Language Interactions between Reading Recovery Teachers and their English-Language Learners

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LANGUAGE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN READING RECOVERY TEACHERS
AND THEIR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE LEARNERS

by

Leslie Yerington

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
San Diego State University and the University of San Diego
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

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Abstract

This qualitative study investigated characteristics of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of Reading Recovery lessons. The new book introduction provides the student with background knowledge and story plot sufficient to render a successful first attempt reading the book that takes place directly after the introduction. The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of Reading Recovery lessons in order to describe the nature of these interactions and discover the relationships, if any exist, between the interactions and student performance. The study also searched for common themes in the function of teacher language when the student was successful in reading the new book.

The theoretical framework for the study was socio-linguistic educational theory, literacy instruction for English-language learners, and Clay's theory about literacy learning. The study used the data collected on one student from each of nine Reading Recovery teachers in California who were teaching Spanish-dominant English-language learners. The data were collected from videotaped lessons, field notes of on-site observations by the researcher, and lesson documents.

The constant comparison method (Creswell, 1998) was used during the data analysis to discover common themes and categories of the teaching-learning transactions. Teacher language was also defined by its teaching/learning function, using a rubric developed by Clay (1998). Successful student outcomes in reading the new book were measured by the Running Record of Oral Text Reading developed by Clay (2002). Using these positive student outcomes as a guide, the researcher found three major
characteristics in the conversations: the interactions contained elements of successful learning conversations as described by Wells (1986); the teachers created an atmosphere of interactive ease or a feeling of comfort in the lesson; and the teachers delivered “comprehensible input” (Krashen, 1981) for English-language learners. The explanation for the most successful new book introductions relied on many interconnected characteristics. Teachers used both verbal and non-verbal interactions, concentrated heavily on the meaning of the book, and made good book choices. This study may inform the growing numbers of Reading Recovery teachers who teach English-language learners.
Dedication
para B
el Coyote de mi vida,
la espina y la flor
when the chaparral surrounds me
i see you
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CHAPTER 1
Describing the Study

*Introduction*

Rosario reads in her new book, *Baby Hippo* (Randell, 1994), “The hippos are b-b-ba-back in the water. Baby Hippo is on Mother Hippo’s b-b-b-back (There is a question in her voice.). The hippos are safe.” Linda, her Reading Recovery teacher, points to the text and says, “You did a good job of working on this tricky part. It does say the hippos are back in water. Do you see how they walked *back* to the water, where they were before? They were in the water at the beginning, weren’t they?” “Yes,” says Rosario as she flips back to the beginning of the book, “here they are in the water.” “Right,” says Linda, “so now they are going back here (Linda points to the picture to illustrate her point) to the water again.” Linda is confirming that what Rosario read is correct and helping her to understand how the word “back” is used in this sentence. Rosario says, “Yeah, the other hippos are there too.” “That’s right,” says Linda, “now let’s look right here (she points to the second time that back appears in text). You read ‘back’; that was good reading work because it looks right. This time it means Mother Hippo’s back (points to it in the picture). That was tricky, wasn’t it?” Rosario looks hesitent, and nods her head. “Back means two things in this book,” continues Linda. “It tells us where the hippos are – *back* in the water - and it tells us where Baby Hippo is – on his mother’s *back*.”

This short teaching interaction, or teaching conversation, was crafted by an observant Reading Recovery teacher who hypothesized correctly why the text was
"back" meant in both instances on that page. The vignette exemplifies a typical student-teacher interaction during part of a Reading Recovery lesson.

**Background of the Problem and Theoretical Framework**

This qualitative study investigated the nature of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of the Reading Recovery lesson. It also investigated what kind of interactions took place in the new book introduction when the student subsequently was successful at reading that book. The theoretical framework for the study was socio-linguistic educational theory, literacy instruction for the English-language learner, and Clay's theory about literacy learning. The research design was twofold. It used constant comparison data analysis to describe and analyze student-teacher interactions, and it used the results of assessments of students' reading to identify what kind of teacher language was used during the preceding book introductions. The research design was developed to examine the complex processes that take place in student-teacher interactions. The purpose of this study was to uncover interaction characteristics that may lead to better communication between teacher and student and therefore better student achievement.

**Statement of the Problem**

Reading Recovery is an intervention for first grade students who are at-risk of failing to learn to read. "Individually designed and individually delivered lessons can bring the child's progress back into the average band of achievement in a very short time" (Clay, 1993, p. 1). The individual design and delivery of the student's intervention and the need to bring the child back into the average achievement band quickly require
that teachers make it easy for children to learn. A student benefits from the kind of individualized student-teacher interactions or conversations that facilitate learning.

Currently there are growing numbers of English-language learners (ELL students or ELLs) in California public school classrooms and in the Reading Recovery program. Because of California demographics, a major portion of the English-language learners is Spanish-dominant. These particular ELLs are currently in English-only school programs and are the slowest-progressing children in the classroom. In schools that provide Reading Recovery as part of their literacy program, many of those children enter this intervention program.

This increasing number of Spanish-dominant English-language learners in California Reading Recovery programs intensifies the need for superb program delivery for these students. The particular characteristics of second-language literacy acquisition may complicate the issue. The researcher does not intend to suggest that Reading Recovery is not sufficient to meet the needs of ELLs because it has been found to be successful with these children (e.g. Neal & Kelly, 1999). Rather, there is very little research on how language interactions affect student learning in one-on-one tutorial settings (e.g. Wells, 1986) and how they affect student learning in Reading Recovery lessons in particular (e.g. Rodgers, 1998). Research is needed to begin the process of uncovering how these teaching/learning interactions affect student learning, especially for this group of students.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of Reading Recovery lessons in
order to describe the nature of these interactions. The study also sought to discover the relationships, if any exist, between the nature of those language interactions and subsequent student achievement.

As was stated previously, there is little research that explains the nature of how student-teacher language might influence learning in the Reading Recovery lesson. Data in the review of the literature suggest that the concept of a teacher and student understanding each other during a learning conversation is more complex than the student’s ability to comprehend vocabulary and grammar. This study focused on the new book orientation portion of the Reading Recovery lesson when teachers are trying to facilitate learning through a conversation. It is a potentially rich opportunity to observe student-teacher interactions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used as a guide to keep the study focused and to ensure consistent methodology:

1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?

2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child’s performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher’s language during the new book orientation, as identified by Clay’s (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?
Definition of Terms

There are a number of terms that were used in this study that may require clarification. Some of the terms will be defined here while others will be defined in the body of the text when a contextualized definition may be more helpful to the reader.

**Bilingual education:** Bilingual education in the United States is a term with no clear definition that includes educational methodology or curriculum guidelines. For the purposes of this study, bilingual education is classroom instruction that is delivered by a certified teacher in the native language of the children in the classroom. There are various kinds of bilingual education programs, usually defined in terms of the amount of native language spoken during the school day and/or the grade at which instruction is changed to English-only curriculum and methodology. The various bilingual education programs are described in more detail in chapter two of this study.

**Bound or bounded:** These terms are used as the verb expression of the word boundaries. In chapters three and four, references are made to certain sections of the conversation to describe where the teacher and student participants in the study begin and end. The sentence, “This part of the conversation was ‘bound’ by a capital letter at the beginning and a period at the end,” means that the part of the conversation to which the researcher refers starts at the capital letter and ends at the period.

**English-language learner (ELL):** This is a student whose native language is not English. For the purposes of this study, the ELL’s native language is Spanish. The students in the study speak English at various levels, but for selection for Reading Recovery they understood English well enough to respond appropriately, even if not always correctly, to teacher direction during the assessment procedure that was done for
student selection. For example, they might say that letters are called “numbers,” but they would not say that letters are “play” or “going.”

The student participants in this study speak English at all competence levels, up to but not including the point where they would be considered to speak as well as a native English speaker. For example, some have mastered complete sentences, often with some syntax errors (i.e., errors in the use of articles, verb endings, and pronouns). They have difficulty in combining words with the ease of the native speaker, although they are able to speak for extended periods of time. An example of this would be, “The bird got seed. The bird eat that. The bird have very hungry” (Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center, Instructions for the use of the NDEC Language Proficiency Rubric for students whose native language is not English, ¶ 5). Other students speak English at less-competent levels.

**Interactive Ease:** This term is used in two ways in the study. Clay’s (1998) definition that applies to the rubric used in the study will be explained on page nine of this paper. The researcher also uses “interactive ease” as the term to describe the social-educational environment that was created by teacher and student during the new book orientation. Interactive ease was a feeling-tone and conversational structure that allowed learning to take place. This use of “interactive ease” appears once in chapter 4 and often in chapter 5.

**Mainstream culture:** This is the culture that is represented by the prevalent attitudes, values, and practices of the majority society or group in the United States.

**New book orientation or introduction:** Both terms, “new book orientation” and “introduction,” were used in this dissertation interchangeably. They name the portion of the Reading Recovery lesson when the teacher and child converse about the book’s plot,
new concepts, vocabulary and language structures that are found in the book. The purpose of the new book introduction is to orient the student to the story in order to facilitate the student’s attempt to read the book.

**Personal connection:** One of the categories found in the data was the number of times that a student made some kind of personal connection to the text while it was being introduced. Sometimes that connection was with a book the child had read previously; sometimes it was with the child’s personal experience.

**Scaffolding:** Scaffolding is a term that Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) brought into the educational community. It refers to the process by which knowledgeable others, usually adults, support a child’s attempts to take on new learning. The adult creates the learning situation so that the child is independently doing as much as possible, while providing for the child those elements that are beyond the child’s current ability.

**Student achievement or achievement:** Achievement, for the purposes of this study, is measured by the accuracy rate at which a child reads his/her book. The books are short texts that would be read in a typical classroom setting. This definition of achievement is based on the measurement of an authentic reading task that closely resembles the tasks students are asked to perform as part of their school work during the normal classroom day.

**Student ages:** Student ages are listed in terms of years and months. In the age “6.7,” the “6” refers to the number of years. The “7” refers to the number of months in addition to six years that the child has completed.

**One-on-One tutoring:** The teaching-learning situation where one teacher works with one student.
The following terms explain how the researcher defines Clay’s (1998) labels for the rubric that were used during the data analysis of this study. The examples, which are included when further explanation seems necessary, are a collection of teaching remarks from the researcher’s experience.

**Accept a partially correct response and tighten the criteria of acceptability:** The teacher confirms that what the child has said is partly correct and then adds more information to that answer in order to direct the student’s thinking to a more precise answer. Or the teacher might ask the child a question to help him/her develop a more precise answer.

An example is as follows: The child is looking at the picture in order to predict how a certain part of the picture is described in the text. The text reads “a ring of mushrooms” (Randell, 1994c, p. 12). The child says, “A circle of mushrooms.” The teacher then replies, “You’re right; those mushrooms are in a circle. In this book, they call it a ring of mushrooms because a ring is round just like a circle.”

**Ask the child to work with new knowledge:** The teacher provides the child with new information, and then asks the child to use that knowledge to read the text.

**Increase accessibility:** The teacher anticipates what may be novel in the story for the student. The teacher provides the information, usually about vocabulary, sentence structure, or the meaning of the story to help make the information understandable. In essence, the teacher provides information that will allow the student to understand certain potentially tricky parts of the book so that the child can read the text without too much intervention from the teacher. The key is that the student may not understand how this information fits into the story’s plot.
An example is: In the story *Kitty and the Birds* (Randell, 1994b), a teacher might explain to the student that the cat in this story is hungry, and cats like to eat birds. The reason the cat in the story is jumping up on a particular page is because she wants to catch and eat the bird that is just flying up from the ground into a tree. This is a relatively common bit of knowledge, but some students may not understand that cats would choose to eat a bird or how cats hunt. To understand the plot of this book, a child needs to synthesize all of these aspects of cat behavior. Some children may not have enough experience with cats to understand how this background information informs the plot in the text.

**Maintain interactive ease:** The teacher most often repeats what the student has said in order to keep the flow of the conversation going. This is the second use of the term “interactive ease.” It is used here in terms of Clay’s (1998) rubric. It appears once in chapter 3, often in chapter 4, and once in a table in chapter 5.

**Present new knowledge:** The researcher interpreted this category to refer to new vocabulary words or concepts. The teacher usually presents the vocabulary with context, reference to a picture if possible, and explanation that will help the child understand how the word fits into the plot.

**Help the child to actively construct the author’s plot:** The teacher draws on the child’s prior experience or knowledge in order to predict some aspect of the story about to be read. Most often the teacher’s remarks use questioning and leading comments to help the child construct what is happening or what will happen in the story.

An example is when the teacher reminds the student about what happened when he or she lost his/her first tooth. The teacher allows the child to reconstruct the parts of
that experience that relate to the story at hand. To help predict a plot about a young boy who is going to put his tooth under the pillow and get money for it, the teacher would help the student to recreate that scenario in his/her head. Then the teacher would explain that this story is about a child who does the same thing.

**Tighten the criteria of acceptability:** The teaching sequence used in the example above about the “ring of mushrooms” might start in the same way, where the student reads “circle” instead of “ring”. This time the teacher could say that the picture does show a circle of mushrooms, but that they call it something else in this book. Then the teacher could point to the word “ring” in the text and ask the child to think about and to decode the word based on the letters that the child sees.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter reviews research in four areas. First, it explores the nature of classroom dynamics and student-teacher conversations in terms of socio-linguistic educational theory. This theory establishes a context for the study as it helps to explain the nature and characteristics of student-teacher interactions. There is a body of related research that describes teacher-student interactions in terms of how they affect the learning process. Next, the review looks at research on English Language Learners. In particular, the review includes data about the achievement levels of ELLs, and documents best practices in bilingual education and second-language learning theory. This creates a basis for understanding the student participants in the study and their educational circumstances. It also helps to establish a rationale for the importance of this study, which specifically concerns Spanish-dominant ELLs. Third, the review examines research on Reading Recovery and the theory upon which Reading Recovery is based, as well as the framework of this intervention. This helps to develop an understanding of the conditions of the research setting and how Reading Recovery addresses the needs of these participants. Fourth, the review examines student-teacher interactions in one-on-one tutorial settings and particularly in Reading Recovery lessons, including the notion of scaffolded instruction.

Student-Teacher Interactions and Classroom Dynamics

As noted in chapter 1, the terms “interactions” and “conversations” were used interchangeably in this study to mean the teaching interactions that occur between teacher
and students in a learning situation. The interactions might be oral interchanges, nonverbal communications, and/or teaching demonstrations. Cazden (1988) identified them as teaching/learning negotiations that take place in good educational settings thousands of times every day. Her research suggested that the child must know how to negotiate within certain patterns of responding and interaction that take place during lessons and classroom routines. The child must be successful in these negotiations in order to be able to succeed in the classroom. An examination of the relationship between culture and language helps to explain the possible complications among a child's language, a teacher's language, and the classroom routines.

*How Cultural Perspective Has the Potential to Influence School Experience*

An individual interprets all of his/her experiences through a cultural perspective. Agar (1994), a cultural anthropologist, explains culture in this way. Culture is not what people actually make or do. It is what they know. What they know is a system of concepts and the links that tie those concepts together. An obvious way in which this system of concepts is expressed is through language. As a way to know culture, words offer an opportunity to explore a culture, and they can lead to the concepts that "travel with them" (p. 79).

There are two important concepts in Agar's explanation that relate to school experience. First, some of us who have lived within and have prospered in the dominant culture do not understand how an experience can be interpreted differently from the way we interpret it. People from the mainstream culture use mainstream media, institutions, and their own experiences to interpret most events. There is very little cultural incongruity. Yet, if one views culture as the constructed reality that Agar described, then
culture is not a universal monolith that can only be understood in one way. Heath (1983) explained school as an institution that was fashioned from and is representative of the mainstream culture. For example, schools employ teachers who are usually products of a mainstream, often middle-class background. Schools reflect mainstream principles and beliefs in their curriculum, structure, and procedures. Schools use a discourse that is particular to the institution. Agar’s definition of culture makes it easier to understand how children and their parents from different cultural groups come to an institution of the mainstream culture, like the school system, with different expectations, understandings and competencies. Their cultural lens may be quite different from that of mainstream culture. There may be an incongruity between the children’s and family’s perceptions about school and the new school setting. One of the possible results is that school may not be an easy place to excel for some children from non-mainstream cultures.

*Language as a cultural expression*

Agar (1994) made a second relative point --- language is the tool (or one of the most important tools) by which culture is expressed and understood. Polkinghorne (1988) supported this position when he asserted,

Linguistic forms have as much reality as the material objects of the physical realms. For human existence, linguistic forms are paramount, for they filter and organize information from the physical and cultural realms and transform it into the meanings that make up human knowledge and experience (p. 158).

Because language is the way that one understands culture and the world, it is also an excellent vehicle to explore how two cultures, for example, a child from a
different ethnic origin and the school that represents the mainstream culture, interact.

Cazden (1988) reported on many aspects of teacher-student language interactions in the classroom. Cazden, Mehan, and associates (Cazden, 1988) studied classroom interactions that they called "event structures" during the course of a school year. They found that students "learned to speak within the structure" of the class lesson (p. 47). To negotiate a classroom day, the children learned how to interact in the various kinds of activities that transpired. If students understood the structures and their roles in the structures, it would allow them to demonstrate communicative and knowledge competences by their appropriate responses and initiations and their overt sanctions of peers who spoke out of turn in the classroom. An additional benefit to learning how to negotiate a clear, consistent event structure, or a lesson, allowed the participants to attend to the lesson's content, not its structure. In other words, the students could pay attention to the content of what they needed to learn, instead of spending some of their consciousness trying to figure out what was expected of them or simply tuning out the situation. The implication is that the children who negotiated the event structure well were considered by the teachers to be successful. And equally important, the others, who did not learn to speak within the lesson structure, were not able to participate fully in that structure, and, therefore, were not as successful.

Lindfors (1991) explained this ability to participate effectively or ineffectively in the classroom in terms of language. She noted that a documented dissonance existed in the interactions between some children and their teachers in the classroom. Other research described how people from distinct cultures, even when there was a common
language within the same country, had distinctly different ways in which they used language. *A Way with Words* is a seminal work by Heath (1983) about how language discourse was constructed by a community of speakers. Children from a particular community did not speak the same discourse that the community school spoke, which led to the dissonance to which Lindfors referred. Every child arrives at school with a complex, integrated system for how to communicate. That communication system is still growing, but is attuned to the communication norms of his/her particular community. There are numbers of specific aspects of a child’s communication system that may be slightly different from the school’s and the teacher’s communication system. Lindfors identified some of the aspects of the communication system: the ways of questioning, the ways of telling a story, the ways of participating in groups, and the ways of engaging in the student-teacher interaction.

*The potential for home-school incongruity.*

Wells’ (1986) influential study about the relationships between children’s language acquisition and school literacy achievement in Bristol, England was set within the context of how the nature of conversation and learning support each other. He found that a preschool child participated more in conversations when the child and an adult each worked actively to communicate their message. The child and adult listened actively to each other in order to understand the message, and most often they were focused on an outside action or event that the child was interested in. The goal of the conversation was not to teach the child about language, but to communicate and understand the meaning of each participant’s contribution. This kind of conversation led to the most elaborate and sophisticated use of language by the child and seemed to facilitate the expansion of the
child’s knowledge (based on how the child subsequently talked about the subject). By virtue of the language interaction, the child learned more about language.

In an educational situation, learning depends on communication between teacher and student, and the same principles apply as in those described in the successful preschool conversations in Wells’ (1986) study. The aim of learning is the collaborative construction of meaning, with negotiation in the learning conversation to ensure that meanings are mutually understood. However, Wells found a different conversational profile in many recorded classroom conversations than had occurred in the conversations between parents and children. For example, the teacher most often dominated the conversation and led the discussion in order to elaborate what the teacher thought was most important about the subject that was being discussed. The conversation did not follow the child’s interest in the subject.

Cazden (1987) found that there was a hidden curriculum that even young children were expected to follow in order for them to be successful in the classroom interactions. This curriculum consisted of the children understanding timing – when it was their turn to speak, to use standard syntax even at the expense of the content of the message, and to be explicit and relevant according to the teacher’s criteria.

Although none of the characteristics of classroom conversation were necessarily negative, they appeared to prove problematic for children who made the slowest literacy progress in Wells’ study. The slowest-progressing children in Wells’ study did better when the school language discourse more closely matched the preschool caregiver-child discourse model.
Allow me to clarify the use of the word culture here. There is no intended suggestion that the possible school-home language mismatch is a result of children only from ethnic or minority cultures interacting with a more mainstream school culture. Children from the mainstream culture may not understand the school language interaction and lesson routines, either. The idea here is that for many reasons, some children do not participate easily in school routines. This inability to participate and to communicate might be a symptom of the child and the school speaking a different discourse. And because language is a cultural creation, the inability of the child to participate and to communicate can be described as a mismatch of the child's culture with the school's culture.

The Emotional Component

Lyons (2003) cited recent research that “provides concrete evidence that cognition (reason) and emotion (feeling) interact to support the learning process…” (p. 60). Lyons explained that learning is not just a cognitive process. It involves emotional, cognitive, and social functions that work as a synergy. “Emotional and cognitive memories are stored and retrieved in parallel, and their activities are joined seamlessly in our conscience [sic] experience” (p. 65). I believe the quote should read “conscious experience.” She further explains that the synergy does not have a hierarchical or sequential form. Emotional, social and cognitive functions cannot be prevented from occurring simultaneously because they occur at a neural level.

The emotional-cognitive connection in terms of learning is important in the discussion that has developed so far in this chapter. Learning includes an element of emotion as part of its makeup. That adds another aspect to the analysis of the teaching-
learning situation and the teacher-student interaction. If the student has had difficulty in learning to read, then it is possible (probable) that the child has an associated negative emotion. Lack of confidence in oneself as a learner is often associated with feelings of being unable to accomplish a task. The emotional component of learning is worth noting for this study because participants of the study are part of the Reading Recovery Program – students who are among the lowest-achieving literacy students in their classroom. Lyons (2003) explains, “For those students, a transformation of emotions and self-perception is necessary for literacy achievement” to occur. (p. 67)

Gee’s (2001) research provided an example of this intricate relationship of emotion, in this case positive experiences, with literacy, self-concept and the school experience. He reported that a father and a preschool-aged son were involved in a literacy event where the son successfully read the message, although not the precise words, of a caption in a coloring book. The father affirmed that the message was correct, and the son reacted by saying that he was learning how to read. The subsequent analysis was that father and son were helping to co-construct a pro-active reader - one who takes reading to be an active creation by the reader of the appropriate language and meanings in conjunction with print. This conceptualization of reading is important because the child is learning that he is in charge of the task. According to Gee, this kind of episode prepares the child for school literacy events where the same expectations exist. It also helps to create a child-student who builds up positive emotional experiences with literacy and, particularly in this case, a sense of positive self-concept.

To summarize thus far, a phenomenon called the “classroom culture” determines the routines of daily activities and classroom language, which, in turn, determine student
participation. A successful student is able to negotiate the routines and the language, and a less successful student might experience difficulty in whole or in part because of his/her inability to negotiate these domains. In addition, the emotional-cognitive connection that surrounds learning has an effect on the child’s potential for achievement.

The public education system has attempted to address some of the potential problems in the classroom for children who speak different languages and who are from different cultures when it implemented bilingual education. The following section looks at ELLs and their specific opportunities for achievement in the schools.

*English-Language Learner Education*

This section on bilingual education considers the population demographics and some of the statistics that created a need for this study. It also describes the methodology and pedagogy that work with this student population.

*Demographics and Statistics*

First, we consider some of the demographics and statistics about the Spanish-dominant English-language learning community that makes this a relevant topic. The ELL population is growing in California. The enrollment of limited-English-proficient children reached 1.4 million in the 1990s. English learners represented one-quarter of California's K-12 students and one-third of those entering the first grade in 1998 (San Diego County Office of Education, 2002). In 2000, Latino students in general became the majority population group in the California school system, although not all of them are ELL students. California State legislation, specifically the Unz Initiative, Proposition 227, in the last six years has made bilingual education unavailable for many students whose families might have chosen that option.
The reduction of bilingual education takes on a greater sense of importance when one considers Latino academic achievement in terms of the graduation rate. Only fifty-eight percent of the Latinos who start high school in San Diego County eventually graduate. This is the lowest percentage of any ethnic population in the county (San Diego County Office of Education, 2002). While there is no research evidence cited here to suggest that the lack of bilingual programs in the schools is correlated to low Latino achievement and graduation rates, the data about graduation rates does support the notion that the California school system is not serving the Latino population as well as it might, that the numbers of Latinos are growing in the school system, and that programs that might have served them better are being cut from the schools.

Another clarification to these statistics is that not all Latino students are English-language learners. ELLs are a subset of the Latino demographic group. However, Thomas and Collier (2001) found in their meta-analysis of bilingual education programs across five school districts in four states that

[E]nglish language learners immersed in the English mainstream because their parents refused bilingual/ESL services showed large decreases in reading and math achievement by Grade 5, almost ¾ of a standard deviation (15 NCEs) when compared to students who received bilingual/ESL services. The largest number of dropouts came from this group... (p. 2).

It is reasonable to conclude that the largest numbers of Latino dropouts in California would also be ELLs who would have entered the school system at some point speaking Spanish as their primary language.
English-Language-Learner Methodology and Pedagogy

Research describes the different kinds of programs that have been offered to bilingual students in the last 30 years and how achievement corresponds to the programs. Thomas and Collier (2001) found that dual-language immersion programs assist bilingual students to reach the 50% level in all first- and second-language subjects, and to maintain that high achievement, as measured by national standardized tests (e.g., the ITBS, the SAT9, the CTBS, and the Terra Nova). The fewest dropouts come from dual-language programs. A dual-language immersion program is one where students receive instruction in their native language and in English. Most of these programs in the United States are Spanish-English bilingual programs. Cummins (2000) supported the same conclusion about effective programs for bilingual students' high achievement levels in his meta-analysis of over 30 years of research in the United States and Canada.

The salient point for this research study is not to argue that bilingual education is the best solution for closing the achievement gap between bilingual, Spanish-dominant students and their English-only speaking peers. The implication for this study is that the research offers an illustration of educational situations that assist Latino students to reach higher academic achievement. Many of these educational situations occurred in bilingual programs and were studied within that context. This current study explains a number of methodologies and pedagogies that exemplify best practices in general for ELLs as a way to understand the characteristics of student-teacher interactions that help to facilitate student achievement in English reading.

There is relatively little research that shows how early literacy develops in a second language, English for example, for children who have not already learned to read.
in their native language. However, according to Cummins (2000), the research does show that readers learn to read in their second language using much the same process that they do in their first language. That is, children use their growing English language knowledge, word and letter knowledge, and their understanding of how print concepts work to make sense of the print on the page. There is an important difference, however, between ELLs and native English speakers: ELLs are learning to read and write at the same time they are perfecting their control over the English language. Other research shows that oral and written English can develop at the same time (e.g. Taillefer, 1996). Therefore, it is possible for ELLs to begin the process of learning English literacy before they have become fully proficient in oral English.

Teaching methodology for English-language learners looks like good literacy methodology and classroom instruction. It consists of a teaching-learning environment that focuses on meaning and messages, an awareness and use of language forms, and the use of language in the educational situation to generate new knowledge, create literature and art, and act within social realities. Children should be immersed in rich reading and writing experiences. There should be demonstration and modeling during the teaching. Children should hear vocabulary and language within the context of whole stories in order to build concept development. The teacher should constantly analyze children’s understandings in order to check and maintain information that is understandable, or to use a term coined by Krashen (1981), the student must receive “comprehensible input.”

Bernhardt (1991), in her meta-analysis of the research of second-language literacy instruction, explained how teachers must understand their students at a deep level. She wrote that English-language learners approach a text through their particular cultural
lenses or understandings. ELLs need access to the implicit knowledge about the English-language text that native language readers would bring to the task. Students must understand the implications of the context, the characters, and the actions. For example, in the text *Little Red Riding Hood*, the reader must have some understanding of dark forests and wolves as being potentially dangerous to children. The reading process is made more difficult if students do not understand these implicit plot constructs that might be called inferential knowledge. Some of the inferences are more universal than others: wolves and dark forests would probably be easy for a Spanish-dominant ELL student to understand. But there are other concepts that might prove problematic: a young girl going to her grandma's by herself in the first place (Where are her siblings?); wearing a red cloak with a hood; and grandma living by herself at a distance from the rest of the family, especially when she is sick.

It is not that any one of these concepts is difficult. It is that if there are enough concepts in the story plot that must be understood through inferential reasoning by the student, and if the inferences are outside of the student’s cultural lens, then the student can devote less cognitive attention to other aspects of the reading process. Bernhardt (1991) concluded that reading comprehension and the reading process were a balancing act between the parts of text that are seen (the words, spaces, signs and letters) and unseen (the inferences). This is not new information for a good reading teacher. All students, especially those who are learning to read, read better when they understand the story’s meaning. However, meaning, or comprehensible input for an ELL student, takes on added complexity because the possible differences in culture between the student and
the teacher may make it difficult for the teacher to recognize what will be incomprehensible to the student.

Reading Recovery

This section will describe the Reading Recovery program and the theory upon which Reading Recovery is based. It will also discuss some of the aspects of the teacher's role in the program. I have placed the research about one-on-one tutoring in the Reading Recovery program in the subsequent section that deals expressly with one-on-one tutoring.

A Description of the Reading Recovery Program

Reading Recovery is a short-term intervention for the lowest-achieving first grade students in the regular education classroom. Most of these children have had large- and small-group reading and writing instruction with dedicated teachers in kindergarten and part of first grade. As good as the classroom programs and teachers are, classroom instruction has not helped these children learn to read and write at the level of their average-progressing classroom peers.

School districts choose to implement Reading Recovery as one part of their comprehensive literacy program. It is designed to help initially low-progress readers to make accelerated progress and catch up to their peers. Accelerated progress means that these students must actually learn at a rate faster than the average students in the classroom. The average students are progressing daily, and to catch up with them, Reading Recovery students must learn faster. To do this, students learn to use a set of reading and writing strategies "independently so that they can function successfully in an average reading setting within the regular classroom" (Askew & Frasier, 1994, p.88).
Expertly trained, credentialed teachers, in a one-on-one tutorial setting, teach at-risk children for a half-hour daily. The length of the child's intervention is determined by the needs of the child, but is rarely more than 20 weeks. Reading Recovery results in one of two positive outcomes: a child reads at the level of the average-achieving children in his/her regular education classroom, or a particular child may be identified early in his/her school career to need a long-term remediation program.

Reading Recovery is based on research. “Reading Recovery is an educational intervention based upon a specific theory of literacy acquisition and utilizing a range of instructional procedures, an implementation system, and an evaluation design developed through the research career of Dr. Marie M. Clay” (Cazden, 1988, p. 23). Slavin, Karweit and Wasik (1993) reported that the program’s implementation integrity from site to site was consistent. Nationwide, 58% of all children who were served in Reading Recovery in 2000 were at grade level, and remained at grade level in June of their first grade year, according to Gómez-Bellenge, National Director of the Reading Recovery National Data Evaluation Center (personal communication, April, 4, 2001). The percentage of successful students was 79% when those who were in Reading Recovery for a complete program of instruction are counted. Children who do not receive a complete program of instruction are most often those who move during the school year or who start the intervention so late that the normal academic school year ends before they have had the opportunity to complete the Reading Recovery intervention. The national success rate for Reading Recovery has been relatively stable since 1997, according to Gómez-Bellenge.
Research and Theoretical Base

The research and theory on the broad topic – “Can these particular children learn?” suggest that reading failure is preventable for all but a very small percentage of children (Clay, 1993; Hiebert, 1994; Pinnell, 1989; Slavin, Madden, Karweit, Dolan, and Wasik, 1992; Slavin, Madden, Karweit, Livermon, and Dolan, 1990). The challenge for educators is to develop an atmosphere for students in which learning to read can occur for most children, according to Wasik and Slavin (1990). Reading Recovery helps to provide this kind of atmosphere for a large portion of the first grade children who have not learned to read within the regular education classroom. Clay (1993) explained the purpose of Reading Recovery in this way, “For a few children, individual and consistent tutoring with these special procedures, introduced after one year of instruction, may well prevent the development of a pattern of reading failure” (p. i). Clay’s reference to “special procedures” here are those used in Reading Recovery. She suggested that individual instruction should commence one year after the child has started school. This allows enough time for the student to begin to engage in the learning-to-read process in the regular classroom, and for the classroom teacher to determine whether the child is making appropriate progress.

In describing beginning reading, Clay (2002) wrote, “A broad-band theory of literacy learning views it as complex rather than simple and acknowledges that writers have to know how to do certain things with language which overlap with things that readers have to know or do” (p. 12). Reading Recovery is based on this theory of literacy-learning being a complex process where reading and writing support each other. Clay indicates that there are many paths to the common outcome of learning to read. No two
children may be learning the same thing about literacy at the same time, and a complex approach to teaching is necessary so that each child has the best opportunity to engage in the learning process. This approach is exemplified when the student reads whole books and writes whole messages in his/her lesson.

The Teacher's Role

The teacher's role in Reading Recovery might be first described as an astute observer of a child's reading and writing behaviors. From those child behaviors, the teacher makes tentative hypotheses about the in-the-head reading strategies that the child is using to arrive at the behaviors. The teacher then reinforces, teaches, praises and models reading and writing strategies that will help the child to be a more effective and efficient reader.

Clay and Cazden (1990) suggest that there is a Vygotskian interpretation of student-teacher relationships in Reading Recovery. Reading Recovery is "a system of social interaction organized around the comprehension and production of texts that demonstrably creates new forms of cognitive activity in the child" (p. 206). The "social interaction model" describes how most educators would describe scaffolding. The term scaffold is used as a metaphor to explain "interactional support" that often is expressed through the student-teacher conversation that takes place during the Reading Recovery lesson. Clay and Cazden explain it as a "teacher-child dialogue that is structured by the adult to maximize the growth of the child's intrapsychological functioning" (p. 219). Reading Recovery teachers use this kind of teaching-learning interaction during the new book orientation. Clay and Cazden describe it as a good example of Vygotsky's theory in action.
Reading Recovery teacher training concentrates on four aspects of the teaching-learning process. First, it clarifies and/or presents the reading and writing concepts that need to be learned in order for someone to become a reader (e.g. phonological awareness, learning words, fluency, comprehension, etc.). Second, Reading Recovery coursework presents an interactive theory of teaching-learning methodology that is based on a mix of constructivism and direct instruction. Third, Reading Recovery prepares teachers to become excellent observers of children's reading and writing behavior, in order for the teacher to hypothesize about how the child is taking-on reading and writing processes. Fourth, Reading Recovery teaches learning-to-read methodologies that have been shown to be effective with these low-achieving children. Understanding all of these aspects of teaching-learning processes allow for powerful teaching that must occur in this short-term intervention that leads to accelerated progress for students.

According to the vision statement of the Reading Recovery Council of North America, a national professional organization for Reading Recovery, the goal is that all children can learn to read. The organization's vision states, "... children [served in Reading Recovery] will be proficient readers and writers by the end of first grade" (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2002, ¶ 1). The implication of this language, that all children will be good readers and writers by the end of first grade, lends a purpose to the work that is done by those who help to carry out the vision. It creates a framework within which Reading Recovery teachers work.

Reading Recovery and the English-Language Learner

As a former Reading Recovery teacher leader, this researcher has had opportunities to interact with teachers around issues related to English-language learners.
Many Reading Recovery teachers expressed concerns about how much English students should know before entering Reading Recovery. The Standards and Guidelines of the Reading Recovery Council of North America (Reading Recovery Council of North America, 2004) states that if the student can understand the directions during the initial evaluation procedures in English, then the student understands enough English to be included in the program. Yet the reality, as Neal and Kelly (1999) stated in their study of Reading Recovery achievement levels of California ELL students, is that ELLs face a dual challenge: they are learning to read at the same time they are learning English.

Given the limited amount of time for each child’s program (approximately 12 to 20 weeks) and the scarce resources for children who are not achieving at grade-level, it is understandable that Reading Recovery teachers are sometimes hesitant to work with children who do not speak English well. Another reality is that the numbers of ELLs who are entering the Reading Recovery program in the state of California are numerous: approximately 32% of the total Reading Recovery student population are English-language learners in California, according to the Reading Recovery Council of North America (2004). These realities concerning ELL demographics and admission guidelines make some teachers anxious about how to teach Reading Recovery ELLs. The teachers are asking for help.

Ashdown and Simic (2000) confirmed in a report of their New York study that there were concerns about which English-language learners to include in the Reading Recovery program. They believed that doubts still existed in some schools about fully adhering to choosing the lowest-performing children to participate in the Reading Recovery program. The ELL achievement results reported in Ashdown and Simic’s
study, in Clay’s (1993) original work with bilingual children, and the studies done about ELL’s in California (Kelly, Klein, Neal and Valdez, 1995; Neal and Kelly, 1999) demonstrate that ELL children were successful in Reading Recovery at approximately the same rates as their English-only peers. Ashdown and Simic found no correlation between the children’s entry-level English and their ability to successfully complete the intervention.

This study affirms the success rate of English-Language Learners in the Reading Recovery program, and more importantly to describe how Reading Recovery provides for the success of these learners. Perhaps more information about how to teach ELLs effectively, and reassurances that the procedures that Reading Recovery teachers currently employ work well for them, will help to ensure that the selection guidelines (all children are eligible if they are among the lowest-achieving, and if they understand the oral directions given in English during the assessment procedures) are followed.

Now let us turn to a description of the characteristics of one-on-one tutoring sessions.

One-on-One Tutoring

Much of the research up until now about one-on-one tutoring has concerned its effectiveness and what factors, such as the length of training received by the tutors and the length of program, contribute to its effectiveness (e.g. Cohen, Kulik and Kulik, 1982; Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes and Moody, 2000; Juel, 1996; Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk and Seltzer, 1994). Some of the research has compared the effectiveness of one-on-one tutoring to small-group instruction (e.g. Pinnell, Lyon, DeFord, Bryk, and Seltzer, 1994; Wasik and Slavin, 1993). Research has also compared the results of tutoring programs
with cross-age tutors, volunteers, pre-service teachers, and trained teachers (e.g.,
there is research that explained the cost-benefit analyses of one-on-one tutorial programs
in its various configurations (e.g. Dyer, 1992; Hiebert, 1994; Shanahan and Barr 1995).
Even with this research, a question remains: What characteristics within the one-on-one
tutorial model lead to its success? Juel (1996) asked that same intriguing question about
what combination of factors --- the tutor, the student, the program, the environment, and
the interaction of these elements--- would help the educational community understand
how one-on-one tutoring is a powerful teaching-learning model.

The question that specifically concerns this current research is how student-
teacher communication interactions affect learning for students in a one-on-one learning
setting. Previous research is not extensive enough to offer a clear explanation of how an
educational setting may affect the teacher-student interaction, nor how student-teacher
language may be different or similar to the classroom language settings. Neither is there
extensive research as yet on the particular student-teacher interactions in Reading
Recovery lessons. Nevertheless, there are some intriguing beginnings. The next section
discusses research that contributes to the unique nature of the one-on-one setting and the
nature of language within that setting in particular.

Some Elements in One-on-One Tutoring That May Lead to Its Success

The teacher-child conversation and how it facilitated learning in a one-on-one
teaching situation was examined in Wells’ (1986) study. Wells used the interactions of
one student, Rosie, who was the lowest performing student in the study, with two
teachers to illustrate how language facilitated Rosie’s participation in the learning
situation. He reported that Rosie acted and spoke differently when she found herself in two different conversational situations. "Teacher A was intent on getting Rosie to talk, and she used the picture as a prop" (p. 99). In the conversation that followed, Rosie produced five simple phrases that the teacher had to coax out of her. Teacher B invited Rosie to tell her more after Rosie had offered a remark about a part of her reading book: "I don't like that one" (p. 98). Rosie volunteered information, led the conversation and responded to the teacher's questions. The difference was notable. In the school classroom structure, Rosie was not successful. Nor was she successful in a one-on-one teaching situation where Teacher A led the conversation on a topic of her choosing and manipulated with questions about the content of a teaching prop. Both of those situations might be considered to be traditional school learning interactions. Wells found that teaching facilitated learning in Rosie's case when the aim was collaborative construction of meaning with negotiations to ensure mutual understanding.

Wells (1986) offered the explanation that the more successful tutorial setting afforded both parties the opportunity to give the conversation their full attention. There were chances for more equalized turn taking. It was possible for the traditional teacher-dominated nature of the conversation and the topic selection to be lessened in the tutorial setting. In short, the conversation in the tutorial setting seemed to better replicate some of the characteristics of a caregiver-child conversation that were documented to be effective with learning language. This is not to suggest that language and literacy learning are the same process, but rather to suggest that the socio-cultural aspects of learning, such as turn-taking, the topic chosen by the child, and the conversation revolving around a
viewed event that were evident in the preschool language learning situations that Wells studied were important in educational models also.

Invernizzi (2001) reported on the element of active engagement within the tutorial setting that helped to motivate students and promote understanding. She suggested that tutors used various strategies to promote active engagement, but that the most widespread was the use of questioning. Questioning provided two learning opportunities for the tutees. It allowed the students to answer and then get immediate feedback about their answers. It also created an opportunity for the student to anticipate upcoming events or information based on their current understandings.

Affection and bonding between tutor and tutee was found to be a characteristic of the tutorial setting in the Juel’s (1996) research. Juel’s conclusion was that affection was a characteristic of all the participant dyads in her study, and not exclusive to the successful pairs. However, for the purposes of this dissertation, and in light of Lyons’ synthesis of cognitive-emotional functions in the brain, the characteristics of affection and bonding seem significant.

*Language Interactions in the Reading Recovery Lesson*

The teaching interactions between teacher and student in Reading Recovery lessons have been characterized as “conversations” in training sessions, conferences, and the literature (Kelly, Klien & Pinnell, 1996). Conversation, according to Wells (1986) is the active participation of *all* members. Clay (1991) referred to this two-way communication when she wrote, “Effective teaching is an interaction and a major part of that interaction is outside the teacher’s control” (p.3). The portion that is outside of the teacher’s control is the spontaneous, constructive participation of the student. This
conceptualization of the teacher-student interaction is prevalent in the literature about Reading Recovery lessons and in the teacher-training model, and, there is some research about the nature of the conversations.

Wong, Groth and O’Flahavan (1994) studied five Reading Recovery teachers who worked with 10 students during the reading portions of the lesson. They looked at the student-teacher interactions in terms of the types of scaffolding that teachers provided for their students. The researchers identified five categories of scaffolding comments: discussing, telling, coaching, prompting and modeling. They found that the kinds of scaffolding changed as the children read easier or harder texts. Although the study dealt with student-teacher interactions, its focus was on how the children were scaffolded and how the scaffolding changed.

Hobsbaum and Peters (1996) explored the teacher-student interactions during the writing portion of the Reading Recovery lesson. They also looked at the nature of the scaffolds that were provided by the teacher for the child and how they changed over time. The study analyzed the “teacher-child moves in relation to each other, rather than isolated counts of initiating and responding” (p. 25). They found that three phases of student-teacher interaction occurred. The phases corresponded to the student’s role that developed more independent problem-solving characteristics. As the children moved from one phase to the next, the teacher’s role was to constantly make it more challenging in line with the child’s developing skill. The task was dynamic and evolving.

Rodgers (1998) conducted a study specifically focusing on the nature of teacher-student conversations and interactions. She described and compared the kinds of teacher scaffolding that were done in the lessons of two Reading Recovery children taught by the
same teacher. The emphasis of her study was also different from the purpose of this dissertation. She was comparing the differences in the nature of teacher support between two students. She found that the teacher provided different levels of support for the two students in the study dependent on the students’ abilities.

Previously, the research about conversation in the Reading Recovery lesson dealt with the nature of scaffolding between the teacher and the student. It focused on how the scaffolding changed within the dynamic nature of assisted performance. That research provides a beginning to understanding the dynamics of one-to-one tutorial settings. This research will add to the description by addressing the nature of the student-teacher language.

**Summary**

This study added to the research about Reading Recovery and teaching practices with English-language learning students. There are growing numbers of Spanish-dominant English-language learners in the California public school system. Many of them are not successfully completing high school. Many of the bilingual programs that have served this population have been eliminated in the last five years. There are growing numbers of Latino students in the English Reading Recovery program, and some teachers are uncertain about how to best help these students. This study sought to describe part of the learning process for English-language learning students within the Reading Recovery remediation.

Reading Recovery is a program specifically designed to be flexible in its approach with each student. Research has shown it to be successful with ELL students. However, up to now, minimal attention has been directed to the nature of the Reading Recovery
teacher’s language and conversation patterns that might facilitate the learning process for these students. The intent of this study was to reveal the characteristics of the interaction during the orientation to the new book that best facilitated student learning.
CHAPTER 3
Design and Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain student-teacher interactions during the new book orientation part of the Reading Recovery lesson of Spanish-dominant, English-language learners. Videotaped lessons, field notes from on-site visits to the participants, and teacher-made lesson records were collected. The study consisted of two analyses: a description of the salient characteristics of the conversations and a description of the relationship between positive student achievement and the teacher language that occurred in the preceding new book introduction.

This chapter describes the theories used to frame the design and methodology of this study and explains how the nature of the inquiry shaped the choice of research design. It situates the study by describing the setting and the participants. Lastly, it explains the data collection procedures and the data analysis processes.

Research Design

Mehan (1979) wrote *Learning Lessons: Social Organization in the Classroom* describing the qualitative study that he, Cazden, and colleagues conducted about the processes where learning unfolded in the classroom. In explaining the research design for his study, he asked why most educational studies were unable to find a relationship between the quality of education and educational attainment. His answer was to suggest that the nature of the then-current methodology lacked the ability to describe the processes of education. Researchers, he said, must be able to show how certain processes operate in pragmatic educational situations.
The significance of Mehan's insight about methodology that relates to this study concerns the research goal. The researcher chose qualitative case study research methodology to describe the pattern of student-teacher talk during Reading Recovery lessons in rich detail. As described by Stake (1995), "The qualitative researcher concentrates on the instance, trying to pull it apart and put it back together again more meaningfully – analysis and synthesis in direct interpretation" (p. 75). This study was designed to investigate an educational process that occurs within a Reading Recovery lesson, not a cause-and-effect relationship between teacher and student actions. It was guided by research questions that use the word "describe" purposefully.

Stake (1995) identifies "instrumental case study" as the use of a case study to understand something beyond the internal characteristics of that particular case (p. 3). In this research, I studied one part of the Reading Recovery lesson in order to understand the nature of student-teacher conversation. Stake explains that when multiple instrumental case studies are coordinated, it creates a "collective case study" (p. 4). This process has a different goal than could be accomplished with the study of one case. The goal of multiple instrumental case studies is usually to arrive at wider understandings. Data from five lessons each of nine different student-teacher pairs were gathered for this collective case study. The goal here was twofold: The study sought to describe the nature of the conversational interaction and therefore to add to the current body of knowledge about the characteristics and the nature of student-teacher talk in a one-on-one tutorial setting. It also sought to describe how the teacher's talk functions to foster learning when the child was successful on the subsequent reading achievement measurement.
Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?

2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child’s performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher’s language during the new book orientation, as identified by Clay’s (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?

Setting

A description of Reading Recovery lesson settings is detailed here to help the reader develop a sense of “vicarious experience[s]” (Stake, 1995, p.63). I describe here the sense of familiarity that was created by the physical setting in most Reading Recovery lessons because it is unique to a one-on-one educational setting in general. This sense is pertinent because it helps to create the atmosphere in which the student-teacher conversations develop. Next, I describe the whole Reading Recovery lesson in order to situate the new book orientation portion of the lesson from which the data were collected.

Six of the Reading Recovery student-teacher pairs in the study had their lessons in a classroom that was sectioned off into learning areas by moveable wall-like partitions. Two student-teacher pairs taught their Reading Recovery lesson in their kindergarten classrooms after their kindergarten children went home. The ninth pair used a corner of a school literacy support classroom that was separate from the rest of the working area. In
the cases where the pairs were separated by the wall partitions, there was little extraneous noise; in the empty classrooms, there was almost no extraneous noise; and in the literacy support room, the noise level varied.

All of the teachers and students sat side-by-side at a student-level desk. There were teaching tools around the teacher—magnetic alphabet letters, the students' records, a box or a stack of the students' books, writing materials and sometimes other teaching-learning supplies. Most often, the area in front of the child was kept clear and uncluttered. These settings, even in the case where the pair shared the area with other children in the learning support room, were comfortably set apart, although they were not isolated. Both teacher and student were able to interact with few outside distractions during the lessons that were taped. The characteristics of the setting may have added to the informal, comfortable atmosphere that was evident in the lessons. It was an atmosphere where extended conversation could take place.

The Reading Recovery lesson has a 30-minute format that can be described by four broad activities. Table 1 shows an idealized lesson schedule. Although none of the teachers adhered strictly to this schedule, they did not deviate widely from it. The last activity is the one from which the data for this study were gathered.
Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Approximate duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiar reading and Running Record of Oral Text Reading</td>
<td>5 – 8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolated phonological awareness activities – letters and words</td>
<td>2-3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>7 – 10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New book orientation and reading the text</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Reading Recovery student starts the lesson by re-reading two or three familiar books independently, with occasional teacher participation. Next, a Running Record of Oral Text Reading is taken as the student reads the book that was introduced and read for the first time during the previous lesson. The teacher’s role during this portion of the lesson is to be a silent observer and to record on the Running Record protocol (Appendix A) what the child says and does. This daily assessment tool was used in this study as a measure of student performance. It will be discussed fully later in this chapter. The teacher and child next engage in insolated phonological awareness activities – the study of words and letters, that is not directly related to a particular book or writing, but which is appropriate for the level at which the child is working. The child then writes a short story up to two or three sentences. The teacher cuts the story up and the child reassembles the cut-up sentences. During all of the reading and writing activities in these sections of the lesson, the teacher is teaching, modeling, and reinforcing reading and
writing strategies and specific phonological skills. These teaching/learning points are taught in a way that make them generalizable to the whole reading and writing process.

The final activity of the lesson is the new book orientation and the child’s reading of the book with teacher support. The teacher usually starts this portion of the lesson with a brief summary of the plot and the main idea of the story. Then the teacher and student look through the book, talking about the details of the story. The teacher introduces concepts, vocabulary, and sentence structures that might be novel or tricky for the student. Clay (1993) writes, “Another explanation is that the teacher is ensuring that the child has in his head the ideas and the language he needs…” in order to read the text (p. 37). The teacher’s purpose is to make information available and useable to the child, so that the child then can read the new book as independently as possible. After the orientation, the child reads the story, with the teacher providing support when it is necessary.

The new book section of the lesson provides good opportunities for the teacher and the student to talk and is generally characterized by turn taking, questions and answers, and the active participation by both teacher and student to listen and to respond. It is a good representation of a teaching-learning conversation where there is active participation by both members, as described earlier in chapter 2 (Wells, 1986). The new book orientation is also a part of the Reading Recovery lesson where the teacher models, scaffolds, and draws on the child’s understandings to facilitate the learning process.

The Reading Recovery teacher chooses books according to what the child controls and what the child needs to learn. The teacher considers text level, content and language structure. The texts have been evaluated and assigned a text level by the
Reading Recovery organization based on the picture support, the complexity of the language that is used, and the difficulty of the words. In the fall, a Reading Recovery student may start the program at level one or two. By January, a student who graduates successfully from the program would be reading books at level 10 or 12. A successful student in June would be reading books at level 14, 16, or 18.

Sample Selection

This study used purposeful sampling, as Patton (2002) defined it. Purposeful sampling derives its power from an “inquiry into and understanding of a phenomenon in depth” (p. 46). Creswell (1998) explained it as sampling that uses participants who are able to contribute to a specific knowledge base. According to Patton (2002), the objective of purposeful sampling is to create credibility, not representation. This is an important distinction because the study looked for description as compared to evidence of cause-and-effect relationships. The selection of nine Reading Recovery teachers paired with nine Reading Recovery Spanish-dominant English-language learners ensured the conclusions that were reached represented a range of variation, as suggested by Maxwell (1996).

The Teacher Participants

One of the selection criteria was the teacher’s level of experience. Askew and Frasier (1994) found that delivery of the Reading Recovery program was influenced by the teacher’s experience. In this study, teachers had at least two years of Reading Recovery teaching experience prior to the 2003-2004 school year. This criterion was not employed as a way to mediate the variables within the study. It was an attempt to gather data that have the richest source material. The level of teacher experience allowed for the
possibility that the Reading Recovery teacher had a greater opportunity to facilitate rich conversation.

In addition to how many years each teacher has taught Reading Recovery, the teacher's age, gender, ethnicity, native language, and number of years teaching in the educational system were collected. The nine teacher-participants were trained Reading Recovery teachers who taught in three California school districts at five elementary schools. There were four males and five females, between the ages of 32 and 48, and of mixed European, Latin American, and African-American ancestry. All participants spoke English fluently, two participants were bilingual Spanish-English, and one teacher labeled himself fluent in Spanish. The participants had between five and 28 years of teaching experience in a classroom setting, and three to ten years of experience teaching Reading Recovery.

The Student Participants

The nine Reading Recovery teacher-participants each selected one English-language learner. The children were first-grade, Spanish-dominant ELLs and were enrolled in the Reading Recovery program in California schools in the 2003-2004 school year. These students attended public schools where Reading Recovery was part of the regular school-wide literacy program. They were part of the Reading Recovery program before they were asked to be in this study. They were chosen for the Reading Recovery intervention based on "a nationally uniform procedure driven by the principles of its original design" (Ashdown & Simic, 2000, p. 32). Specifically, the children were selected as a result of their classroom performance being among the lowest-achieving students in the classroom, and an assessment, called the Observation Survey (Clay, 2002) that was
administered by the Reading Recovery teacher at his/her school, as part of the normal school policy. The participants were seven girls and two boys who ranged in age from 6.1 years to 6.8 years. This is within the standard age range for first grade in the California public school system, and Reading Recovery is a program specifically designed for first grade children. Spanish-dominant English-language learner participants were germane to the study’s purpose.

The student’s oral language level in English was gathered for each student-participant. It was not used as a variable in the study, but rather as a way to describe the participants. Students were assessed using the California English Language Development Test, called the CELDT, (CTB/McGraw-Hill, 2003), mandated by the State of California to be given to every ELL in public schools. Trained school personnel at the beginning of the school year administered the tests. The results did not affect the student’s selection for the Reading Recovery program nor this research study.

The English level of each participant, according to the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), was reported in descriptive terms: beginning, early-intermediate, intermediate, early advanced, and advanced. There were three students who scored at the beginning level, two who scored at the early-intermediate level, one who scored at the intermediate level, and three who scored at the early-advanced level. (See Appendix B for the publisher’s explanation of the scoring levels.)

School Data

Data about the schools were collected and are listed in Table 2. The schools had between 445 and 1013 students. The number of Hispanic children ranged between 20%
and 58% of the school populations. Three schools were in suburban settings and two were in rural areas.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Total size</th>
<th>Hispanic students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>582 students</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>525 students</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>721 students</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1013 students</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 5</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>445 students</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although demographic data about the teacher, the student, and the school site of every participant in the study were collected, these data were not used during the data analysis of the study. They were used to describe the sample participants and the study more completely. (See Appendix K.)

Sample Selection Process

In order to find Reading Recovery students and teachers who were willing to participate in the study, the researcher contacted Reading Recovery teacher leaders in California. The researcher has a professional acquaintance with many of the California teachers and with all of the teacher leaders (the teacher trainers/supervisors). Each teacher leader has a database of practicing Reading Recovery teachers whom he/she supervises. The researcher requested, from the teacher leaders, the lists of the names of Reading Recovery teachers who had at least two years experience, and who were
currently working with Spanish-dominant ELL children. The researcher narrowed the list of teachers to those who work within a reasonable geographic range, as personal visits by the researcher to the teachers were necessary. Initially, the researcher contacted the potential teacher-participants with a phone message at their work site or with an email. Eighteen teachers returned the researcher’s call or email. After confirming that they were working with Spanish-dominant, English-language learners, the researcher explained the project and invited them to participate, using a script to ensure uniformity across solicitation situations (Appendix C). The researcher visited the teachers who were interested in order to explain the proposal and the procedures. If the teacher agreed to participate in the study, permission from the school or school district, according to district policy, was obtained by the researcher. Appendix D is an example of a school’s letter to permit participation in the study. The letter of consent for the teacher’s participation is Appendix E.

The next step was for each Reading Recovery teacher-participant to elicit participation from an appropriate student and her/his parents. The communication between the Reading Recovery teacher and the parents is part of the normal Reading Recovery procedures. The teacher was able to explain the project and solicit the required permission during one of her/his parent communications. Sample letters of informed consent by the parents and assent by the students are included as Appendixes F and G. The parent letter was available in Spanish for those parents who wished to read and discuss the study in their native language (Appendix H). The teacher-participant or the researcher participated in a Spanish discussion of the project with the parents, as needed.
The researcher told the teacher-participant during the introductory visit that the study’s purpose was to understand the nature of student-teacher interactions in Reading Recovery lessons in order to better teach English Language Learner students. This general explanation of the study, which did not specify a particular part of the lesson, allowed the teachers to feel that they were valued participants, and yet did not taint the data that were collected from each teacher. The teachers were not able to craft their language specifically during the new book orientation part of the lessons to subscribe to an imagined ideal since they did not know the exact section being analyzed.

Data Collection

The researcher collected three kinds of data - videotaped lessons, field notes from the researcher’s observations and lesson records – in order to facilitate the understanding of this complex educational process. Patton (2002) described the importance of rich, descriptive data (or “thick description”) so that the researcher has a better opportunity to find common themes and important characteristics in the data, and is better able to judge the meanings and significance of the data. Thick descriptions helped to substantiate the research findings. Data collection procedures were practiced and refined during a pilot study in May 2003.

Videotapes

Teachers videotaped six complete, consecutive lessons during their student’s program. The teachers taped the lessons by placing the camera at an appropriate angle in order to record the events, eliminating the need for a cameraperson to be present. In six of the nine recordings, the camera was placed in front of, and slightly above the teacher and student. The camera angle was slightly downward in order to watch the faces and upper
bodies of the participants and the activities that took place on the table in front of the pair. In three of the recordings, the camera was placed to the side of and slightly above the teacher-student pair. The camera recorded the lesson at a slight angle and therefore was able to catch most of the action and expressions of the participants. The sound quality was sufficient to hear almost everything that the teacher and the child said in all of the videos. The filming technique that was used in the study is also commonly used in Reading Recovery. Most Reading Recovery teachers tape lessons regularly in order to use them for self-analysis of their own teaching.

The lessons were videotaped as opposed to just being audiotape because it allowed the researcher to watch non-verbal communication between the participants, and the action that took place during the lesson. This allowed for a more complete picture of the student-teacher interaction.

The six lessons selected for taping were constrained by time; they took place in the fall of 2003 and winter of 2003-2004. Teachers taped lessons ranging from number 21 through 43 of the child’s program. Reading Recovery students begin their lessons as soon after the beginning of the school year as possible. However, because the academic year commences at different times in different districts, there is no exact date for all children’s programs to begin. It would therefore be possible that the nine student-teacher pairs would have different taping dates that would correspond to the same lesson numbers. By choosing to tape lesson numbers beyond lesson 20, the researcher allowed the child and the teacher the opportunity to establish rapport before the taping started; and this time frame ensured that the children would be reading texts that had more story detail than the very simplest texts that are commonly used at the beginning of Reading
Recovery tutoring. The lesson numbers had no specific relationship to what aspects of the reading process the teacher and child focused on during the new book orientation. The lessons' objectives were determined by the teachers' evaluations of each child's needs at that point in his/her intervention. The new book orientation reflected the objectives chosen by the teacher for that day.

Videotapes were collected, and transcriptions were made of the lesson segment on each tape when the teacher and student were discussing the new book that was read in the lesson. Transcriptions were made of the first five taped lessons. The sixth lesson was included in the data because it contained the Running Record of Oral Text Reading from the book introduced in the fifth taped lesson. The edited tapes and their transcriptions of the new book orientation portion of the lesson were one part of the data collected for the study.

Researcher Observations

A second method of data collection was observations of lessons. The researcher observed one lesson per teacher and took field notes about the student's and the teacher's behaviors. Observations occurred during the time frame when lessons were being videotaped for the study. Although these observations were done to collect specific data on teacher-student conversation for this study, observations are part of the regular training procedures for all Reading Recovery teachers. Therefore, teacher participants were accustomed to the observation procedure because teacher leaders had made regularly scheduled visits to observe them and their lessons. During those regular Reading Recovery teacher leader – teacher visits, the teacher leader observed the lesson, the student was dismissed back to the regular classroom, and then the two teachers
discussed some portion or portions of the lessons. This is usually a collaborative discussion, with both teachers trying to fine-tune procedures and theory that will lead to helping this particular student to make accelerated reading progress and to becoming a better Reading Recovery teacher in general. Most often, teacher leader - teacher visits have the feeling tone of a peer coaching visit. The teacher leader is not usually an administrator, and therefore the visit is not supervisory in nature.

The researcher used the Reading Recovery Lesson Observation Protocol (Appendix I) to record field notes about the observed lesson. The observation protocol is a simple document that was suggested by Creswell (1998). It helped to keep observation notes across participants similar in scope and depth. Both the descriptive and the reflective portions of the observation protocol were part of the data collected for the study.

The researcher, a former Reading Recovery teacher leader, had a discussion with the teachers that was similar to the input that they would receive from any teacher leader. The information from this discussion was not part of the data collected for the study. The researcher intended that the discussion follow the standard teacher leader site visit procedure as closely as possible and therefore help the teacher to feel comfortable. To accomplish this goal, the researcher talked with the teacher about portions of the lesson that were introduced by the teacher, but not about the new book introduction. Note that the researcher discussed the purpose of the study in broad terms with the Reading Recovery teacher at the beginning of the project: the student-teacher interactions during the Reading Recovery lessons. It was not the researcher's intent to trick the teacher about the purpose of the study, but neither did the researcher want to taint the data collected by
having the teacher somehow modify his/her lessons in order to teach the “ideal” new book orientation (if there were such a thing). The researcher wanted data that reflected typical lessons, and if the teacher-participants had no knowledge about what particular portion of the Reading Recovery lesson was being analyzed, that goal had a better chance of being reached. Therefore, the researcher did not discuss the specific researcher questions with the teacher-participants, and during the post-lesson discussion, the researcher steered the discussion to a portion of the lesson other than the new book orientation.

**Teacher-made Lesson Records**

The third piece of data collected was a copy of the teacher-made lesson records and a copy of the Running Record of Oral Text Reading that are kept daily on every student. The Reading Recovery teacher makes and keeps these records to help inform her/his teaching and to help plan for the next day’s lesson. The lesson records were not reported as part of the study’s data analysis, per se. They were used to help the researcher situate the data from the observations and the taped lessons. (See Appendix J for an example of a typical lesson record kept by the Reading Recovery teacher for each student’s lesson.)

The Running Record of Oral Text Reading (Running Record) was the assessment tool used to measure student achievement in this study. A Reading Recovery teacher takes a Running Record for each new book during the lesson following the new book introduction, or in other words, the second time the child reads a particular book. The Running Record describes, with codified notation, exactly how the child reads the book: the correct reading, the mistakes, the corrections the student makes after a mistake,
pauses, repetitions, and any teacher intervention. The standardized procedures for taking a Running Record mean that any teacher who has learned how to administer and to analyze a Running Record will be able to understand what the child did during the reading.

Clay verified “the reliability of trained observer’s recording and scoring of error rates and self-correction rates” for Running Records (Clay, 2002, p. 161). Her study compared the reliability of the scores of two analyses of the same tapes of children reading books. An $r = .98$ was found for error scoring and $r = .68$ was found for the self-correction rate. Chi-square tests found no significant differences for inter-rater reliability at the .01 level.

The researcher, who has had eleven years experience administering and analyzing Running Records, collected the Running Records from all the teachers for all the books that were recorded for the study.

Data Analysis

In this section, first, the researcher will explain the theory that underpins the data analysis of this study. Next, she will outline the steps that she took to categorize the data from the tapes and the tape transcriptions, the lesson records and the observations. She will also explain how the same data were grouped using Clay’s rubric. Finally, the researcher will discuss how each student-teacher case was described, and finally how the themes were created across the cases.

A restatement of the research questions follows:

1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?
2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child's performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher's language during the new book orientation, as identified by Clay's (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?

Theoretical Framework

The data in this study described the organization and the actions of an everyday Reading Recovery event. The goal was to capture a measure of the complexity of the events and to understand the creation of the learning structure. Mehan's (1979) work informed the data analysis section of this study. He observed the social organization of routines and everyday events in the classroom and then analyzed the data to describe the "interactional work of the participants" which described the structures of the events (p. 8). The interactions in this study were complex because, as Mehan (1979) comments, the researcher was trying to capture a description of the interconnected nature of teacher-student interaction in verbal and nonverbal modalities, where the multiple functions of a speech act can occur simultaneously (p. 8).

Creating Categories

The data analysis at this level was twofold. First, the researcher used an ongoing inductive analysis strategy to look at the conversations and to create categories. Second, the researcher used a deductive analysis strategy to look at the same data in order to categorize it according to Clay's Teacher Language Rubric. To facilitate the discussion
here, this analysis referred to the categories that emerged through inductive study with the word “category.” The data that emerged from Clay’s Teacher Language Rubric were referred to with the word “grouping.”

The inductive analysis strategy used coding and matrices for ongoing comparisons across taped lessons and transcriptions, observations, and lesson records. As a first step, categories were created to organize the data according to its characteristics. From an analysis of the data, a number of categories emerged. The researcher created a matrix in which to record the occurrences of the categories from watching the tapes and examining the notes of on-site observations. Then the researcher examined the tape transcriptions and marked the categories and groupings, as a way to verify and check the first analysis. Data from the transcriptions were counted and recorded numerically.

One set of data was recorded for the five student-teacher dyads when the student was successful on five subsequent Running Records. In the cases when the student was both successful and unsuccessful, the researcher disaggregated the data again for the successful lessons and for the unsuccessful lessons. There were four dyads where the student was successful and unsuccessful. The term “successful” referred to the new book orientation conversations when the child performed at 90% or higher on the subsequent Running Record. Of the 45-recorded lessons, there were 36 lessons, or 80% of the total that were successful. “Unsuccessful” referred to the new book orientation conversation when the child performed at 89% or lower. The researcher realizes that “successful” and “unsuccessful” are value-laden terms. For the four student-teacher participant dyads that had both kinds of lessons, there are two sets of data: one for lessons when the Running Record was below 89%, and one when the Running Record was 90% and better. Clay
(2002) states that a child reading a text at 90% – 94% accuracy has an appropriate level text from which this child can learn. An accuracy level below 90% indicates that the child is making too many mistakes to be able to make sense of the text.

The researcher chose to report data that were pertinent to the research questions in tables, figures and the text of this paper. However, the researcher also recorded all of the data in tables that are listed as Appendixes K and L.

Teacher and student utterances.

One category created from the data was the number of utterances by each participant in the lesson, or in other words, the kind of turn-taking that occurred. The researcher was not looking for change over time, but rather how much the teacher and student participated in the conversations. The researcher counted the number of utterances to determine how often the student and the teacher interacted in the conversation. A percentage was used to record the number.

An utterance was identified when one participant began to speak and either finished or was interrupted by the other participant. There were three kinds of utterance transitions coded for in the transcriptions done of each taped lesson. Often one participant finished an utterance and the other participant began an utterance. In this case, the researcher did not note anything. Sometimes, one participant interrupted the other, but they did not speak at the same time because the first participant stopped talking. The researcher marked this as “interruption” in parentheses at the beginning of the second speaker’s contribution. Sometimes both participants spoke at the same time. The researcher noted the word “simultaneous” in parentheses, and recorded the words that were spoken simultaneously under one another. An example of two utterance sequences
is recorded in Table 3 to illustrate the utterances that were not clearly bounded by the termination of one participant’s speech and the beginning of the next participant’s speech. The label “T” stands for teacher and “S” stands for student.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utterance type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Interruption   | T - It’s like a candy bar, yeah. It’s got special treats- lots of toys...It’s  
|                | S - (interruption) Dog!!! |
| Simultaneous   | T - It does look like a dog, yeah......so they say, “Here is a grab bag”.  
|                | T - Yeah, so they say, “Here is a grab bag”. You say...  
|                | S - (simultaneous) Here is a grab bag. |

Two other bits of information, interruptions and simultaneous talking, were coded in this category. This was part of the information gathered when utterances were analyzed.

**Number of words spoken by each participant.**

The researcher also counted the number of words that the teacher and student spoke in the new book orientation of a lesson. For the five dyads where all of the lessons resulted in successful student performance, one set of number-of-words was recorded. For four dyads with mixed successes, the researcher counted the number of words for all successful lessons by that dyad and all unsuccessful lessons by that dyad. She recorded two sets of data for those dyads.
Questioning.

The analysis of questioning was a bit more complex. Using the interaction of both participants to determine the category, three kinds of questions were identified: teacher questions, rhetorical questions and information-seeking questions. Mehan (1979) wrote about the kind of questioning pattern that is referred to in this paper as teacher questions. He called it an “Initiate, Respond, Evaluate or IRE” pattern. Although he was not the first researcher to identify this kind of question pattern, he documented the pattern in typical teacher-student interactions in the classroom. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) also documented the questioning pattern, and called them “exchanges” that consisted of teacher initiation, student response, and teacher feedback. In this dissertation, the teacher questions were characterized by the student-teacher pattern common to Mehan’s and Sinclair and Coulthard’s definitions: the teacher typically asked a question to which the teacher knew the answer, and the student produced a response that was evaluated based on the teacher’s expectation. In the example listed in Table 4, the teacher and the student were looking at the illustration of one of the pictures in the book. The teacher knew the answer to the question, “Look at Emma. What is she?” before he asked it, and expected the student to answer “Bear” as indicated by his evaluative feedback, “She is a bear.” (The researcher used the bold type during the coding to denote an emphasis of a single word.)

Rhetorical questions were a second kind of question. They were asked by the teacher and required no student answer. Often there was no pause in the teacher’s speech pattern to allow for an answer, nor was there a glance by the teacher at the student to determine whether the student intended to answer. Most often, the teacher asked and then
answered the question herself/himself. In the example below, the teacher asked “They’re both happy, aren’t they? The tiger and the bear are happy.”

The final question category was information-seeking questions, where the teachers and the students asked questions to which they did not know the answers. These types of questions always expected an answer, but they were distinguished from teacher questions because they were a quest for information to which the questioner did not know the answer. These were the only kind of questions found in the data that was initiated by the student. The example listed in Table 4 starts with the teacher asking a question to which he does not know the answer, “What were you on Halloween?” The student replies “A dog.” Then there is a long pause before the student continues, “No, the red puppy.”

Excerpts from different parts of one transcript that show each type of question have been included in Table 4. They were put into a table format so that the reader could see the exchange and how it included (or did not include) both participants. The label “T” stands for teacher and “S” for student.

One set of data was recorded for the five dyads when the child was successful on five Running Records. Two sets of data were recorded for the four dyads when the child was successful and unsuccessful, or had mixed performance.
Table 4

*Examples of Each Kind of Student-Teacher Question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher question</td>
<td><em>T</em> – Look at Emma. What is she?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S</em> – Bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>T</em> – She <em>is</em> a bear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical question</td>
<td><em>T</em> – They’re both happy, aren’t they? The tiger and the bear are happy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information-seeking</td>
<td><em>T</em> – What were you for Halloween?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question</td>
<td><em>S</em> – A dog. (long pause)... no, the red puppy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, the researcher determined how many times the student responded to the teacher questions and the information-seeking questions. The researcher counted the number of responses, whether they were correct or incorrect, made by the student after the teacher questions and after the teacher’s information-seeking questions. A percentage was reported for all five lessons. One set of data was recorded for the five dyads that had all successful Running Records. Two sets of data were recorded for the four dyads when the child had mixed performance.

*Non-verbal communication.*

Lastly, the researcher tallied evidence of non-verbal communication. The researcher tallied smiles and gestures during the taped lessons and the researcher’s observation. She also noted when the teacher or the student pointed to something in the book’s illustration to explain a vocabulary word or a concept. Because of the complex nature of this data, the researcher did not attempt to categorize nor accurately count the number of times these actions occurred. Rather, she tallied when they occurred, and then recorded them as being highly present or rarely present.
Creating Groupings

In the second part of analysis that sorted the data, the researcher grouped the transcribed portions of the taped student-teacher conversations according to Clay’s (1998) Teacher Language Rubric. (See Appendix M for a copy of the rubric.) Clay’s Teacher Language Rubric grouped the teacher’s conversation according to what learning-teaching function that portion of the conversation fulfilled in the new book orientation.

**Teacher Language Rubric**

The rubric had nine teacher language functions. The first function was when the purpose was to *maintain interactive ease*. The teacher most often repeated what the student said in order to keep the flow of the conversation going. Second, the teacher tried to *increase accessibility*. The teacher anticipated what might be new or novel in the story for the student and provided information, usually about the vocabulary, sentence structure or the meaning of the story to help make the new information understandable. In essence, the teacher provided information that allowed the student to understand certain potentially tricky parts of the book so that the child could read the text without too much intervention from the teacher. Third, the teacher used language to *prompt the child to actively construct the author’s plot*. The teacher drew on the child’s prior experience or knowledge about a text that was similar to the current text, in order to predict some aspect of the current text. Fourth, the teacher might *accept a partially-correct response*. The teacher confirmed that what the child said was partly correct, and then added more information to that answer, in order to direct the student’s thinking to a more precise answer. Fifth, the teacher used language to *tighten the criteria of acceptability*. The teacher might ask for the child to develop a more precise answer. Often there was a
teacher question that helped the child to think about the answer. Sixth, the teacher might probe to find out what the child knows. Seventh, the teacher used language to present new knowledge usually about vocabulary or concepts. Eighth, the teacher would ask the child to work with new knowledge while reading the text. Ninth, the teacher would provide a model to show how some thinking process worked.

Determining which part of the conversation corresponded to each group was complicated. It was important in this process to include the interactions of both participants. To allow flexibility and to increase the accuracy of the groupings, the researcher determined the beginning and the end of each grouping, or bounded the conversation, according to how that portion of the conversation functioned in the new book orientation. This meant that each part of the conversation that corresponded to a particular function might be unique in length. An example of two consecutive groupings is in Table 5. Two groupings were included so that the reader could see where the boundaries existed. Additionally, one grouping might represent two kinds of language function as defined by the rubric. To account for this, each unit was coded by one or more functions. The parenthesis in the table that says “text” was a note to show the researcher that the sentence was a direct quote from the story.
### Table 5

**The Teacher Portion of the Conversation Grouped According to Function**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher language function</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase accessibility and, ask child to work with new knowledge</td>
<td><em>T</em> – (text) &quot;Look at Matthew&quot;. You say that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S</em> – Look at Matthew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>T</em> – Say it again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S</em> – Look at Matthew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>T</em> – Look at him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S</em> – mmm-mmm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>T</em> – What is he?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt child to actively construct the author’s plot</td>
<td><em>S</em> – He’s a rabbit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>T</em> – Is he happy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>S</em> – (emphatic head shake) No.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teaching moves.*

The number of times a teacher used language to facilitate a teaching-learning function was also counted in the taped transcripts. These language functions were coded, counted, and then averaged across lessons. For dyads where the student was successful in five out of five lessons, there was one set of data. For dyads where the student had mixed results, there were two sets of data.

The entire data set was analyzed twice: once according to inductive categories derived by the researcher from the analysis of the data, and a second time, according to deductive groupings from Clay’s rubric. All the categories and groupings were entered into the Microsoft® Excel software program that has a spreadsheet format. These categories and groupings were used in the next step of the data analysis.

The researcher noted eccentricities in the data that did not lend themselves to categories or groupings. These aspects of the data were usually particular to one student-
teacher pair. They appeared in the language interaction of that pair, but not necessarily in any of the other dyads. The researcher developed labels for the eccentricity and looked for evidence of it in the five recorded lessons, the observation notes, and then verification in the lesson transcriptions.

Creating Individual Cases with Each Student-Teacher Dyad

From the spreadsheet that recorded all of the categories and groupings, data were collected for each student-teacher dyad. The creation of an individual case profile for each dyad allowed for a comprehensive view of the salient categories and groupings, another aspect of "thick description" that was cited as a valuable data analysis trait according to Patton (2002). This section of the data analysis was disaggregated in the Microsoft® Excel software program. The treatment of the data by individual cases that included all germane aspects of the data allowed for the opportunity to create the next layer of data analysis via cross-case analysis.

Cross-case analysis

The researcher organized this portion of the data analysis in two steps. The analysis began with the Excel spreadsheet that organized the data for the case studies. A matrix was created to show how data from each case compared to the other cases. Miles and Huberman (1994) call this "an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing..." (p.10). In the first step, patterns were identified. These patterns were organized and recorded according to the research questions: patterns that described the characteristics of new book orientations, patterns that described the characteristics when the student was subsequently successful at reading the text and
patterns that described the teacher language as characterized by its function when the
student was subsequently successful at reading the text.

Validity and Reliability

An underlying characteristic of qualitative research to be understood by the reader
is that the author's lens or point of view is always part of the research. Maxwell (1996)
explained a qualitative study's validity as its credibility. A study does not find the
existence of an "objective truth." Rather, the reader of such research tries to find "some
grounds for distinguishing accounts that are credible from those that are not [credible]"
(p. 87). Polkinghorne (1988) suggested that the study needed to be "believable and
verisimilar" (p. 161). Maxwell further explained that validity could be addressed in a
qualitative study by being very specific about the "threats" to its validity. He stressed that
the researcher must speak to different interpretations of the data and different theoretical
frameworks that could apply to the data in order to explain how they do not invalidate
one's particular study. The researcher was intent on establishing this kind of validity in
the dissertation study. Below are examples of other possible threats to the validity of this
research.

Stake (1995) explained that the case study seldom creates an entirely new
understanding but refines or modifies an existing generalization. He writes that the "real
business of case study is particularization, not generalization" (p. 8). A case study is an
attempt to describe the phenomenon, or in this case, the student-teacher conversation.

Agar (1994) addressed one aspect of research studies that was a potential threat to
their validity: the status as a participant observer, which is part of this researcher's role.
Yet, there are large numbers of researchers who validate a participant observer's positive
role in a research study. In Agar’s book, he cited Bronislaw Malinowski’s definition of the participant observer as one who becomes part of the life around one and can also keep a “third eye” above it, in order to observe what is going on. This allows the researcher to interpret language interactions within the context of that particular situation. It gives the researcher permission to translate what the conversation is about, why the conversation is taking place, what situation it occurs in, and what activity it accomplishes in that situation. (p. 93). Although Malinowski is not specifically referring to narrative research here, he makes comments similar to Polkinghorne’s references to how the researcher interacts with the creation of the story, or the plot, based on the research.

The researcher has been part of the Reading Recovery community for eleven years, and therefore brought a certain perspective to this study. The intent of this study was to create a methodology that would substantiate validity. Yet, a particular lens and interpretation to the data analysis were evident in the research methodology. This could be considered a strength because as an insider, the researcher was be able to interpret certain aspects of the teacher-child conversation with greater understanding. It also threatened the validity because bias was a possible influence that affected the data analysis. Balancing the strength and weakness of this researcher’s role was a constant guideline.

The second possible ethical issue that might have affected the study’s validity was the anonymity of teachers and students. Their confidentiality was maintained in a number of ways. First, only demographic information that was necessary to the goal of the study was included in the study write-up. Although demographic information was collected about each school, teacher, and student, the study did not link any particular site
or participant with the demographic information. Second, the teacher and children’s identities were separated from the actual data and the data analysis procedures and the report write-up. Pseudonyms were used in the report and a coding system was used during data analysis. Third, the data were never out of the researcher’s direct control. They were kept in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s office.

A third possible threat to the study’s validity and an ethical concern might be the influence of the researcher’s role in the Reading Recovery community on the teachers who participated in the study. This is not an exaggeration of the researcher’s personal influence – she was only one teacher leader among about 800 in the United States. It is the role of teacher leader that might have influenced the participating teachers in the study. Every measure was taken to minimize the possible effects of the teacher leader role in the study.

The researcher attempted to enrich the schema in order to account for the anomalies. Patton (2002) wrote about relationships within studies, about who controls the language, and how that dynamic constructs reality and affects the study’s findings. This particular aspect of data interpretation applies to this study also. There is inherent power as the person who controls how the data will be discussed. It was an important factor considered throughout the study.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of Reading Recovery lessons in order to describe the nature of these interactions. The study also sought to discover the relationships, if any exist, between the nature of those language interactions and student
achievement. In order to do this, the researcher collected data from 45 conversations between the teacher and student during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson. The data were collected from videotapes and their transcriptions, field notes about the researcher's observations, and teacher-made lesson records. Data were then analyzed on three levels. First, categories and groupings were made to organize the data. Second, data were presented according to individual cases of the student-teacher dyads. Finally, a cross-study analysis was made to see the patterns that emerged from the data. The following chapter reports findings of the study.
CHAPTER 4

Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of Reading Recovery lessons in order to describe the nature of these interactions. The study also sought to discover the relationships, if any exist, between the nature of those language interactions and student performance on the subsequent Running Record of Oral Text Reading.

The research questions that guided the study were as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?

2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child's performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher's language during the new book orientation, as identified by Clay's (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?

In this chapter, the researcher presents data that describe the student-teacher interactions. A number of categories emerged from the analysis of these data: how many utterances each participant made, the number of words that the student and the teacher used during the conversation, the kinds of questioning patterns found, and the percentage of times that teacher questions and information-seeking questions elicited student
response. In addition to oral language data, the researcher found evidence of non-verbal communication - the use of gestures, laughter, and attention directed to illustrations during the new book orientation.

Using Clay's teacher language rubric, data were also analyzed by grouping them according to the function of the teacher language in the conversations. The action of teachers using language to perform a certain function were called teaching moves. The teaching moves were averaged across lessons.

Next, the researcher used cross-case analysis to synthesize the data into themes and patterns. As part of the cross-case analysis, the major findings were identified. To begin, a presentation of the category and grouping data is detailed in the next section, where individual cases of each student-teacher dyad were created.

**Individual Cases of Each Student-Teacher Dyad**

Stake (1995) suggested that a researcher “provide adequate raw data prior to interpretation so that readers can consider their own alternative interpretations” (p. 87). The researcher created individual case studies of each student-teacher dyad to present the most clear, comprehensive picture of the data. Organizing the data into individual cases allowed for the inclusion of pertinent data, or a “thick description.”

First, an explanation of how data were recorded for the individual cases is presented here. The researcher watched the taped lessons and referred to the field notes about the on-site observations to begin the process of organizing the data into categories and groupings. Then the transcriptions of the taped lessons were analyzed by noting and counting occurrences of the categories and groupings. Numbers and percentages were used to record some of the data in this report, although there was only a minimal attempt
to analyze the data in a quantitative manner. The counting was an attempt to offer a
descriptive recording of the data and to gauge the importance of the data gathered from
watching the videotapes and the observations. Percentages were used to normalize the
numeric analysis of the data when appropriate.

Much of the data was reported in percentages. The percentages were determined
in all instances by counting the number of the category or grouping and comparing it to
the total to convert it to a percentage. Some of data were reported by taking the average
number of times a particular characteristic occurred across the five lessons of each dyad.
Certain categories of data - the number of teacher and student utterances, the number of
words spoken by the teacher and by the student, the questioning patterns, and the student
responses to those questions - were disaggregated according to the student’s success rate
on the performance measure. In other words, if the student achieved at 89% or lower on
the Running Record for some of the lessons, the data were disaggregated and reported
two times: once for the lessons when the child scored 90% or higher and once for the
lessons when the child scored 89% or lower. The number of words spoken by the teacher
and the number spoken by the student were reported as a ratio of teacher-to-student
words and were also recorded separately for successful and unsuccessful lessons.

The functions of teacher language data, which were reported as “groupings” and
emerged using Clay’s rubric, were stated in percentages. The researcher reported one
piece of that data, the number of teaching moves initiated by the teacher, as an average of
the lessons. These data were also disaggregated according to student performance on the
Running Record, and were reported twice: once for the total number of lessons, once for
the lessons when the child subsequently scored 90% or higher and once for the lessons
when the child subsequently scored 89% or lower. The decision to report the data in this manner was based on how it helped to answer research questions two and three: what kind of language was used when the subsequent student performance was successful.

The researcher chose to refer to the dyads by letter name and the participants by pseudonym. She realizes that this runs the risk of confusing the reader at a later stage of the analysis when themes and patterns are discussed because there are 18 participants. In each dyad, the teacher is named first and the student is second. A summary table of all interactions in the dayads is presented in Tables K and L.

**Dyad A: Terrence and Maria**

The Reading Recovery teacher, who will be referred to in this study as Terrence, works in a suburban school of 721 students, where 30% of the student population is Hispanic. Terrence, a European-American, was an experienced classroom teacher for 12 years before he became a Reading Recovery teacher eight years prior to the beginning of this study. He characterized himself as being able to speak Spanish fluently. Maria is a female student, aged 6.3 at the beginning of the study. Her level of oral English was beginning, as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) score. The study took place when Maria was reading books at Reading Recovery levels five and six, when children are using beginning visual analysis to read words and know a moderate number of high-frequency words. She was successful on five out of five Running Records (the performance assessment).

Terrence and Maria engaged in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text,
and the vocabulary. Terrence related the meaning of the text to some aspect of Maria’s personal experience in every lesson. In every lesson, he or the student used a short phrase or two in Spanish to clarify a concept or vocabulary word.

Terrence and Maria’s interactions during the new book orientation were examined to find the number of utterances made by each participant in the lessons in order to look at how they took turns. Utterances are the way the researcher identified the teacher or the student taking turns in the conversation. The researcher added the number of teacher and student utterances in each lesson and then converted that number to a percentage. Terrence made 51% of the total number of utterances and Maria made 49% of the total utterances across five lessons. The researcher also calculated the number words spoken by the teacher and by the student during the lessons when Maria was successful on the subsequent performance measure. The ratio of teacher-to-student number of words in five lessons was 3:1. This was the lowest ratio of teacher-student number of words in the data.

The analysis of the questioning patterns was done by counting the number of each kind of question and finding the percentage in relation to the total number of questions in all lessons. Terrence and Maria’s total lessons contained 54% teacher questions, 14% rhetorical questions, 25% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 7% information-seeking questions by the student. The researcher also calculated that Maria made an effort to respond 32% of the time to teacher questions and 18% of the time to information-seeking questions across all of the lessons.

One piece of data that emerged as salient for this particular data set, and not noted in a quantifiable way, was how the child participated in the conversation. Maria interrupted the teacher often. She finished the teacher’s sentences and jumped in to
provide an answer before the teacher had finished asking it. The teacher demonstrated no noticeable negative reaction to this kind of interaction. He stopped and allowed the child to finish her thought. Almost all of the time, the child had anticipated correctly what the teacher was asking or describing. In three instances during five lessons, the student anticipated incorrectly, and the teacher redirected the child to the pertinent information.

The researcher tallied smiles and gestures during the taped lessons and the observation. The use of non-verbal communication was highly present in this dyad's lessons. Terrence and Maria smiled often during the lessons. Both participants used gestures extensively to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. For example, to explain what a grab bag was, Terrence first, and then Maria, pantomimed grabbing for something, and then pretended to grab for an object in an imaginary bag. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. He also pointed to parts of the illustrations when he prompted the child to construct part of the author's plot.

The data grouped by the function of the teacher language according to Clay's rubric (Appendix M) were gathered for all lessons. The researcher counted the number of instances that each function occurred during the new book orientation and then converted that to a percentage of the total number of instances in the five lessons. Using the order of functions as they appear in Clay's rubric, Table 6 shows the percentage of times that Terrence used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function. They are also referred to in this paper as "teaching moves."
Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of Teacher Language for Dyad A</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author's meaning</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Terrence used language 33% of the time to help the child construct the author's meaning, and 31% of the time to increase the accessibility of information. He used language 11% of the time to present new knowledge and to have the child work with new knowledge, 5% of the time to accept partially-correct student responses and to probe to find out what the child knew, and 4% of the time to maintain interactive ease. He did not use language to tighten the criteria of acceptability and provide new knowledge with modeling. Across five lessons, Terrence made an average of 21 teaching moves per lesson.

Dyad B: Teresa and Jazmin

The Reading Recovery teacher, Teresa, works in a suburban school of 525 students, where 37% of the student population is Hispanic. Teresa, a European-American, was a classroom teacher for more than five years before she became a Reading Recovery
teacher three years prior to the beginning of this study. She is a monolingual English
speaker. Jazmin is a female student, aged 6.8 at the beginning of the study. Her level of
oral English was early-intermediate, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took
place when Jazmin was reading books at Reading Recovery levels seven and eight. This
level of book required that Jazmin know a moderate number of high-frequency words and
be able to analyze word parts in order to figure out new words. Jazmin was successful on
the performance measure, the Running Record, in five out of five lessons.

Teresa and Jazmin also engaged in the new book orientations in a focused
manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed to some
aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure
of the text, and the vocabulary. Teresa related the meaning of the text to some aspect of
Jazmin’s personal experience in four out of five lessons.

Teresa and Jazmin’s interactions during the new book orientation were examined
to find the number of utterances made by each participant in all lessons. Teresa made
56% of the total number of utterances, and Jazmin made 44% of the total utterances
across five lessons. The number of words across the five lessons was converted to a
teacher-to-student ratio of 15:1.

The analysis of the questioning patterns was done by counting the number of each
kind of question and finding the percentage in relation to the total number of questions in
all lessons. Teresa and Jazmin’s total lessons contained 57% teacher questions, 17%
rhetorical questions, 17% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 9%
information-seeking questions by the student. The researcher also calculated that Jazmin
made an effort to respond 80% of the time to teacher questions and 66% of the time to information-seeking questions.

The researcher tallied smiles and gestures during the taped lessons and the observation. The use of non-verbal communication was highly-present in this dyad's interactions. Teresa and Jazmin smiled often during the lessons. The teacher used gestures often in each new book introduction to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. She also pointed to parts of the illustrations when she prompted the child to construct part of the author's plot.

Clay’s rubric yielded data that were grouped by the function of the teacher language. Table 7 shows the percentage of occurrences that Teresa used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function. The percentages were calculated by dividing the number of times that particular language function was used by the total number of language functions in five lessons. Teresa used language 47% of the time to increase the accessibility of the information contained in the text, 27% of the time to present new knowledge or vocabulary, and 21% of the time to help the child construct the author’s meaning. She used language 4% of the time to provide new knowledge with modeling, and 2% of the time to have the child work with new knowledge. Teresa did not use language in order to maintain interactive ease, to accept a partially correct answer, to tighten the criteria of acceptability and to probe to find out what the child knew. The average number of teaching moves across five lessons was 11 per lesson.
Table 7

**Functions of Teacher Language for Dyad B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language function</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dyad C: Nick and Jessica*

The Reading Recovery teacher, Nick, works in a suburban school of 582 students, where 37% of the student population is Hispanic. Nick, a Mexican-American, had been in the classroom four years before he became a Reading Recovery teacher four years prior to the beginning of this study. He is bilingual in English and Spanish. Jessica is a female student, aged 6.8 at the beginning of the study. Her level of oral English is early-advanced, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when Jessica was reading books at Reading Recovery level nine. She knew a large number of high-frequency words and was able to analyze word parts in order to figure out new words. She was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in five out of five lessons.
Nick and Jessica focused 100% of their conversation during the new book orientation on some aspect of the text. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Nick related the meaning of the text to an aspect of Jessica’s personal experience in all five lessons.

Nick made 51% and Jessica made 49% of the total utterances across five lessons. The number of words in the lessons had a teacher-to-student ratio of 4:1.

Nick and Jessica’s total lessons contained 53% teacher questions, 17% rhetorical questions, 20% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 10% information-seeking questions by the student. The researcher also calculated that Jessica made an effort to respond 71% of the time to teacher questions and 50% of the time to information-seeking questions.

Nick phrased questions during the lessons with a tone of voice that suggested genuine wonder on the teacher’s part. It was a characteristic particular to this teacher. For example, Nick asked, “Does the crab look scared?”, when he and Jessica were looking through one of the books. The question was categorized as a teacher question; however, the tone of voice was one of mutual discovery. This tone-of-voice quality was apparent in all of this dyad’s questioning interactions.

The researcher tallied smiles and gestures during the taped lessons and the observation. Use of non-verbal communication was highly-present. Nick and Jessica smiled and laughed often during the lessons. Both participants used gestures extensively to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. He also pointed to parts of the illustrations when he prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.
The data grouped by the function of the teacher language according to Clay’s rubric are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of Teacher Language for Dyad C</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nick used language 44% of the time to help the child to construct the author’s meaning, 42% of the time to increase the accessibility of information, and 5% of the time to accept partially-correct student responses and tighten the criteria of acceptability. He also used language 2% of the time to have the child work with new knowledge and also to provide new knowledge with modeling. He did not use language to maintain interactive ease, probe to find out what a child knew, or to present new knowledge. Nick made an average of nine teaching moves per lesson.
Dyad D: Denise and Anna

The Reading Recovery teacher, Denise, works in a suburban school of 525 students, where 37% of the student population is Hispanic. Denise, an African-American, had been in the classroom more than 10 years before she became a Reading Recovery teacher four years prior to the beginning of this study. She is a monolingual English speaker. Anna is a female student, aged 6.11 at the beginning of the study. Her level of oral English was intermediate, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when Anna was reading books at Reading Recovery level six. She was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in five out of five lessons.

Denise and Anna’s interactions during the new book orientation were examined to find the number of utterances made by each participant in all lessons. Denise made 52% of the total number of utterances and Anna made 48% of the total utterances across five lessons. The teacher-student ratio of words in the lessons was 12:1.

Denise and Anna focused 100% of their conversation during the new book orientation on some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Denise did not relate the meaning of the text to some aspect of Anna’s personal experience in any lessons.

Denise and Anna’s lessons contained 60% teacher questions, 27% rhetorical questions, 6% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 6% information-seeking questions by the student. The researcher also calculated that Denise made an effort to respond 100% of the time to teacher questions and 50% of the time to information-seeking questions.
The use of non-verbal communication had mixed presence in this dyad. Denise and Anna smiled and laughed often during the lessons, but the participants rarely used gestures to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. She also pointed to parts of the illustrations when she prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

Denise waited a long time for Anna’s answers during the new book orientation. “Wait time” is a term used by educators to describe the time after the teacher has finished asking a question and is literally waiting for a response. This teacher’s wait time was noticeable. One of the researcher’s notes during the on-site observation states, “Denise appears to be allowing the student lots of time to absorb the details of picture and to respond.” The researcher did not record the number of seconds on a regular basis. But two instances were recorded when the wait-time exceeded 10 seconds. During that time, the student appeared to be engaged in thinking and in studying the illustration.

Table 9 shows the percentage of times that Denise used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function, according to Clay’s rubric. Denise used language 48% of the time to increase accessibility of information, and 43% of the time to help the child to construct the author’s meaning. She used language 3% of the time to accept partially-correct student responses, to tighten the criteria of acceptability, and to present new knowledge. Denise did not use language to maintain interactive ease, probe to find out what the child knew, have the child work with new knowledge, or provide new knowledge with modeling. Denise averaged seven teaching moves per lesson.
### Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language function</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dyad E: Robert and Cassie**

The Reading Recovery teacher, Robert, works in a suburban school of 582 students, where 37% of the student population is Hispanic. Robert, a European-American, had been in the classroom seven years before he became a Reading Recovery teacher five years prior to the beginning of this study. He is a monolingual English speaker. Cassie is a female student, aged 6.10 at the beginning of the study. Her level of oral English was early-advanced, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when Cassie was reading books at Reading Recovery levels six and seven. She was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in five out of five lessons.
Robert made 51% of the total number of utterances and Cassie made 49% of the total utterances across five lessons. The teacher-student ratio of words across lessons was 5:1 per lesson.

Robert and Cassie participated in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Robert related the meaning of the text to some aspect of Cassie’s personal experience in every lesson.

Robert and Cassie’s lessons contained 62% teacher questions, 14% rhetorical questions, 15% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 8% information-seeking questions by the student. The researcher also calculated that Cassie made an effort to respond 46% of the time to teacher questions and 42% of the time to information-seeking questions.

The use of non-verbal communication was highly-present in the dyad’s interactions. Robert and Cassie smiled and laughed often during the lessons. Both participants used gestures extensively to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. He also pointed to parts of the illustrations when he prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

Table 10 shows the percentage of times that Robert used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function, according to Clay’s rubric. He used language 46% of the time to help the child to construct the author’s meaning, 35% of the time to increase the accessibility of information, and 7% of the time to maintain interactive ease and to accept
partially-correct student responses. He also used language 2% of the time to probe to find out what the child knew, and 3% of the time to present new knowledge. Robert did not use language to tighten the criteria of acceptability, to have the child work with new knowledge or to provide new knowledge with modeling. He averaged 12 teaching moves per lesson.

Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of Teacher Language for Dyad E</th>
<th>Percentage of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author's meaning</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dyad F: Yvonne and Juan

The Reading Recovery teacher, Yvonne, works in a rural school of 445 students, where 20% of the student population is Hispanic. Yvonne, a European-American, was an experienced classroom teacher of more than 20 years before she became a Reading Recovery teacher four years prior to the beginning of this study. She is a monolingual
English speaker. Juan is a male student, aged 6.10 at the beginning of the study. His level of oral English was beginning, as measured by the CELDT score. Juan was reading books at Reading Recovery level three, where he was just beginning to use high-frequency words and visual information to read text. He was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in four out of five lessons.

Yvonne and Juan engaged in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Yvonne related the meaning of the text to some aspect of Juan’s personal experience in four out of five lessons.

Dyads F through I had new book introductions where the subsequent Running Records resulted in both successful and unsuccessful performances, which the researcher refers to as having mixed success. Beginning with this dyad, the researcher reports the data in two separate data sets – data for book orientations when the student subsequently read successfully, and data for book orientations when the student subsequently read unsuccessfully. Yvonne made 52% of the utterances, and Juan made 48% of the utterances when Juan was successful. Yvonne and Juan each made 50% of the utterances when Juan was unsuccessful. The ratio of teacher-to-student number of words was 6:1 in lessons when Juan subsequently scored 90% or higher, and 4:1 in the lesson when Juan scored 89% or lower.

Yvonne and Juan’s lessons which resulted in successful performance contained 55% teacher questions, 9% rhetorical questions, 18% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 18% information-seeking questions by the student. This was the highest
percentage of all dyads in the student information-seeking category. The lessons that resulted in unsuccessful performances had 17% percent teacher questions, 28% rhetorical questions, 50% information-seeking questions, and 5% student information-seeking questions. The researcher calculated that Juan made an effort to respond 93% of the time to teacher questions and 65% of the time to information-seeking questions.

The use of non-verbal communication was highly-present in this dyad’s interactions. Yvonne and Juan smiled and laughed often during the lessons. Both participants used gestures extensively to explain or enhance concepts and vocabulary. For example, to explain what “crawl” was, Yvonne first and then Juan crawled on the floor. The teacher used this kind of modeling for a new concept or an unfamiliar vocabulary word in four out of five lessons. The teacher and the student pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. Yvonne also pointed to parts of the illustrations when she prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

The data grouped by the function of the teacher language according to Clay’s rubric were gathered for interactions that preceded the student’s successful performance on the Running Record, in this case for four new book orientations. Table 11 shows the percentage of times that Yvonne used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function in all five lessons, in the four lessons where the student was subsequently unsuccessful, and in the one lesson where the student was subsequently unsuccessful. The data are grouped into columns according to the criteria listed above – all lessons, successful lessons, and unsuccessful lessons. Each row of the graph refers to a particular teacher language function. In this way, the reader is able to compare the language
function according to success rate, or to compare the entire profile of successful and unsuccessful lessons. The number in parentheses is the number of lessons that contributed to those percentages.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language function</th>
<th>All lessons (5)</th>
<th>Successful performance (4)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful performance (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dyad G: Inez and David

The Reading Recovery teacher, Inez, works in a suburban school of 525 students, where 37% of the student population is Hispanic. Inez, a Mexican-American, had been in
the classroom 20 years before she became a Reading Recovery teacher six years prior to the beginning of this study. She is a monolingual English speaker. David is a male student, aged 6.5 at the beginning of the study. His level of oral English was early-intermediate, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when David was reading books at Reading Recovery level seven. He was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in three out of five lessons.

Inez and David engaged in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Inez did not relate the meaning of the text to some aspect of David’s personal experience in any lesson.

Inez made 53% of the total number of utterances and David made 47% of the total utterances when David was subsequently successful. Inez made 61% of the utterances and David made 39% of the utterances when David was subsequently unsuccessful. It was the largest variation in this particular category of data. The teacher-to-student ratio of words in the lessons were 13:1 when David subsequently scored 90% or higher, and 8:1 when David scored 89% or lower.

Inez and David’s successful lessons contained 47% teacher questions, 35% rhetorical questions, 12% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 6% information-seeking questions by the student. Inez and David’s unsuccessful lessons contained 65% teacher questions, 29% rhetorical questions, 3% information-seeking questions, and three percent student information-seeking questions. The researcher also
calculated that David made an effort to respond 44% of the time to teacher questions and 33% of the time to information-seeking questions.

The use of non-verbal communication was highly-present in this dyad’s interactions. Inez and David smiled and laughed often during the lessons. The participants used gestures often to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. She also pointed to parts of the illustrations when she prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

The data grouped by the function of the teacher language according to Clay’s rubric were gathered for interactions that preceded the three categories of lessons – all lessons, lessons with subsequent successful performance, in this case for three out of five new book introductions, and lessons with subsequent unsuccessful performance, in this case for two out of five lessons. Table 12 shows the percentage of times that Inez used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function. Inez made an average of eight teaching moves during successful lessons and 11 teaching moves during unsuccessful lessons.
Table 12

*Function of Teacher Language for Dyad G*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language function</th>
<th>All lessons</th>
<th>Successful lessons (3)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful lessons (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of occurrences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dyad H: Nancy and Lisa*

The Reading Recovery teacher, Nancy, works in a rural school of 445 students, where 20% of the student population is Hispanic. Nancy, a European-American, was an experienced classroom teacher of more than 20 years before she became a Reading Recovery teacher ten years prior to the beginning of this study. She is a monolingual English speaker. Lisa is a female student, aged 6.7 at the beginning of the study. Her
level of oral English was beginning, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when Lisa was reading books at Reading Recovery level three. This level of book meant that Lisa was just beginning to learn high-frequency words and to use visual cues to help herself read. She was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in only two out of five lessons.

Nancy and Lisa engaged in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Nancy related the meaning of the text to some aspect of Lisa’s personal experience in just one lesson.

Nancy made 50% of the total number of utterances, and Lisa made 50% of the total utterances in both successful and unsuccessful lessons. The number of words in the lessons, recorded as a ratio of teacher-to-student, was 4:1 in the lessons when Lisa was subsequently either successful or unsuccessful.

In the analysis of the questioning patterns, Nancy and Lisa’s successful lessons contained 73% teacher questions, 20% rhetorical questions, zero percent information-seeking questions by the teacher, and 7% student information-seeking questions. During unsuccessful lessons, there were 53% teacher questions, 16% rhetorical questions, 7% teacher information-seeking questions, and 12% student information-seeking questions. The researcher also calculated that Lisa made an effort to respond 79% of the time to teacher questions and 75% of the time to information-seeking questions.

When the researcher tallied smiles and gestures during the taped lessons and the observation, the use of non-verbal communication was highly present during the dyad’s
interactions. Nancy and Lisa smiled often during the lessons. Both participants used gestures occasionally to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary in the story. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. She also pointed to parts of the illustrations when she prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

Data grouped by the function of the teacher language were gathered for interactions that preceded all five lessons; for lessons that preceded the student’s successful performance on the Running Record (reading at a 90% accuracy rate or higher), in this case during two out of five lessons; and for lessons that preceded the student’s unsuccessful performance on the Running Record (reading at an 89% accuracy rate or lower). In this instance, Table 13 shows the percentage of times that each function occurred in new book orientations for these three groupings. The average number of teaching moves was 12:1 lessons when Lisa scored 90% and higher, and 17:1 when Lisa scored 89% or lower.
Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of Teacher Language for Dyad H</th>
<th>All lessons (5)</th>
<th>Successful lessons (2)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful lessons (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of occurrences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author's meaning</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually in terms of vocabulary)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dyad I: Javier and Ramona

The Reading Recovery teacher, Javier, works in a rural school of 1013 students, where 58% of the student population is Hispanic. Javier, a Mexican-American, had been in the classroom four years before he became a Reading Recovery teacher four years prior to the beginning of this study. He is a bilingual English and Spanish speaker. Ramona is a
female student, aged 6.5 at the beginning of the study. Her level of oral English was early-advanced, as measured by the CELDT score. The study took place when Ramona was reading books at Reading Recovery level seven. This level of book required that Ramona know a moderate number of high-frequency words, and be able to analyze word parts in order to figure out new words. She was successful on the performance measure, the Running Record, in just two out of five lessons.

Javier and Ramona engaged in the new book orientations in a focused manner. One hundred percent of their conversation during this time was directed at some aspect of the new book. They discussed the meaning, the language or sentence structure of the text, and the vocabulary. Javier related the meaning of the text to some aspect of Ramona’s personal experience in two out five of lessons, when subsequent performance was successful.

Javier made 53% of the utterances and Ramona made 47% of the utterances when Ramona was subsequently successful. Javier made 54 percent of the utterances, and Ramona made 46% of the utterances when Ramona was subsequently unsuccessful. The teacher-to-student ratio of words was 8:1 in the lessons when Ramona subsequently scored 90% or higher, and 16:1 in the lessons when Ramona scored 89% or lower.

Javier and Ramona’s successful lessons contained 69% teacher questions, 26% rhetorical questions, 5% information-seeking questions by the teacher, and no information-seeking questions by the student. The unsuccessful lessons had 69% teacher questions, 26% rhetorical questions, 5% teacher information-seeking questions, and no student information-seeking questions. This was the only dyad that did not have student information-seeking questions. The researcher calculated that Ramona made an effort to
respond 41% of the time to teacher questions and 100% of the time to information-seeking questions.

The use of non-verbal communication was mixed in this dyad’s interactions. Javier and Ramona smiled often but laughed rarely during the lessons. The participants rarely used gestures to explain or enhance a concept and vocabulary. The teacher pointed to the illustrations multiple times in each book to help explain a concept or vocabulary. He also pointed to parts of the illustrations when he prompted the child to construct part of the author’s plot.

Data grouped by the function of the teacher language were gathered for interactions that preceded all lessons, lessons where the student was subsequently successful on the Running Record, in this case in two lessons, and lessons where the student was subsequently unsuccessful on the Running Record, in this case in three lessons. Table 14 shows the percentage of times that Javier used language to accomplish each teaching-learning function in these three categories. The average number of teacher moves was seven during successful lessons, and 11 during unsuccessful lessons.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language function</th>
<th>All lessons (5)</th>
<th>Successful lessons (2)</th>
<th>Unsuccessful lessons (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the accessibility of information</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present new knowledge (usually vocabulary)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new knowledge with modeling</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cross-Case Analysis**

The data from cases about Dyads A through I were used in the next level of data analysis – the cross-case analysis. The researcher looked for patterns or for themes in the data gathered from the observations, the transcripts, and the lesson records. She analyzed this portion of the data by creating a matrix to find patterns across the cases. These patterns were organized according to the research questions guiding the study:
1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?

2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child's performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher's language, as identified with Clay's (1998) Teacher Language Rubric, from the teacher's new book introduction that emerge to help explain that success?

Stake (1995) wrote about this portion of the data analysis process: "The search for meaning often is a search for patterns, for consistency, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call 'correspondence'" (p. 78). In this research project, some patterns appeared immediately because the correspondence was clear. The researcher recognized the patterns in the data that were found in the literature, but there were also new patterns that appeared. It also seemed that some dyad's successes were an interaction of a number of patterns or themes.

In an attempt to present the information concisely, the researcher arranged it in three sections according to the answers to the three research questions. First, the characteristics of new book orientations are reported. Second, differences in the conversational characteristics when students were subsequently successful and unsuccessful reading the text are described. Last, the function of teacher language as characterized by its function when the student was subsequently successful at reading the text is described. The three research questions are answered by looking at how the data
represented these themes: new book orientation content, student-teacher participation, the characteristics of questioning, non-verbal communication, and the patterns that appeared in teacher language function, as characterized by Clay’s rubric.

*Characteristics of New Book Orientations*

The researcher used inductive analysis to characterize the data about new book orientation characteristics. She decided not to include the data from Clay’s rubric in this section, but rather, in the subsequent sections. Data patterns that emerged in the case studies that described the conversational characteristics of new book orientations were arranged in the four themes introduced above: orientation content, student-teacher participation, the characteristics of the questioning patterns, and non-verbal communication. The researcher analyzed trends in numeric values in order to describe the data.

The content of all new book orientations was consistently focused on the new book in some way. Teachers and students discussed the concepts, the vocabulary, and the language structure or the grammar. Many times the concepts were related in some way to the students’ personal experiences. Students remarked at times about a new story with a character that was known from a previous book. For example, during an orientation in Dyad A, the student said, “Max and Emma again”? The student in Dyad C remarked, “A lot of Sallys…” in reference to a character that appeared in a number of her texts.

Student-teacher participation showed traits of equal turn-taking. In all of the dyads, teachers and students shared almost equally the number of times that each participant had a turn in the conversation. Table 15 represents the percentage of times that each participant had a turn in the conversations across five lessons. These data are
presented for all lessons for all dyads. (See Appendix K for a complete listing of the
data.) Most teachers had a slightly higher percentage of turns than the students: for
example, Dyad A teacher had 51% of the turns while Dyad A student had 49%. The
larger differences between teacher and student turn-taking were Dyad B, G, and I where
the teachers had 56% to 57% of the turns, while students had 43% to 44% of the turns.

The teacher-student ratios of words in the conversations, used to demonstrate how
much each participant spoke, showed a variation among dyads, but consistently showed
ratios where the teacher spoke more than the student. This was something immediately
noticeable in the video tapes and the observations. In the transcriptions, where the words
were counted, the pattern was corroborated. These ratios were calculated for all five
lessons of all the dyads. In the lowest ratio, which occurred in a successful dyad, Dyad A,
the ratio was 3:1. In the dyads where the ratios were the largest, one of them Dyad B -
15:1, was a successful dyad, and one of them, Dyad I – 13:1 had mixed success.
Table 15

The Percentages of Turn-taking Occurrences and the Teacher-Student Ratio of Words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Teacher percentage of turn-taking</th>
<th>Student percentage of turn-taking</th>
<th>Teacher-student ratio of words in lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>3:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>15:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>11:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>5:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>10:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>13:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questioning patterns added to the data about conversational characteristics. Table 16 shows the percentage of each kind of question used by participants in the conversation. Percentages were listed by student-teacher pair. A teacher question was the label used in this study to describe Mehan's (1979) teacher question-student response-teacher evaluation format that research found prevalent in classroom instruction. Another characteristic of teacher questions is that the teacher typically knows the answer to the question and is expecting a specific answer. The salient feature of the range of teacher questions for this research, 45% to 68%, was that it was the largest percentage of any kind of question in all of the dyads. The range of student information-seeking questions ranged from 3% of the total questions to 14%. The salient feature was that student
information-seeking questions were the smallest percentage of any kind of question used in seven dyads. There was one dyad, Dyad I, that had no student information-seeking questions. There did not appear to be any particular pattern to the percentages of rhetorical questions and teacher information-seeking questions.

Table 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Teacher questions</th>
<th>Rhetorical questions</th>
<th>Teacher information-seeking questions</th>
<th>Student information-seeking questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student response to teacher questions and information-seeking questions showed that within eight dyads, the student responded more often to teacher questions than to information-seeking questions. (Table 17) In Dyad I, the student responded to teacher questions 41% of the time, and to teacher information-seeking questions 100% of the time. The lowest percentage of student response, 17% came in Dyad B in response to
information-seeking questions. The highest response percentage, 100%, came from Dyad D in response to teacher questions and Dyad I during student information-seeking questions.

Table 17  
*Percentage of Responses to Each Kind of Question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Student response to teacher questions</th>
<th>Student response to information – seeking questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The non-verbal communication theme consisted of smiling and laughing, the use of gestures, and the use of illustrations to explain vocabulary and concepts or to help the child construct the author’s meaning. The researcher recorded their presence or noted their absence. All dyads in the study, except for one, smiled and laughed often. Dyad I smiled often but laughed rarely. All dyads in the study, except for two, used gestures often. Dyads D and I used gestures rarely. All dyads used the illustrations in every book during every new book orientation to explain vocabulary and concepts or to help the child
construct the author's meaning. With the exceptions noted above, all dyads used smiles, laughter, gestures, and pointing to an illustration as part of their common communication repertoire. The two dyads that did not demonstrate four of the four indicators of non-verbal communication often used two or three out of the four indicators.

Differences in the Conversational Characteristics When Students Were Subsequently Successful and Unsuccessful Reading the Text

For this section, the researcher needed to do one other step of calculations for the four dyads that had Running Record scores above 90% and below 89%. To streamline the descriptive terminology for this and subsequent sections, the researcher chose to use the words successful and unsuccessful, corresponding to the same descriptive language used in chapter 3. The researcher looked at the data of a particular student-teacher pair during successful conversations and during unsuccessful conversations to discern patterns. Therefore, in this section, data pertaining to the four dyads that had both successful and unsuccessful conversations were analyzed separately. Of the 45 new book orientations in the study, 36 or 80% of them were successful on the subsequent Running Record.

The content of all successful new book orientations remained focused entirely on the book. Taking into account the 36 successful new book introductions, 21 of them or 58% related the text to the students' personal experience. Of the five dyads that had successful orientations during all five lessons, four of them used the students' personal experiences in every orientation.

Student-teacher utterance percentages or turn-taking, how many turns each participant took, did not change when the data were examined by successful and unsuccessful conversations except in the case of Dyad G. In all other cases, the
percentages remained almost the same, usually changing just one or two percentage points. The teacher in Dyad G had 53% of the turns during successful lessons and 61% of the turns during unsuccessful lessons. (See Appendix K and L for a complete list of student data.)

The differences in the teacher-student ratio of words for the five dyads with five successful lessons remained the same as presented for the previous question: the ratios ranged from a high of 31:1 to a low of 3:1. The differences in the teacher-student ratio of words changed for three out of the four dyads who had mixed success. See Table 18. In two dyads, the teacher-student ratio of word use was greater when the student was subsequently successful than when the student was unsuccessful. In one dyad, the results were the reverse, while in the fourth dyad, the ratios were equal.

Table 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Successful teacher-student word ratio</th>
<th>Unsuccessful teacher-student word ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>13:1</td>
<td>8:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>4:1</td>
<td>4:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>16:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 was also converted into Figure 1 to show graphically how the ratio of word use differed between successful and unsuccessful lessons.
One part of the questioning pattern, the percentage of teacher questions, changed when data were analyzed from only successful lessons. Table 19 shows the change in the four dyads with mixed success between the percentage of teacher questions when all five lessons were included, and then when only successful lessons were included. The five dyads that had 100% successful lessons were included in the table to provide context. The number in parenthesis next to the dyad letter name shows how many lessons were used to calculate the successfully only percentage. For example, next to Dyad F is the number "(4)" because that is the number of lessons that the child read 90% or higher on the subsequent Running Record during the study. The second column shows the percentage of teacher questions for all five lessons for all nine dyads. The third column shows the percentages of teacher questions for the successful lessons of the four dyads.
that had mixed results. The “n/a” stands for non-applicable because for those dyads the figures for both columns would be the same. With the exception of Dyad H, the percentages of teacher questions in relation to all questions grew when the data for successful lessons only was analyzed. The salient feature was that there was change in the four dyads with mixed results.

Table 19

Percentages of Teacher Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>Teacher questions during all five lessons</th>
<th>Teacher questions during only successful lessons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (5)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>n/a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (5)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (5)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (5)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E (5)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (4)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G (3)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H (2)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (2)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The non-verbal communication data showed every teacher using smiles, laughter, gestures and pointing to the illustrations during the successful new book orientations to some degree. In seven dyads the teachers and students used all four indicators of non-verbal communication. In Dyads D and I, the teachers used the four indicators but not as often as other teachers. Both used gestures rarely, and in Dyad I, the teacher laughed
rarely. All of the teachers and students always smiled and pointed to the illustrations to help explain concepts and vocabulary.

Function of Teacher Language

Clay’s Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M) was used to calculate the numbers of times each teacher used language to accomplish a particular teaching function. Percentages were calculated for each lesson and averaged for the five lessons. A percentage was also calculated separately for the four dyads that had successful and unsuccessful scores on the Running Record.

A short synopsis of the nine language functions follows:

1. maintain interactive ease- teacher repeated what the student said in order to keep the flow of the conversation going.

2. increase accessibility - anticipated what might be new or novel in the story for the student and provided information, usually about the vocabulary, sentence structure or the meaning of the story to help make the new information understandable in an integrated way.

3. prompt the child to actively construct the author’s plot- drew on the child’s prior experience or knowledge about a text that was similar to the current text, in order to predict some aspect of the current text.

4. accept a partially- correct response- confirmed that what the child said was partly correct, and then added more information to that answer, in order to direct the student’s thinking to a more precise answer.

5. tighten the criteria of acceptability - asked for the child to develop a more precise answer.
6. probe to find out what the child knows.

7. present new knowledge—usually about vocabulary or concepts.

8. ask the child to work with new knowledge while reading the text.

9. provide a model to show how some thinking process worked.

Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentages of Language Used for Each Teaching Function for Five Lessons</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increase accessibility of information</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Help the child to construct the author’s meaning</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Accept partially-correct student responses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Present new knowledge</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Provide new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20 shows the percentages of language that were used for teaching functions. The values shown are for five lessons in all the dyads.

All of the teachers used language to accomplish teaching functions in a similar way. The majority of the language was used to increase the accessibility of information or to help the child construct the author’s plot. The two of those groupings together accounted for more than 50 percent of the language interactions for every teacher. Teachers using language to present new information, usually vocabulary words, and accepting partially correct student responses were the next most popular teaching moves. Three groupings had relatively few uses: maintaining interactive ease, tightening the criteria of acceptability and providing new knowledge by modeling.

For the dyads with mixed success, F, G, H, and I, Table 21 shows the percentages for lessons with subsequent successful results and unsuccessful results. The first row shows the dyad letter (F, G, H, and I) and the words successful or unsuccessful. Then, the number in parenthesis shows how many lessons were used to calculate the percentage for that dyad. So, for example, column two, row two shows that Dyad F used no language to maintain interactive ease in the four lessons that resulted in 90% or better on the subsequent Running Record.

The values in Table 21 do not show a particular pattern. The values sometimes increase, sometimes decrease, and sometimes remain the same between lessons with successful and unsuccessful results. There is no clear pattern between the teaching moves of a particular dyad either.
Table 21

Percentages for Lessons with Successful and Unsuccessful Results for Dyads F, G, H, and I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F successful</th>
<th>F unsuccessful</th>
<th>G successful</th>
<th>G unsuccessful</th>
<th>H successful</th>
<th>H unsuccessful</th>
<th>I successful</th>
<th>I unsuccessful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Maintain interactive ease</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Increase accessibility of information</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Help child to construct the author's meaning</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Accept partially-correct responses</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tighten criteria of acceptability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Probe to find out what child knows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Present new knowledge</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Child works with new knowledge</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Provide new knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

This research described the student-teacher conversation during the new book orientation of Reading Recovery lessons. Data were analyzed in three levels. First, categories and groupings were made to organize the data. Next, the categories and groupings were synthesized into individual cases according to the student-teacher dyad. Finally, the cases were examined to find patterns across the data. Patterns were arranged into the themes: the content of the new book orientation, student-teacher participation, the...
characteristics of questioning, non-verbal communication, and the patterns that appeared in teacher language function as characterized by Clay's rubric. These patterns were reported according to how they addressed the research questions. Data from the themes about content, student-teacher participation, characteristics of questioning, and non-verbal communication were used to address research question one and two. The data from Clay's rubric addressed the third research question.

Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the possible significance of the data. It relates the study's findings with the theoretical framework of the study --- socio-linguistic educational theory, literacy instruction for the English-language learner, and Clay's theory about learning-to-read.
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Introduction

This qualitative study investigated the nature of student-teacher interactions during the new book introduction portion of the Reading Recovery lesson. It also investigated what kind of interactions took place in the new book introduction when the student subsequently was successful at reading that book. The theoretical framework for the study was socio-linguistic educational theory, literacy instruction for the English-language learner, and Clay’s theory about literacy learning.

The questions that guided the study were:

1. What are the characteristics of student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation of the Reading Recovery lesson?

2. Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child’s performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

3. When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher’s language during the new book orientation, as identified by Clay’s (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?

Discussion of the Findings

The data in this study showed the teaching-learning conversations of nine Reading Recovery student-teacher dyads during 45 new book orientations. The
discussion of the findings in this chapter are organized into sections according to the three research questions.

**Question One: What Are the Characteristics of Student-Teacher Conversations during the New Book Orientation of the Reading Recovery Lesson?**

In answer to this research question, the data analysis found patterns of interaction that aligned with three larger research issues: characteristics of educational conversations, interactive ease, and comprehensible input. First, there were patterns in the data similar to the successful characteristics of educational conversations discussed by Wells (1986). These characteristics were typified by each participant in the dyad working actively to understand the conversational message. The characteristics, according to Wells, include each participant taking turns, the caregiver scaffolding the parts of the conversation that might be difficult for the student/child to produce alone, and active listening.

Second, the data was characterized as demonstrating interactive ease. Interactive ease was the term adopted by the researcher to describe the social-educational environment that was created by teacher and student during the conversation. Interactive ease was a feeling-tone and conversational structure that allowed learning to take place. It can be considered similar to Cazden’s (1988) description of the teaching-learning negotiations in the classroom setting described in chapter 2.

Third, the patterns in the data had traits that helped create “comprehensible input” for the student. This term was coined by Krashen (1981) to describe how content material in a lesson needed to be “contextualized” and explained in a way that rendered it understandable to the students. The educator needed to tailor the learning specifically to
the targeted students in order to create comprehensible input. Let us start with the traits of
the conversations that described successful learning conversations.

Successful learning conversations.

The conversations during the Reading Recovery new book introductions consisted
of teachers and children talking about an outside event, one of the successful
conversational characteristics that was described in Wells' (1986) research. The teachers
and students focused on the new book or on some aspect of understanding the book. The
conversation about the new book always included a brief statement about the main idea
of the story, usually two or three sentences delivered by the teacher towards the
beginning of the orientation. Often the teachers and students concentrated on the book's
illustrations. One might view the use of illustrations as a prop—a focus for attention that
Wells described in his successful conversational patterns between mothers and their
preschool children.

The physical characteristics of the new book orientations had some of the same
characteristics of caretaker-child conversations also described by Wells (1986), and later
by Lindfors (1991), and that were linked to successful educational conversations. The
teachers and students took turns regularly during the conversation. Turn-taking was
substantiated by the almost equal number of utterances or turns taken by each participant
in the data. Eight of nine dyads had utterances that approached equal turn-taking.

The ratios of teacher-to-student words during the conversation showed patterns
where teachers did much of the talking. This finding corroborated the classroom student-
teacher interaction patterns found in the literature, where teachers also did most of the
talking (Lindfors 1991; Mehan, 1979). In the classroom setting, research suggested that
this characteristic might lead to the reduced participation of some students, and in turn, might contribute to their lack-of-success. However in the tutorial setting, the ratio of teacher-to-student words did not seem to be a factor in determining the level of success of the student. The word ratio and successful performance will be discussed in the next section.

This researcher suggests that the ratio of teacher-to-student words in a tutorial setting creates a different set of educational circumstances than those created in the traditional classrooms that were reported by Lindfors (1991) and Mehan (1979). In tutorial settings the word ratio might be similar to a trait in the caretaker-child conversation pattern that was described in Wells (1986) research. The caretaker is filling in the parts of the conversation that the child cannot complete unassisted. The Reading Recovery teacher was filling a similar conversational role in the educational conversation about the books. The teacher participation could be considered what Wells called collaboration and construction to make a meaningful conversation. In this study, the teacher acted as a scaffold both for the content of the conversation, and as a support for students learning the English language. Thus, it would be logical that the teacher would be speaking more than the student. The successful performances following most of the new book orientations in the study suggest that the teacher-to-student word ratio is one of the positive influences in the one-on-one learning environment, rather than a negative one implied by the research on classroom interactions.

It is not the intent of the researcher to suggest that conversations during the new book orientation part of the Reading Recovery lesson were the same as the celebrated caretaker-child conversations documented in Wells’ (1986) research. However, these
conversations do share some of the same pivotal characteristics – taking turns, support by
the participant who was most capable, and conversation focused on an outside event, in
this case the book that was being introduced.

*Interactive ease.*

Another aspect of the teacher-student conversations was what this researcher
described as interactive ease. There was a certain kind of ease within the conversations of
all the dyads that enhanced the ability of the conversation to promote learning. The
interactive ease was evident in the smiles and laughter that were part of the non-verbal
communication between participants. Smiles and/or laughter were highly-present in most
dyad interactions. Smiles and/or laughter seemed to flow naturally from the conversation
and in turn helped the natural flow of the conversation in a positive feedback loop.

The interactive ease manifested itself in other ways among the dyads. For
example in Dyad A, the student showed by various means that she was an active
participant in the conversation. She interrupted the teacher often during every lesson to
finish what he was saying. She felt comfortable within the structure of the lesson to be
able to participate in that way. She also answered the teachers' questions before he had
finished articulating them. Table 22 shows an example of each of these conversational
patterns. Column two records the conversation. "T" stands for teacher and "S" stands for
student. Notice in the examples that the ellipses, "..." indicate that the teacher was going
to continue talking. In both examples the researcher placed the student's words right
below the word the teacher was saying at the moment of interruption. In the second
example, the teacher and student articulate "at the beginning of" together. In the second
example, the student is actually finishing the instructions that the teacher is giving during
a teaching move. Both examples in this dyad’s conversational interaction could be interpreted as demonstrations of Cazden’s (1988) and Mehan’s (1979) ideas about how successful students understand and participate in the lessons’ event structures. This kind of interaction pattern also appeared to be indicative of the child’s comfort and ease with the lesson structure.

Table 22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of the Student Interrupting the Teacher</th>
<th>Student-teacher conversation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of interruption</td>
<td>Student-teacher conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student answers teacher’s question before teacher finishes articulating it</td>
<td>T - Yeah, so they say, “Here is a grab bag.” You say… S - “Here is a grab bag.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student finishes teacher’s sentence</td>
<td>T - What letters would you expect to see at the beginning of…? S - at the beginning of shouted?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Dyad F, the use of gestures and extended explanations to clarify tricky English vocabulary support the researcher’s definition of interactive ease. The teacher and student in Dyad F who got on the floor to demonstrate crawling was one example where the teacher and the student used pantomime and whole-body gestures to explain a concept or vocabulary. Extended explanations in a playful manner characterized this dyad’s interactions. They also used language to play. In one lesson, when the teacher was checking that the student understood what might be appropriate for certain animals to eat—sharks eat meat, giraffes eat leaves, and pandas eat bamboo shoots, the teacher and student were soon extending that conversation to the absurd by saying that the student would eat cockroaches and radios. The student suggested that the teacher would eat a bus and a classroom. In addition to verifying through logical examples and absurd examples
that the student understood the concept of appropriate food for certain animals, the interaction demonstrated the ease and fun that the participants created with each other.

Dyad F’s example of interactive ease may also be seen as an instance of the teacher knowing when to extend the conversation because the student required more explanation. The teacher interpreted the learning situation in an adept manner and proceeded to provide more examples of crawling so that the child could clear up a confusion. It is a good example of Clay’s (1993) instructions to Reading Recovery teachers to “support the child with any particular features that are likely to cause him difficulty. For example, provide a model which emphasises [sic] by stress, shouting, singing or some other means the anticipated difficulty.” (p. 37)

The teacher in Dyad C showed a genuine sense of wonder when he was asking questions. This was peculiar to this particular teacher. As the student and teacher looked through the pictures of the book and the teacher asked questions or pointed out important features of the story, there was a feeling of mutual exploration. It was transmitted through the teacher’s tone of voice. An analysis of the questions that the teacher used, for example: “Will she fit into that one?” or “Mmmm, who’s there?”, look like other teacher questions that were documented in the study. However, viewing the videotape provided another perspective. This sense of wonder suggested that both the teacher and the student were involved in a mutual discovery and genuine conversation.

The smiles, laughter, and other examples of interactive ease were important characteristics to the learning environment of the students. This kind of interaction may be significant when it is seen in the context of Lyons’ (2003) writings. She stated that there is always an emotional component to learning. “Cognitive and emotional memories
are stored and retrieved in parallel’’ (p.65). There is no way to separate or to put into hierarchical order emotional, cognitive and social functions. Therefore, the patterns of data that show interactive ease might be considered good indicators of a positive learning environment.

Comprehensible input.

English-language learner literacy methodology looks like good literacy methodology in general. The defining characteristics are immersing the student in rich reading and writing experiences, focusing on the meaning and the message, building vocabulary and language structures through context, and checking the student’s understandings. The data patterns that pertained to all conversations will be discussed here. The data that were generated using Clay’s rubric about the function of teacher’s language will be discussed in a subsequent section that refers to new book orientations that preceded successful student performance.

Teachers focused their new book orientations on the meaning and the language of the stories. Virtually all of the talk revolved around some aspect of experience or plot detail that would allow the child to understand what was happening. Pictures, the book’s plot, the language and sentence structure, and the vocabulary were part of the content of the new book orientation. The new book orientation with its rich, interactive conversation between teacher and student was reminiscent of the description by Cummins (2000) and by Bernhardt (1991) of good literacy instruction for English-language learners.

The nature of the questions during the conversation was another example of this kind of comprehensible input. Teacher questions, those questions when the teacher knows the answer before-hand and is usually looking for a particular response, and
rhetorical questions accounted for the majority of questions used in the student-teacher 
interactions. Both kinds of questions showed a focus of attention on developing the 
meaning of the story. The use of questions seems to be an attempt by the teacher to draw 
the student into the conversation in order to understand the plot.

There were no clear-cut patterns in how the students responded to rhetorical 
questions or genuine information-seeking questions. (Information-seeking questions 
require a genuine answer because the teacher does not know the answer before he/she 
asks the question.) The research literature (Heath, 1983; Lindfors, 1991; Cazden, 1986) 
raised the question as to whether children from non-mainstream cultures might have 
difficulty participating in classroom events in part because of the nature of teacher 
questioning. The data from this study about Spanish-dominant ELL students did not seem 
to document teacher questioning as a potential problem for student understanding and 
participation in a tutorial situation. Student response to the teacher questions and the 
information-seeking questions showed no particular discrepancy. That is, students did not 
necessarily respond better to information-seeking questions than to teacher questions or 
vice versa. Nor was there a clear pattern in student response between successful and 
unsuccessful lessons. A discrepancy might be expected if a particular teacher question 
format was difficult for a student to understand. This research was not designed to show a 
cause-and-effect relationship; however, at a descriptive level, there was nothing to 
suggest that the style of a teachers' questions restricted student participation and student 
understanding in this tutorial setting.

All of the dyads used illustrations from the books and gestures to explain concepts 
and vocabulary. Teachers, by their interactions with students, understood when to explain
more in order for the student to be able to understand. The interactions that have been written about previously concerning the word "crawl" and the concept of a "grab bag" were good examples of the extended conversation needed to make the meaning of the book understandable for that particular child.

The examples that have been provided here concerning the teachers' abilities to create comprehensible input reflect Clay's (1998, 1991) writing about how Reading Recovery lessons in general, and new book orientations in particular, are crafted to a student's current competencies. It is one of the reasons why Reading Recovery teacher training is directed towards helping each teacher to become a better observer of children's reading behavior in order to hypothesize about how the child is processing the print. A new book orientation specifically designed for that particular child was part of each teacher's lesson planning in this study.

The data showed that there were times when a confusion occurred because of a complex concept with which the student had no experience. At these times, the child appeared confused about a particular concept and returned to it repeatedly during the conversation in a manner that demonstrated he/she did not understand an important point. One example was during the conversation about the grab bag book. The student did not understand what a grab bag was. The teacher described the concept of a grab bag by introducing the idea of a wrapped present that was a surprise when the purchaser opened it. The student saw a dog in one of the first illustrations. She learned what the word "grab" meant through the teacher's explanation. However, when she looked at the print, the researcher hypothesized from viewing the tape that the student decoded the word "bag" as "dog" (the letters "b" and "d" are commonly confusing for beginning readers).
She talked about the “dog” during the conversation numerous times. It is beyond the scope of this research to determine whether this and the other examples were evidence of an incongruity between the curriculum or the vocabulary and that particular child’s experience, or if there was a lack-of-experience on the part of this teacher with Mexican culture language and whether the concept of grab bag had a cultural equivalent. The importance might be that even in a lesson format where teachers are directly responding to one child, student confusions can occur.

**Summary of Response to Question One**

The data from this study revealed rich description of how the content of the conversation, its structure, and the tone of interactive ease created a successful learning environment in the majority of the lessons. Similarly, the teachers’ attention to meaning and the message in the story helped to build student understanding in order to provide the opportunity for good reading work. In general, it is the synthesis of these characteristics working together that created a robust learning atmosphere.

It is important to remember that Reading Recovery students in this study were the slowest-progressing students in their first grade classrooms. For whatever reasons, they were not able to progress at the average rate of their peers in the classroom. The data showed that in 80% of the lessons in this study, the children were subsequently successful on the later performance measure. The data from this study found that new book orientations had the characteristics of good conversation, interactive ease and comprehensible input which led to the students’ engagement in learning during the Reading Recovery lessons.
The next section discusses the descriptive characteristics of successful teaching-learning conversations.

**Question Two:** Do salient characteristics or themes appear in the student-teacher conversations during the new book orientation when the child's performance is successful in reading that book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading?

Question two queried the characteristics of the new book introduction when the subsequent performance assessment was successful. Six elements will be examined here. First, successful new book orientations shared some characteristics with new book orientations in general. Second, there were three salient traits in the conversations across Dyads A, B, C, D and E, which helped to create their successful performance results. Third, book choice became a very important aspect of how the teachers created the teaching-learning conversations. Fourth, one particular characteristic of the interactions in Dyads A, C and D individually demonstrates why the conversations led to subsequent successful outcomes. The fifth section adds to our understanding about the successful results by noting what was not successful in the interactions in some of the dyads. In the final section the researcher presents data about the teacher-student word ratios and the student responses to questions that are puzzling.

**Shared characteristics.**

The new book orientations in general, and those that led to successful outcomes, shared some characteristics. The teachers and students constructed understanding of an outside event, they took turns about the same percentage of times in the conversation, and they had a similar spread in the ratio of teacher-to-student words. There was evidence
that the student understood and participated in the lesson event structure, the
conversations showed a sense of interactive ease, and teachers made teaching moves that
allowed for comprehensible input.

If one looked solely at the patterns of percentages, ratios and averages, there were
no clear cut differences in the numeric data between new book orientations that led either
to successful or unsuccessful reading. Perhaps one would not be surprised by this
characteristic because the research project was designed with a qualitative methodology,
and the number of cases was relatively small. Mehan's (1979) writings also proposed that
certain kinds of research methodology could not find the relationship between the quality
of education and educational practices. He suggested looking at the learning-teaching
interaction in as much of its complexity as possible. The researcher suggests that the
student's successful performance in this study is a complex relation among many aspects
of the student-teacher conversation. The research design was purposeful. It was designed
to describe and explain what the educational conversation looked like. In doing so, the
numeric data helped the researcher to confirm her observations and field notes.
Therefore, although the numeric trends were helpful and germane, they do not tell the full
story.

Common characteristics that led to success in Dyads A, B, C, D and E.

When the researcher looked at the features of the Dyads A through E, all of which
had five successful Running Records, some characteristics emerged: the teachers related
the stories most of the time or all of the time to the student's personal experiences, the
teacher and student practiced together some of the sentences with difficult grammar, and
there was a very precise use of language.
The new book orientation was related to the students’ personal experiences. The teachers in Dyads A and E related every text to some facet of the students’ experiences. In Dyads B, C and D, the teachers related the text to the students’ experiences in most of the lessons. For example, the teacher in Dyad E asked, “Have you ever lost a tooth before?” The student nodded her head yes. He continued, “Let me see.” The student opened her mouth and the teacher peered in. “Oh yeah.” The student immediately chimed in, “I lost two teeth.” The five teachers accomplished two things with short interchanges of this nature. They established an interactive bridge to the text and they created this bridge with comprehensible input. When a student understands what the story is about, the researcher suggests that the student is better able to engage in the actual reading process because meaning can be used to negotiate the reading. A personal connection with the story would also build student enthusiasm and interest in the book, which would lead to better reading processing.

The teachers in Dyads B, C and E facilitated the introduction of new language structures by repeating them with the student. Their common invitation to this learning task was something like “Let’s say that part together.” Both teacher and student then spoke the targeted sentence together. This particular methodology is a concrete example of helping the child to accomplish a learning task with help, before asking the child to do the task alone.

Having the child practice a tricky sentence structure is a common Reading Recovery procedure during the new book orientation, and the procedure was also part of the teachers’ moves in all the dyads. Clay (1993) instructs teachers in the following manner:
Give opportunities for the child to hear and use the new words and structures that he will have to work out from the pictures, the print and the language context. (Sometimes it is necessary for a child to gain control over a particular language structure first, so that he can use it in his reading.) (p. 37)

The teachers from Dyads B, C and E adapted the procedure slightly by inviting the child to say the structure with them, and then saying the sentence with the child every time, as opposed to having the child attempt to say it alone. This was different from the teaching moves made by other teachers in the study. This teaching technique assisted the children from Dyads B, C and E in two ways. The teachers invited the child to participate with them, which alleviated performance anxiety, and they scaffolded the actual repetition of the targeted sentence that allowed the child to direct his/her attention to the meaning of the sentence. The researcher suggests that for an English-language learner, assisting the performance in this way is important for keeping the learning conversation comfortable and helping the child to understand the meaning and/or grammar of the sentence.

The teachers in Dyads A, C, D and E used language precisely and clearly. The researcher wrote in her notes of the on-site observation for Dyad D: “Teacher does not waste words. Appears to think of how to express the idea in the clearest manner.” The transcripts verified this observation. For example, the teacher in Dyad C explained the most important aspects of a story about two small children who did not want to go into a large toy apparatus called a “jumper” until older children had left. He said, “Have you ever been on a jumper before?” The child nodded her head yes. “Well, what do you do if
there's big kids in there? What do you do? Do you go in there with the big kids?" The teacher could have chosen any number of ways to describe the problem that was set up in this plot. He chose to explain, with simple language, the ideas that were important for understanding this particular story: the tension between two small children wanting to enter a big toy and the apprehension they might feel because there were big kids on the toy already. Without understanding this problem, the story might not have made sense to the student. The two salient features that this researcher considers to be important for this study are the choice of the concepts that the teacher chose to explain and the precise use of simple language used to explain the concepts.

This kind of explanation relates to Bernhardt's (1991) research about how English-language learners need to be introduced to unfamiliar or potentially confusing concepts that might be part of a story's plot. As was noted previously, this kind of teaching is similar to good literacy instruction in any educational setting. However, it may be especially important when the student is working in his/her second language.

Book choice.

It became apparent that the teacher's book choice was extremely important to the language interactions of this study for a number of reasons. First, the child read successfully when the book was related to the child's personal experiences, as was explained previously. Second, when the book proved problematic, two important teaching-learning considerations emerged that underlie how the Reading Recovery teacher guided the orientation. First, a student can only keep a certain amount of new information in active memory in order to use it to help read the new book. If the teacher chose a book with too many new ideas or language structures, the child appeared unable
to synthesize all of the new information into a successful reading performance on the Running Record. This became apparent in one of the lessons with a subsequent unsuccessful performance. The teacher had chosen a book that did not have a plot. It was a caption, rhyming text at book level five. The child did not interact much during the new book orientation – the teacher-student word ratio was 48:1 - and the teacher explained the new vocabulary on every page. The subsequent reading was below 90%.

The second consideration related to problematic books was how the teacher persevered during the orientation. As it became apparent that the new book was difficult for the student, teachers reacted in different ways. To return to Dyad A and the book about the grab bag, Terrence took time and explained repeatedly what a grab bag was. This persistent explanation with gestures, student participation and repetition of the same concept in different ways resulted in a subsequent Running Record above 90%.

Another teacher introduced a book with a difficult concept about a mistaken identity. During the subsequent orientation, the teacher-student word ratio was 32:1, and the teacher gave a brief orientation. She explained the details of the pictures thoroughly, but did not return to how they related to the tricky mistaken identity plot element. Nor did she repeatedly invite the child to participate in order to see if the concept was understood. She asked the student once if she understood, and when the child nodded yes, she continued to a slightly different concept. The resulting Running Record was below 90%.

While there are many possible explanations for unsuccessful book orientations, and the researcher does not want to pinpoint a cause-and-effect relationship, book choice was an important consideration. The teachers who had five successful Running Records
chose books wisely or were able to explain the text in a robust manner so that the student could read successfully.

*Individual successful characteristics of Dyads A, C and D.*

Other notable characteristics of the language interactions were found in individual dyads, as opposed to being found in all successful dyads or in a number of successful dyads. The characteristics exemplified the dynamics of good conversation, helped to create interactive ease, and created the opportunity for the student to access comprehensible input. For example, in Dyad A, the student participated more in the conversation, as was described in the previous section of the chapter about how the child interrupted the teacher often, and finished the teacher’s sentences. The lower ratio of teacher-to-student words in the transcripts – 3:1 - and the nature of the child’s interruptions when the teacher was talking, demonstrate the active student participation. The teacher created an atmosphere where the student understood how to respond successfully and be an active participant.

The teacher in Dyad C employed a sense of wonder and genuine discovery in the intonation of his voice. The teacher’s voice quality created a sense of interactive ease that invited the student to participate, and gently fostered student construction of the plot during the reading process. This served as a model for good reading behavior. For example, when the teacher turned a page in the book, he asked the question, “I wonder how she will get the sparrows to come out of the tree and down to her?” A good reader anticipates what is going to happen in the story, in order to understand the plot. This example helped the child to understand how a good reader anticipates and constructs the author’s plot.
Dyad D had a very long wait time, and the silence appeared to allow the student to absorb the meaning of the picture or the concept about which the student was thinking. The amount of wait time may have contributed to the child’s ability to make sense of the pictures in relation to the text’s plot and structure. The student’s participation and subsequent successful learning may have been enhanced because the extra time allowed the second-language learner to process what was happening and to respond. There was time for the student to think.

The researcher suggests that the nature of the new book orientation conversations be considered in all of their complexity. The characteristics that made the conversations successful might be different from dyad to dyad. However, they share the characteristics of good conversation, interactive ease and comprehensible input. They also substantiate Gee’s (2001) articulation of the kind of experiences that help to generate a reader who understands that reading is a creative, active process.

*Characteristics of dyads that had mixed success.*

Three characteristics of the student-teacher interactions that did not lead to student success help us understand more about successful performances. One of those characteristics was the type of books that the teachers in dyads with mixed success selected for the child to read. The previous section described how poor book selection affected the student-teacher interaction. The information to be added here is the type of books that resulted in unsuccessful performance on the Running Record. The majority of the books that fell into this category were books that did not have a strong plot. Most often they were caption books: books that followed a certain patterned text and changed...
one or two words on each page. An example of a caption book is "I can sit on a towel and look at the pool. I can sit on the sofa and watch TV." (Beck, 1988, pp.5-6)

The second trait is that the teacher did not explain the main idea of the book. For example, in one lesson the teacher did not explain the main idea of *The Jigaree* (Cowley, 1993), and therefore, the story became a complex caption book. In the story, a jigaree—an animal peculiar to a planet in outer space—wants to become a friend or the pet of a space boy who lives there. The crux of the plot is that the boy makes the jigaree perform certain tasks until the jigaree is so tired that it cannot continue. The jigaree performs those tasks because, through the pictures, the reader is led to understand that the jigaree wants to go home with the boy, and the story ends with the boy taking the jigaree home.

In this particular new book orientation, it appeared that the student never understood the point of the plot. The story’s rhyming structure and the student’s particular abilities in English more than likely contributed to the subsequent unsuccessful performance on the Running Record. However, the orientation presented the book as a complex caption book because the student did not appear to understand the main idea of the story.

A short explanation here suggests how not understanding story construction affects many young readers who do not have much experience with literacy and books. The idea was introduced to the researcher in a lecture by Blair Koefoed, a Reading Recovery university trainer from New Zealand. He suggested that children who were inexperienced with listening to and participating in books or story telling did not completely understand that a plot must have a beginning, middle and end, and that something must happen in the plot to create a "problem" and then to resolve it. Koefoed said that Reading Recovery children are often those who could stop reading a sixteen
page book at page twelve and never realize that they had not finished the story. They are the children who do not quite understand that a story is going someplace — to a conclusion or a resolution.

A student who does not understand how story plots are constructed needs to be exposed to the relationship between each page or episode in the text and how it relates to the story’s main idea. The researcher suggests that the orientation about *The Jigaree* (Cowley, 1993) did not help the child to understand where the story was going or how it made sense. One might suppose that even after reading the book the child still did not understand it.

It is beyond the scope of this research to determine without a doubt why certain books were difficult for certain students because the reasons are intricate and interrelated. The researcher does not claim to know exactly why *The Jigaree* (Cowley, 1993) and *The Best Place* (Beck, 1988) were too difficult for these students. However, in six out of the nine books that were read unsuccessfully, the books were caption-type books or were introduced in a way that made them appear to be a series of unrelated events. One conclusion is that helping the child to understand the main idea of the book is an important feature of successful new book orientations and contributes to subsequent successful reading.

A third trait of mixed performance was the lack of what the researcher refers to as interactive ease during the lessons. In two dyads with mixed success, the researcher did not observe the warm feeling tone that was evident in other dyads. Most of the evidence for this observation comes from the non-verbal communication factors and the teacher’s tone of voice. The participants did not smile often or laugh. There was little warmth in
the teachers' voices. The teachers did not appear to invite participation with their tone of voice or their facial expressions. The teachers did not seem to monitor the conversation to see if the student understood or was participating. The normal conversational give-and-take between participants, which in turn leads to comfort and ease in a caretaker-child conversation, was absent. The lack of interactive ease may have contributed to these dyads having among the lowest performance results.

Puzzles.

The researcher found two characteristics of the data, teacher-student word ratios and student response to teacher questions that affected this research differently from the studies in the literature review. Both characteristics were obvious to the researcher when she watched the taped lessons, and later when she reviewed the transcriptions of the lesson tapes that had subsequently successful performances. Cazden (1988), Heath (1983), Lindfors (1991), Mehan (1979), and Wells (1986) reported that these characteristics had the potential for affecting the performance of less-successful students in a negative way in the classroom. The researcher suggests that these characteristics did not have the same effect in one-on-one educational settings.

In this study, the features of teacher-student word ratios did not enhance or impede student success. Teachers spoke more than students by ratios from 3:1 to 31:1, and at both extremes there were dyads that experienced subsequent success. By most standards, larger ratios would appear to be indicative of a relatively one-sided conversation that afforded little opportunity for students to engage actively. The data from this study did not show a particular trend in word ratios when looking at successful orientations versus unsuccessful orientations. Neither did the researcher see a trend when
looking at the orientations of individual teachers who had mixed results to see how the ratios changed between their lessons with subsequent successful and unsuccessful performance results.

The suggestion by the researcher is that at this level of analysis, with a relatively small sample size, and a descriptive, qualitative research framework, the ratio of teacher-to-student words did not make a difference. As was noted in the section about question one, the existence of large teacher-student word ratios indicate the kind of positive scaffolding that is done by the teachers in the conversation. In other words, teachers modified the new book orientation to meet the individual needs of students in terms of comprehensible input.

The student responses to teacher questions and information-seeking questions did not show a particular pattern during successful new book orientations either. There was no noticeable pattern or change in the data that led to successful and unsuccessful orientations. Perhaps at this level of student-teacher interaction, the questions were tailored so specifically to the student that they were not difficult for the student. Or perhaps the teacher was able to monitor the student’s understanding to the degree that the teacher could clarify the question when needed more easily than in a larger classroom situation. The limitations of small sample size, qualitative research, and descriptive methodology apply in this case also. The methodology was not designed to explore numeric trends except as a way to describe the data. At this level of analysis, the student response to teacher and information-seeking questions did not show any positive or negative effects.
Summary of Response to Question Two

In summary, the characteristics of the successful new book orientations substantiated the themes of focused content, interactive ease and comprehensible input. A look at the successful dyads revealed consistent references to the students’ experiences when introducing the story’s plot, supporting the student during his/her learning of tricky language structures, a precise choice of which concepts in the plot to explain, and the use of exact, simple language in the explanation. The book choices were discussed in terms of how they affected the language interactions. A look at individual dyads revealed how each one created an atmosphere of interactive ease where the child was able to access comprehensible input. The description of certain characteristics of unsuccessful performances lent understanding about what is necessary to help a child be successful with a particular book.

The researcher suggests that successful new book orientations are a complex mix of many characteristics. Those characteristics are directly related to the particular student-teacher relationship and the particular book. The new book orientation reflects Clay’s general theory about the individual nature of each student’s intervention. Clay (1993) writes,

With problem readers it is not enough for the teacher to have rapport, to generate interesting tasks and generally to be a good teacher. The teacher must be able to design a superbly sequenced programme determined by the child’s performance, and make highly skilled decisions moment by moment during the lesson (p. 9).
Clay's reference to lesson design features in the context of this research are the book choice and how the teacher creates an understanding of the new book's main idea. Clay's reference to highly skilled decisions in the context of this research are the teacher's reactions and perceptions about how the child understands what is being said during the new book orientation, and how the teacher adjusts the conversation to account for that analysis.

The researcher suggests that the data findings describe how the one-on-one tutorial situation is a robust learning environment for Reading Recovery English-language learners when it is crafted by an observant teacher. The one-on-one setting allows the teacher and student to interact in a way that promotes good conversational traits and fosters communication within the learning-teaching dyad. The creation of interactive ease between the participants allows the learning-teaching environment to proceed. Good teaching decisions that connect with the students' personal experiences and support the atmosphere of comprehensible input in terms of conversational content - the explanation of problematic plot concepts and difficult English language structures - enhance successful performance. The teacher's ability to choose new books facilitates that conversation. In addition, the potential problems that might arise for slow-progressing children in relation to teacher-student word ratios and teacher questioning patterns appear to be neutralized in the one-on-one setting.

Question Three: When the student is successful at reading the new book on the subsequent day, as measured by a Running Record of Oral Text Reading, are there common characteristics in the teacher's language during the new book orientation, as
identified by Clay’s (1998) Teacher Language Rubric (Appendix M), that emerge to help explain that success?

Question three asked how the function of teacher language, as measured by Clay’s rubric (Appendix L), helped to explain successful new book orientations. There were distinctive patterns in the kinds of teaching functions that emerged from the data. For all dyads, an analysis of the successful lessons showed that teachers spent over 50% of the teaching moves in two of the groupings of Clay’s rubric: helping the child to access the information of the plot, and inviting the child to construct the authors’ plot and message. The next most-used grouping was presenting new knowledge. These teacher language functions supported the themes of comprehensible input and interactive ease.

*Accessing information.*

When the teacher engaged in language that made information accessible to the child, the child had access to comprehensible input. This process most often entailed telling the student something that helped the student to understand what was happening. The student might understand all of the different and separate parts of the concept, for example, the vocabulary and the sentence structure. Yet, the significant aspect of this rubric grouping is that the child might not understand *how it all works together*. An example follows that illustrates how the researcher conceived of this rubric grouping.

The teacher in Dyad B explained the plot of a simple story book to the student by saying, “Ben wants to paint a picture about his dad.” This picture was one of the pivotal plot devices in the story to tell the reader information about Ben’s dad, a new character. Ben was a little boy who had been introduced in previous books at lower book levels. Ben’s dad had been absent until this text, and had only been vaguely referred to in
previous stories. The dyad continued to discuss the picture as a way to build a sketch about Ben's dad. It helped the student understand how this event fit into Ben's life, and therefore, how the plot worked. This particular example is about the story's plot, but sometimes the teacher might supply sentence and story structure in order to make the text more accessible to the student.

Providing new knowledge.

Teachers provided new knowledge to their students that also allowed for the creation of comprehensible input. The process here was initiated by the teacher when he/she felt that the student was unfamiliar with a vocabulary word. The example that has been used about the grab bag is a good illustration of this grouping because the child did not understand what a grab bag was. Another example follows that illustrates this grouping.

In the text, the teacher in Dyad C began, "They call it a hermit [crab] because it lives inside a shell." The teacher points to the shell. "This kind of crab likes to find a shell to go inside." The student said, "and sleep." The teacher continued, "to keep them safe. The crab gets bigger, so she has to find a new shell so she can get inside." In this case, the student was probably unaware that hermit crabs do not have attached shells, and they have to look for new shells periodically, which provided the story line for this book. The teacher's job here was to give new information to the student so that when she read the story, it would make sense. This is another good example of helping the student to have access to comprehensible input.
Active engagement in constructing the author’s plot.

Interactive ease was facilitated by the teacher’s invitation to the student to actively engage in constructing the author’s plot. The kind of language used invited participation, taught the child that participation was expected during the reading process, and directed the student’s attention to certain features of the print or the illustrations to help this process happen. It was done in a way that supported the student’s attempts and scaffolded the reading process.

In one passage of the conversation in Dyad A, the dialogue helped the student to construct the understanding that one character, Emma, was happy with a costume that her mother made for her. Her brother, Matthew, was not happy with his costume. This setup provided the problem in the text that needed to be resolved. Table 23 illustrates the guided learning that occurred in this kind of action.

In this particular passage the teacher “led” the student to consider the implications of the illustration in such a way as to anticipate what would happen in the plot. The example is included here to help show how the invitation to actively construct the author’s plot was done in a way that also created interactive ease. In a learning situation where the end goal is to have the child learn how the reading process works, it seems important that the learning be accompanied by enough support to allow the child to work and to feel comfortable at the same time. This learning-teaching example supports Lyons (2003) idea about the synergy of cognitive and emotional responses to the same learning sequence. Interactive ease is present if the child is allowed to feel supported during the learning process.
The researcher also suggests that these kinds of teaching moves with language functions that supply access to comprehensible input and are accomplished with interactive ease build an understanding within the child that he/she can become a reader. It is very much like Gee's (2001) analysis that successful readers learn reading is an active creation by the reader of the appropriate language and meanings in conjunction with print.

Table 23

*Active Engagement in Constructing the Author’s Plot*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Look that’s Emma. Look at Emma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>She is a bear. Does she look happy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>She does. Well, turn over, we’ll take a look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Oh look.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Look at Matthew…What is he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>He’s a rabbit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Is he happy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>No (emphatic head shake)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>No he’s not, is he? So what do you…? Let’s see what happens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Summary of Response to Question Three*

The use of Clay’s Teacher Language Rubric produced data that reiterated two themes, interactive ease and comprehensible input, that were also found in the data related to answering questions one and two in the study. Specifically, when the teacher
invited the child to engage actively in the construction of the author’s plot, the teacher built interactive ease. When teacher language helped the child to access information in the text and build new knowledge for the child, the teacher created comprehensible input. Yet, the data from Clay’s rubric added to the study’s descriptive nature because it identified the teacher language that was linked to those themes. Teachers spent time helping the child to understand the story’s plot in ways that promoted the student’s active construction of meaning. Equally, care was given to creating a comfortable learning environment.

Teaching that supports interactive ease and comprehensible input are supported by the Reading Recovery lesson because they are reflected in Clay’s theory. Clay (1993) writes that the teacher’s role is to help the child be ready to integrate knowledge about the meaning of the story, the language and the printed text (letters, words, and spaces) in order to be able to read. The first sentence of the following quotation discusses the teacher’s effort to facilitate the child’s ability to read. It uses terminology that relates to research about memory - “recency and familiarity”. In other words, a student should be guided to use ideas that have been introduced recently or that are already familiar, in order to be able to decode. Clay states:

This effort to facilitate responding might be explained in terms like recency and familiarity. Another explanation is that the teacher is ensuring that the child has in his head the ideas and the language he needs to produce when prompted in sequence by print cues. (p. 37)
The ideas presented in this quote promote the creation of reading strategies that underlie Gee’s (2001) idea of creating an active reader who understands that the reading task is one of constructing meaning.

The teacher’s role is to help the student learn to do this active reading. Clay’s instructions to Reading Recovery teachers direct them to scaffold that active processing. The condition of interactive ease is necessary in order to have that learning take place. The child is actually learning how to do two equally important things in this learning-to-read conversation. The student is learning the actual process of decoding print, and also how to become an active reader. Given that this study was done with students who are English-language learners, it seems important that an educator have access to information that would make comprehensible input and interactive ease clearly defined in real educational settings.

**Limitations to the Study and Directions for Future Research**

The limitations to this study are those connected with case study methodology in general. Transcriptions and lesson records of 45 lessons, and observations of nine lessons make up the total data collected. This allowed the researcher to analyze in depth the material collected, but did not create a study that necessarily could be generalized to a larger or more diverse population.

Additionally, the researcher understands that her position as a former Reading Recovery teacher leader may have biased her interpretation of the data. The researcher used her experience in the field and the questions that emerged from her observations of, and experience working with, English-language learners to guide the data analysis. That can be considered a strength because as an insider she understood the significance of the
language and the teaching situations that emerged. However, it also had the potential to prejudice the data analysis portion of the study because her training dictated the perspective that she used to analyze it. One of the answers to this last limitation is that she made clear during the entire paper the possible significance of her position. Another answer was to allow readers to understand the study's methodology, which was described in chapter 3, and to have access to as much of the preliminary data interpretation as possible, which is done in Appendixes K and L. These last two safeguards would help a reader to develop a similar study or to propose other possible conclusions to the data analysis.

The possibilities for future study are many. This study provided a preliminary description of the characteristics found in educational conversations during the new book orientation. It would be interesting to expand the educational community's understanding of teaching-learning conversations in the tutorial setting in general, and Reading Recovery lesson in particular, by interpreting similar raw data—taped and transcribed lessons with slightly different questions. First, more could be learned about the effectiveness of the learning situation and teacher language if a study were done of an exemplary Reading Recovery teacher with two different students: one who made good progress in the intervention and one who did not.

Second, would the researcher's speculation about the importance of devoting time to building context and meaning for English-language learners be validated if the study data were analyzed differently? For instance, a researcher could analyze the content of the transcriptions to see what percentage of time was spent on the book's meaning and language structure versus the percentage of time spent on decoding. Those percentages
could be linked with performance outcomes. The study could be duplicated with slightly different questions that included an analysis of the book choices that were made by the teachers.

Finally, studies might be done to gain further insight about the English-language learning, low-achieving students who participated in Reading Recovery. A longitudinal study could be done on ELLs who were in the Reading Recovery intervention and how they later achieved in school. When students receive their primary literacy instruction in Spanish, and when they are also low-achieving students, the appropriate intervention strategy is the Spanish adaptation of Reading Recovery - Descubriendo la Lectura. Another interesting longitudinal study would be how Spanish-dominant students who participated in Reading Recovery and those who participated in Descubriendo la Lectura progressed in subsequent schooling.

**Conclusions**

The research literature (e.g. Clay, 1993; Neal & Kelly, 1999; Ashdown & Simic, 2000) shows that Reading Recovery is a successful intervention program for the lowest-progressing English-language learners. A review of this study’s findings helps to describe why Reading Recovery is successful. This study also extends the literature (e.g. Allington, 1994; Juel, 1986; Wasik & Slavin, 1990) about why one-on-one tutorial settings are good educational environments for low progress students. The description of the conversations that introduce new books to Reading Recovery students helps to explain what good teaching looks like.

High-quality teaching about phonics, letter and word knowledge, and writing continue in conjunction with reading and writing whole texts in every Reading Recovery
student's program. The study's findings about new book orientation conversations fit within this larger framework of Reading Recovery teaching during the whole lesson.

There are three over-riding themes that emerge from the data: First, the characteristics of good conversation occur in student-teacher interchanges during the new-book orientation. The one-on-one setting allows both participants to be active constructors of the conversation and to concentrate on making meaning. The fact that Reading Recovery lessons share some of the characteristics with the highly-successful caregiver-child conversations found in Wells (1986) work is a positive indication of a successful learning environment. The fact that the orientations contain positive aspects of a learning conversation is significant for the ELL population because English-language learners in the Reading Recovery program are learning language at the same time that they are learning to read.

Second, the positive learning environment is substantiated in the study's findings about interactive ease. In seven of the nine student-teacher dyads studied, there was a noticeable atmosphere of comfort and familiarity. This is not to suggest that the dyads did not work hard during the observations and taped lessons. As was noted in chapter 3 and subsequently, the video tapes and observations showed the students and teachers focused on the new book or on some concept that would help to explain the new book 100% of the time.

The interactive ease of these learning-teaching negotiations characterized Reading Recovery lessons. Individual teachers and students reflected interactive ease in very different ways – for example, smiles, laughter, student interruptions, and playful language. The researcher's impression of the seven dyads that demonstrated interactive
ease was that the dyad’s rapport helped to engender learning and engagement. The reader is reminded that Juel’s (1986) research found affection and bonding in both successful and unsuccessful tutorial relationships. This researcher suggests, based on the relative lack-of-success of the two dyads that did not demonstrate interactive ease, that rapport or bonding enhanced the learning process. These kinds of personal, comfortable lesson environments seem especially important for ELLs and/or for students who are having the most difficult time making average progress in the regular classroom situation.

Third, the data findings showed that the teachers spent time creating comprehensible input for their students. Much of this comprehensible input centered on the context and meaning of the story. The researcher notes that in addition to appropriate, purposeful attention being directed to decoding words, the creation of context and meaning was evident in all of the new book orientations. The teachers did some specific things to help create comprehensible input – for example, relating the book to the child’s experience, practicing the difficult language structure with the child, helping the child to access whole concepts, and creating a new book orientation where the student understood the book’s main idea. The researcher contends that this kind of teaching is important for all children, and for all low-progress children, but it is most important for those who are also English-language learners. Based on the meta analysis done by Cummins (2000) of bilingual education and literacy instruction for English-language learners, comprehensible input is a key component to good ELL instruction.

The combination of these characteristics seems to overpower the possibility that Reading Recovery English-language learners would not benefit from this educational setting because of school-home cultural incongruity. The success of English-language
learners in the Reading Recovery program is attributable to many more causes than were analyzed in this study. However, the study found these elements to be characteristic of new book orientations in a study where 80% of the Running Records in the study scored 90% or better.

A Final Note

The results of this study shed light on why Reading Recovery teachers are effective with their English-language learners. The results also help the Reading Recovery community become more aware of how the atmosphere of their teaching conversations affect their students' ability to learn. A comfortable, safe lesson environment holds the hope that the child will be more engaged in the learning process and better able to read the new book.

In order for a remediation like Reading Recovery to be replicable, the elements that make it successful must be explained in real-life terms to teachers and trainers who work daily with low-progress English-language learners. Research helps educational professionals to identify exemplary methodology and pedagogy. The strength of this study is to put a face on the methodology. It is important to reassert for Reading Recovery professionals that Reading Recovery is successful for ELLs, and to describe the elements of the program that work well for them. In addition, Reading Recovery professionals can begin to explore how to use their own personality and teaching style to build a comfortable environment in which learning flourishes.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Example of a Typical Running Record
## RUNNING RECORD SHEET

**Name:** [Blurred]

**School:** _________

**Date:** 11-27

**D. of B.:** _________

**Age:** ______ yrs ______ mths

### Text Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Titles</th>
<th>Running words</th>
<th>Error rate</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Self-correction rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Easy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1:</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>1: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Instructional</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1:</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>1: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hard</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1:</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>1: 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directional movement:** Good - appropriate

### Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections

- **Information used or neglected** [Meaning (M), Structure or Syntax (S), Visual (V)]
  - **Easy**
    - Instructional: used (M, S, V = whole word, beginning, word +)
    - Word configuration: maybe /hi-wei/
    - Here be
  - **Hard**

### Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections

(see Observation Survey pages 30-32)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Information used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>MSV, M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cross-checking on information (Note that this behaviour changes over time)*

Integration: __________

Analysis of Errors and Self-corrections:

(see Observation Survey pages 30-32)
Appendix B

California English Language Development Test
SKILL AREA PROFICIENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTORS, GRADES K AND 1

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

(Students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 are assessed only in Listening and Speaking.)

Advanced: Students who perform at this level on the CELDT typically

• understand and use more extensive vocabulary and more complex syntax, with minor problems in comprehension or communication.
• understand and follow all simple oral directions.
• tell a coherent story based on a picture sequence, clearly expressing its main point using complete sentences, without errors that significantly hinder communication, though perhaps without giving much elaboration.

Early Advanced: Students who perform at this level on the CELDT typically

• understand and use a somewhat more extensive vocabulary and simple syntax, with occasional problems in comprehension or communication.
• understand and follow many simple oral directions.
• tell a somewhat coherent story based on a picture sequence, but without clearly expressing its main point, using some complete sentences with gaps in vocabulary and errors that hinder communication.

Intermediate: Students who perform at this level on the CELDT typically

• understand and use simple vocabulary and syntax, with significant gaps in comprehension and frequent errors in communication.
• understand and follow a few simple oral directions.
• tell a story that is not coherent based on a picture sequence, using phrases and incomplete sentences, with scant vocabulary and numerous errors that hinder communication.

Early Intermediate: Students who perform at this level on the CELDT typically
• understand and use very basic vocabulary, but make frequent errors, with severely limited comprehension and communication.

• understand and attempt to follow a few simple oral directions.

• tell part of a story, using simple words and phrases.

**Beginning:** Students who perform at this level on the CELDT may demonstrate **no** receptive/productive skills, or may

• understand or attempt to use a few basic words, with severely limited comprehension and communication.

• attempt to follow simple oral directions, with severely limited success.
Appendix C

Recruitment Telephone Script
Hello ____________, this is Leslie Yerington.

I am doing a research study about Reading Recovery teacher-student conversations during the lessons. I am looking for volunteers among those of you who are currently teaching Reading Recovery with a Spanish-dominant English language learning student. Do you have an ELL whose parents would allow him/her to participate?

I am asking each volunteer teacher to submit five videotaped lessons, the lesson records from those lessons, and allow me to do one site visit. I would like you to carry-out the taping in the same way that you do for your regular Reading Recovery training sessions. You can point the camera at the table where you and the student are sitting, and record the lessons without any camera person there. I know that if you move outside of the camera’s range during the lesson that the video will not record that movement.

The site visit will be like your regular teacher leader’s site visits. I will be happy to discuss the lesson with you after it is over.

I am trying to find out more about how we support and interact with our students who are English-language learners. I will use this information to write my dissertation.

I will meet with you after I have made a transcript of your tapes and looked at the observation notes. I want to make sure that you and I agree on what you and your student were talking about during the lesson. After the study is complete, I will share the results with you.

If you decide to participate, all your answers will be confidential. I will not link any of your personal information to the write-up of my study. Your participation and your student’s will be completely anonymous. You may decide to withdraw from the
study at any time, and I will honor that decision. If you decide to withdraw, I will not use any of your information in my study.

Thanks,
Appendix D

Sample Letter of District and School’s Approval for Participation in the Research Study
To whom it may concern:

Johnson Elementary School and Cajon Valley Union School District support Leslie Yerington in the exploratory study that she is doing about the conversations between Reading Recovery teachers and their students. We believe that any improvement in student-teacher communication practices will have benefits for all children in the Reading Recovery program.

Leslie has permission to observe and tape record the Reading Recovery lessons. We understand that the data collection and data analysis procedures will protect the teachers' and students' identities, and that all reports about the study will protect that anonymity. We have reviewed the parent consent letters that allow the students to participate in the study, the teacher consent letters, and the student assent letters. In reviewing the study's methodology, we believe that all participants will be fully informed about the study's purpose and progress so that they may make an informed decision to participate. There appears to be no potential risks to the study because the teachers and the students are not asked to do anything that is outside of their normal Reading Recovery lessons. Leslie will submit a final copy of the report at the conclusion of the study.

Sincerely,

XXXXXX, Principal
Appendix E

Teacher’s Consent to Act as a Participant in a Research Study
I would like you to collaborate in a research study with me. The study’s purpose is to understand more about the teacher-student conversations that teachers have with their English-language learners during Reading Recovery lessons. Before you give your consent to participate, it is very important that you and I read and talk about your rights as a participant. Please ask questions if any part of this paper is unclear.

I will observe and take notes during one of your lessons. I will also ask you videotape five of your lessons, and then I will transcribe those tapes. I will review the written transcriptions to identify any patterns or themes about how teachers speak with students and ask them questions. I will share with you my understanding of what you were trying to accomplish during the student-teacher conversation, before I analyze the conversation for themes and patterns. I will also share the report that I write.

The benefits for you as a participant are the chance to understand your teaching better through our interactions. Your students may also benefit because you may make better teaching decisions, based on that reflection. There may be additional benefits to your teaching in general if you find it helpful to analyze your teaching based on what you see in the tapes. I hope that the report will help all Reading Recovery professionals to teach our English-language learners better.
You and I will be the only people who will listen to the tapes and to look at the transcripts of the tapes. The transcripts will be locked in a file cabinet in my office, and will be destroyed in five years. As I write the report about the study, I will make sure that your and your student’s identities are strictly confidential.

Participation in the study is voluntary. Your choice about whether to participate or not will not affect any aspect of your work. If you do become a participant, you may withdraw from the study at any point. I will honor your withdrawal, and not use any information from the tapes and observations in the study. There will be no penalty for your withdrawal of consent.

If you have any questions at any time, please contact Leslie Yerington, at 619-468-3073 or email me at lay@yerington.org. You may also contact my university supervisor, Patricia Kelly, at 619 594-0181.

Your signature at the end of this letter indicates that you have read the information, and that you and I have talked. Your signature indicates that you agree to be in the study, and that you may withdraw your consent at any time. Your signature does not mean that you give up any of your legal rights.

I give my consent to collaborate in the project about Teacher-Student Interactions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant's name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant's Signature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher's Signature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Consent for my Child to Participate in a Research Study
My name is Leslie Yerington, and I am a student at SDSU and University of San Diego. I am asking for your permission to tape record five of your child’s Reading Recovery Lessons and to observe one of those lessons for a research study that I am doing. Please read this letter and talk to your child’s Reading Recovery teacher about it so that you understand what this means, before you sign the letter.

I am studying how teachers and children talk together during the Reading Recovery lesson. I hope to find some information that will make it easier for Reading Recovery teachers to help children learn more.

I will watch and take notes during one of your child’s lessons. This is actually part of my regular job duties in the schools. Your child and his/her teacher will not do anything different during the lessons. Your child’s Reading Recovery teacher will also tape record five lessons. I will watch those videos and record the conversation in writing. I will review the written notes to find patterns or themes about how we speak with our students and ask them questions. I will be happy to play the tapes for you or show you copies of the notes at any time.

The tapes and the notes will be kept in my locked filing cabinet for five years and then destroyed, so that no one else will be able to look at them. I will make sure that your child’s name and the teacher’s name is confidential during all parts of the study. I will never use your child’s real name, his/her teacher’s name or the school name when I write.
my report, and I will not identify him/her to anybody. That will ensure your confidentiality.

Your child will continue to have Reading Recovery lessons, even if you decide that he/she should not be in the study. Your decision will not affect his/her program at all. At any time, if you feel uncomfortable, you may say that you do not want him to continue in the study. I will destroy the tapes and the notes immediately. There will be no repercussions if you decide that your child should drop out of the research study.

If you have any questions at any time, please call Leslie Yerington, 619 468-3073, or my research supervisor at the University, Patricia Kelly, 619 594-0181. You can also call your child’s Reading Recovery teacher, __________ at __________. If you have questions about your child’s rights as a human subject in a research study, you may call the Committee on Protection of Human Subjects at San Diego State, 619-594-6622.

Your signature at the end of this letter means that you have read the information, and have talked with your child’s Reading Recovery teacher about it if you have questions. Your signature means that you agree to your child being in the study, and that you may withdraw your consent at any time. Your signature does not mean that you give up any of your legal rights.

My child has permission to be in the Teacher-Child Conversation Research Study.
Child's name

Your name

Your signature  Date

Reading Recovery teacher signature  Date

My signature  Date
Appendix G

Assent to Participate in a Research Study
Your teacher is going to tape record five of your lessons. You two will do the same things that you always do. The tape will help me to see the good reading and writing work that you do.

You do not have to let your teacher tape record you – you can say no. If you say no, he/she will not do it, and you will have your regular Reading Recovery lesson with your teacher.

Is that OK with you? If it is OK with you, please sign right here.

_________________________________________________________________________
Student Name

_________________________________________________________________________
Student Signature

_________________________________________________________________________
Date
Appendix H

Spanish Translation of Consent for my Child to Participate in a Research Study
Consentimiento para la participación de mi hijo(a) en un estudio de investigación

**Investigadores:** Mi nombre es Leslie Yerington y soy una estudiante en SDSU y la Universidad de San Diego. Deseo pedir su permiso para grabar seis de las lecciones de Reading Recovery con su hijo(a) y para observar una de esas lecciones para un estudio de investigación que estoy llevando a cabo. Por favor lea esta carta y hable con la maestra de Reading Recovery de su hijo(a) para que el/ella le explique lo que este estudio significa y le responda cualquier pregunta que pueda tener antes de firmar esta carta.

**El Propósito del Estudio:** Yo estoy estudiando como los maestros y los niños se hablan durante la lección de Reading Recovery. Espero poder encontrar alguna información que les facilite a los maestros de Reading Recovery a ayudar a los niños a aprender más.

**El Proceso:** Yo vería y tomaría apuntes durante una de las lecciones con su hijo(a). Esto es de hecho parte de mi trabajo regular en las escuelas. Su hijo(a) y su maestro no harían nada diferente durante las lecciones. El maestro de Reading Recovery de su hijo(a) también grabará seis lecciones. Yo veré esos videos y registrará la conversación por escrito. Revisaré las notas escritas para identificar patrones o temas sobre la forma de hablar con nuestros estudiantes. Yo estoy dispuesta para tocar las cintas grabadas o mostrarles copias de las notas cuando usted quiera.

**La Confidencialidad:** Las cintas y las notas se mantendrán en un archivero con seguro por cinco años y luego serán destruidos, así que nadie más podrá accesarlos. Yo me aseguraré
que el nombre de su hijo(a) y del maestro(a) se mantenga confidencial durante todo el
tiempo del estudio. Nunca usaré el nombre verdadero de su hijo(a), su maestro(a) o de su
escuela cuando yo escriba mi reporte y no lo identificaré con nadie. Esto es para asegurar
su confidencialidad.

Su hijo(a) continuará sus lecciones de Reading Recovery, aún si usted decide que su
hijo(a) no participe en este estudio. Su decisión no afectará su participación en el
programa. Si usted decide que su hijo(a) puede participar en este estudio, usted puede
cancelar su participación en cualquier momento que usted lo decida. En ese caso yo
destruiré las cintas y las notas inmediatamente. No habrá repercusión alguna por
suspendir la participación de su hijo(a) en el estudio.

Si tiene preguntas antes o durante el periodo del estudio, por favor llámeme (Leslie
Yerington, 619-468-3073) o a mi supervisora de investigación en la Universidad,
Patricia Kelly al 619 594-3241. También puede llamar a su maestra de Reading
Recovery, _________________ al ___________________. Si tiene
alguna duda sobre los derechos de su hijo(a) en lo que se refiere a sujeto humano en el
estudio de la investigación, puede llamar al Comité de Protección de Sujetos Humanos en
la Universidad Estatal de San Diego (SDSU, por sus siglas en inglés) al 619-594-6622.
El Consentimiento: Su firma al final de esta carta significa que usted ha leído y comprendido esta información, y que ha hablado con la maestra de Reading Recovery de su hijo(a) y aclarado cualquier duda que pudiera haber tenido.

Su firma significa que esta usted de acuerdo que su hijo(a) participe en este estudio, y que esta consciente de que puede suspender su participación en cualquier momento. Su firma no significa que usted esta cediendo ninguno de sus derechos legales.

Mi hijo(a) tiene mi permiso para participar en el estudio de investigación de Interacción Maestro-Alumno.

Nombre del estudiante

______________________________
Nombre de la madre, el padre o tutor

______________________________
Firma de la madre, el padre o tutor Fecha

______________________________
Firma del maestro(a) de Reading Recovery Fecha

______________________________
Firma de la Investigadora Fecha
Appendix I

Reading Recovery Lesson Observation Protocol
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student behaviors</th>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J

Example of a Typical Reading Recovery Lesson Record
**LESSON RECORD**

**WEEK/LESSON 6/23**

**DATE: 10-14-03**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW TEXT</th>
<th>RE-READING</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>TAKING WORDS APART IN READING</th>
<th>LETTER IDENTIFICATION MAKING AND BREAKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Bulldozer</td>
<td>Dan 4</td>
<td>fast - no expression;</td>
<td>can</td>
<td>Cook - s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>good pg turns;</td>
<td></td>
<td>- ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>that has sc are sc</td>
<td></td>
<td>- ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>praise pg turns;</td>
<td>f-far sc</td>
<td>I make wd; he guesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pat's Puppy</td>
<td>was; had; sc</td>
<td>f-fast sc</td>
<td>+ done easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Friend</td>
<td>play; sc; good pg</td>
<td></td>
<td>- needs wd; work of &quot;his&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for LW</td>
<td>turns; prompt for fast + good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>running-</td>
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<td>Joe + Bike</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>90%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1:4 self-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>correction</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

-LBD likes to help but the other machines tell him to go away because he is too little. Let's read to see...

-Lang: "I'm not to little am I?"

-faster, s.m.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTION WORDS AND FLUENCY PRACTICE</th>
<th>SPATIAL CONCEPTS</th>
<th>SEQUENCING</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My dad could do a wheelie.</td>
<td>Dad (correct w/ prompt)</td>
<td>*neatness good spacing between ws. w/ in wd</td>
<td>✓/✓/✓/✓ ✓</td>
<td>tracking w/ multi lines appears to be problem. Does he always look @ 1st letter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheelie 1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>do x 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>see ↓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feet - him ↓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sleep - me ↓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheelie</td>
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Appendix K

Characteristics of the Participants and the New Book Orientations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
</tr>
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<td>f/f</td>
<td>m/f</td>
<td>f/f</td>
<td>f/m</td>
<td>f/m</td>
<td>Suc/Unsuc</td>
<td>f/m</td>
<td>f/f</td>
<td>m/f</td>
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<td>582</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>1013</td>
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<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>51%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>52%/59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>53%/61%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%/50%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53%/54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>48%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>48%/50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>47%/39%</td>
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<td>50%/50%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>60%</td>
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<td>58%</td>
<td>47%/65%</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>31%</td>
<td>35%/29%</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>6%/3%</td>
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<td>7%/12%</td>
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Appendix K
Complete Data Table of Student and Teacher Characteristics and their Interactions

Note. There are two columns of data for Dyads F-I - data for all lessons, and data for lessons with subsequently successful Running Record results and for lessons with unsuccessful Running Record Results (Suc/Unsuc).
Appendix L

The Function of Teacher Language
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyad</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Suc/Unsuc</th>
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<tr>
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<td>47%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%/50%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>54%/32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>27%</td>
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<td>3%</td>
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<td>19%</td>
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<td>36%/27%</td>
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<td>0/0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0/2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0/3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix L**

Complete Data Table for Teacher Language Characterized by Teaching Function According to Clay’s Rubric

*Note.* *The numbers in column A correspond to the number of the teacher language function referred to in the text. For example, “1.” refers to the data that describes how teacher language maintained interactive ease.*

There are two columns of data for Dyads F - I - data for all lessons, and data for lessons with subsequently successful Running Record results and for lessons with unsuccessful Running Record Results (Suc/Unsuc).
Appendix M

Teacher Language Rubric
The following are descriptions of the function of the language used by the teacher when talking with the student during the new book introduction. I will use this rubric to characterize the kind of language that the teacher uses.

1. Maintain interactive ease: The teacher repeats or expands what the child says. He/she alerts the child to new features of the text in an abbreviated way, rather than discuss them extensively.

2. Increase the accessibility of information from the text: The teacher provides information – vocabulary, sentence structure, meaning of story, that will help the child to problem solve a difficult word or phrase in the text.

3. Prompt the child to constructive activity: To help the child understand the plot, the teacher links something from the text to the child’s personal knowledge. For example, the teacher might pause for the child to generate the ending. “How do you think X felt?”

4. Accept partially correct responses.

5. Tighten the criteria of acceptability: “I like the way you thought about X, but did you notice...?”

6. Probe to find out what the child knows.

7. Present new knowledge.

8. Ask the child to work with new knowledge.

9. Provide a model to facilitate new learning.
This rubric was developed and published in Clay, M.M. (1998). *By different paths to common outcomes*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann (pp 175-181). It is used with verbal permission of the author.