A CASE STUDY ON VIDEO-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Stephen J. Winton

August 2018

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Abstract

Pearson and Gallagher's (1983) Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model suggests the starting point of teaching is modeling. As teacher expertise is essential in supporting good instruction, teachers need modeling of best-practice instruction. Video-based demonstration lessons allow for on-demand modeling opportunities in a variety of settings**.** The aim of this study was to examine the perceptions of district-level curriculum staff at an urban school district who created a series of video-based demonstration lessons to support a balanced literacy initiative. The following research questions were addressed in this study: (1) What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons? and (2) What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity? A collective case study was utilized and interviews along with a focus group of secondary district-level literacy and English language arts instructional coaches who experienced the video-based demonstration lessons was conducted. The constant comparative method was used to analyze interview data and develop themes**.** Instructional coaches in this study perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling, offered the authenticity of a district classroom setting, supported the district's vision of instruction, contained choice of accessible videos, was of use in instructional coaches' work, and positively impacted teacher capacity**.** Examining these perceptions and how one district implemented video-based demonstration lessons offered insights into how this process could be replicated or adapted. This study suggested that the model of *Thinking Made Visible* offered a useful tool in implementing a district's instructional vision and building teacher capacity.

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Chapter I

Introduction

A personal experience informed this study's researcher on the importance of demonstration lessons. In the fall of 2009, the researcher was the director of curriculum for secondary English language arts for a large charter school system. At that time, the researcher was by no means an expert in literacy instruction. An elementary colleague and the researcher were looking to learn. They met a nationally-renowned literacy presenter to whom the researcher will subsequently refer to as the presenter, who agreed to serve as a consultant. They asked the presenter to conduct demonstration lessons at the district's schools. To facilitate, the researcher followed the presenter from school to school. The presenter taught through a balanced literacy framework that focused on supported, student-centered, authentic literacy experiences, which the researcher had never experienced. Sitting and watching the presenter conduct fifteen to twenty demonstration lessons taught the researcher how to teach. It was better than any teacher preparation program, any workshop, or any professional book the researcher could have read. Of course, professional development and professional reading are essential in building teacher expertise; but, had the researcher not first seen the presenter teach, the researcher would not have had a vision for what balanced literacy instruction is.

Of course, the researcher was extremely lucky to have such an experience. Schools often employ mentoring programs to provide support. A challenge to such work is the effect of teacher turnover, which has increased the number of new teachers in need of mentoring. This problem is particularly pronounced in large urban school districts. Marinell and Coca noted that in New York City public schools, "27 percent of middle

school teachers left their school within one year of having entered; 55 percent left within three years; and 66 percent left within five years" (2013, p. iv-v).

A challenge for supporting teachers in such a situation is providing enough mentors with expertise to meet the need of the volume of new teachers. It would be ideal if every teacher could experience demonstration lessons similar to those in which the researcher participated. However, there often is not enough capacity within schools or districts to provide such one-on-one support, given such turnover rates.

Statement of the Problem

One of the most significant problems in education is the lack of capacity to build teacher expertise. As Allington noted, "good teachers, effective teachers, matter much more than particular curriculum materials, pedagogical approaches, or 'proven programs.' It has become clearer that investing in good teaching - whether through making sound hiring decisions or planning effective professional development - is the most 'research-based' strategy available" (2002, p. 12). Changing hiring procedures or rethinking professional development can help, but when teachers lack mentors with expertise, or skilled mentors are stretched thin due to the high volume of teachers in need of support, building teacher expertise across a school or district is especially challenging.

Pearson and Gallagher (1983) discussed the Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model, the first step of which is modeling. For learning to occur, it is best to begin by modeling the activity. If one wants to teach students to make inferences as they read, then the teacher should first read aloud and think aloud about the inferences he or she makes. Therefore, to build expertise it is essential for teachers to first watch demonstrations of effective teaching.

Wood Ray in *Study Driven* wrote, “Before revision, vision” (2006, p. 35). She referred to the need to read from mentor texts to build a vision for writing, but the same principle applies in education. Teachers might hear about practices such as interactive read-aloud or supported independent reading in professional development and professional reading, and of course there is great learning found in such sources, but it is very difficult to form a vision for what best practice instruction is without seeing it in practice through actual teacher and student interactions.

Further, in the No Child Left Behind legislation (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) eras, there has been a shift towards a test-preparation philosophy. There is enormous pressure resulting from high-stakes testing for students to do well on mandated standardized testing and schools often center instruction on practicing for such tests. However, Allington noted that none of the exemplary teachers he studied relied on test-preparation methods and suggests that best-practice instruction is a preferred route for student achievement (2002, p. 740). If there is no model for an alternative and if teachers and administrators have no vision of what effective instruction looks and sounds like, then it is all too easy to rely on worksheets and rote instruction.

The need for modeling of expert instruction is of special note given high teacher turnover rates. Teacher turnover most affects student populations of high need. Carver Thomas and Darling-Hammond stated, “turnover rates are 50% higher in Title I schools, which serve more low-income students. Turnover rates are also 70% higher for teachers in schools serving the largest concentrations of students of color” (2017). In reflecting on this quotation from Thomas and Darling-Hammond, the researcher of this study suggested a lack of mentorship might contribute to the turnover rate above, as teachers

grow frustrated from a lack of support and leave their current position or the profession. Thinking from a district perspective, it is difficult to conceive of how to provide the kind of one-to-one expert mentoring that teachers need to grow in expertise given available staffing.

The need to build teacher expertise through modeling and mentoring is not limited to districts with high teacher turnover rates. All teachers, new and experienced alike, grow in expertise through experiencing modeled demonstration lessons and reflecting on how they might incorporate ideas into their own practice (Villarreal, 2010, p. 1). Further, Kucan, Hapgood, and Palincsar studied 60 upper-elementary teachers and found only one-third of teachers could engage in effective inferring instruction or questioning techniques; most used only general probes (2011, p. 75). Thus, a need to build teacher expertise is prevalent. The two-thirds of teachers who lack foundational teaching strategies, as indicated from the above study, would benefit from modeling and mentoring and the one-third with effective teaching skills would benefit from further refinement and reflection through watching examples of expert instruction.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how video-based demonstration lessons might support building teacher capacity and reinforce a school district's instructional vision. This study centered on a new form of video-based demonstrations lessons to address the above problem. Existing forms of videos of demonstrating teaching strategies tend to fall into three categories. The first category consists of footage captured of classroom teachers. These videos are very valuable in that they show the work of exemplary classroom teachers. However, such videos tend to be very general,

such as a video focusing on the broad teaching strategy like modeling, or show lessons out of context of a wider instructional vision. If a central office wants to provide professional development of many key instructional strategies to support the vision of the district, it is difficult to partner with classroom teachers to achieve such a goal. The district staff would need to tell the teacher to teach certain lessons on certain dates that work for the film crew, which would disrupt the natural flow of the teacher's lesson plan cycle and take over the classroom. The district would have to select an expert teacher and the demands of filming a series of lessons might undercut the teacher's autonomy. Of course, the district could partner with multiple teachers, but forming partnerships with so many teachers is logistically complex. With the demands on the central office staff's and teachers' time, creating a complex filming schedule of specific teaching strategies would not likely be done. It would take double the preparation time to collaborate with the outside party on what specifically the district wants captured and it could lead to frustration on all sides. This is one reason why videos featuring classroom teachers tend to be very general, with topics such as "small-group work" or "classroom management."

A second category of video-based instructional support is when district-level staff record teaching strategies in a studio without the presence of students. These videos do not require the logistical work of setting up filming in a school and it is less pressure on the presenter. Usually, the district-level staff member stands in a studio and teaches as if students were there. These videos have the advantage that the district can easily target specific key strategies they want highlighted. However, modeling a teaching strategy in a studio lacks the authenticity of working with actual students and the complex interactions of teaching are lost. Essentially, the viewer is looking at a district-level staff talking in

front of a green screen. This tends to be monologic instead of the dialogic nature of a balanced literacy classroom.

A third category of video-based teacher support consists of teaching captured from outside sources, such videos of nationally-known educators that sometimes accompany their books. It is of course wonderful to watch these master teachers in action, but since such videos are not filmed in the teachers' districts, they may reject them because of differences in the student population and setting.

This study centered a new form of video-based professional development, in which district-staff creates a strategic vision for key instructional components to be filmed and the district staff teach the lessons with district students. An advantage of this is that the district staff can tailor what is to be captured on video to the instructional vision of the district, the videos can specifically target the most beneficial strategies, the work will have the added authenticity of teaching involving the district's own students, and the videos will document the dialogic nature of balanced literacy instruction.

Research Design

This study was designed as a qualitative case study, incorporating narrative elements to presentation and analysis, regarding the creation of a series of video-based demonstration lessons entitled *Thinking Made Visible* for a large urban school district. The researcher created this video series, collaborating with colleagues from the district's literacy and media team, to provide a resource in building teacher expertise and support the district's balanced literacy initiative for middle school and high school. The lessons were filmed and the videos were implemented beginning in the 2015-2016 school year,

with additional videos created in the 2016-2017 school year. The researcher of this study created and implemented *Thinking Made Visible*, writing lessons, teaching on camera, editing the content, and distributing the videos. Three other literacy instructional coaches created content for the series. The series was produced in collaboration with the district's media production team. These district-staff demonstration lesson videos featured both video exemplar lessons, which are complete lessons ranging from 35 minutes to over an hour, and key strategy videos briefly highlighting specific instructional topics. Video exemplar lessons typically began with an interactive read-aloud modeling a reading comprehension strategy, gradually releasing responsibility for the thinking to the students through discussion and shared reading. Debriefs with other teachers watching the lessons being filmed were sometimes included, in an attempt to recreate the professional dialogue about the teaching strategies presented that often follow traditional face-to-face demonstrational lessons. As of June 2018, *Thinking Made Visible* offered 10 video exemplar lessons and 19 key strategy videos to support the district's literacy instruction.

The goal of this study was to explore district-level instructional coaches' perceptions of *Thinking Made Visible's* design, content, and implementation and its impact on teacher capacity. This contributed to the purpose of the study, which is to explore how video-based professional development might support building teacher expertise and reinforce a school district's instructional vision.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used in this case study of video-based professional development and are defined below:

Balanced Literacy - a method of teaching that centers on modeling useful reading and writing strategies through authentic texts, followed by collaboration, with support and choice offered in independent learning (Strickland, 2018).

A Demonstration Lesson – when a teacher models teaching strategies with students to help another teacher build expertise (Villarreal, 2010, p. 1).

A Classroom-Teacher Demonstration Lesson Video - when a classroom teacher's work is filmed, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

An Externally-Created Demonstration Lesson Video - when a nationally known educator or any person or group outside the viewer's school district films teaching, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

A District-Staff Classroom Demonstration Lesson Video - is defined as when a district-level staff member is filmed teaching in a classroom with students, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

Interactive Read-Aloud – is defined as a teaching strategy in which a teacher reads aloud, models thinking about a strategy, and then allows students to turn and talk to other students to apply the strategy (Harvey & Goudvis, 2005, p. 18).

Key Strategies Videos - regarding the *Thinking Made Visible* series, a key strategies video consists of a short video, usually three to seven minutes, designed to highlight a key teaching concept for the audience. Key strategies videos combine both studio-based explanations of what the audience is seeing and the classroom footage, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

A Lower Third - a caption that appears on the screen to offer additional information (Montgomery, 2010).

A Professional Resource Video - defined in *Thinking Made Visible* as discussions of teaching strategies not centering on in-class demonstrations, such as filming colleagues discussing an article or a teacher explaining his or her lesson-planning process, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

A Studio-Based Demonstration Lesson Video - when district-level staff films teaching strategies without students present, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

Video Exemplar Lesson - regarding *Thinking Made Visible*, a video exemplar lesson is defined as a complete lesson filmed, as defined for the researcher for the purposes of this study.

The Workshop Model - a method of instruction centering on student choice of reading and writing activities and ample time for authentic reading and writing, supported with mini-lessons and teacher conferring (Children's Literacy Initiative, 2018).

Research Questions

The research questions for this study were the following: What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons? What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The purpose of this study was to explore how video-based professional development might support building teacher expertise and reinforce a school district's instructional vision. This study centered on the creation of a series of video-based demonstration lessons entitled *Thinking Made Visible* for a large urban school district. The researcher created this video series, along with colleagues from the district's literacy and media team, to provide a resource for building teacher expertise and to support the district's balanced literacy initiative for middle school and high school. This study explored the research questions:

> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?
>
> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Nancie Atwell's *In the Middle* (1998), offered a vision of instruction centering on authentic literacy experiences and choice in student reading and writing activities. Instead of the artificial experience found in many schools where literacy instruction focuses on assigned texts, uniform writing topics, and worksheets, balanced literacy instruction is more like the natural experience of readers and writers outside of school, with long periods immersed in personal and meaningful reading and writing. In addition, the above text stressed the importance of the teacher modeling his or her thinking to support students.

In exploring instructional coaches' perceptions of how a series of video-based demonstration lesson videos might support building teacher expertise and reinforce a school district's literacy initiative, it is necessary to explore the relevant literature related to building teacher capacity, instructional coaching, the use of videos in professional development, and balanced literacy instruction. This study examined the district-led professional development videos that support a balanced literacy vision of instruction.

However, many classrooms still resemble the teacher-centered environment of the traditional classroom instead of the student-centered environment that Atwell described. The researcher suggested that one reason for this is a lack of meaningful visual models for teachers to emulate as they grow in expertise. The visual models many teachers draw upon are their own teachers in school. Teachers might read a professional book or attend a professional development session, but often the ideas they explore remain abstract without concrete visual examples. Essentially, their most sustained model for how to teach is the years teachers spent in school. Thus, if in school a future educator was assigned whole-group books to read followed by study packets, when he or she becomes a teacher that model is often emulated. If the future educator lacked a teacher who modeled their thinking process, as a teacher they have no vision for what this looks and sounds like. Thus, there often is a generational problem in teaching. The researcher of this study argued that each generation of teachers is far more influenced by their own teachers than professional books or professional development. This can lead to a problem of implementation of best-practice instruction. As cited in the literature review below, the literacy community has reached a consensus that a balanced literacy framework is a profitable model for growing life-long readers and writers. Such

consensus on the research is in contrast with the teacher-centered instruction one sees in many classrooms.

This problem is increased by the complex nature of balanced literacy instruction and the workshop model. The traditional model of lecture followed by assigned tasks is easy to understand and teachers have ample models from their own schooling. It is simple enough to fill a block of four weeks by assigning a whole-group book and printing out student packets for students to complete. It may be comforting for the teacher to have control of the conversation, lecturing and dominating the flow of ideas. The more dialogic approach, where the teacher facilitates open-ended questions and multiple ideas, is more difficult to grasp, especially if one has never seen such teaching. The fluidity for the workshop model with ample time for student reading and writing supported by conferring can seem chaotic to one who has never been in a successful balanced literacy classroom. To understand balanced literacy, it is beneficial to repeatedly watch an expert teacher interact with students, to pick up on the subtle choices in language, the pauses for wait time, and the in-the-moment teaching decisions.

However, many teachers never experience such modeling. If they are lucky, they might be partnered with a mentor teacher in their first years and visit their classroom a handful on times; often times that mentor teacher is not operating under a balanced literacy framework because of the generational problem cited above. The high teacher turnover rates cited in Chapter One exacerbate this problem. Thus, some buildings lack a single teacher utilizing a successful workshop model and there may be no base of expertise from which to build teacher capacity.

Moving away from teacher-centered classrooms is crucial in school reform.

One can see the impact of the dominance of teacher-centered instruction in the reading habits of United States youth. The National Endowment of the Arts' report "To Read or Not to Read" showed that reading rates dropped for decades in the United States (2007, p. 8). The study stated that the percentage of 9-year old children who read every day for fun was 53% in 1984, 54% in 1999, and 54% in 2004. The percentage of 13-year-olds who read every day for fun was 35% in 1984, 28% in 1999, and 30% in 2004. The percentage of 17-year-olds who read every day for fun was 31% in 1984, 25% in 1999, and 20% in 2004. The fact that the percentage of 9-year-olds who read for fun remained consistent at above 50% suggested that the majority of young people naturally like to read. The fact that as students get older the percentage of students who read for fun dropped, and the problem has worsened over the decades, suggested that the literacy instruction students received has not served them well.

In fact, Gallagher's in *Readicide* (2009) argued that a new term be should introduced into the lexicon: "Read-i-cide: noun, the systematic killing of the love of reading, often exacerbated by the inane, mind-numbing practices found in schools" (p. 2). Gallagher stated that schools value creating test-takers over readers, schools limit authentic reading experiences, schools underteach books, and schools overteach books (p. 5). Gallagher argued that the teacher-centered approach to literacy instruction has created a nation of non-readers. To add to Gallagher's argument, this researcher suggested that schools and teachers may continue to commit readicide until they find better ways to build teacher capacity in literacy instruction.

The researcher of this study posited that to watch an expert teacher teach is essential to becoming an expert teacher. In watching an expert teacher, one forms a

vision of best-practice instructional moves. Without seeing and hearing what skilled instruction looks and sounds like, ideas about best-practice often remain abstract and difficult for teachers to implement. From a district perspective, the task of building the capacity is daunting. This researcher recounted anecdotally from working in the central office of two large urban school districts that it is often challenging to find enough classroom teachers or support staff to serve as models for the high numbers of teachers in need of support. Thus, if teachers need to see expert instruction in order to grow in their profession, the lack of skilled teachers to serve as models presents a formidable challenge.

The researcher suggested that one way to provide visual models for balanced literacy instruction is for district-level staff to be filmed teaching in classrooms with actual students. This study explored a case study of a large urban school district's creation and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of professional development videos centering on demonstration lessons. If a district wishes to support a shared vision of instruction, visual models of key components of this vision can help support implementation. Essentially, a video series of demonstration lessons might serve as a way to counteract the scarcity of teachers and support staff available to model best practice by creating a resource where every teacher can watch lessons in a workshop model. Video can never fully replicate the experience of being in an actual classroom with an actual teacher and later debriefing on instructional moves, but being able to see the instruction is a starting point for growth. Essentially, such a video series might allow targeted demonstration lessons to reach a mass audience.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

A foundational theory of this study was Pearson and Gallagher's Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model (1983). Sometimes called "I Do, We Do, You Do," this method of teaching starts with modeling. As stated above, many teachers step into the classroom without ever seeing an expert teacher teach. Fundamentally, *Thinking Made Visible* attempted to provide the 'I Do" phase of learning, so that the teachers experience models of best-practice instruction.

Many teachers in their professional development lack the "I Do" phase. They have never experienced face-to-face modeling of best-practice instruction. They have never watched a demonstration lesson of balanced literacy instruction and seen an expert teacher interact with students. Instead, they are plunged into the "You Do" phase and experience frustration. The researcher of this study suggested that without visual models of how best to teach, professional development can be challenging. Providing visual models is essential to supporting the Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model and, given a lack of capacity in many districts, video-based professional development is one way to bring the "I Do" phase to a mass audience of teachers.

Similarly, this study is influenced by Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (1978). Vygotsky suggested that learning activities can be divided into three categories: what the learner can do on their own, what the learner can do with help, and what the learner cannot do. The latter is often termed frustration level. Many new teachers arrive in the classroom with a vision informed by their own days as students and teacher-centered instruction. Without expert modeling of teaching, expecting such teachers to implement best-practice instruction sends them into frustration level. They are not ready to teach successfully without assistance. Demonstration lessons are key in the zone of

proximal development in building teacher capacity and video might be a tool in bring such modeling to a mass audience.

This study was also influenced by the theory of visual learning, as explored by Patton (1991). Visual learning suggested that images can powerfully support learning new concepts. When we express ideas in words, we often are dealing in abstractions. The human brain is excellent at processing images, much more so than words. Thus, if at a professional development a presenter tries to explain what an interactive read-aloud is rather than show a visual example, much is lost. It often takes the visual example of watching an expert teacher: the gestures, the images of how the classroom is configured, watching a lesson unfold, to allow a teacher to internalize an instructional concept.

Much of the theory behind the content of *Thinking Made Visible* was based on balanced literacy instruction. Beginning in the 1970s, a body of literature emerged on the importance of the teacher modeling reading strategies by reading and thinking aloud, the importance of a dialogic classroom centered on ongoing teacher-to-student and student-to-student talk, and student choice of reading and writing activities, supported through conferring. For more on this balanced literacy framework, see the literature review below.

Research on Building Teacher Capacity and Teacher Efficacy

Building teacher capacity is key in raising student achievement. In a ten-year study of exemplary elementary teachers, Allington found, "Good teachers, effective teachers, matter much more than particular curriculum materials, pedagogical approaches, or 'proven programs.' It has become clearer that investing in good teaching…is the most 'research-based strategy available'" (2002, p. 740).

Developing teacher expertise in urban settings is challenging given the high teacher turnover rate. Olsen and Anderson noted in a study on retention of urban education teachers that, "Nearly 20% of new teachers abandon the profession within 3 years of having entered, whereas as many as 46% leave within their first 5 years on the job" (2007, p. 6). Further, they stated that the teachers most likely to report job satisfaction when schools are organized to support their efforts (p. 24).

One difficulty of such high teacher turnover rates in urban settings is providing the support that teachers need to be successful. In *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*, Hattie examined various factors and their effect sizes on student achievement. If there was an effect size of .4 or greater, this was a significant factor, resulting in a year or more of growth in student achievement (2009, p. 18-19). To highlight the need to provide teachers support and the challenges in doing so, it is helpful to examine the factors of professional development and mentoring Hattie cited. Professional development had an effect size of .62, which indicated a high impact on student achievement. Hattie stated that the most effective professional development centered on "observation of actual classroom methods, microteaching, video / audio feedback, and practice" (p. 120). In contrast, teacher mentoring had a low effect size of .15. Hattie commented that teacher mentoring "usually involves little, if any, teaching and is more of an 'apprentice' model based on social and role model experiences" (p. 188). In many districts, there often is not a broad base of expertise from which to draw to provide enough expert teachers to serve as models. That perhaps is why Hattie found a lack of actual teaching in mentoring programs. This study posited that strategically sharing video-based demonstration lesson might provide support in modeling

effective instruction, similar to the professional development model Hattie referenced.

Key to providing the support teachers need to build capacity is Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. Warford in "The zone of proximal *teacher* development" stated that the idea of providing the just-right level of support for learning applies equally to teacher preparation as it does to student learning. He wrote, "The goal…is always to stay within the 'zone' between a learner's actual capacities and a proximal set of knowledge and skills that they can reach through expert-other mediation" (2010, p. 253). One way to support learning in the zone of proximal development is modeling and demonstrating. If a teacher is expected to conduct an interactive read-aloud but has never seen one, this could put the teacher in frustration mode. The expectation is beyond the zone of the learner's capabilities. If the same teacher watches an interactive read-aloud modeled by another teacher, this might put the learning task into the zone of proximal development by building knowledge and vision of the goal. However, it does become a challenge when there are few or no teachers in the building to serve as models of expert instruction, or modeling opportunities are limited because those with expertise are stretched thin due to a high volume of need. In such cases, help from the outside may be needed.

Highlighting this concern that there needs to be external support in building teacher capacity, Stosich in a study of building teacher capacity in high poverty schools found, "Some outside expertise is necessary for teachers to learn to work in new ways with students and with their colleagues" (2016, p. 47). In the study, two high-poverty schools created a network of teacher leaders to model best-practice instruction. Stosich found, "Evidence that teachers had learned the strategies modeled by network leaders and

incorporated them into their instructional practice was apparent in classrooms" (p. 49). However, there were problems in upscaling this model or starting from a point of little teacher capacity. Stosich noted, "Schools with lower levels of initial capacity may require intensive principal support" (p. 48). Based on Stosich's research, if there are few to no expert teachers to support the modeling she describes and the principal is unwilling or unable to provide support, building capacity becomes problematic. This is especially true from a district-level perspective, when the issue of building teacher capacity concerns thousands of teachers at dozens of buildings.

Jaquith in "Building Instructional Capacity: A Research Brief" wrote, "Creating instructional capacity, however, is premised on the assumption that instructional resources lie both inside and outside the organization…which necessitates being able to identify and use these resources" (2012, p. 3). Strategic judgment of the resources within a district and how they might be best utilized is important when considering building capacity district-wide. In districts with high teacher turnover rates, teachers with expertise who do stay in the district often move into administrative roles. Thus, there is often a lack of classroom teachers to serve as model classrooms. Indeed, those with expertise in curriculum and instruction often move to the central office. Sometimes as instructional coaches these educators go into the field and model lessons, but the sheer volume of the teachers needing support makes it challenging to meet the needs of all teachers. By identifying the resource of expertise at the central office, as Jaquith mentioned, and distributing model lessons through video, a district might to a degree offer coaching to all who are willing or supported to access the resource.

Indeed, it is the inability to provide support for the volume of teachers in need that

often presents challenges in systems change. King in a study of building teacher capacity in Cambodia wrote, “For the teachers in this study a cascade model limited whose capacity was developed. Indeed, if teacher capacity is to be developed, capacity development must be for all, not a minority.” (p. 13). That is precisely the problem school districts with teacher retention problems face in the United States. With a handful of instructional coaches, they often are only able to reach a fraction of the teachers in need of development.

The cascade model mentioned is a version of the trainer-of-trainer model. King records, “Additionally, an issue with cascade models is that ‘there is a watering down the further down you go’ Indeed, how, for example, a policy or pedagogical innovation is interpreted as it passes down from the national to the provincial level and then to principals and senior teachers at workshops and finally to teachers is important.” (p. 8). The trainer-of-trainer model is often used by school systems to mitigate the lack of expertise district-wide. The central office will arrange for a training of instructional practices with representative from each campus, who in turn are expected to provide professional development at their building. The watering down that King mentions is a real problem, as the trainer-of-trainer model assumes full integration and mastery of the instructional concepts by those who pass the training along. Using video for demonstration lessons is one way to circumvent this watering down. The demonstration lesson is captured at whatever level of quality of the original form, and can be distributed at that level endlessly.

Video-based professional development can reach and impact a wide audience. Indeed, the ease of access of video-based professional development can be a factor in

building teacher capacity. Cooter in "Teacher 'Capacity-Building' Helps Urban Children Succeed in Reading" wrote "professional development for teachers usually begins and ends with what I term awareness-level or first-exposure training. One- or two-day workshops for teachers…are awareness-level experiences." (2003, p. 199). Cooter stated that this surface-level learning is not enough. Thereafter should follow, "deep learning with limited capacity. This involves significant study of the new teaching strategy beyond the awareness" (p. 199). This illustrates how video-based professional development might play a role in the larger framework of teacher development. In the large urban school district in which *Thinking Made Visible* was produced, teachers received two to three days of summer professional development as part of the balanced literacy initiative. This might be the awareness-level training Cooter mentions. By embedding video-based demonstration lessons in the curriculum and offering a bank of dozens of videos featuring balanced literacy classroom instruction, teachers had the opportunity to deepen their learning, synthesizing the concepts from the initial professional development with multiple examples of the pedagogy in practice. Cooter noted that after deep learning should follow practice with coaching (p. 2000). Face-to-face coaching is something video-based demonstration lessons cannot replace. Nevertheless, video does offer the chance to deepen learning for many who would otherwise only receive the awareness-level professional development.

In summary, the research on building teacher capacity highlights the need for all teachers to receive meaningful models of best-practice instruction and acknowledges the limitations of resources to offer coaching to all teachers in a district. This study examined how video-based demonstration lessons might offer support to teachers in

modeling best-practice instruction in a format that can be replicated district-wide.

Literature on Instructional Coaching

The qualitative data of this study consisted of interviews and a focus group of instructional coaches who utilized *Thinking Made Visible* to explore the research questions:

> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons? What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

As such, as review of literature on instructional coaching was warranted.

In a narrative study on her role as an instructional coach, Saurez argued that modeling is essential in coaching: "A coach can model the lesson(s) while the classroom teacher observes, the coach and the classroom teacher can co-teach the lesson(s) together, or the coach can observe the classroom teacher in a specific area to provide feedback" (2017, p. 493). Suarez concurred with Pearson and Gallaher's (1983) Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model that new learning best begins with modeling and followed supported practice, transferring responsibility to the learner appropriately. The researcher of this study agreed with Saurez on the need for modeling as a starting point for coaching. Given limitations of staffing to provide one-to-one modeling opportunities, the researcher explored the use of video to disseminate demonstration lessons.

Czajka and McConnell conducted a case study on situated, long-term instructional coaching to reform practice in STEM classrooms. The authors found "Since training is specific to the course and occurring in the classroom, instructors are not investing time to

attend training workshops. Training is occurring during their normal teaching responsibilities" (p. 12). While one might argue in favor of the value of spending time in professional development workshops, nevertheless Czajka and McConnell made a valid point that integrating instructional coaching into teachers' regular duties offers immediacy and saves time.

Echoing the work of Czajka and McConnell in a different format, in this study, the researcher and other instructional coaches embedded video-based demonstration lessons into the district's curriculum. The large urban school district in question delivered curriculum via an online hub. Instructional coaches created teacher pages utilizing video-based demonstration lessons from *Thinking Made Visible*. Key lessons offered both a traditional lesson plan and a video modeling lesson objectives with actual students in the district. Thus, there was the sense of immediacy Czajka and McConnell described. Instead of attending a professional development and waiting days or weeks to apply the learning to teaching, teachers had immediate modeling of learning objectives for the lesson they were planning. Further, this was in the course of teachers' normal duties of planning for a lesson, to be used how and for what duration they wished, thus lessening time constraints of modeling through the on-demand format.

Pak and Desimone in a study of integrating effective instruction coaching into professional development noted that this included "opportunities for teachers to observe, receive feedback, analyze student work, or make presentations, as opposed to passively listening to lecture" (2016, p. 3). The researcher of this study agreed with Pak and Desimone that modeling in professional settings by instructional coaches, followed by active creation by participants, facilitates learning. Often this is accomplished by the

instructional coach leading a demonstration lesson in a classroom, observed by the teacher, who will later try out the modeled strategy, or modeling in a professional development workshop for a group of teachers, who will then collaboratively apply the learning in practice.

The researcher of this study hypothesized that video-based demonstration lessons might facilitate instructional coaches' work in two ways. The first is access. Instructional coaches often cannot reach every teacher in a district, so the use of video-based demonstration lessons might replicate their modeling efforts by embedding these in curriculum or online learning modules. Second, in face-to-face professional development workshops, the use of brief clips of demonstration lessons filmed in classrooms with students from the district might bring to life the modeled strategy in an authentic setting. Not only is the new learning modeled, participants can envision this in practice. This might aid the participants' application of new learning in the professional development and later their classrooms.

Chaaban and Abu-tineh examined instructional coaches' perceptions of professional development, finding that instruction coaches believed it works best in a school-based setting (2017, p. 280). It can be a logistical challenge in a large urban school district to create long-term professional development in school settings, which is why it often occurs at central locations. The researcher of this study hypothesized that some degree of the school-based setting can be obtained through the use of video-based demonstration lessons. It can either bring the "school" to the professional development, through participants seeing teaching with students modeled, or bring the professional development to the school, by offering accessible professional development to school-

based professional learning communities through online learning modules. This is especially applicable in places where a district-level instructional coaches might not have time or access to visit.

Chaaban and Abu-tineh stated instructional coaches perceived "the mode of delivery must suit teachers' busy schedules and be sympathetic to their needs as learners…the timeframe must be long enough to develop professionalism" (p. 268). The combination of site-based professional development that is both flexible for teachers' schedules and is long-term is challenging given the logistics of large urban school districts. The researcher of this study hypothesized that creating a bank of video-based demonstration lessons and delivering these in an on-demand format allowed for flexible opportunities for sustained professional development.

Chaaban and Abu-tineh noted instructional coaches perceived that teachers were often resistant to change due to existing beliefs and practices and professional development needs to make learning come alive for participants (p. 280). The researcher of this study hypothesized that authenticity of filming demonstration lessons in district classrooms with district students might be a factor in overcoming this resistance. Many district-based videos on strategy modeling occur in the studio without students. While these are valuable, the studio setting might increase the resistance of teachers as they could question if this would work in a classroom. Similarly, videos filmed in classrooms outside of the district might face the same skepticism, as teachers might think this would not work given the unique concerns of their educational setting. The researcher of this study hypothesized that the authenticity of modeling in district classrooms with district students would increase buy-in.

Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright explored data from a longitudinal study of three reforming school districts to explore the research questions: "How (and what) do instructional coaches learn in the context of district instructional reform? And what organizational structures and policies support them in that process?" (2010, p. 921). The authors challenged the idea that instructional coaches are established experts and suggested that coaches are also learners as well (p. 921). The study adopted a Vygotskian theory that there is a reciprocal relationship between the coach learning and organizational support for professional development (p. 925).

The authors argued that the learning of the instructional coach takes place through the publication of new learning through talk or action (p. 926). Essentially, the writers stated that the instructional coach both learns and teaches through an act of publication, namely teaching designed to be seen by others. Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright's work connected to this study in that the publication mode was essential in internalizing learning. The researcher of this study hypothesized that the planning, teaching, filming, editing, and implementing of *Thinking Made Visible* lessons was a learning experience for the instructional coaches involved as well as teachers who would view them. The act of publication, as the authors argued, "helps us 'see' the ways new ideas about practice are taken up and discussed by individuals and groups of practitioners" (p. 926). These acts of publication are then conventionalized in the practice of both the coach and others (p. 926). The act of publication might form a vision of instruction for both the coach and those whom the coach mentors.

The use of video by the researcher of this study as a mode of publication recalls the work of Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright in that in reform contexts

coaches often learn as they are implementing new ideas and transmit those ideas to others (p. 953). Essentially, video as a transmission model both creates import in the learning and widens the transmission destination. Further, the act of publication moved beyond just replicating ideas from the district vision but appropriating these ideas and transforming them in the context of the coach's work while at the same time sharing these with others (p. 953). The researcher hypothesized the creation of *Thinking Made Visible* helped internalize district objectives in the instructional coaches themselves.

Echoing the work of Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright, Tschannen-Moran argued in her study of the growth of emotional intelligence of instructional coaches that "because they watched coaching demonstrations…they drew from two sources of self-efficacy: vicarious experiences (i.e. watching someone else model the target skill) and verbal persuasion (i.e. comments from others about one's performance)" (2018, p. 299). The researcher of this study hypothesized that the instructional coaches who created and implemented the videos in question grew in efficacy; watching others teach created these vicarious experiences and discussion of others teaching offered moments of reflection. Similarly, teachers went through the same process as the videos were disseminated and utilized. While Tschannen-Moran focused on modeling the interactions between coaches and teachers, the same soft skills of "nonverbal signals, body language, and facial expressions to determine the emotional state of another" apply to demonstration lessons as well (p. 290). In demonstration lessons, the facilitator does not just model the teaching strategy, but also the subtle nuances of interactions with students. The researcher of this study hypothesized that these intangibles are difficult to recreate without the authentic setting of a classroom with

students, which is why the video-based demonstration lessons were set in district classrooms.

Reinforcing the work of Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, Boatright, and Tschannen-Moran, Hattie in *Visible Learning: a Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement* found that one of the most effective practices in raising teacher expertise and student achievement was micro-teaching. This consisted of the teacher videotaping a lesson of herself or himself teaching and then analyzing, reflecting, and debriefing with other educators. This practice had a large effect size of .88, with .4 representing a year's growth in student achievement (2009, p. 112). The connection to this study's examination of district-created video-based professional development is twofold. First, Hattie's work concurred with the above study of Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright that an instructional coach reflecting on an act of teaching is a learning process, building capacity for their role as an instructional coach. The researcher hypothesized the creation and implementation of these videos engaged in this process. Second, the creation by a district of a repository of video-based demonstration lessons offered a source for the kind of reflective conversations that Hattie described as teachers debriefed what they viewed.

In summary, the above literature review on instructional coaching suggested that modeling in authentic settings is essential in building teacher capacity. Further, the instructional coach is as much as learner as a teacher, and this learning process through public acts of teaching is essential in both the growth of the instructional coach's expertise and the transmission of learning. The researcher of this study hypothesized that the use of video-based demonstration lessons both provides on-demand access to

modeling across a district and can serve as a tool to develop the expertise of instructional coaches.

The Use of Video in Professional Development

Tunney and A van Es examined the use of video in professional development and noted that video provides a reference point for teachers as they build a shared vision of instruction based on best practice. The study concluded that video "will support the development of instructional expertise for beginning teachers as they enter the profession" (2011). In a study of the use of head-mounted cameras to capture mathematics instruction of English language learners, researchers noted that "video data could also provide pivotal insight to how participants come to understand their own engagement with others and how this informs instructional choices in the classroom" (Estapa, Pinnow, & Chval, 2016). Another study examined science teachers over the course of the year viewing video from published sources, videos of each other teaching, and video of professional study groups; the study found the video model valuable but suggested that the videos must be relevant to teachers and also supported by collaborative discussion (Zhang, Lundeberg, Koehler, & Eberhardt, 2011). In a case study of a pre-service teacher filming her own lessons and discussing footage with a mentor, researchers found video a tool for greater reflection (Calandra, Brantley-Dias, & Dias, 2006). The Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education created a twenty-two program, video-based professional development system for geography teachers entitle *Geography: Teaching with the Stars* and found that teachers are willing to receive instruction online featuring lessons conducted by a master teacher (Boehm, Brysch, Mohan & Backler, 2012).

Thus, there is a consensus that video of teaching can play a key role in building teacher expertise. However, no study found consisted of district-level public school staff filming their teaching in classrooms to create a comprehensive series of professional development videos. Most studies focused on classroom teachers being filmed or teachers filming themselves and reflecting. These experiences of watching a classroom teacher are of course valuable, but they could compliment a strategic plan of a series of video-based demonstration lessons to support the district's vision of instruction. Indeed, the closest example found to the design of this study is the work by Gilbert M. Grosvenor Center for Geographic Education, which created a comprehensive vide-based professional development series for geography teachers. If school districts themselves adopted the same approach, it would have the added value of relevance. Instead of an outside institution creating a video series for a wide audience, there would be greater relevance as the teachers would see teaching and learning in their own district. The use of videos created across the country where student demographics and socio-economic status might be different might increase the likelihood that teachers could dismiss the videos based on the different setting or population. Further, if a school district relies upon an outside source for a professional development video series, then it must rely on the instructional vision of that source. By creating their own video-based professional development series, a district can tailor the content to their vision and objectives.

Balanced Literacy Instruction

Another body of professional literature related to this study is that of balanced literacy instruction, the content of *Thinking Made Visible*. Perhaps the most landmark book on balanced literacy is Atwell's *In the Middle* (1998). Originally published in 1987,

Atwell's text fundamentally changed language arts instruction by moving towards a workshop-based model of exploring authentic texts to inform writing instruction and offering students choices of writing tasks and independent reading. *Thinking Made Visible* offers videos based on such student-centered authentic literacy instruction.

Allington's (2002) "What I've Learned about Effective Reading Instruction" is a seminal article on balanced literacy. Allington studied groups of effective elementary teachers for over a decade, looking for common attributes. He discovered the six Ts of effective teaching which are teaching, time, teaching, texts, talk, tasks, and testing. Time referred to time spent reading as opposed to the "stuff" of worksheets and busywork. Teaching was the modeling and demonstrating of useful skills, such as the metacognitive reading strategies. Texts should be those which students can and want to read. Talk was defined as purposeful talk where students build upon each other's ideas. Tasks should be authentic and real-world with managed choice. Testing should often be formative and based on a growth mindset. Allington's six Ts offered a blueprint for balanced literacy instruction (p. 740-747). All these components are part of *Thinking Made Visible*. Indeed, the instructional coaches involved filmed a professional development video on discussion of Allington's 6ts as support for the series.

Langer in "Guidelines for Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well: Six Features of Instruction" (2000) suggested that students should learn skills and knowledge in multiple lesson types. This includes separated activities which ask students to learn a skill or rule and simulated activities in which the students apply what they have learned in an authentic setting (p. 4). Langer stated teachers should integrate test-preparation into instruction. This means that instead of teachers relying on

inauthentic test-preparation activities, such as boxing the title or eliminating wrong answer choices, teachers might focus on balanced literacy instruction then briefly model how this authentic learning applies to the genre of test-taking (p. 6). Langer argued that teachers should make connections across curriculum, instruction, and life (p. 8). This focused on a holistic approach to teaching, making connections across a unit of study as opposed to isolated, self-contained lessons. Teachers can make connections across contents. For example, an English language arts teacher collaborating with a social studies teacher on a civil rights unit might focus on reading fictional texts and primary source documents based on that time period. Langer argued that instruction should be relevant to students. In the previous example, teachers might support the students in making connections to the civil rights movement and inequality in the students' community. Langer wrote that students should learn strategies for doing the work required (p. 10). For example, a teacher might model that to make inferences, we connect the text clues with our background knowledge and provide a graphic organizer. Langer stated that students are expected to be generative thinkers (p. 12). Instead of the teacher telling the students the meaning of a text, the students are invited to create their own interpretations. Langer wrote that classrooms should foster cognitive collaboration (p. 14). This involves ongoing talk between the students and the teachers as all learners build upon each other's ideas.

The above big picture ideas in balanced literacy are found again and again in professional literature, as seen in more detail further in this literature review. As stated above, the researcher of this study argued there is a generational problem in

implementing these best practices as a teacher's vision of instruction is often most strongly informed by his or her own schooling.

However, in the NCLB and ESSA eras there is a new obstacle: the pressures of high-stakes testing. In Beers' "What Matters Most: Considering the Issues and Conversations We Need to Have," the author wrote:

> "Schools might be teaching students how to pass a test, but it's not creating lifelong learners who are passionate about reading and writing...when the focus is on passing a single test, we don't seem to be creating kids who are critical and creative thinkers, who are contributors and collaborators, who are problem solvers and change leaders." (2014, p. 266).

Thus, schools in the United States are often caught in a vicious cycle. Schools' funding is tied to success on standardized tests. School administrators feel pressure to do well on these tests, so they pressure teachers to focus on test preparation. This is despite that fact that Allington noted in his study of exemplary teachers,

> "none of the teachers relied on the increasingly popular commercial test-preparation materials (e.g.,workbooks, software). Instead, these teachers believed that good instruction would lead to enhanced test performance. The data bore out their beliefs. It was in the less effective teachers' classrooms (which we observed as part of a substudy) that we found test-preparation activity." (p. 746).

Not only is a test-preparation focus counterproductive to increased test results, it robs students of the joy of authentic learning. Instead of reading authentic texts, students complete worksheets produced by an in-house writer working for a test-prep company.

Students learn that reading is not to open one's mind or find joy; rather, it is an unpleasant activity one must do to complete a forced test.

A symbolic example of the challenges of the test-preparation mindset can be found in Beers' "The Consequences of Inaction." The author visited a school in which classrooms were converted into "official test-prep zones" (2016, p. 11). One classroom had a lone bookshelf which had been sealed off with tape like it was a crime scene. The teacher informed Beers the principal had instructed the teacher to do this so that students would not have access to the books during testing. Of course, limiting students access to books is another counterproductive measure, as Anderson, Fielding, and Wilson (1988) found that students' independent reading volume is directly linked with reading achievement on standardized tests. Yet, as Beers noted it is commonplace to cut time for independent reading in favor of test-preparation.

Thus, though there is a consensus in the research that a balanced literacy approach leads to student achievement, the above stated factors of generational imitation and the pressures of high-stakes testing severely limit the implementation of best practice. If teachers and administrators do not have a vision of what balanced literacy instruction looks and sounds like, it is tempting to adopt a teacher-centered or test-preparation approach instead to venturing into unclear territory. Thus, *Thinking Made Visible* attempts to provide models of that balanced literacy instruction to support building vision.

The Importance of Modeling through Interactive Read-Aloud

The *Thinking Made Visible* videos often begin with an interactive read-aloud, in which a teacher models thinking about a text and then offers students opportunities to

explore the modeled strategy (Keene & Zimmerman, 2007, p. 37-38). For example, a teacher might begin reading a text and thinking aloud about questions he or she has about the text, then stop strategically at other points and ask students to turn and talk to their neighbor about questions they have about the text. An interactive read-aloud is a new form of teaching to many. Often in secondary classrooms, round-robin reading by students or assigned passages with study questions are the norm. If teacher does not model their thinking and allow students time to explore the selected strategy with the support of their peers, then often they do not have the support needed to grow as readers.

Tovani in *Do I Really Have to Teach Reading* discussed the importance of mental modeling (2003, p. 26-27). She stated that mental modeling gives students understanding into how good readers and writers make sense of texts. Further, mental modeling allows students to see options that they have as they read and write, how good readers decide what to do. Mental modeling helps students understand the complexities of reading and writing and that they are ongoing cognitive processes (p. 27). Tovani stated that modeling is often best done by reading aloud from an accessible text. Accessible texts are short, interesting, relevant, and understandable (p. 39). If the text is not accessible then this can counteract the intended function of modeling. For the sake of argument, imagine a 9th grade English language arts teacher wishes to introduce the metacognitive strategy of inferring for the first time to a group of students. She plans to think about the inferences she is making as she reads and ask the students to turn and talk about the inferences they are making through open-ended questions. So far, all of this follows the balanced literacy model. But the text she selects to model inferring is the "to be or not to be" soliloquy from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The difficulty-level of the text might hinder

focus of the lesson, in this case making inferences. A picture book or a short excerpt from a young adult novel might be a more appropriate choice to facilitate the outcome of the model. Accessible texts for modeling reading strategies were featured in *Thinking Made Visible*.

Routman in *Reading Essentials: The Specifics You Need to Teach Reading Well* argued that in addition to specific reading skills, more intangible aspects of reading should be modeled as well (2003). Routman stated that a teacher should "examine your own reading life, make it visible to your students, and connect world reading to school reading" (p. 23). This is important because many students have no one in their lives who is a reader and no models about how reading is meaningful. As such, they view reading as a school-based activity with little personal relevance. Routman suggested teachers share their reading habits by letting them know what the teacher is reading and what he or she will read next (p. 25). Many lessons in *Thinking Made Visible* focused on such aspects of reading development. In addition, the medium of video captures intangible aspects difficult to convey in print curriculum, such as the smiles and enthusiasm of teachers and students engaged in reading.

Reading Comprehension

Many of the *Thinking Made Visible* videos feature modeling and anchor charts based on Harvey and Goudvis' *The Comprehension Toolkit* (2005). *The Comprehension Toolkit* focused on the metacognitive reading strategies of inferring, making connections, asking questions, determining importance, monitoring comprehension, summarizing, and synthesizing. These strategies make visible what good readers do as they interact with texts.

Rosenblatt in *Literature as Exploration* (1995) developed the transactional theory of reading, often known as reader-response. As opposed to New Criticism, in which the meaning is solely found in the text, Rosenblatt suggested that meaning is found in the transaction between the reader and the text, allowing for multiple valid interpretations. The reading instruction of *Thinking Made Visible* was based on reader-response. In the videos, the teacher often invited multiple interpretations of texts, encouraging students to create their own meaning based on the text clues. This was a shift away from traditional teaching where there is one correct interpretation the teacher attempts to impart to the students.

Many of the lessons in *Thinking Made Visible* focused on the *Notice & Note* signposts for reading strategies (Beers & Probst 2012, 2016). Beers and Probst identified the most common author's craft choices and created signposts to support the reader's reflection on these choices. Author's craft moves found in nonfiction included Contrasts and Contradictions, Extreme and Absolute Language, Numbers and Stats, and Quoted Words (2016, p. 117). A focus of their work was to read with questioning stances such as "What surprised me? What challenged, change or confirmed what I knew?" (2016, p. 78). Their work sought to shift the focus from reading nonfiction to absorb information to reading with a questioning stance towards both the author's message and the world. For example, one of the signposts is Extreme or Absolute Language, which asks the reader to question why the author might use strong language (2016, p. 136). Beers and Probst argued that a questioning stance is essential for citizens in a democracy. "We don't want students to dismiss a text simply because they disagree with it, nor do we want them to accept a text simply because they do agree with it...habits of mind that lead

to insularity are a threat" (p. 72). *Thinking Made Visible* attempted to model this questioning stance, a shift away from more traditional instruction centered on reading to absorb information. Rather, teachers need to model questioning the author's purpose and choices as well.

The Importance of Dialogue

Thinking Made Visible attempted to model a dialogic classroom, based on the work of Johnston (2012). Drawing on the work of Dweck, Johnston's *Opening Minds* focused on the possibilities of a growth mindset. Johnston contrasted a fixed performance frame, in which intelligence is static and achievement is measured by one bar and a dynamic performance frame based on effort and growth. Johnston explored the idea of social imagination, the importance of imagining things from another's point of view and teaching for social justice. This is in part accomplished through open-ended questions and an idea that we all contribute to the thinking in a democratic learning community.

Independent Reading

Wallis (2012) suggested a three-text classroom comprised of a whole group reading, often an interactive read-aloud, a small group reading, which might be guided reading, a book club, or an exploration of a genre-based text set, and independent reading, with students reading books they can and want to read. This mirrors the Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model and is a shift away from relying solely on whole-class readings of basal readers or novel studies. The whole group, small group, and independent reading continuum are featured in *Thinking Made Visible;* all video exemplar lessons in the series contain interactive read-alouds and small group readings; supported independent reading is highlighted in the "Reading Conferences" and

"Picking a Just-Right Book" videos.

Offering students choices of texts they can and want to read and support is essential. Allison's *Middle School Readers* (2008) and Kittle's *Book Love* (2013) explored this concept of supported independent reading. Traditionally, students in school were expected to read whole-class novels as the core of independent reading. Allison argued that students need a choice of texts they can read and support from the teacher through conferring. Allison's text offered helpful book shopping, conferring, and comprehension strategies to both help struggling readers become engaged in reading and active readers grow in their understanding of what they read. Further, Johnston and Ivey (2012) studied a group of middle school students who were given choice of edgy young adult novels as opposed to a traditional assigned whole-class novel curriculum. They found positive gains in the students who were offered a choice of engaging texts in reading achievement. Moreover, the choice empowers students to view themselves as readers and learners. This suggested one should consider offering more choice about independent reading and better access to engaging texts. Videos of choosing just right books and reading conferences are included in *Thinking Made Visible*.

Routman (2003) argued that the teacher should share his or her passion for reading by sharing their reading lives, then help the students find books that match their interests (p. 26). Instead of a one-size-fits-all curriculum where all students read the same thing, the teacher might model about how he or she finds books that fit his or her interests and then survey students' interests, helping them find just-right books.

There is a difference between traditional Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) or sustained silently reading (SSR) programs and what is termed supportive independent

reading (SIR). In the former, students are provided time to read but offered no support as they read. The time to read is valuable but struggling readers often fail to read and engaged readers are not nudged forward in their understanding. Essentially, DEAR or SSR programs lack the teaching component. In supportive independent reading, this teaching often comes in the form of reading conferences. Kittle (2013) stated that reading conferences often fall into three categories: monitoring the student's reading life, teaching strategic reading, and helping the student plan the complexity and challenge of reading (p. 79). Questions that help monitor a student's reading life might include: "What are you reading? How did you choose it? What's on your to-read-next list? Which authors are your favorites? How much did you read last year? Do you consider yourself a reader? Where do you read at home?" (p. 80). Such questions and the conversations that follow help students become more reflective, purposeful readers. Conferences that teach a reading strategy are often used for re-teaching or refining metacognitive reading strategies. As stated above, in the Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model, the reading strategies that the teacher models in the" I Do" phase and supports through collaboration in the "We Do" phase have their destination in the "You Do" phase, which is independent reading. Sometimes, a student needs extra support in translating these skills to their independent reading. Kittle suggested such questions such as "Tell me about a time when this book has confused you and what you've done to get yourself back on track in your understanding" (p. 82). This is an example to the metacognitive skill of monitoring comprehension. Another question shared is "Tell me about the characters in this book – who are they, what do you think of them?" (p. 82). This question promotes inferring. Another question is "How is this book

different from the last book you have read?" which asks the reader to compare and contrast (p. 82).

If a reader is engaged in a book, then it is the job of the teacher to nudge the student forward towards greater complexity and challenge in their reading. For example, Kittle asked, "Which genres have you read this year? Tell me about a genre you don't usually read and let's think about books that might ease the transition from what you love to what will challenge you to think differently" (p. 84). Such conferences both validate the students current reading yet challenge readers to explore new vistas that might change their understanding of themselves and the world. Supported independent reading strategies were explored in *Thinking Made Visible.*

Writing Instruction

Concerning writing instruction, Wood Ray (2006) examined the power of noticing and naming (p. 35). Traditionally, academic terms are often taught in isolation. For example, a teacher might create a PowerPoint defining what an ellipsis is. Wood Ray argued that we should notice what writers do in authentic texts, provide it a name, and then consider the effect on the reader of the author's choice. Instead of trying to get students to memorize the definition of what is something like an ellipsis out of context, students notice what author is doing and analyze the author's craft choices. This in turn allows students to think like authors and informs their writing.

O'Flahavan, Grabowsky, and McGraw (2012) explored the idea of Consume, Critique, Produce. This theory suggested to scaffold writing in the genre, students need to consume many examples of authentic texts in the genre they are to write. After consuming and noticing the features of the genre, students then read through the lens of a

critic, before producing their own writing in the genre. In Thinking Made Visible, videos focus on the teacher and students noticing specific author's craft choices, naming them, then trying them in writing.

In addition, Armstrong-Carroll (2002) shared multiple writing strategies found in the Abydos institutes. Of note is depth charging, which allows students to connect ideas from sentence to sentence for greater depth in writing. Depth charging is a strategy included in Thinking Made Visible.

Anderson (2000) explored theories on writing conferences in writer's workshop. Anderson sought to shift the focus from teacher-directed methods of writing instructions such as formulaic writing and correcting students work towards putting students in charge of moving their writing forward. Beginning with an initial question such as, "How's it going?" Anderson asked students what they want to work on in their writing today and offered scaffolds through conferring to move writers forward. Writing conferences are featured in *Thinking Made Visible*.

Summary of the Literature Review

Thinking Made Visible was an exploration of the use of video-based demonstration lessons to help build teacher capacity and support a large urban school district's vision of balanced literacy instruction. The relevant literature suggests modeling is essential in building teacher capacity and instructional coaching. Research suggests that video is an effective tool to model best-practice instruction, but that a relevant setting is crucial. The literature on balanced literacy instruction argues that modeling and supporting authentic literacy experience facilitates students' growth as readers and writers.

Video-based demonstration lessons might be one way to model balanced literacy instruction for a wide audience. A video-based professional development series cannot replace face-to-face professional development and coaching, but rather it might work in concert with it. Indeed, *Thinking Made Visible* supported the large urban school district's ongoing professional development and clips of the series were included in sessions.

Chapter III

Methods

This study centered on *Thinking Made Visible*, as series of video-based demonstration lessons created and implemented at a large urban school district to support a middle and high school literacy initiative. The goal of this study was to explore district-level instructional coaches' perceptions of *Thinking Made Visible's* design, content, and implementation and its impact on teacher capacity. This chapter explains the qualitative nature of the study and the selection of the approach, a case study with narrative elements to presentation and analysis, is justified. The research design, participants, and procedures are explained. The data analysis, ethical considerations, validity, and a summary are shared.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how video-based professional development might support building teacher expertise and reinforce a school district's instructional vision.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?

What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Research Design

Shank and Brown (2007) stated that qualitative research is a "type of empirical research that focuses on the study of meaning and related phenomena and settings" (p. 239). Since the data collection focused on interviews and a focus group of district-level instructional coaches with open-ended questions and analysis of the meaning of the responses, the research design was qualitative. The interviews and a focus group provided the primary data for this case study. A secondary qualitative source of data was a narrative provided by the researcher this study who planned, created, and implemented the video-based demonstration lessons, providing insights into the process.

Characteristics of a Qualitative Study

Creswell and Poth described qualitative research as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world" (2018, p. 7). Thus, the researcher is positioned in qualitative research as an observer, reflecting and interpreting data in a search to make meaning. Shank and Brown noted that in qualitative research, the findings and results flow from the questions, arguments, and methods (p. 144). The job of a qualitative researcher is to sort findings and discoveries into a coherent organization in a search for meaning (p. 145). Much of the work of the researcher is sifting through data, organizing into categories, and reflecting on the meaning. Creswell and Poth argued that an essential element of planning a qualitative study is to select an appropriate approach, the options being narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, and case study research (p. 67). The authors noted the approach is selected by the research focus (p. 66). The selection process of this study is described below.

Characteristics of a Case Study

Case studies examine the meaning of symbols, the meaning of events, or even the meaning of life through the study of a case (Zucker, 2009). Shank and Brown (2007) stated that a case study is "where a small number of people or situations, sometimes even only one person or situation, is examined in great depth" (p. 233). Creswell and Poth noted that "a key to generating the description of the case involves identifying case themes. These themes may also represent issues or specific situations to study in each case" (p. 98). Thus, a case study looks at a specific example in depth to explore broader themes that might be applicable in other situations.

The case study approach was chosen for this study because the researcher examined the specific example of creating and implementing a series of video-based demonstration lessons to support both a balanced literacy initiative and grow teacher capacity in a large urban school district. Since the focus of this research was to examine instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visble* at a large urban school district and how these video-based demonstration lessons might impact teacher capacity, the case study approach was warranted. The researcher examined the approach to implementation in this case, in that district-level staff strategically planned and taught lessons filmed in district classrooms, and how this differed from other video-based professional development.

Characteristics of a Narrative

Moen stated that narrative research articulates "continuous experiences and dialogic interactions both with our surrounding world and with ourselves" (2006, p. 56). Cresswell and Poth noted that narrative research, "As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals" (2018, p. 67). Shank and Brown note that narrative analysis is "a specialized research method in qualitative

research that looks at the dynamics and characteristics of stories and story-like types of data" (2007 p. 237). Thus, the reflection on the data gleaned from stories is central in a narrative approach.

While this study was primarily a case study, the researcher adopted a narrative approach to presentation and analysis of data. This was appropriate as the researcher created and implemented the video-based demonstration lesson series *Thinking Made Visible* which is examined in this study. Offering a narrative of this process provided ideas on the process of such an endeavor and how it might be adapted or replicated by others.

Sampling Method

This study followed the constant comparative method in that information was taken from data collection and compared to emerging categories (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p. 85).

Representative samples are designed "to make the sample a miniature replica of the population" (Shank & Brown, 2007, p. 46). Since this study examined the district-wide creation and implementation of video-based demonstration lessons, it is essential that the sampling be representative. This study examined district-level instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* and the impact of the series on teacher capacity. The sample for the interviews and focus group were identified and selected as being as secondary literacy and English language arts instructional coaches working at the district office during the creation and implementation of the video series *Thinking Made Visible*, which was the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. Participants were sent a recruitment email and participation was voluntary.

Setting and Participants

The setting was the central office of a large urban school district in which *Thinking Made Visible* was created and implemented.

The participants were district-level secondary literacy and English language arts instructional coaches at a large urban school district. There were five instructional coaches who were interviewed and took part in a focus group at the district central office. Participants represented the larger body of instructional coaches, who in turn served many different campuses. As such, this was a representative sample of the district's instructional coaches. In addition, the researcher offered a narrative of the experience of creating and implementing the video-based demonstration lessons in this case study.

Instrumentation

Five participants took part in face-to-face interviews. These participants were selected as a representative sample of secondary district-level literacy and English language arts instructional coaches during the time of the creation and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*. The following questions were considered:

1. What are your perceptions of the design of the lessons of *Thinking Made Visible*, including the fact that they are filmed in district classrooms with district students?
2. What are your perceptions of instructional practices you see in *Thinking Made Visible* based on your knowledge of literacy best-practice?
3. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through online curriculum?
4. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through online professional learning modules?

5. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through face-to-face professional development?
6. What are your perceptions of the impact *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

The second round of interviews consisted of follow-up questions of interviewees to expand upon their initial responses. If new questions were created, they focused on the research questions:

1. What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?
2. What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Responses were coded and categorized for qualitative analysis, using the constant comparative method. Theme statements emerged from this for discussion of this project's research questions.

There was a focus group based on an open-format discussion of the emerging theme statements referenced below. Participants' responses were quoted in the discussion of data.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to the study, ethical considerations included obtaining appropriate approval from the university, the large urban school district, and the International Review Board. In beginning to conduct the study, the researcher disclosed the purpose of the study and refrained from pressuring participants to participate or sign consent forms. In collecting

data, the researcher refrained from disrupting the participants' work and stored data securely. In analyzing the data, the researcher avoided presenting only positive results and maintained the confidentiality of the participants. In reporting data, the researcher avoided falsifying or misreporting findings and did not share any information that would harm the participants. In publishing the study, the researcher provided proof of compliance with ethical considerations and did not plagiarize (Cresswell & Poth, 2018, p. 55).

Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, Confirmability

The credibility of the study was enhanced by the fact that it is a case study of the creation and implementation of a series of video-based demonstration lessons in a large urban school district. The transferability was enhanced by the above cited fact of the need of the setting of a large urban school district; given the high need, if video-based demonstration lessons are helpful in this setting they might be helpful in others. The dependability was increased by the fact that a representative sample instructional coaches were interviewed. The confirmability was increased by the inside-the-process reflections shared by the researcher in the narrative approach to presentation and analysis.

Summary

This study examined instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* and the impact on teacher capacity. By combining qualitative analysis of the representative sample instructional coaches interviewed, along with the narrative approach to analysis and presentation by the researcher as to the creation process, this offered insights in to the process of such an endeavor and ideas for others who might seek to replicate or adapt such a model.

Chapter IV

Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings of the study and offers discussion of the results. This study centered on *Thinking Made Visible*, as series of video-based demonstration lessons created and implemented at a large urban school district to support a middle and high school literacy initiative. The study consisted of interviews and a focus group with five district-level secondary literacy and English language arts instructional coaches at the large urban school district where *Thinking Made Visible* was created and implemented. The interviews and focus group explored the research questions:

> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?
>
> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Using the constant comparative method, the data from the interviews was coded into categories by key words. From the categories, the following themes emerged:

1. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling of teaching strategies.
2. Instructional coaches perceived that the fact *Thinking Made Visible* was filmed in district classrooms with district students increased the authenticity of the videos.
3. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* aligned to the

district's vision of instruction.

4. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible's* design offered a choice of different types of videos and was accessible.
5. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was of use in instructional coaches' work of instructional support.
6. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* positively impacted teacher capacity.

A focus group was conducted to provide further opportunities for participant reflection on emerging themes.

This chapter was organized by presenting each theme and relevant qualitative data from the interviews and focus group in the form of participants' responses. The researcher discusses and analyzes the data following the presentation of data of each theme. Then, the researcher offers qualitative data consisting of a narrative on the process of creating and implementing *Thinking Made Visible*.

Case Study Context

This study was a case study concerning the creation and implementation of a series of video-based demonstration lessons at a large urban school district to support a middle school and high school literacy initiative. Entitled *Thinking Made Visible*, the videos were created to provide modeling of key instructional practices based on the district's vision of instruction. The series differed from other instructional-support video series in that the lessons were planned and taught by district staff and filmed in district classrooms with district students. The researcher created and implemented *Thinking Made Visible*, writing lessons, teaching on camera, editing the content, and distributing

the videos. Three other literacy instructional coaches took part in the creation of content. The series was filmed and produced by the district's media production team.

The case study approach was chosen to examine the idea of using video-based demonstration lessons to provide instructional support to a large urban school district. In the case of this district, there was a high ratio of teachers in need of support in ratio to the number of instructional coaches or other support staff. In considering this problem, the researcher reflected on a transformative experience in participating in demonstration lessons taught by a nationally-known literacy presenter. The researcher posited that video-based demonstration lessons, aligned with the district's vision of instruction and filmed in district classrooms with district students, might to a degree address the problem of the district's need for greater instructional support.

A series of interviews were held with district-level secondary literacy and English language arts instructional coaches consisting of approximately 10 to 15 minutes each located at the district's central office. Then, follow-up interviews consisting approximately five to 10 minutes each were conducted at the district central office to allow participants to expand upon responses from the first interviews. Using the constant comparative method, the responses from these interviews were coded by keywords into categories. From these categories, themes emerged. Then, a focus group was held with all participants at the district central office for approximately 30 minutes to allow for reflection on the themes to add additional qualitative data. Member checks were conducted to ensure the accuracy of the transcriptions. The data source of examining instructional coaches' perceptions in this case study was chosen to offer insights from those whose role it is to support both teachers and the district's instructional vision.

Keywords, Codes, and Categories

Table 1 below presents the keywords and codes used to categorize data from interviews.

Table 1

Keywords, Codes, and Categories

Design	Authenticity
Short	Classrooms
Long	Students
Accessible	Our
Variety	My
Choice	Their
	District
	Kids
	Authentic
	Real
Alignment to the District's Vision	Modeling
The District's Practices	See
Vision	Looks like
Expectations	Show
Initiatives	Example
Curriculum	Model
Teacher Capacity	Use in Instructional Coaches' Work
Impact on Specific Teachers	Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* with

Learn Support Action Professional Development Understand Ongoing Try Capacity Empower Emulate Do	Specific Teachers Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Face-to-Face Professional Development Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Online Learning Modules Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Curriculum

Table 2 presents the coding rubric for qualitative data from interviews. Note, synonymous terms or matching descriptions of the terms below were used in coding data.

Coding Rubric

Table 2

Coding Rubric

Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Modeling								40
	See / Show	8	11	5	5	2	31	
	Looks Like	1	1	0	0	0	2	
	Model	0	2	1	1	1	5	

	Example	0	0	1	1	0	2	
Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Authenticity								64
	Classrooms	2	2	1	1	0	6	
	Students / Kids	2	9	2	5	5	23	
	Our, My, Their	1	6	0	5	3	15	
	District	0	2	1	3	3	9	
	Authentic / Real	0	11	0	0	0	11	
Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Alignment to the District's Vision								77
	The District's Practices	23	19	5	3	12	62	
	Initiatives	2	2	0	1	1	6	
	Expectations	0	0	0	1	0	1	
	Curriculum	3	1	0	0	0	4	
	Vision	3	1	0	0	0	4	
Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Design								14
	Choice / Variety	2	1	2	0	0	5	
	Long / Short	3	0	0	0	0	3	

	Accessible	2	1	0	2	1	6	
Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Use in Instructional Coaches' Work								28
	Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* with Specific Teachers	1	9	1	2	1	14	
	Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Face-to-Face Professional Development	0	3	0	3	1	7	
	Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Online Learning Modules	0	2	0	1	0	3	
	Coach Used *Thinking Made Visible* in Curriculum Writing	0	0	2	0	2	4	
Category	Comment Code	Comment Codes					Code Total	Category Total
		LIT1	LIT2	ELA1	ELA2	ELA3		
Teacher Capacity								47
	Impact on Specific Teachers	1	1	1	1	1	5	
	Try / Do / Emulate / Implement / Transfer / Action	1	10	0	4	0	15	

	Learn / Understand	1	3	1	0	0	5	
	Support / Help	0	5	2	2	3	12	
	Professional development	3	0	2	0	0	5	
	Capacity / Empower	1	2	1	0	1	5	

Themes

Theme One: Modeling

Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling of teaching strategies. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 40 references to modeling in regard to *Thinking Made Visible*.

Literacy Coach 2 noted:

> There's not enough coaches for everybody sadly...Seeing is believing and I can't as much as I might want to do a real life small group to demonstrate for you. You know, there's restrictions on our time and we can't. I can't get students that always stay afterschool to do a voluntary small group for me. That's not possible. But if I want you to try it, then you need to see it in action and that's where the videos come back into place. Because I can try to Google, you know, or you find on YouTube videos of secondary literacy practices and there are not any or very few. So to have this bank of resources that I can pull up and any training that I'm doing…I'm with principals, teachers, whatever is, is huge. And we have all the major practices that we want teachers to do. We have a video for it. So if I want teachers to do a conference, yeah, I could model a conference with them myself,

but I can also pull this video of a coach doing a quality conference or if I want them to talk about how do they do text selection. Yeah, I can talk about that. But having the video of teacher coaching a kid through text selection, that's a lot more powerful than anything else I can do just with those adults in the room. So, they're really invaluable.

ELA Coach 1 said:

I found a couple very helpful a few times because a lot of teachers didn't know what that was and you can't explain it without showing an example of what a fishbowl looks like.

ELA Coach 2 stated:

I think having them within the online curriculum and teachers can access that as a resource for when they're looking at the teacher unit, the teacher guide, and they actually need to see what does this practice look like when I'm implementing this with my students? And that's something that they can click on, they have an example and then they can go and emulate that in their classroom.

ELA Coach 3 said:

When we have teachers who are really struggling and it's really beneficial for them to look at those videos and have a chance to see it in action before they teach it. The videos that I would reference in particular are the videos, especially around inferring and think-alouds. We have teachers who don't understand what a read aloud is versus reading aloud and thinking aloud and really making…what's going on in your brain as reader, explicit for kids so they can understand that reading is a skill and something that you develop. So, with those videos, a teacher

> who would just go in and read the text and stop, maybe ask a couple of questions and then move on. They're able to look at those videos, they're able to watch someone in action and then go take that knowledge straight to their class because it's asynchronous. You don't have to attend a training, you don't have to be away from your family, you don't have to do anything, you just have to watch the video and take it back to your class.

Discussion of Theme One: Modeling

The coding of data revealed 31 references to the word "see" or "show," stressing the visual aspect of modeling. Demonstration lessons are based on modeling and help form a vision of what instructional strategies and moves look like. For example, ELA Coach 1 referenced the fishbowl strategy. This is where a teacher models with a small-group what collaborative discussion looks like for the rest of the class. A complicated strategy with many nuances, ELA Coach 1 suggested that seeing this in action helped teachers learn the strategy. Text-based professional resources and curriculum are integral in developing teacher capacity, but the qualitative data suggests instructional coaches in this study perceived that seeing instruction in action is valuable. Literacy Coach 2 noted the logistical difficulties in setting up modeling sessions and suggested the use of video to provide opportunities for modeling when it might not otherwise be possible to do so with students is helpful. Literacy Coach 2 also noted that there are not enough coaches to support all teachers, as the researcher argued, and stated that *Thinking Made Visible* provided some modeling where there is limited support. ELA Coach 3 noted the asynchronous nature of video, how a teacher could watch it at a time he or she chose and

immediately apply it to their classroom; sometimes days pass between face-to-face models and application of the modeled strategy.

Theme Two: Authenticity

Instructional coaches perceived that the fact *Thinking Made Visible* was filmed in district classrooms with district students increased the authenticity of the videos. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 64 references to authenticity in regard to *Thinking Made Visible*.

Literacy Coach 1 said:

> Well, I think our teachers in the district will see things that are created from outside organizations or outside publishers and what are the first questions are wondering…the kids and the teachers that were reflected in those examples are not similar to the makeup of our districts. I think initially the fact that they filmed in district classrooms with district students…they make them more credible if you will.

Literacy Coach 2 stated:

> I think it was fabulous that we were able to see these strategies in place in real-world situations with real students that look like the classrooms and the students. I think in years past the district has had videos but they were very sterile and very, you know, the perfect-world scenario. And so sometimes as a teacher myself, when I was a teacher and seeing those, it was like, "Well that's great, but that doesn't look like my classroom …I can't really picture that happening in my world." And so, these *Thinking Made Visible* videos I think were a lot more authentic to the reality and the types of students and the levels of students that we

all see. So, it's a lot easier for teachers to relate to and then a feel like they could try that strategy to themselves.

ELA Coach 1 noted:

I definitely think it's a strength of the videos that they were recorded in district classrooms with different district students because I think that will increase teacher buy-in when they see lessons taught with actual [district] students…to see some examples of how the conversations in the classroom don't always go as you think they will. But this is what you can do in the moment. This is how you can still, you know, get some meaning out of that and show those kinds of real-time teacher moves and it's good to have those for new teachers that are struggling teachers.

ELA Coach 2 said:

I liked that the fact that they are filmed in our district with our district students. It is really something that has been asked for by our teachers when we have done district professional development because we'll show them videos of students or teachers and students in another district, in another state. And they can't relate to those students because they say, “But those are not my students.” So, I think that is a great benefit that they're done in our district with our district students.

ELA Coach 3 stated:

I think that if you have any legitimacy and … street credibility with teachers, if it's not filmed in our district with our students, they blow it off. I've shown lots of videos from like the Learning Channel or something like that and teachers are like, “Oh, but that's not our kids. Our kids can't do that.” And it's particularly

useful to say, “No, these are our kids.” That’s exactly what they say. This is how they responded and our kids can do it.

Discussion of Theme Two: Authenticity

Instructional coaches perceived that teachers tend to dismiss instructional videos filmed with students outside their district. ELA coach stated that videos filmed in the district were something that has been asked for by teachers, indicating a need. Literacy Coach 2 suggested that other videos were “sterile” and “perfect-world,” suggesting that *Thinking Made Visible,* which was filmed with real students and was unrehearsed, offered some authenticity. ELA Coach 3 stated that some teachers see videos from outside the district and argue that their kids cannot do what they see in the video. The researcher hypothesized that filming demonstration lessons in district classrooms with district students might help change teachers’ thinking about their students’ capabilities. The researcher argued that if they see teaching and learning with classrooms and students that are similar to theirs, teachers will have greater buy-in concerning the video-based demonstration lessons. Indeed, the term “buy-in” was used by ELA Coach 1.

Theme Three: Alignment to the District’s Vision of Instruction

Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was aligned to the district’s vision of instruction. *Thinking Made Visible* was created to support the district’s middle and high school literacy initiative. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 77 references the literacy initiative, key instructional practices of the initiative, or the instructional vision of the district in regard to *Thinking Made Visible*.

Literacy Coach 1 said:

I think that the videos directly connect to the literacy initiatives within the district, both middle and high school and frankly a lot of them apply to our elementary literacy initiative. They're connected to the district curriculum. So, you see a lot of the videos had the Beers and Probst's signposts in there, which is something we've done in district professional development. You also see a lot of the metacognitive strategies that are reflected in the videos…I mean, you're seeing things such as how to promote a joyful and meaningful reading or seeing things like engagement in reading, you're seeing things like read-aloud, think-aloud. So, these are all things that support our best practices in literacy.

In another part of the interviews, Literacy Coach 1 said:

` And if you look at the collection of videos, you see that all of them tie back to those [here the participant said the name of the initiative] components. For example, you see the read-aloud, think-aloud throughout the videos. You also see this supported independent reading where you have kids selecting books of their choice and then talking about their literacy journey. You see writing integrated throughout. You also see evidence of small-group instruction or specific strategies that have been addressed in district trainings such as the fishbowl or having purposeful talk within the small group. So, I think it's very clear that what's happening in the videos is what we want to see happening in the classrooms.

Literacy Coach 2 stated:

I think they're on 100 percent on point for the things that we are asking teachers to do. Based on our literacy initiatives, those practices of those videos are the exact same things that we are telling leaders that teachers should be doing. They're

represented in the literature out there and all the research and what they say about best practices. And so, to have something tangible in our district schools with our district students that people can turn around and say, “Oh, that's not some lofty idea that someone came up with. This is something that I can see happen in my room right now that is best practice.” I think it's just revolutionary. I think for our teachers to be able to see that… it's really relevant to the work that we're doing in our initiatives. I couldn't think higher of it. It's just the best practices that we want everyone to do.

In the focus group, Literacy Coach 2 said:

I think when a district that is large as ours and we have an initiative that we want everybody to learn about and to implement, it's a big challenge to support everybody. Just because we have way more campuses than we do coaches. And so, I think the videos are having the practices be aligned to our initiative and the practices that we're putting into our curriculum. Things like that really helps bridge the gap for those campuses that don't have coaches to come out and model those strategies. Or they might read the strategy in the master course but not really know what it looks like and if there's the link to the video right there, they can click it and they can go and see it. So, I think it's a great tool when we're somebody or a district that's just this big of a size and we just don't have the manpower to get out and see everybody.

ELA Coach 2 stated:

First and foremost, the design emulates our workshop model.

ELA Coach 3 said:

> I think the *Thinking Made Visible* series is exceptionally cutting edge when we talk about literacy best practice; it sort of zeroes in on what I consider like the heart of good ELA instruction and without any of the added on like accoutrement of like all the new things that are going on in literacy, like let's do this program or that program. I really see it as like what kids need to be doing over and over and over again, and it also really aligns with our literacy [the participant said the specific name of the initiative] movements.

Discussion of Theme Three: Alignment to the District's Instructional Vision

Instructional coaches repeatedly referenced the connection between the district's literacy initiative and key instructional strategies of the initiative with *Thinking Made Visible*. The researcher argued that many instructional videos in other series that featured classroom teachers are general in nature, such as "modeling" or "classroom discussion." The researcher suggested that this is because of the logistical and planning limitations of collaborating between the central office staff that often lead the district initiatives and busy classroom teachers. In the literacy initiative of the district of this case study, there were many key instruction strategies highlighted in professional development and curriculum. To systematically plan and to ask classroom teachers to teach specific lessons on specific days, in coordination with the availability of the film crew, was impractical. Further, it would disrupt the natural flow of teachers' lessons. The researcher suggested this is why other videos featuring classroom teachers' instruction tend to be general. In such videos, a quality teacher is often identified to participate and broad examples of good instruction are captured. These are of course valuable to show quality teaching, but may lack the specifics of the district's instructional goals.

A response to this problem that the researcher explored was for central office staff to plan and teach the video-based demonstration lessons, much like a consultant would teach a demonstration lesson in a teacher's classroom with his or her students. This allowed for systematic planning of the key instructional components of the literacy initiative to be targeted. Instruction coaches perceived alignment between the strategies in *Thinking Made Visible* and the district's vision of instruction.

Theme Four: Design

Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible's* design offered a choice of different types of videos and was accessible. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 14 references to the design of *Thinking Made Visible*.

Literacy Coach 1 said:

> The design…the videos are very accessible. There's choice in there. So, there's some better designed to be short clips that might be used for a PLC and then there's longer video clips that allow teachers to maybe spend some of their planning time looking at them. Or perhaps an administrator has a specific focus they want their staff to look on. So, I think the fact that there's choice of shorter and longer videos is great.

ELA Coach 3 said:

> I've been here for 18 years and I have seen people go, people stay, people move…when you create something like the series, it's a permanent resource for teachers… These videos will be there and the teacher who is looking for them, we'll be able to find them. We know what best practices are… those videos are

there for the teachers forever.

In the focus group, ELA Coach 3 said:

> Anytime to you when you started a new initiative… the initiative and the work have to go hand in. Our district is so big…now we have these videos that are going to stand…the videos are going to be there to access. …Like it's, it's a huge, like that's like a rock of support for sustainability.

Discussion of Theme Four: Design

The researcher initially conceived of *Thinking Made Visible* as consisting only of full demonstration lessons of approximately 30 to 60 minutes in length. This was because of the power of the researcher's experience in watching the above referenced nationally-known literacy presenter teach full lessons. Later, when the researcher realized that time constraints for teachers might make watching full demonstrations lessons a problem for some, he created shorter versions of the videos, some three to seven minutes in length, to highlight key strategies. Thus, teachers had the choice of watching full versions or shorter videos. The edited versions proved useful for including short videos in face-to-face professional development. Literacy Coach 1 perceived this as a strength.

Literacy Coach 1 mentioned that the videos were accessible. The researcher, in collaboration with the district's media team, added lower-thirds, descriptions of teaching strategies happening in the videos. For example, a lower-third might be, "The teacher thinks aloud to model the strategy" or "The teacher asks an open-ended question." This helped make clear the intended learning for the viewer and link the professional terminology with the visual example.

Literacy Coach 3 mentioned that the videos by nature are a permanent resource. The researcher posited that not only does video allow for a wider reach of modeling, the on-demand nature provides a resource that stays over time. Once created, the video-based demonstration lessons are available whenever wanted in perpetuity.

Theme Five: Use in Instructional Coaches' Work

Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was of use in instructional coaches' work of instructional support. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 28 references to instructional coaches using *Thinking Made Visible* in supporting instruction.

Literacy Coach 2 said:

> They've really been super beneficial because when we built our modules, I've used the videos in the modules I've helped build. It's really hard to create a really rich experience online when all the person is doing is reading and typing and maybe doing some really basic click-and-drag matching activities.

Literacy Coach 2 continued:

> I look at them now having watched them with teachers and having watched them with administrators… she can go to the site and she can pick out what are the things that she wants to do and then I can kind of help guide her on her journey.

ELA Coach 1 said:

> I am a curriculum writer, so I really liked having this resource as something that was available to put on pages for teacher information where they could go and see what it looks like.

ELA Coach 2 stated:

As a coach, I can actually take that to a math teacher that I know needs help or a social studies teacher or the science teacher.

ELA Coach 2 continued:

So, in my experience in facilitating professional development and even having an opportunity to look at online professional learning modules, having those videos there as a resource to supplement your PD, your online PD and what it looks like for a teacher is an example of how do I facilitate this in my classroom.

In the focus group, ELA Coach 2 noted:

So, for me, when I'm going to model for teachers, I like to have the video because they see different people doing the same strategy, so it's easier for them sort of to make it their own…And then that teacher will see, "Oh, I can do it my way and tweak it to work what my students need to see." That's a great benefit to those videos and how they support our instructional curriculum. You made me think of the fact that they can pause it, rewind it, do that in a model…If there's a certain part they want to see you again, they can just simply backtrack a little bit.

In the focus group, ELA Coach 2 referenced using *Thinking Made Visible* with administrators:

A lot of administrators will ask for strategies. They don't understand what the strategies are in ELA. They never seen them, but when I've sat with a principal and said, "Oh, you can see this strategy…let's this see video and show you what a fish bowl looks like. Let me show you what this looks like." Then it sets a light bulb off in their head.

ELA Coach 3 noted:

> We embed the videos on a page that we call teacher pages, which we envision to be embedded teacher development within the content, within the curriculum. So if we're doing a unit on writing narratives…we searched for videos that match that.

Discussion on Theme Five: Use in Instructional Coaches' Work

The researcher originally conceived of *Thinking Made Visible* centering only a website where video-based demonstration lessons might be accessed, to help teachers with limited instructional support. The implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* went beyond this. For example, Literacy Coach 2 and ELA Coach 2 stated they used the videos as resources with the teachers they coach face-to-face. The researcher did not anticipate this form of use.

ELA Coach 2 referenced using *Thinking Made Visible* in face-to-face professional development and online learning modules. This was another unforeseen avenue of implementation at the beginning of the project. The researcher also has used *Thinking Made Visible* in face-to-face professional development and argued that it is a way of bringing instructional strategies to life for participants, as they see teaching and learning in action with actual students. Similarly, *Thinking Made Visible* was utilized in online learning modules to transport participants to a classroom setting.

ELA Coach Three referenced how instructional coaches embedded *Thinking Made Visible* into curriculum. The district in this case study utilizes an online system to distribute lesson plans. The instructional coaches created teacher pages in which *Thinking Made Visible* videos were housed linked directly to related lessons. For example, in a lesson focusing on making inferences, there was a teacher page with a *Thinking Made Visible* video where this strategy was modeled. The researcher argued

that the immediacy of this link has benefit, as supported by instructional coaches' perceptions cited above. Instead of waiting weeks between demonstration lessons or a professional development on a topic and implementation, the modeling is accessed as the teacher plans for that specific instructional strategy and lesson.

Theme Six: Teacher Capacity

Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* positively impacted teacher capacity. Based on the coding of qualitative data from instructional coach interviews into categories, there were 47 references that instructional coaches perceived *Thinking Made Visible* positively impacted teacher capacity.

Literacy Coach 1 stated:

> Even just yesterday I had a teacher asked me, "You know, I really want to see more of this. I want to see more read-alouds. I want to see more model thinking." And I was like, "Oh well, look at the *Thinking Made Visible* series." And you know, as soon as I sent her the link, she was so excited to go back on there that she emailed me back. Then I asked her, "Specifically which ones are you going to be looking at?" And she said. "The read-alouds and definitely the Signposts" because that's something they're wanting to do on their campus.

Literacy Coach 1 commented on the experience of creating content for *Thinking Made Visible*:

> I was initially reluctant to be on video because I just don't like being on camera and I get uncomfortable with that part of it. But I think ultimately it was actually a very good professional development opportunity for me to build my capacity because you really had to sit there and think about what your beliefs about

effective literacy instruction are and how you are displaying those beliefs and those practices that you think are going to impact student outcomes within the videos. So ultimately, I got to really solidify my beliefs about read-alouds, small group instruction, modeling thinking. You know, how we want our kids to be engaged in selecting books of their choice. And I think seeing you display some of your lessons and your thinking allowed me to continue to build my capacity as a coach. And in turn, those ideas that I learned and techniques are then transferred into what I do with my teachers in the classroom.

Literacy Coach 2 said:

If you have the video that accompanies the lesson plan and then you can see somebody doing this strategy and action, you're going to understand it a lot more and you're going to be more willing to do it or try it yourself… it's going to influence your practice more than any article or online activity you could do… And I think that really gives teachers the power to say, “Hey, I can try that.” It also has really empowered our newer teachers to try those things.

Literacy Coach 2 continued:

One of the videos I remember we were watching and I think it was the purposeful talk one and there was no, it wasn't, it was the text selection anyway…there was a bin of books on the table for the students and the students were thumbing through that and...that was not the purpose of showing the video. But she was like, “Maybe if I give them some things to look at and they look at all the books, then they'll be more apt to go to the bookshelf.” And I was like, “Yeah, absolutely. Like we need to get their hands on these books so they can actually make

informed selections. They don't know what's over there so let's get them into their hands and start, you know, going through it." And so, it, you know, that was not the purpose, but she saw a practice in it that she could do and can tweak. And she's one of my few teachers that has continued with, you know, independent reading to this day. Now if I was to go work with her next year, there's probably other things I would pull out, like we might do the conferring one because that's something she hasn't done yet. But I now have a bank of things that I can go to with her to help push her practice along…. So, there I think they have been a game changer. I wish we had more of them and I wish we had them around for longer.... And so, these videos, I think it's a great tool for me as a coach. I think they really helped bridge that gap between teachers and campuses who don't have coaches or who only see us once a month. I think it really kind of helps bridge that gap.

In the focus group, Literacy Coach 2 stated:

We're developing this common language with everybody…It's so we all know what we're talking about when we say read-aloud for example. I think sometimes that's really important for administrators, so they're speaking the same language that their teachers are to really help make sure that we are doing the initiative or I'm using this practice.

ELA Coach 1 stated:

I think having these videos that show what the lessons of like in classrooms could be very, very beneficial, especially for new teachers or teachers who don't understand what the expectations are in our ELA classrooms.

ELA Coach 1 noted a desire to improve implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*:

I wish we had more time for teachers to watch some more of the videos. They are definitely a good resource, but I'm wondering if they couldn't even more impactful or helpful for teachers if we could ensure that, you know, this many teachers watched this one video or something like that, or if we could push videos directly out to teachers or something like that.

ELA Coach 2 noted:

The videos had just made it that much easier for them to transfer their skills from the professional development setting to their own classroom.

ELA Coach 2

This takes me to the other part of my job, instructional coaching. After I'm using those videos and in face-to-face professional development and then going to the classroom to actually coach a teacher on using these strategies, seeing if they've been in my professional development training. Did they take that back and use it in their classroom? And most of the times, yes, they have and the videos had just made it that much easier for them to transfer their skills from the professional development setting to their own classrooms.

ELA Coach 3 said:

I think they're also useful sometimes when we have teachers who are maybe struggling with content or struggling with strategies… we can really build that teacher capacity… if you're trying to teach someone a certain strategy or you're trying to show them how something could work and you start with the

video, all of a sudden you bring everybody up to the same level.

In the focus group, ELA Coach 3 stated:

> This is to me the path that new teachers take first year, you know, nothing. You have no strategies, no toolkit of your own. So that's the unit you're trying to gather all of those strategies on how to work with kids the second year. You're kind of getting to more understand what's going on. And then the third year, yeah, we're kind of up and running, right? Well, with *Thinking Made Visible* videos, those tools are right there their first year, so they won't have to go around searching for them and they have a model what that looks like their first year. So, they're not so much struggling and just trying to survive. It's there. So, I think that would help with the teacher turnover rate and retention because now we're giving them tools.

Discussion of Theme Six: Teacher Capacity

All five instructional coaches anecdotally shared specific teachers who they said viewed and benefitted from *Thinking Made Visible*. There were 15 references to words such as "try," "do," "emulate," "implement," and "transfer." Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* supported teachers trying strategies of the literacy initiative. There were five references to words such as "learn" or "understand," indicating that instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* supported expanding teachers' expertise. There were 12 references to *Thinking Made Visible* with the words "support" or "help" in relation to teachers. There were four direct references to *Thinking Made Visible* building teacher capacity or empowerment.

The reference by Literacy Coach 2 that *Thinking Made Visible* helped create a common language amongst teachers and administrators suggested that video-based

demonstration lessons can support a shared instructional vision. The researcher argued that videos would help make tangible the often abstract instructional ideas involved in school reform.

ELA Coach 3 stated that *Thinking Made Visible* helped first year teachers and this might positively impact teacher retention rates. The researcher began the work of *Thinking Made Visible* out of concern of how to support large numbers of teachers given high teacher turnover rates. The researcher argued that by increasing modeling opportunities via video, this would increase teacher expertise and help prevent the frustration that often leads to burn out.

Literacy Coach 1 was the only participant of this study who took part in creating and teaching lessons on camera with students for *Thinking Made Visible*. Literacy Coach 1's comments that the process helped build her capacity as an instructional coach echoed Galluci, D Voogt Van LAre, Yoon, and Boatright's idea that public acts of teaching build capacity in instructional coaches (2010, p. 921). Thus, a model such as *Thinking Made Visible* might not only benefit teachers but also the instructional coaches that participate in content creation.

ELA Coach 1's comment regarding a desire to improve distribution of *Thinking Made Visible* pointed to future work. Thinking strategically about more ways of implementation or involving more layers of stakeholders in the distribution process might increase teachers' use of the resource.

A Narrative by the Researcher

The researcher offers the following reflections as a narrative of the creation and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*.

Experience in Teaching Demonstration Lessons

The researcher did not begin teaching demonstration lessons with *Thinking Made Visible*. After viewing the demonstration lessons by the nationally-known literacy presenter referenced above, the researcher began conducting demonstration lessons himself. At first, the researcher simply copied the demonstration lessons of the presenter. Soon, he tried ideas of his own. The researcher continued conducting demonstration lessons throughout his career.

The researcher, in reflecting on his narrative of creating and implementing *Thinking Made Visible*, posited that this experience with demonstration lessons was a prerequisite for embarking on such a project. It takes time to build comfort in teaching in front of others, let alone being filmed. Further, the creation *Thinking Made Visible* involved teaching with students the researcher had just met upon filming, much like other demonstration lessons by an instructional coach. The background in demonstration teaching allowed the researcher to function in that situation.

Focusing on the District's Instructional Vision

The researcher took part in planning the large urban school district's middle and high school literacy initiatives. In planning *Thinking Made Visible*, the researcher highlighted key instructional strategies of that initiative, such as interactive read-aloud, think-aloud, turn and talk, open-ended questions, a dialogic classroom, the metacognitive reading strategies, Beers and Probst's Signposts (2012, 2016), small-group reading, supported independent reading, author's craft study, and the reading and writing connection. He planned lessons strategically that he thought would be of benefit in illustrating high-leverage strategies for the wide audience of the district's teachers. Thus,

beginning with a strategic vision of instruction might be a starting point those who wish to embark on such a project.

An Active Role in the Editing Process

Thinking Made Visible was possible because the district's media team offered extensive time and support for filming. In turn, the researcher took an active role in the editing process. After filming, the researcher was offered access to the raw footage, which he then watched, suggesting how the footage should be edited and targeting lower-thirds to explain teaching strategies. He returned to the studio to film introductions and explanations to bridge between sections of the videos. This was time consuming but the researcher reflected that this both enabled him to get to know the material and create greater access and clarity for the viewers.

Reflection on Alternate Methods of Implementation

As noted above, *Thinking Made Visible* was implemented through a website, online curriculum, face-to-face professional development, online professional learning modules, and through instructional coaches' interactions with teachers. The researcher reflected these alternative forms of distribution widened the audience for the project. The researcher argued these differing methods of implementation were differentiated based on the needs of the teachers.

A Concluding Anecdote

The researcher began *Thinking Made Visible* as an attempt to replicate for a wide audience the transformative experience of participating in a nationally-known literacy presenter's demonstration lessons. In 2018, two years into the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, the same literacy presenter was offering demonstration lessons at

the large urban school district of this study. The researcher was present along with several campus administrators. While debriefing the demonstration lessons, one principal remarked on the quality of the lessons and asked, "How do I get all of my teachers to see this?" This was exactly the question the researcher pondered concerning all the teachers of the district when conceiving *Thinking Made Visible*. Then another principal, with whom the researcher had never spoken, referenced the *Thinking Made Visible* videos. The researcher reflected that this anecdote provided some anecdotal support for the efficacy of the work.

Summary

This case study of revealed the following instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* and its impact on teacher capacity:

1. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling of teaching strategies.
2. Instructional coaches perceived that the fact *Thinking Made Visible* was filmed in district classrooms with district students increased the authenticity of the videos.
3. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was aligned to the district's vision of instruction.
4. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible's* design offered a choice of different types of videos and was accessible.
5. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was of use in instructional coaches' work of instructional support.

6. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* positively impacted teacher capacity.

The researcher reflected that his prior experience in conducting demonstration lessons, a focus on key aspects of the instructional vision of the district, an active role in the editing process, and considering alternative forms of implementation increased the impact of these video-based demonstration lessons.

Chapter V

Conclusions

Overview of the Study

Chapter One of this study outlined the problem of building teacher expertise in large urban school districts with high teacher turnover rates and limited resources for support. The researcher shared a transformative experience in which he took part in demonstration lessons led by a nationally-known literacy presenter, which changed his practice. The researcher hypothesized that by video-taping demonstration lessons in district classrooms with district students, this might provide a resource that could reach a wide audience of teachers. Further, the researcher theorized that if district staff strategically planned and taught the lessons, this might target and support key aspects of the district's literacy initiative. This resulted in the creation and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons. This case study examined the research questions:

> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?
>
> What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Chapter Two of this study consisted of the review of literature concerning the theoretical framework of the study, which was founded on the Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model of instruction, building teacher expertise and efficacy, instructional coaching, the use of video in professional development, and balanced

literacy instruction.

Chapter Three of this study presented the constant comparative method of a qualitative case study, with narrative approaches to presentation and analysis. The data consisted of interviews and a focus group of five district-level instructional coaches to offer thoughts on the above research questions. Interview responses were coded by keywords and categorized. From these categories, themes emerged. Focus group responses provided further qualitative data for discussion.

Chapter Four consisted of the findings and discussion. From the interview data, the following themes were found:

1. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling of teaching strategies.
2. Instructional coaches perceived that the fact *Thinking Made Visible* was filmed in district classrooms with district students increased the authenticity of the videos.
3. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was aligned to the district's vision of instruction.
4. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible's* design offered a choice of different types of videos and was accessible.
5. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* was of use in instructional coaches' work of instructional support.
6. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* positively impacted teacher capacity.

The researcher offered discussion and analysis of each of these themes. In

addition, the researcher shared a narrative of lessons learned from the creation and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* as further qualitative data.

Perceptions of Instructional Coaches on *Thinking Made Visible*

Instructional coaches in this study perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling, offered the authenticity of a district classroom setting, supported the district's vision of instruction, contained choice of accessible videos, was of use in instructional coaches' work, and positively impacted teacher capacity. The researcher chose to study instructional coaches' perceptions because educators in this role are closely engaged in the challenging work of district-wide school reform. Instructional coaches' perceptions in this study supported the researcher's hypothesis that video-taping demonstration lessons in district classrooms with district students can provide authentic modeling of instructional strategies that might help build teacher capacity for a wide audience. Further, instructional coaches' perceptions supported the idea that if district staff strategically planned and taught such lessons, this might help target and support key aspects of the district's literacy initiative.

The Model of *Thinking Made Visible*

Thinking Made Visible attempted to offer a new form of video-based district professional development. Some video-based district professional development is filmed in studios without students. For example, district staff might want to share an instructional strategy such as making inferences in reading, and film a mock lesson in a studio without students. The advantage of this approach is that it is relatively easy logistically to accomplish and does provide instructional support. The disadvantage is that it lacks the authenticity of the setting of a classroom with students and many of the

nuances of real-time instructional moves are lost. A second approach that districts often use is to film the work of an exemplary classroom teacher. This offers the authenticity of the classroom setting and is of benefit to model best-practice instruction. One challenge in using this model to support a district-wide vision of instruction is that the product often is very general, such as "classroom management" or "modeling." It would be extremely challenging to coordinate with classroom teachers to target key instructional strategies from a district initiative and coordinate with a production crew to film. The planning time and disruption to the teachers' schedules would make this problematic. In the review of literature of video-based professional development, the researcher did not find an example of comprehensively documenting key instructional strategies of a district's vision of instruction by filming classroom teachers. A third approach is to utilize outside sources of video-based professional development, such as video footage of nationally-known educational practitioners. This makes targeting desired strategies more feasible and many such videos are set in classrooms with students. However, as instructional coaches in this study noted, teachers often dismiss such videos if the setting or student demographic is different from their learning environment.

The researcher hypothesized that if he strategically planned demonstration lessons focusing on key literacy practices from the district's vision of instruction and district staff taught these lessons in district classrooms with district students, and these were filmed and distributed, this might lessen some limitations of the above three models of video-based professional development. Instructional coaches perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling aligned to the district's vision of instruction with the authenticity of a district classroom setting.

The researcher sought to implement the videos of *Thinking Made Visible* in a variety of modes, including a central website, online curriculum, face-to-face professional development, online professional learning modules, and instructional coaches' interactions with teachers. This increased the audience of the videos. ELA Coach 1 expressed a desire for greater viewership. The researcher agreed that exploring additional avenues of implementation and involving more stakeholders in the implementation process might increase the impact of the series.

Limitations and Future Research

This case study examined district-level instructional coaches' perceptions of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* and its impact on teacher capacity. Since these instructional coaches were part of the work in implementing the instructional vision of the district and worked on implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, there is the possibility of bias in the responses. Literacy Coach 1 participated in planning and teaching lessons on film with students as part of the project, which is also a potential factor for bias. However, district-level instructional coaches see many resources which purport to advance the instructional vision of the district, which gives them expertise in evaluation of such resources. This combined with their role as agents of district-wide school reform warranted studying their perceptions. Including Literacy Coach 1 in the study allowed for analysis of the impact of the process of public acts of teaching on an instructional coach's capacity.

Possibilities for future research include studying the perceptions of teachers and administrators of the design, content, and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* and its impact on teacher capacity. Quantitative studies on the rate of usage of *Thinking*

Made Visible or the impact of use of the series by teachers on student achievement are also possibilities. Studying another districts' exploration of similar video-based professional development might indicate if the model is replicable and offer ideas on adaptation based on the districts' needs.

Recommendations

The model of video-based professional development explored in this case study might be adapted by other districts to meet their needs. Most district offices have instructional goals they wish to see implemented by their teachers to meet the needs of their students. The researcher argued that one barrier to accomplishing such goals is a lack of modeling of instructional practices. As stated above, Pearson and Gallagher's Gradual Release of Responsibilities Model (1983) suggested that learning best begins with modeling, followed by shared practice, then independent practice. The researcher identified a lack of modeling of instructional strategies for teachers, particularly in large urban school districts with high teacher turnover rates. Video offered a medium in which demonstration lessons could be available on demand. The researcher theorized that by district staff teaching targeted lessons in district classrooms, this modeling might be both authentic and aligned with the district's vision of instruction. As such, other districts could follow a similar model to provide support for their goals.

Barriers to such exploration by others might be the comfort of district staff in offering demonstration lessons on video in district classrooms with district students and the time required to invest is such a project. The researcher regularly conducted demonstration lessons in classrooms with students, observed by teachers, before this project began. This provided preparation teach in the high-pressure situation of being

filmed. If district staff wished to try a similar endeavor and had not conducted demonstration lessons recently, the researcher suggested this might be a starting point. Time considerations are also a factor. The researcher spent hundreds of hours planning, setting up the logistics of filming, teaching the lessons, editing the footage, and implementing the videos in a variety of formats. Given the workload of many district-level staff, this might seem impractical. However, the researcher argued that if a goal of district-level staff is to provide instructional support to a wide audience of teachers aligned with the district's vision of instruction, the time is not wasted, as evidenced by the perceptions of instructional coaches in this study.\

Here is a short list of recommendations for those seeking to implement a model of video-based district professional development based on the Thinking Made Visible model:'

- Focus on building comfort and expertise in demonstration lessons.
- Reflect on the learning community's vision on instruction.
- Reflect on targeted instructional strategies to support the vision of instruction.
- Focus on filming lessons in classrooms that represent the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the wider learning community. Of special note is the use of diverse texts. In *Thinking Made Visible*, multi-cultural texts were utilized to reflect the diversity of the learning community and connect with students' experiences.
- Devote time to the editing process.
- Be creative in multiple modes of implementation of the video-based professional development.

- If one wishes to explore *Thinking Made Visible*, the videos are available at https://vimeopro.com/hisdpsd/thinking-made-visible for viewing.

Conclusions

District-wide school reform is challenging work. The roots of this study began when the researcher witnessed a nationally-known literacy presenter's demonstration lessons and this transformed his understanding of teaching and learning. Years of work in district offices convinced the researcher of the critical need for models of best-practice instruction, particularly in large urban districts with high teacher turnover rates. *Thinking Made Visible* offered a different model of video-based demonstration lessons, in which district staff targeted key instructional strategies and they themselves taught these in district classrooms with district students. The resulting videos were implemented in a variety of formats. Instructional coaches in this study perceived that *Thinking Made Visible* provided modeling, offered the authenticity of a district classroom setting, supported the district's vision of instruction, contained a choice of accessible videos, was of use in instructional coaches' work, and positively impacted teacher capacity.

The researcher does not claim that the model of *Thinking Made Visible* will solve every educational problem. Indeed, much of teaching and learning is about taking small steps forward rather than quick fixes. Further, the researcher suggests that educational work is about making what difference one can in the work of teachers and the learning of students. *Thinking Made Visibl*e was an attempt to reach a wider audience of teachers with authentic modeling and support of best-practice literacy instruction aligned with the district's vision of instruction. The researcher acknowledges this form of video-based professional development is but one tool in the complex work of instructional support.

Nevertheless, such a model offers a chance to reinforce what one Literacy Coach 2 in this study termed a “shared language” in the work of school reform.

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Appendix A

University Approval

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH
Institutional Review Boards

APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION

April 26, 2018

Stephen Winton

swinton@uh.edu

Dear Stephen Winton:

On April 24, 2018, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	A Case Study on Video-based Professional Development
Investigator:	Stephen Winton
IRB ID:	STUDY00000944
Funding/ Proposed Funding:	Name: Unfunded
Award ID:	
Award Title:	
IND, IDE, or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Stephen Winton Research Timeline A Case Study on Video-based Professional Development.pdf, Category: Other; • Stephen Winton IRB Protocal 503 A Case Study on Video-based Professional Development Revised 4 12 18.pdf, Category: IRB Protocol; • Script for Email Recruitment for "A Case Study on Video-based Professional Development", Category: Recruitment Materials; • Stephen Winton HRP-502a (2).pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Stephen Winton Interview and Focus Group Questions A Case Study on Video-based Professional Development.pdf, Category: Study tools (ex: surveys, interview/focus group questions, data collection forms, etc.); • Stephen Winton District Approval(2).pdf, Category: Letters of Cooperation / Permission;
Review Category:	Expedited
Committee Name:	Not Applicable

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH
Institutional Review Boards

IRB Coordinator:	Danielle Griffin

The IRB approved the study from April 26, 2018 to April 25, 2019, inclusive.

To ensure continuous approval for studies with a review category of "Committee Review" in the above table, you must submit a continuing review with required explanations by the deadline for the March 2019 meeting. These deadlines may be found on the compliance website (http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/). You can submit a continuing review by navigating to the active study and clicking "Create Modification/CR."

For expedited and exempt studies, a continuing review should be submitted no later than 30 days prior to study closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted on or before April 25, 2019, approval of this study expires and all research (including but not limited to recruitment, consent, study procedures, and analysis of identifiable data) must stop. If the study expires and you believe the welfare of the subjects to be at risk if research procedures are discontinued, please contact the IRB office immediately.

Unless a waiver has been granted by the IRB, use the stamped consent form approved by the IRB to document consent. The approved version may be downloaded from the documents tab.Attached are stamped approved consent documents. Use copies of these documents to document consent.

In conducting this study, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system.

Sincerely,

Research Integrity and Oversight (RIO) Office
University of Houston, Division of Research
713 743 9204
cphs@central.uh.edu
http://www.uh.edu/research/compliance/irb-cphs/

Appendix B

Recruitment Letter

Dear Teacher Development Specialist,

I am conducting a study for my EdD in Education with the University of Houston regarding the video series *Thinking Made Visible*.

This study examines the research questions:

What are teacher instructional coaches' perceptions of the design and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?

What are instructional coaches' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Participation would consist of individual interviews of approximately 20 minutes each and one focus group with other participants of the study of approximately 45 minutes. These will tentatively take place from the present to July of 2018. The total time to commit to the study is approximately 90 minutes.

Your participation would be greatly appreciated to help this study. If you interested, there will be a consent form with will provide detailed information.

Please contact me if you are interested and thank you for your consideration!

This research study has been reviewed by the University of Houston Institutional Review Board.

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. What are your perceptions of the design of the lessons of *Thinking Made Visible*, including the fact that they are filmed in district classrooms with district students?
2. What are your perceptions of instructional practices you see in *Thinking Made Visible* based on your knowledge of literacy best-practice?
3. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through online curriculum?
4. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through online professional learning modules?
5. What are your perceptions of the implementation of *Thinking Made Visible* through face-to-face professional development?
6. What are your perceptions of the impact *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?

Note: The second round of interviews will consist of questions that are created based on emerging themes from the first round of interviews or ask interviewees to expand upon their initial responses. If new questions are created, they will focus on the research questions:

3. What are teacher development specialists' perceptions of the design and implementation of *Thinking Made Visible*, a series of video-based demonstration lessons?
4. What are teacher development specialists' perceptions of the impact of *Thinking Made Visible* on teacher capacity?