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by

Charles E. Allen, Jr.

May 2017

TEACHER SELF-ASSESSMENT: A FACILITATIVE PROCESS
FOR PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

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

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

Background: Currently, junior high school teachers are evaluated by administrators using summative assessment methods. There is an absence of teacher self-assessment in the evaluation process and rarely are students directly part of the feedback process. There is a need for teachers to be empowered in the evaluative process by receiving meaningful student feedback and participating in effective self-assessment with a facilitative administrator. **Purpose:** This exploratory case study provides data using the Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA), with four experienced junior high school teachers with and without instructional support. PCLA usage included classroom digital audio, student narrative, and numerical feedback of the same lesson, with teachers self-assessing their teaching and students' learning perspective. The teachers analyzed their results using the PCLA. The research identified changes between two separate teaching lessons. The study analyzed possible variations of results. The research data has the potential to be used to assist teacher evaluation and pedagogical improvement.

Methods: Four participating teachers audio recorded their classroom instruction, received feedback from students, and self-assessed using the PCLA on two occasions. Using these three points of data, the teachers wrote reflection summaries and were interviewed by the researcher after each PCLA lesson. Carspecken's interview protocol and critical ethnography methods were used for analysis. The researcher, also a campus assistant principal, provided instructional support to two of the teachers. **Results:** The four teachers had individual approaches in organizing their PCLA survey to meet their needs. The various tactics did not limit the feedback that each teacher received from students nor did it limit self-reflection. The results suggest the value of audio recording

in self-assessment, student feedback, and the administrator in the role of facilitator.

Conclusion: This study revealed the significance of teachers hearing directly from their students and self-assessing their own learning, using real-time data.

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Chapter I

Introduction

I grew up in Mobile, Alabama, where the school system was poor both financially and in overall quality of instruction and leadership. I noticed as a student without being privy to any data that African American students like myself were often behind other students, but even worse, were treated differently from our Caucasian counterparts by the teachers. One of my middle school teachers in particular told me that I was limited in what I could accomplish in life due to my skin color. I do not remember the context in which that statement took place but I cannot think of any reason why something of that nature should ever be said to any student at any time. I am also assured this was not an attempt to encourage me to try harder to overcome future obstacles but more of a suggestion to not set my expectations too high on what I could accomplish. I have wondered many times whether that teacher had had that same conversation with other African American students and whether other teachers across the nation felt the same way and had had that conversation with their students.

As I grew older and began to pay closer attention to the news and politics, I realized that separation, or achievement gap, existed throughout the United States. This was not a Mobile problem or an Alabama problem, but a national problem that affected minority students like myself, as well as impoverished students. This revelation empowered me to work in an area with minority and low-socioeconomic students whom I felt had been left to fend for themselves to obtain success through education.

Tavernise (2012) stated that education was historically considered a great equalizer in American society, capable of lifting less advantaged children and improving

their chances for success as adults. This part of the American dream faces numerous challenges as the education system continues to fail minority and poor students. The President and Secretary of Education in 2014 found the levels of school suspensions and expulsions to be unacceptably high, particularly for minority adolescents. According to Fabelo et al. (2011), there are disproportionate numbers of special education and African American students in Grades 7–12 who receive harsher consequences than their peers for similar behaviors. In a 6-year review of 1,000,000 Texas students and their records, ranging from office discipline referrals to suspensions and expulsions, most of which were initiated from the classroom, 97% of the discipline actions leading to suspensions and expulsions in the study were not required by Texas state laws.

As a male African American, I would be considered an exception or outlier due to my academic success in spite of attending school in an impoverished neighborhood that lacked the appropriate resources to educate students effectively and despite being a minority student whom some educators may not have considered to be capable to do much with what they had to offer. A year after my service in the U.S. Air Force, I became certified to teach. I was hired at a suburban middle school, not in the low-income community that I had sought. Nevertheless, I worked with low-socioeconomic students, along with African American students who were categorized economically as middle class. I noted an achievement gap in this suburban school district, even among middle-class students.

As an administrator, I meet and discuss these issues with fellow administrators, as well as in my university courses as a doctoral student. I hear the same reasoning: The economic status of students creates the achievement gap. It makes sense that students

who have fewer resources and have minimal outside experiences will struggle with coursework. This disparity in education is made up partly of the difference between the achievement by all lower-class students and that by middle-class students, but there is an additional gap between Black students and Caucasian students, even when they come from families with similar incomes (Rothstein, 2004).

The relevancy of this and any gap in the education system speaks volumes to the nation's success. Evans (2005) stated that closing the achievement gap is widely seen as important not just for the education system but also ultimately for the economy, for social stability, and for moral health as a nation. The school does not have the sole responsibility but it is indeed on the front line of the attack. The gap is relevant to society because students of different races are not achieving at the same level and this condition must be addressed. Is it the racial difference? How students learn? Teacher expectations? Instructional practices? An educational system should allow every student the opportunity to be successful. Surely, that lack of access to success cannot be based on race or ethnicity.

Tatum (1999) stated that African American students have historically been categorized as less intelligent than Caucasian students, which would be for some an explanation of the achievement gap in education, even though there is no significant research to support this claim. Attempts have been made by the federal government and individual public school campuses to improve educational practices, usually involving high-dollar programs. Teachers are not solely to blame for the disparities in the education system. My belittling middle school teacher is, I believe, in the minority of

educators. But teachers do play distinct roles in the lives of young people each day and are the most important part of any school.

Several issues are related to the lack of opportunities for student success, but that lack is in large part due to the fact that many educators do not understand what it means to engage in educational practices that promote equity (Boykin & Noguera, 2011).

Classroom teachers often do not have the power to create large shifts in the overall educational landscape, which is controlled by state legislators and local school boards.

However, teachers can ensure that their individual classrooms are not only equal for all students but equitable as well. How could a teacher establish a system of self-assessment that builds on the needs of both the teacher and the students? This process could begin with the teacher understanding his or her own perceptions and expectations and creating a person-centered learning environment through affective instruction.

Statement of the Problem

Freiberg and Lamb (2009) asked, “Do we want to have obedient youth who have limited experiences with initiative and creativity, or would we rather raise our nation’s youth to be caring, self-disciplined, independent thinkers?” (p. 99). One way to address this problem is to confront it directly. Could a self-assessment process improve the levels of communication and provide teachers insight into the thinking of their students?

Currently, there is an absence of teacher self-assessment in the classroom. Using self-assessment processes enables educators to be sensitive to the needs of students. Self-assessment can help teachers to know how they are reaching students in the affective domain. Self-assessment allows the conversation to come internally from the individual teacher.

Self-assessment provides an opportunity for teachers to see their perceptions and expectations without waiting for a third party to tell them. This is valuable for all students and could be particularly advantageous for narrowing the gaps faced by minority and low-socioeconomic students.

By understanding differences between races and cultures, teachers can relate to students (Koebler, 2011). Ladson-Billings (1995) suggested a theory on race, posited how it affects the classroom instruction and concluded that the theory can explain school inequity. Through this study, I hope to give credence to the need for further research on the topic. Determining causes of this problem and considering the educator's role can lead to understanding how to support and implement practices that will narrow the gap. One key element is finding a range of sources to build teachers' repertoire of practices. Self-assessment allows a conversation to come internally from the individual teacher to replace externally sourced reflection and change.

Person-Centered Instruction

Learning outcomes, or goals, are reflective of what students should be able to do at the end of their studies. Bloom's taxonomy is a tool used to determine how students reach that outcome. The taxonomy is made up of three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The affective domain involves students' feelings, emotions, and attitudes that shape the self. Learning outcomes in the affective domain are comprised of attitudes and values that should be developed by students during their studies; this area is often ignored by educators (Savickiene, 2010).

The person-centered approach utilizes a much different philosophy in education. According to C. Rogers and Freiberg (1994), the person-centered approach can take place

only when the leader, within himself and in relationships with others, trusts others to think for themselves. Leaders and teachers become facilitators. Administrators share decision making and teachers share ideas and responsibilities among peers. In turn, teachers facilitate students in creating an environment in which they have ownership of their own learning.

During class, students can be curious, proactive, and highly engaged or they can be alienated, reactive, and passive, depending in part on the supportive quality of classroom conditions (Reeve, 2006). A person-centered classroom emphasizes caring, guidance, cooperation, and self-discipline that is developmentally appropriate for all members of the classroom (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). Table 1 summarizes the differences between a teacher-centered classroom and a person-centered classroom (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994, p. 240)

Standard Teacher Evaluation

If teachers are expected to operate in the affective domain, they must be evaluated and receive feedback specifically in this area. Various evaluation instruments are used in U.S. public schools but all seek to evaluate three specific areas, with the first emphasizing teacher entry academic quality and the last two focusing on academic outcomes: teacher quality, teacher performance, and teacher effectiveness (Hinchey, 2010). Teacher quality can be thought of as the attributes that teachers bring to the classroom, including specialized knowledge through education credentials, including the level of teacher preparation, understanding of learners, and beliefs and expectations for students. Graduates traditionally come from college teacher preparation programs but

Table 1

Teacher-Centered and Person-Centered Classrooms

Teacher-centered classrooms	Person-centered classrooms
Teacher is the sole leader.	Leadership is shared.
Management is a form of oversight.	Management is a form of guidance.
Teacher takes responsibility for all the paperwork and organization.	Students are facilitators for the operations of the classroom.
Discipline comes from the teacher.	Discipline comes from the self.
A few students are the teacher's helpers.	All students have the opportunity to become an integral part of the management of the classroom.
Teacher makes the rules and posts them for the students.	Rules are developed by the teacher and students in the form of a classroom constitution or compact.
Consequences are fixed for all students.	Consequences reflect individual differences.
Rewards are mostly extrinsic.	Rewards are mostly intrinsic.
Students are allowed limited responsibilities.	Students share in classroom responsibilities.
Few members of the community enter the classroom.	Partnerships are formed with business and community groups to enrich and broaden the learning opportunities for students.
Teacher focuses mainly on cognitive domain of instruction.	Teacher focuses on affective domain of instruction.

many now come from nontraditional programs. This provides a varied landscape of teachers in classrooms.

The quality of teachers can also be based on beliefs that individual teachers bring to the classroom, which is much more difficult to measure using current standardized instruments. Teachers' beliefs about students' capacity to learn are of particular concern because they shape the teacher's choices of how to manage the classroom (Gill &

Hoffman, 2009). The beliefs that teachers hold about students can affect students' ability to succeed. Studies have linked achievement gaps with teachers' negative beliefs about students of color, students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, or both (Lynn, Bacon, Totten, Bridges, & Jennings, 2010). Love and Kruger (2005) found that teachers with positive preconceptions of their students had greater success in closing gaps for African American learners.

Teacher performance (what the teacher does) is evaluated during classroom instruction. This varies from state to state, and even among individual districts and schools. My current district mandates that teachers be evaluated using the state-approved Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS). With PDAS, teachers are subject to a one-time 45-minute observation, along with shorter observations throughout the year. The appraiser generally applies evaluative criteria to examples of classroom practices, such as being organized, providing clear goals and standards, and keeping students on tasks (Kennedy, 2008). Administrators focus on how activities are presented to students and the interactions between teacher and student and among students.

Teacher effectiveness is the result of teachers' activities or the outcomes of student learning (Hinchey, 2010). Lines begin to blur as school administrators decide what effectiveness looks like. Test scores can be used as a quantitative measure to determine levels of student learning but scores may not tell the entire story. Other attributes could be measured to determine whether teachers are effective, such as attitudes, behaviors, motivation, and emotional well-being of students. However, a disincentive for including these latter types of attitudinal outcomes as a measure of teacher effectiveness comes from critics who have complained that the most important

purpose of schools—to develop students’ academic talents—has been set aside by efforts to enhance students’ self-esteem; they also claim that it is difficult to measure the affective domain (Hirsch, 1999). Many teachers consider standard teacher evaluations to be ineffective. Duffett, Farkas, Rothertham, and Silva (2008) found that 26% of teachers agreed their formal observation and evaluation were helpful and 32% considered them to be “well-intentioned but not particularly helpful” to their teaching practice (p. 3). This disconnect between teachers and administrators creates the notion that teaching in the affective domain is insignificant. However, it is imperative that the emotional needs of students be considered.

Teacher Self-Assessment

Bailey (1981) defined teacher self-assessment as the process of self-examination in which the teacher uses a series of sequential feedback strategies for the purpose of instructional self-improvement. Teachers have an opportunity to effect change in the classroom more than any other person in the education process. They must understand the students whom teach, as well as how to teach them, to create this positive change. Through evaluation of their teaching, teachers can raise the level of expectation and recognize and change their own perceptions of their students.

A common assumption is that teachers should be reflective, habitually monitoring their effectiveness and planning improvements (Schön, 1984). However, this practice is not implemented in a meaningful and useful way. There are various explanations for this limited attention. It has been difficult to measure the affective domain and its relationship to student learning. In the past decade the field has grown considerably in this area. Also, knowledge and skills have traditionally been perceived as more

important outcomes than attitudes and values, based on a supposition that the latter should be developed at home rather than at school.

In reference to evaluating preservice and inservice teachers, Freiberg (1987) cited a key model for remedying the lack of quality feedback for teachers. Freiberg suggests the use of a teacher self-directed assessment model that incorporates several sources of information to enable teachers to evaluate their own performance. Classrooms are complex systems of individuals and groups, curriculum and personal agendas, aspirations, and affiliations (Doyle, 2009). Self-assessment allows the educator to take an in-depth look at the culture and climate of the classroom. It encourages a level of self-reflection that is often absent from the daily role of an educator. The teacher should understand what works, but perhaps more important, how students perceive the teacher's actions toward them. This process could help to close the gap in achievement among student groups. If teachers can determine how their own perception plays a role in educating students, true change can take place.

Person-Centered Self-Assessment

My experience in utilizing a self-assessment measure involved Ms. Jones (pseudonym), an 11-year veteran who teaches Pre-Advanced Placement World Geography to ninth-grade students. She was open to participating in the use of a self-assessment measure that would provide her with feedback about her teaching, utilizing several feedback sources such as student responses to a 10-point Likert-type scale with space for comments, audio taping of the class in which students completed the feedback form, and her self-rating after listening to the audio tape. The measure utilized was the Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA; Freiberg, 1995-2017).

Ms. Jones selected 10 items from a list of 37 teacher and student descriptors that were provided in four sections: Teacher, Student, Curriculum, and Materials. The design of the measure is unique, as the teacher preselects up to 10 PCLA descriptors from the list of 37 and then designs specific Indicators for the 10 Descriptors to clarify how an impartial observer could determine the degree to which the teacher was utilizing a particular PCLA Descriptor. As a result, each teacher participant is part of the development of the final instrument. Ms. Jones explained that the Descriptors that she selected were in areas that she “needed to work on.” For example, she was interested in whether she encouraged individual decision making by students, creativity, and a challenging environment. This first step makes self-assessment a unique and effective tool. The process begins with the teacher deciding what areas need improvement, rather than being evaluated on a plethora of areas with no significant guidance. Each of the 10 PCLA Descriptors had one or two Indicators to describe what an observer would see the teacher using in the classroom.

Ms. Jones knew exactly what to look for and how to determine specifically what takes place in her classroom. Following the PCLA process, she selected a class period for the PCLA assessment to take place and the lesson was audio recorded. Students were given the PCLA survey, delimited to 10 Descriptors, to score on a Likert-type scale from 1 to 10. After listening to the audio, Ms. Jones then ranked herself. I also reviewed the audiotape and completed the PCLA.

Ms. Jones completed the analysis and we reviewed the results of the assessment together while discussing the comments made by the students, by her, and by me. About 2 weeks later, Ms. Jones conducted the PCLA again with the same class. Again, the

students completed the PCLA survey at the end of the class and we listened to the audiotape of that class session. Of the 10 items used in the assessment, the students rated only three Indicators lower in the second assessment than in the first assessment. (This will make more sense after in-depth explanation of the model; what was more significant were the discoveries made by the Ms. Jones.)

Ms. Jones discovered that she often used sarcasm in the classroom; after use of the PCLA, she saw that it was detrimental to successful instruction. The students did not like it as much as she had thought, and she did not care for the sound of it, once she heard it. Ms. Jones also realized that the some students were “bailed out” and not always held responsible, while other students carried the weight. She learned that her students enjoyed more independence in their learning through collaborative groups; this carried over to the second assessment, as they were given more opportunities to be creative and provide their own input. After reviewing the data from the two assessments, Ms. Jones shared, “Many of the comments gave me a warm, fuzzy feeling, some made me giggle, and some left me scratching my head. These types of observations and assessments are always helpful so you are welcome whenever!”

The use of this assessment allowed Ms. Jones to see things through her own eyes, as well as through the eyes of her students, rather than through the eyes of an outside observer, such as administrator or specialist. The assessment carried more value to her and let her take an objective look at how she interacts with students, based on several data sources. She made instructional and interactive adjustments from the first assessment to the second.

Ms. Jones commented that the PCLA had changed her viewpoint on how to address her students. The PCLA provided four opportunities for objective, data-driven self-reflection that she decided would improve her instruction for the remainder of the year. This same process can be used to help teachers see whether they are creating the equitable classroom required for all students to be successful. Teachers like Ms. Jones would be able to determine whether preconceived perceptions and biases were seeping into their instruction. This alone would not completely eliminate the gaps in instruction but would help individual teachers to become more aware of their effect on students.

Administrators' Perspectives of Self-Reflection

As an assistant principal, I currently use the PDAS to evaluate teachers. This tool does not appropriately address the affective domain of teaching. While the PCLA does not omit the cognitive domain, it puts a primary focus on the affective elements of teaching and the person-centered approach. I saw the difference in teacher acceptance of the evaluation versus the use of the traditional PDAS evaluation. I observed the positive effect of self-assessment first-hand as an administrator.

The PCLA allows the educator to take an in-depth look at the culture and climate of the classroom. It also allows for a level of self-reflection that is often absent from the daily role of an educator. Teachers often reflect on a lesson, particularly after students have not been as successful as expected. Many have moments of reflection throughout the year if they have a difficult class or a struggling student whom they have been unable to reach. The PCLA is unique in its ability to create a reflection that is geared toward the teacher's connection with students. This reflection involves student feedback. Teachers

gain understanding of what works but, perhaps more important, how their students perceive their actions toward them.

The use of the PCLA is valuable for any teacher with any and all students. However, there are some specific advantages geared toward minority and low-socioeconomic students. Before these students can be reached academically, they must be reached emotionally. There must be a sense of care from the educators. Teachers may not know the impression that they make on students. The PCLA provides self-reflection, peer observation, and student feedback needed to gain a perspective of the teacher's classroom. With these data, teachers can become aware of the perceptions that they hold about students, expectations, and racial biases.

Teachers' Perceptions

Most teachers are well intentioned and would like for every student to attain success. However, each teacher brings individual thoughts, ideas, and biases into the classroom. These become a part of the foundation of how the teacher instructs. Schools in the United States have had, and continue to have, an issue of African American students achieving at lower levels than Whites, which is referred to as the achievement gap. Ladson-Billings (2007), who viewed that gap as an education debt, suggested that, rather than focusing on telling people to "catch up," it is more effective to think about how this mountain of debt, amassed at the expense of entire groups of people and their subsequent generations, can be repaid. This makes sense, as those who are ahead are not going to stop progress or regress.

Accessibility to preschool programs and low socio-economic backgrounds are commonly posited reasons for the gap (Ferguson, 2003). Ladson-Billings (2007) also cited several reasons that educators use as explanations, which she referred to as *myths*:

The parents just don't care

These children don't have enough exposure/experiences

These children aren't ready for school

Their families don't value education

They are coming from a "culture of poverty" (p. 318)

J. Lee (2002) added youth culture, student behaviors, and schooling conditions and practices to this list of factors that affect student achievement. The significant number of factors creates a complex problem with several avenues of exploration by which to address research questions.

There is the more controversial but common assumption that a teacher's perceptions, expectations, and behaviors are biased by racial stereotypes (Ferguson, 2003). If the teacher believes that a student has low capabilities, the teacher will expect substandard work from that student. Teachers in general hold students whom they believe to be more intelligent to higher expectations. But if African American students are thought to be less intelligent, then it is likely that the teacher will not hold them to the same level of expectation.

Without that equal expectation of high-level work, African American students often fall behind, thus widening the achievement gap. Walker (2007) stated that teacher's perception of students and what those students are capable of affect the type of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that teachers offer. If teachers offer students a

curriculum based solely on what the teachers' preconceived ideas based on racial bias that are lower than what they provide for other students, they are also offering a lower standard of achievement. Teachers must provide a standard that is equal for all students to allow for acceptable achievement and allow students strive for this higher level of success, rather than settle for mediocre performance.

Low teacher expectations have been discussed for decades as a critical influence on the poor performance by African American students, from preschool through graduation (Obiakor, 1999). Ferguson (2003) stated that, even with parents of equal schooling, African American children arrive at kindergarten with fewer reading skills than Caucasians. These perceptions of potential have also factored into students' placement, such as in reading groups, without formal assessment (Ready & Wright, 2011). This gap continues to widen throughout the educational year; even when African American and Caucasian students have equal scores, African Americans tend to make less future progress. Research shows that, while economic status or parental background make substantial impacts on outcome by African American students, there must be other factors that affect this achievement gap.

DeCastro-Ambrosetti and Cho's (2011) study revealed that, when asked to identify students who were more likely to have academic success or attend an Ivy League institution, Asians, followed by Caucasians, were the top picks. But when asked which students were more likely to have athletic success, Hispanics and African Americans led the way. When asked who was most likely to be involved in a gang, African American males were the clear choice by the teachers (DeCastro-Ambrosetti & Cho, 2011). Teachers have preconceived notions about their students, either from experience or

upbringing, just as most adults do. The difference is that teachers' perceptions can cripple the success of students.

Teachers' Expectations

The term *teachers' expectations* describes the inferences that teachers make regarding students' potential to achieve, which can be influenced by factors such as IQ test scores, family background, and information from students' former teachers (Riley & Ungerleider, 2012). Research reveals that teachers hold lower expectations of African American students' academic ability and performance (Chang & Demyan, 2007). This identifies the potential correlation between perceptions and expectations and student achievement. If teachers believe that students are not able to learn, they will expect substandard work from them. Obiakor (1999) stated that a teacher's perception of a student leads directly to an expectation for the student. If the teacher perceives the child as intelligent, he or she will expect above-average work from the child. A child's performance tends to mirror the expectations of his or her teachers. Once the teacher has established an idea of the level at which a student is able to learn, the teacher may begin to teach down to that lower level to that student, which is a disservice to the student, the teacher, and the rest of the class.

Teachers can imbue an inferiority complex by allowing their biases to affect their actions in the classroom. Rubies-Davies (2007) stated that teachers interacted more frequently with high-expectation students in public and with low-expectation students in private. Teachers would conclude that this is done to prevent the low-expectation student from becoming embarrassed; however, this only exacerbates the inferiority complex.

Students who always have private conversations may feel that they are being admonished.

Racial Biases

A common interpretation of the research findings in the area of teacher expectations is that teachers hold race and ethnicity-based expectations for their students, which can easily turn into self-fulfilling prophecies that threaten performance (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). The student begins to perform at the level that is expected of him by the teacher. Successful investigation of self-fulfilling prophecies by researchers shows that teachers believe false information given to them about students, teachers act on the information in ways that students can perceive, and students respond in ways that confirm the expectation (Ferguson, 2003).

African American students recognize the difference in approach by teachers toward them versus toward their Caucasian counterparts. They also experience a higher degree of stress in the classroom due to negative stereotypes (Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master, 2006). Teachers with biases praise correct answers from high-expectation students but not those from low-expectation students. Low-expectation students are also criticized more often. In a research study involving 12 primary teachers from eight schools, researchers found that teachers accepted lesser-quality answers from high-expectation students because they assumed that those students knew more, which could cause low-performing students to become withdrawn and higher-level students to become lazy (Rubie-Davies, 2007). In more recent study with six teachers with high expectations and six teachers with low expectations, Rubie-Davies (2010) found a strong correlation between expectations and student success.

African American students identified teacher encouragement as a motive for their effort and substantially indicated that this encouragement was more motivating than teacher demands; in contrast, Caucasian students cited demands more often than their minority peers (Flaxman, 2003). Research clearly indicates that African American students not only deserve the same expectations in the classroom but also need it to be successful, as teacher support is a strong motivating factor. Where low expectations persist, schools face safety and discipline challenges and practice social promotion, moving students along regardless of whether they have the skill set needed to succeed in the next grade (Lehane, 2008). The resulting social problems ultimately affect the learning environment.

Teachers' Underestimation of Potential

Ferguson (2003) stated that, if perceptions of children's intellectual potential affect goal setting in both homes and classrooms, which surely they must, then teachers and parents who underestimate children's potential will tend to set goals that are too low. Parental involvement or the lack thereof is and will continue to be a classroom concern that that cannot be altered by schoolteachers or administrators. It is more advantageous to concentrate on the actions of the teacher, which can be altered.

Regardless of race, underestimation of the potential of a student is a major problem and a disappointment to the education system. Ferguson (2003) noted that it is a major waste of human potential and a social injustice not to give teachers needed incentives and support to set, believe in, and skillfully pursue higher goals for all students, especially African Americans and other stigmatized minorities.

Children spend their days in social interaction with teachers and other students, and the teachers' perceptions and expectations reflect and determine the goals that both students and teachers set for achievement; the strategies that they use to pursue the goals; the skills, energy, and other resources that they use to implement those strategies; and the rewards that they expect from the effort (Ferguson, 2003). The simple reality is that education takes place predominantly in a classroom, and much of African American students' success relates to the expectations of the teacher. Students need teachers who believe that they can achieve (Moses-Snipes & Snipes, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

What could teachers learn through self-assessment? Ms. Jones learned new ways to communicate with her students. She understood the importance of creativity for her students and she understood how they were able to learn by collaborating. Most important, she learned how to take a step back and question herself to determine whether she was doing what was needed for each student in her classroom to succeed. The perceptions that educators carry in reference to various student groups affect student success. Through self-assessment, teachers can identify whether they are allowing how they perceive students to change how they teach them. This is not an end-all solution to an overwhelming problem, but it is an opportunity for teachers to empower themselves to effect change in students.

This exploratory study provides relevant data regarding teacher self-reflection utilizing the PCLA process. Exploratory research produces inductively derived generalizations about the group, process, activity, or situation under study (Stebbins, 2001). From this study, teachers and other educators will have a foundation to build

opportunities to expand their repertoire of looking at themselves without waiting for other to tell them how they are doing.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Teacher evaluation is a continuous part of the education process. Teachers are evaluated annually in various ways to determine how effectively they transmit cognitive information to students. The affective domain is often ignored in this process (Martin & Briggs, 1986). I have been a part of schools that have campus and/or district-wide programs to promote character and respect. But rarely have I seen teachers truly work within the affective domain of instruction to reach each student in the classroom. I believe that this is because they are not assessed for doing so. Teachers are married to the achievement of standardized test scores of their students, and administrators' success, or lack thereof, is directly correlated. This has been a factor in education since the 1983 national report *A Nation at Risk* (Gardner, 1983). That report provided a very bleak picture of the future of education. This obsession with creating a system to improve student achievement engendered an environment in which the affective domain of learning became secondary or nonexistent due to tight time constraints on teachers. Students cannot achieve unless attention is given to their overall well-being.

The teacher is responsible for the classroom environment and for addressing the affective needs of students to facilitate learning (Cornelius-White, 2007; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). This review of literature investigates theoretical perspectives of what creates an affective environment. Research discusses affective instruction and the importance of integrating the affective domain into cognitive and psychomotor education. Person centered-learning addresses the overall climate of a campus, as well as its effect on individual classrooms and students. Teacher self-evaluation is addressed here as

source of empowering feedback to the teacher and a tool to improve teacher-student interaction, as well as instruction. The current use of teacher self-assessment and recording instruction is also addressed.

Empirical studies are cited to look at the self-assessment tools used to create an environment that allows teachers to be self-assessors and to improve their teaching based on their own collected data. Research conducted by Flanders (1962), Hoover and Carroll (1987), Freiberg (1987), and Anderson and Freiberg (1995) is a part of the foundation for self-assessment to be considered as a viable and effective form of feedback for teachers.

Theoretical Perspectives

Affective instruction. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) defined *affective* as relating to, arising from, or influencing feelings or emotions; expressing emotion. Affective instruction would then represent a curriculum that has a focus on emotional state. It does not omit the cognitive domain of learning but addresses students' emotional state. The cognitive and affective domains interact significantly in instruction and learning (Martin & Briggs, 1986). Learners often gravitate to teachers who understand and implement the affective domain in their teaching strategies because they are often considered to be more inspiring and influential so-called experts (Pierre & Oughton, 2007). This points to the affective domain's importance in education.

According to Bloom (1965), there are three domains to learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain's hierarchy begins with straightforward acquisition of knowledge, followed by more sophisticated cognitive tasks of comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The psychomotor domain relates to learning physical movements and progresses through the levels of

reflex movements, fundamental movements, perceptual abilities, physical abilities, skilled movements, and expressive movements. The affective domain, in its earliest taxonomy, progresses from receiving, responding, valuing, and organization to characterization (Bloom, 1965). Educators expect students to receive by being conscious or aware, respond by doing something with the information that they have learned, and value by seeing worth and making the right choices (Allen, Barnes, Reece, & Robertson, 1970).

Recent research has found that, to produce significant affective outcomes, innovation must be specific to a particular need (Cornelius-White, 2007). Cornelius-White and Harbaugh (2010) evaluated affective instruction by measuring the following outcomes: (a) participation, (b) motivation, (c) self-efficacy, (d) social attendance, (e) satisfaction, (f) disruptive behavior, (g) motivation, and (h) dropout. When correlated with cognitive student outcomes, it was determined that students achieved more when affective needs were met at school (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010).

The three domains are considered to be separate but appropriate cognition and psychomotor skills are better developed in an environment that addresses the affective domain. The affective domain, while somewhat ignored (Martin & Briggs, 1986), is an integral part of classroom instruction and classroom management. The phrase “They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” may be cliché but holds true for students. It is also important to parents. One recurring theme expressed by African American parents and community members is a lack of respect for students (Lloyd, 2003). To correct this condition, teachers must know what type of environment

they are creating. The use of self-assessment with emphasis on the affective domain will provide educators with that information.

Person-centered learning. The person-centered approach to education can improve the overall school climate. *School climate*, as defined by Freiberg and Stein (1999), is the quality of a school that creates healthy learning places, nurtures children's and parents' dreams and aspirations, stimulates teachers' creativity and enthusiasm, and elevates all members. Positive school climate has been found to have a positive effect on student achievement (Brookover et al., 1978) and student motivation (Klose, 2008). Research supports the correlation of a person-centered approach in schools to a successful school climate and successful students based on facilitative teacher-student relationships (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010).

The teacher cannot and should not shoulder the burden of managing the classroom alone. Students should have ownership of the classroom and be involved in the procedures that keep it afloat. Classrooms are complex systems of individuals and groups, curriculum and personal agendas, aspirations and affiliations (Doyle, 2009). Self-reflection and student input affect movement toward a successful classroom. It is a fundamental truth that people should treat one another with dignity and caring in the busy institutional life of schools (Doyle, 2009). Moses-Snipes and Snipes (2005) reported that students need teachers who believe that they can achieve.

A meta-analysis by Cornelius-White (2007) found that person-centered teacher variables had an above-average finding-level association with positive student outcomes. Person-centered education addresses the whole person and creates an environment that promotes life-long learning. It is not the acquisition of knowledge, or even broader social

or emotional outcomes such as democratic, cooperative function; the very process of learning how to learn is crucial to instructional success (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). Person-centered education moves beyond regurgitation of facts. Person-centered education matures self-actualizing people. C. R. Rogers (1951) provided eight descriptors to describe self-actualizing people:

Take self-initiated action

Are capable of intelligent choice and self-direction

Are critical learners

Have acquired knowledge

Adapt flexibly

Utilize all pertinent experience feely and creatively cooperate effectively

Work in terms of their own socialized purposes. (pp. 387-388)

To teach with the goal of self-actualization means to value all aspects of students, including engagement and achievement (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). This again focuses on the student as a whole person.

From a classroom management perspective, a person-centered classroom emphasizes caring, guidance, cooperation, and the building of self-discipline that is developmentally appropriate for all members of the classroom (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). The management of a person-centered classroom looks different from a traditional classroom. Every student in each class period should be assigned a managerial position. Some students may rotate positions every other week to ensure total involvement. The positions should include absent manager, work collection manager, return work manager, timer manager, and so forth. These positions create an

environment of ownership but also relieve the teacher to focus on instruction. The students should also take part in determining real-world consequences in the classroom, which will create an environment of community.

The PCLA (Freiberg, 1995-2017) is an affective measure of learning. The instrument permits flexibility to allow the teacher to determine areas of feedback to be provided. As this tool was used in this study, it lends itself to creating a person-centered environment.

Student feedback. Another factor of teacher self-reflection can be founded in students' ratings of teachers. Student ratings provide information about students' perceptions, beliefs, and judgments about a particular teacher and his or her practice (Lavigne & Good, 2013). This allows students to provide feedback to teachers about the course and instruction. McKeachie (1996) found that some teachers disagreed with this method, arguing that it encouraged students to think that they were qualified to make judgments about teaching and would destroy proper respect for teachers.

There is a level of sensitivity when being evaluated that can be heightened by the potential of low evaluation from students. But the reward is great as it allows teachers to gain insight regarding how their students feel about the classroom. It also provides an opportunity for shared ownership in the classroom process, moving toward a person-centered learning environment.

McKeachie (1996) found that student ratings alone improved overall teaching, but not by much. However, when the teacher discussed the results with peers, there was substantial improvement (McKeachie et al., 1980). A study by Tuckman and Oliver (1968) required students to rate teachers twice within a 12-week interval to determine

whether there was change in behavior by the teacher. The results showed that the student feedback had a significant effect on teachers' behavior (Tuckman & Oliver, 1968).

Greenwald and Gillmore (1997) made the argument that class size and grading leniency could create bias in student ratings. However, class size becomes a factor only when the ratings are used to compare teachers to each other rather than for analyzing teacher effectiveness (McKeachie, 1997).

Student feedback was used as early as the 1940s in some universities. However, even with research pointing to its clear usefulness, it is used no more today than then (McKeachie, 1996). Student feedback gives students a voice to present a well-defined observation to the teacher. The uniqueness of the PCLA is involvement in both teacher self-assessment and student feedback. This combination affords an opportunity for self-reflection and useful data to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Students are essentially the outcome of an education system and a teacher's practices; thus, it seems logical that their opinions should be considered (Lavigne & Good, 2013, p. 135).

Teacher self-assessment. It is a fair assumption that, if teachers are more involved in observing and evaluating their own teaching, they will increase their empowerment and autonomy. Too often, teachers come out of evaluation procedures feeling that their basic needs, such as being treated as a professional, having opportunities to grow, feeling comfortable with change, and experiencing camaraderie, are not being met or are inadequately served through "watchdog" and "quality control" systems adopted by some administrators (Rothberg & Fenner, 1991). While some have argued against the teacher being overly involved in the evaluation process (Towndrow & Tan, 2009), Blasé & Blasé (1999) concluded that providing feedback in thoughtful discourse

with teachers about what was observed concerning their teaching demonstrates effective principal-teacher interaction. Teacher self-reflection goes one step further in allowing the teacher ownership of the process. An administrative evaluation may change behavior, but such changes are often exhibited only when the source of the threat is present (Warner, Cooper, & Houston, 1980). Self-assessment puts the teacher in a position of power.

Teacher self-assessment may be defined as “the process of self-examination in which the teacher uses a series of sequential feedback strategies for the purposes of instructional self-improvement” (Bailey, 1981, p. 9). The need for teacher self-evaluation is also tied to the need to maintain professionalism and accountability to the profession of teaching (Kremer-Hayon, 1993). Kremer-Hayon (1993) identified three areas of accountability for teachers: moral, contractual, and professional. Studies that analyzed the profession of teaching found that autonomy and accountability are the two central attributes of a profession (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Etzioni, 1969; Howsam, Crorigan, & Denmark, 1985; Lortie, 1975; Schein & Kommers, 1972). If teachers are to be held accountable, they should have more involvement in the process that measures their accountability. However, many teachers have not been taught how to self-reflect and self-assess (Bailey, 1981), even though there are several ways to complete the task. Kremer-Hayon (1993) suggested using audio, video, journals, logs, and diaries for teachers to observe and evaluate themselves.

The lack of quality feedback begins in preservice student teaching opportunities as mentor teachers often fail to explain to student teachers what they are doing wrong (Freiberg & Waxman, 1988). The lack of feedback is a significant barrier to humanizing

both schools and classrooms (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). There must be a way for educators not only to receive feedback but to receive effective feedback. Teacher self-assessment fills this void. Teachers rarely receive ongoing feedback about their teaching; accurate feedback is a crucial component of instructional change (Freiberg, 2002).

Teacher self-assessment is a formative assessment rather than a summative assessment. *Formative* refers to assessment that is specifically intended to generate feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning (Sadler, 1998). *Summative* contrasts with formative in that it is concerned with summarizing and is geared toward reporting at the end of a period (Sadler, 1989). Most teacher evaluation programs are centered on the summative approach, completed at the end of the year. Therefore, any feedback provided to facilitate growth is given shortly before teachers begin summer break, having little to no effect on teaching. Self-assessment can be completed at any time during the school year and multiple times, potentially affecting learning throughout the school session. Teachers are just as interested in comparing their opinions and abilities as any other individuals, but most comparisons are made without the benefit of objective methods (Flanders, 1961).

Theoretical and empirical research studies support the use of self-assessment. Hall (1979) and Fuller (1969) stated that focusing on the affective domain of education suggests the importance of teachers' involvement in their professional development. Wade (1985) noted that teachers are more likely to benefit when they learn on their own, which is a criterion of self-assessment. The following cited research studies investigated the use of self-assessment in preservice and inservice programs.

Current use of teacher self-assessment. Standard teacher evaluations involve an administrator observing the classroom and using a checklist and rating system to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Danielson (2011) cited four deficiencies in traditional evaluation systems: (a) outmoded evaluative criteria, usually in the form of checklists; (b) simplistic evaluative comments; (c) the same procedures for novice and career teachers; and (d) lack of consistency among evaluators. The system is not effective in providing meaningful feedback to teachers. Many teachers are rated at the highest level on every item, with no guidance as to where they might focus improvement efforts (Danielson, 2011). A principal or a superintendent must be able to say to the school board and the public, “Everyone who teachers here is good, and here’s how I know” (Danielson, 2011). In order for this to take place, an effective measurement tool must be used to assess teachers.

Self-assessment is used consistently in schools daily by students in the form of exit tickets: quick summaries provided by each student in the form of answering questions or journal writing to reflect on what was learned that day. Brown, Marzano, and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2009) suggested that teachers end each class session with a student self-assessment of how well they understood the key ideas and concepts presented in the lesson. While the importance of self-assessment by students is recognized, there is little recognition that it is just as valuable a tool for teachers as for students.

Self-assessment leads inevitably to a focus on professional learning and growth (Danielson, 2011). Historically, teachers have been asked to self-report on their teaching as a part of reflection and growth (Lavigne & Good, 2013). However, Lavigne and Good

(2013) noted that accuracy in self-reports is low, due in part to the format, which is often in the form of a checklist provided by administration.

Through self-assessment, reflection, and analysis, a teacher can identify components on which to concentrate, with a mentor or supervisor available as a coach (Danielson, 2011). The Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment at Howard University (2007) stated that the most important evaluator of teaching is the teacher. The center advocates self-assessment and supports videotaping in the classroom to evaluate instruction. The center currently provides instruction to teachers on how to use the Flanders Interaction Analysis System (FIAS; Flanders, 1961) in classrooms. Self-assessment and analysis are helpful in determining which areas of teaching need primary attention by novice teachers (Danielson, 2011). Teacher self-rating is one of the easiest and least threatening ways for teachers to obtain information about their performance (Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011).

Self-assessment is a constructive strategy for improving the effectiveness of inservice training, provided it is bundled with other professional growth strategies such as peer coaching, observation by outsiders, and focus on teaching strategies (Ross & Bruce, 2007). In a study to measure teacher effectiveness, Stronge, Ward, Tuckere, and Hindman (2007) utilized the FIAS to capture teacher interactions with students during 60-minute recorded intervals. They used audio taping to record the lessons to provide feedback to teachers. This is evidence of the usefulness of a method that is more than 50 years old.

Recording of instruction. Professionals in other fields, such as medicine and psychology, are using videotaping as a teaching strategy but it is still a very limited topic

in teacher education literature (Song & Catapanao, 2008). Using video to record lessons recreates the voice, behavior, and movements of the teacher and students (Tochon, 2001). The idea behind videotaping class is that there is no outside expert with an evaluative checklist to evaluate those factors (Myers, 1998). The teacher becomes the observer and decides what is successful and what calls for improvement. Teachers explore their personal interpretations of what it means to be a good teacher instead of depending on others to do so (Song & Catapanao, 2008).

With all of the advantages of videotaping, Freiberg (1987) suggested the use of audio taping instead, citing that it is less obtrusive, allows greater flexibility in analysis, and allows teachers to focus on verbal teacher-student interactions. When focusing on the affective domain, it is important not to become sidetracked by what is seen but to listen intently. The PCLA (Freiberg, 1995-2017) utilizes audio taping by the teacher. Audio taping dates back to the FIAS (Flanders, 1961), a system that is still utilized for self-reflection. While technology has advanced, the audiotape still serves as the best method to assist in measuring the affective domain. Recording replaces the standard checklist or portfolio format for self-assessing.

Empirical Studies

Flanders Interaction Analysis System. Interest in self-assessment began with work by Flanders in the 1960s (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995). Flanders (1961) saw a major problem for teachers to obtain objective information about their classroom behavior within 1 hour of its occurrence. Flanders (1962) noted that too many teachers lack a sense of experimentation with regard to their own behavior. Teachers would like to know more about their own behavior but they interpret subjectively in terms of their

self-concept (Flanders, 1962). Student teachers were provided tools to be successful observers of classroom interaction but had to decide individually whether to make changes to their behavior (Flanders, 1962). Teachers use the tool focusing on two areas, teacher talk and student talk, with specific categories within those parameters. All data are centered on verbal interaction in classrooms.

The teacher talk and student talk categories are identified in Table 2 (Flanders, 1961). When tallying the events that occur during observation, there is no scale placed on the numbers. Teachers select their own goals for what they would like to improve in their teaching and they use audio recording to evaluate their verbal interactions in the classroom.

Table 2

Categories for Interaction Analysis

Source	Influence	Categories
Teacher talk	Indirect influence	Accepts feeling Praises or encourages Accepts or uses students' ideas Asks questions
	Direct influence	Lecturing Giving directions Criticizing or justifying authority
Student talk		Student talk: response Student talk: initiation Silence or confusion

In the original study, Flanders (1962) found that teachers made significant changes in their behavior consistent with the intent of the training, without advocating one specific pattern of teacher influence. The improvement was based on individual teacher's goals, which is the cornerstone of self-assessment. The results implied that utilizing interaction analysis could provide immediate feedback to teachers who are willing to participate (Flanders, 1962). Immediate feedback provides teachers with opportunities to make changes and improve teaching at the moment. This is considered to be formative assessment rather than the more common summative teacher evaluation.

Hoover and Carroll: Self-assessment of classroom instruction. Hoover and Carroll (1987) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of self-assessment in improving the quality of elementary reading instruction. The study was completed as an inservice program for teachers in a medium-sized southeastern U.S. school. The inservice training took a client-centered approach in its design so teachers would feel a sense of control over the training. The inservice training was designed to explore ways in which teachers might be helped to implement effective practices in their classrooms. Self-assessment was the chosen strategy, in part due to its inexpensiveness but also due to the positive conclusions from both theoretical and empirical research.

Hoover and Carroll (1987) created a checklist based on research findings of interest to teachers to use in their self-assessment process. Teachers researched and discussed self-assessment research prior to receiving the checklist. The checklist assessed effective teaching practices but did not promote any particular behaviors. The objectives of the study were to investigate a research-based checklist, examine effective teaching behaviors as a result of self-assessment using a research-based checklist, and

explore feasibility of pre and post audio tapes of classroom instruction. Teachers were taught how to complete the checklists using the audiotapes.

The quantitative posttest data showed that teachers changed their behavior in 13 of 14 categories and displayed more effective techniques than ineffective techniques (Hoover & Carroll, 1987). Qualitative data were collected from the self-assessment questionnaire completed after reviewing recorded class instruction. While 64% of the participating teachers originally had negative feelings about the process, comments afterward were almost 100% positive, with 94% stating that the self-assessment had been helpful with reading lessons (Hoover & Carroll, 1987). The study's results indicated that self-assessment provided an opportunity to recognize behaviors that are unfavorable to student learning and that positive behaviors increased as a result of the self-assessment training. Teachers were almost unanimously supportive of the self-assessment, showing that teachers desire a process by which they have ownership and direction.

Low-Inference Self-Assessment Measure (LISAM). The LISAM was developed for use with secondary student teachers and with elementary and secondary teachers as part of their professional education (Freiberg, 1987). The instrument is considered to have low inference due to the ability of individuals to come to similar conclusions on the frequency of teaching behaviors in all categories (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995). Teachers listen to audiotapes of their own teaching and evaluate themselves based on the parameters of the instrument. The LISAM stimulates student teachers to become involved in thinking about, talking about, and modifying their teaching, which is highly motivating to many teachers (Freiberg & Waxman, 1988).

The LISAM utilizes audio versus video to be less obtrusive in the classroom, allow greater flexibility in analysis, and focus on verbal interactions between teachers and students (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995). The goal does not address all areas of teaching but focuses on a specific and concise observation of teacher instruction. The LISAM instrument consists of 12 teaching behaviors (Freiberg, 1987), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Low-Inference Self-Assessment Measure (LISAM) Teaching Behaviors

	Behaviors
Yes-no questions	Closure
Short-answer questions	Wait time, divergent and opinion questions
Divergent questions	Wait time, all questions
Opinion questions	Positive statements: variety and spontaneity
Teacher talk/student talk	All positive statements
Motivating set	Use of student ideas

Listening to audiotapes and transferring them into frequency counts, teachers conduct a data-based analysis of their teaching (Freiberg, 1987; Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005). After setting goals, teachers document positive changes with supporting data from audio analysis. In a study conducted by Anderson and Freiberg (1995) using the LISAM (Freiberg, 1987), the student teacher participants rated the LISAM beneficial to their teaching and reported that they would use it, or some variation, in the future. The

teachers noticed aspects of their classroom that had previously been ignored, such as teacher talk versus student talk. Anderson and Freiberg (1995) found that the LISAM could serve as a catalyst to accelerate a student teacher's pedagogical development.

Research Questions

The research supports the positive impact of teacher self-assessment on teacher performance in preservice and inservice programs. However, there is a lack of research that focuses on the use of self-assessment on a continual basis for novice and veteran teachers and the administrator's role in facilitating the self-assessment process. This lack of research raised the following research questions:

1. How does student feedback to experienced teachers on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and PCLA II?

2. How does assistant principal participation in supporting a cluster of experienced teachers in their use of the PCLA improve the level of student feedback and teacher reflection between PCLA I and PCLA II?

The data for the research questions were collected using case study methodologies involving the PCLA and teacher interviews.

Chapter Summary

The primary difference between teachers who improve and teachers who do not improve is that only the former gather information about their teaching and make an effort to improve some aspect of their teaching every time they teach (Fink, 1995).

Examining teachers' self-assessments helps researchers not only to discover how aware teachers are of the feedback that they give; it can also help teachers to become aware of

their strengths and needs, which in turn may help to improve performance (Montgomery & Baker, 2007).

It is up to individual teachers to recognize, and adapt to, the findings of the PCLA. But they cannot be expected to make improvements to classroom management or instruction from the affective perspective if they are not given the opportunity to evaluate that performance. Self-assessment provides the opportunity for teachers to step away from their perceived performance and into a more accurate depiction of their classroom methods (Koriat, 1997). Researchers have had interest in teacher self-assessment for more than 50 years (Anderson & Freiberg, 1995) and student feedback for more than 70 years (McKeachie, 1996); never the less, meaningful implementation in the classroom is still lacking. The results of this exploratory study will help to determine whether further research is needed regarding teacher self-assessment.

Chapter III

Methodology

Chapter II described the theoretical perspectives of affective instruction, person-centered learning, and teacher self-assessment. There also was a review of empirical studies that have addressed the effectiveness of teacher reflection and self-assessment. This exploratory case study was designed to determine whether and how student feedback changes teacher perspectives and whether the assistant principal's involvement in the process improves the self-reflection.

The PCLA provides 37 descriptors for teachers to utilize as a self-assessment measure to provide feedback on data points, starting with the students (Freiberg, 1995-2017). This study did not investigate the psychometrics of the PCLA itself. Instead, the study examined whether teachers could identify changes in their teaching from a self-assessment perspective through the use of the PCLA instrument.

The PCLA self-assessment could provide other ways to communicate with students. It could allow teachers to take a step back and question how they communicate with students. The perceptions that teachers carry in reference to student groups based upon race, income, and so forth can affect student success. Self-assessment provides the opportunity for teachers to identify the relationship between their perceptions of their students and the instruction that they provide. This is an opportunity for teachers to empower themselves to effect change in students (Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005).

This exploratory study provides data regarding teacher self-reflection utilizing the PCLA process. Exploratory research produces inductively derived generalizations about the group, process, activity, or situation under study (Stebbins, 2001). From this study,

teachers and other educators will have a foundation to build opportunities to expand their repertoire of looking at themselves without waiting for others to tell them how they are doing (Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005).

Setting

This research took place in a public school in a suburb of Houston, Texas. The junior high school includes seventh and eighth grades. The district has more than 21,000 students and 23 schools, including 11 elementary schools (Pre-kindergarten to Grade 4), 4 middle schools (Grades 5 and 6), 4 junior high schools (Grades 7 and 8), 2 traditional high schools (Grades 9 to 12), a career and technology school (Grades 9 to 12), and an alternative center serving both as a disciplinary placement (all grade levels) and dropout recovery program (high school students). The demographics of the district as reported by the district in June 2014 are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Ethnic Demographics of the Study School District

Ethnicity	%
White	40.71
Hispanic	30.00
Black	16.00
Asian	9.89
Multiracial	2.82
American Indian	0.49
Native Hawaiian	0.10

The district has a 22.9:1 student/teacher ratio across all grade levels and schools in the district. All schools “met standard” in reference to Texas Education Agency (TEA) Accountability Ratings. The most recently published demographics of the junior high where the study took place were based on the 2012-2013 Texas Academic Performance Report (TEA, 2014). Demographics of the study campus are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Demographics for the Study Campus

Ethnicity or classification	%
African American	22.2
Hispanic	15.0
White	41.5
American Indian	0.2
Pacific Islander	0.5
Two or more races	2.7
Economically disadvantaged	13.9
English Language Learner	0.8
Special Education student	9.6

This campus does not service English Language Learner (ELL) students, but monitors students beyond services or those who have been denied services. This decision was made due to the larger size of the campus in comparison to the other junior high

schools, as well as for personnel purposes. In order to serve ELL students, the campus must have an English as Second Language (ESL) teacher, and this campus is not allotted one. The campus has 22% African American students, compared to the district average of 16%. The school has more than 18% Asian students, compared to the district average of 9.9%.

The school opened in August 2009 as the fourth junior high campus in the district. Of the many apartment complexes in the district's zone, only one is zoned for this campus, as most students live in homes. Many of the homes within the feeder area are located in recently built master-planned divisions within a suburb of Houston, with the lowest in cost slightly above \$150,000.

I was a special education teacher at the school during its opening in 2009. This is my third year as an assistant principal at the school, after 3 years of teaching and 4 years of administration at other campuses in the same school district. I am very familiar with the students and parents in the community, as well as the standard operating procedures of the district.

State of Texas Teacher Assessment Measure

The teachers who were involved in this study were not required to be observed under the PDAS. PDAS, the standard observation tool approved by the TEA, became available in fall 1997 for school districts that chose to depart from its predecessor, the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS; Kemerer & Crain, 2011). PDAS encompasses ratings that assess the teacher's performance in relation to enhancing student performance, enhancing student attendance, improving or maintaining high school completion rates, and identifying and assisting students in at-risk situations (Kemerer &

Crain, 2011). The appraisal system adopted by the state includes one 45-minute observation or mutually agreed shorter time segments each year. Additional walk-throughs may be conducted at the discretion of the supervisor and summative reviews of all observations occur at the end of the school term. PDAS contains eight domains (Kemerer & Crain, 2011, p.9): (a) Domain I: Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process; (b) Domain II: Learner-Centered Instruction; (c) Domain III: Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress; (d) Domain IV: Management of School Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time, and Materials; (e) Domain V: Professional Communication; (f) Domain VI: Professional Development; (g) Domain VII: Compliance With Policies, Operating Procedures, and Requirements; and (h) Domain VIII: Improvement of Academic Performance of All Students on the Campus. Each domain has a subset of indicators for the appraiser to determine whether the teacher is rated as Exceeds Expectations, Proficient, Below Expectations, or Unsatisfactory.

The four teachers who participated in this study were exempt from formal observation (PDAS) for the 2015-2016 school year, based on district requirements for exemption: (a) be employed on an educator term or continuing contract, (b) be State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) certified, (c) be employed by the district for at least 3 consecutive years, and (d) have received on the two most recent PDAS appraisals a rating of Exceeds Expectations in Domains I-IV and in at least one of Domains V-VIII). Once a teacher is qualified, the exemption is effective for 3 years.

PCLA Self-Assessment

The PCLA (Freiberg, 1995-2017) provides feedback to teachers from several feedback sources, including student responses to a 10-point Likert-type scale with space

for student comments, audio taping of the class of students who completed the feedback form, and the teacher's self-rating measure after listening to the audio recording of the lesson (Freiberg, 1995-2017). The distinctiveness of the PCLA lies in using distinct data points: student feedback, self-assessed rating, peer observer feedback, and an audio recording.

There are 37 descriptors initially provided to the educator, from which they select 10 descriptors and supporting Observable Indicators for each Descriptor. The PCLA's 37 Descriptors are divided into four sections: Educator, Learner, Curriculum, and Resources. The design of the measure is unique, as the teacher preselects up to 10 PCLA Descriptors from the total list of 37. The selection process is based on finding a good fit with classroom needs. After selecting 10 Descriptors, the educator designs specific Observable Indicators that provide a narrative of what an impartial observer (including classroom students) could use to determine the degree to which the teacher was utilizing a particular PCLA Descriptor.

Each of the four study participants had input in the development of their individual PCLA to focus on areas they to be addressed in their classrooms. The use of the PCLA in this study has the potential to provide teachers who are currently exempt from instructional assessment for the current school year both formative and summative feedback from multiple sources of data: self-assessment, student feedback, and peer observation.

Research Design

Participants. Four teachers were selected to participate in this case study. The selection was based on the availability of teachers on campus who were exempt from

formal observation (PDAS) for the school year. Nine teachers met the criteria to be exempt. Exempt teachers were selected for the study to avoid teachers being responsible for multiple forms of evaluation within the school year. The four participants are not directly supervised by me, nor am I their annual appraiser for the school year. All have at least 5 years of experience teaching. For teachers to receive exempt status, they must meet the criteria for 3 consecutive years and be acknowledged by the district as teachers who “exceed expectations.”

The sample size for qualitative research should be large enough to assure that all perceptions that might be important are uncovered without becoming repetitive or superfluous (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). This study was designed to discover whether student feedback within the PCLA affects a teacher’s instructional methods and whether there is a change in a teacher’s self-reflection process when utilizing the PCLA. This study did not evaluate the PCLA as a tool; therefore, the saturation level was lower because the study focused on the changes taking place within a small group (Charmaz, 2006). Four teachers from different backgrounds were assumed to be able to provide the data needed to address the research questions. The use of in-depth interviews allowed each teacher to share specific examples exclusive to their experience (D. Lee, Woo, & Mackenzie, 2002).

Years of experience by teachers on the campus ranged from recent college graduate, first-year teachers to 32 years of classroom experience. For the purpose of this study, four experienced teachers with recent successful appraisal that exempted them from formal appraisals for a 3-year period were recruited. The four teachers had taught for at least 5 years on the study campus.

The four teachers had a range of backgrounds. Teacher 1 is a Caucasian female in her late 20s; all 6 years of teaching have occurred at the school, including 4 years of teaching music. Teacher 2 is a 33-year-old African American female with 10 years of classroom experience, all in mathematics. This is her 8th at the current campus, after spending her first 2 years at another junior high campus in the same district. She has completed a master's degree in curriculum and instruction. Teacher 3 is a 38-year-old Caucasian female who has earned two bachelor's degrees and a teacher leadership master's degree program. She has taught at the current campus for the past 6 years and has 3 years of experience at another junior campus in the same district. Teacher 4 is an African American female in her 8th year of teaching at the current campus and 18th year overall. She holds a bachelor's degree in finance but has taught mathematics for her entire career.

I worked closely with two of the teachers, coaching them through the process. The other two teachers were given instructions on how to use the PCLA but did not receive any coaching from me in order to determine how much support they might need and whether any differences would be perceived by the teachers.

Type of study. This study was an exploratory case study, investigating an area of research that has not been explored using the PCLA for junior high school teachers. Carspecken (1996) stated that critical qualitative research is one of several genres of inquiry into nonquantifiable features of social life. The PCLA assesses the affective domain of teaching, discussed in Chapters I and II, and relates to instruction that focuses on the social-emotional domain of learning.

Research has shown that students are more successful when the affective domain is a focus of instruction (Cornelius-White, 2007; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010). This is based on attitude and behaviors of the teacher that are based on human phenomena. The interview protocol used in Carspecken's model was selected as the study framework of the four teachers using the PCLA. The interview protocol was chosen as a guide to foster meaningful conversations; it contained three parts: topic domains, covert categories, and follow-up questions (Carspecken, 1996). According to Carspecken (1996), attitudes and experiences are investigated in social research. The nature of the PCLA data collection fits in the scope of Carspecken's approach to qualitative research.

Stebbins (2001) indicated that, when there is limited knowledge about a group, process, activity, or situation, researchers may want to examine a research question based on some level of experiential learning to determine whether there are elements worth discovering. Within PDAS, teachers are evaluated based on their teaching and the appraiser's perception of successful student learning. The appraiser provides feedback on what was observed during the 45-minute observation period; the procedure does not include feedback from students. Moreover, PDAS does not involve the teacher assessing his or her own instruction.

The PCLA is not a summative evaluative measure. However, it provides feedback that is significantly different from what teachers normally receive from their school administration (Lavigne & Good, 2013). Teachers in this study focused on self-assessment, which is currently nonexistent in the PDAS state evaluation system. PDAS evaluates a teacher's instruction and classroom management and provides a rating of

what the teacher has done. The PCLA is a self-assessment measure that allows teachers to improve instruction (Snead, 2014). The PCLA also solicits feedback from students. Social science exploration is a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life (Vogt, 1999).

Case study. The research is a collective case study of four teachers in four classrooms at the same time (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). The decision to focus on qualitative case studies stems from the fact that this design is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing (Merriam-Webster online, n.d.). The four teacher participants were selected based on nonrandom convenience sampling due to their availability on campus and their exemption from PDAS state assessment. Case studies are differentiated from other types of qualitative investigation in that they are intensive descriptions and analysis of a single unit or bounded systems (Smith, 1978). This case study provides a foundation for further research on the use of feedback in the affective domain and its relationship to teacher self-assessment.

The qualitative methodology adhered to guidelines set in Carspecken's (1996) *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research*. This study affords opportunities for use of the PCLA self-assessment (Freiberg, 1995-2017) by teachers to evaluate their perceptions of how they interact with students and to provide with insight on how their students see them. According to Carspecken (1996), attitudes and experiences are the principal items investigated in social research. Identifiers were removed from documentation and replaced by pseudonyms for teachers, with no indicators or

descriptions of students. This encouraged participants to answer authentically on the PCLA and in the interviews.

Research Questions

The data collection process was guided by two research questions:

1. How does student feedback on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and PCLA II?
2. How does assistant principal participation in the PCLA improve the level of teacher reflection between PCLA I and PCLA II?

The data were analyzed to address the research questions, as shown in Table 6 and Table 7.

Data collection included the PCLA ratings completed by the teacher and students. Student feedback is paramount for the teacher to evaluate interactions with students when using the PCLA. The teacher and students rated the instruction based on the 10 Descriptors chosen by the teacher. The student ratings were averaged and compared to the teacher's self-ratings based on the audio recording of the lesson. The teachers used the same PCLA measure as the students, rating the lesson after listening to the audio recording. After the teachers complete the ratings, they wrote a summary after PCLA I. This process also took place after PCLA II, with that summary compared to PCLA I (Freiberg, 1995-2017).

With the two PCLA surveys and the summary, this study provides teachers three data points for teacher self-assessment, along with feedback from their students (Figure 1). The summary should be a concise, accurate account of the teacher's interpretation of the scores and recording after PCLA I and PCLA II, with length being at the teacher's

Table 6

Research Summary

Research question	Variable indicators	Data source	Participants
How does student feedback on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and PCLA II?	PCLA self-assessment using the Descriptors chosen by the teacher. PCLA self-assessment using teacher-developed Observable Indicators	PCLA: Student feedback on the PCLA, audio recording of lesson for teacher feedback, Teacher reflection summaries, interviews with the teachers	Four veteran teachers in a suburban junior high school
How does the assistant principal's participation in the PCLA improve the level of teacher reflection between PCLA I and PCLA II?	PCLA self-assessment using the Descriptors chosen by the teacher. PCLA self-assessment using teacher-developed Observable Indicators	PCLA: Student feedback on the PCLA, audio recording of lesson for teacher feedback, Teacher reflection summaries, interviews with the teachers	Four veteran teachers in a suburban junior high school

Source: Research grid, unpublished, developed by H. J. Freiberg in 1993.

discretion but at least one page. Teachers take the steps shown in Table 8 to create and complete the PCLA.

The teachers also used a data chart to organize feedback from themselves and their students. They averaged the student ratings and listed the comments provided by the students. They listed their self-ratings and the ratings by the outside observer. All comments were also listed on the chart. Table 9 is an example of recorded data for the Descriptors and Observable Indicators. This example contains data recorded by a teacher on a different campus who had utilized the PCLA with her ninth-grade geography class.

Table 7

Data Analysis Process

Compiling the primary record (Audio Recording & Reflection Summary I)

Preliminary reconstructive analysis of Reflection I

Dialogical data generation of Interview I

Reconstructive analysis of Interview I

Reconstructive analyses of Reflection II

Dialogical data generation of Interview II

Reconstructive analysis of Interview II

Source: *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research: A Theoretical and Practice Guide*, by P. F. Carspecken, 1996, Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

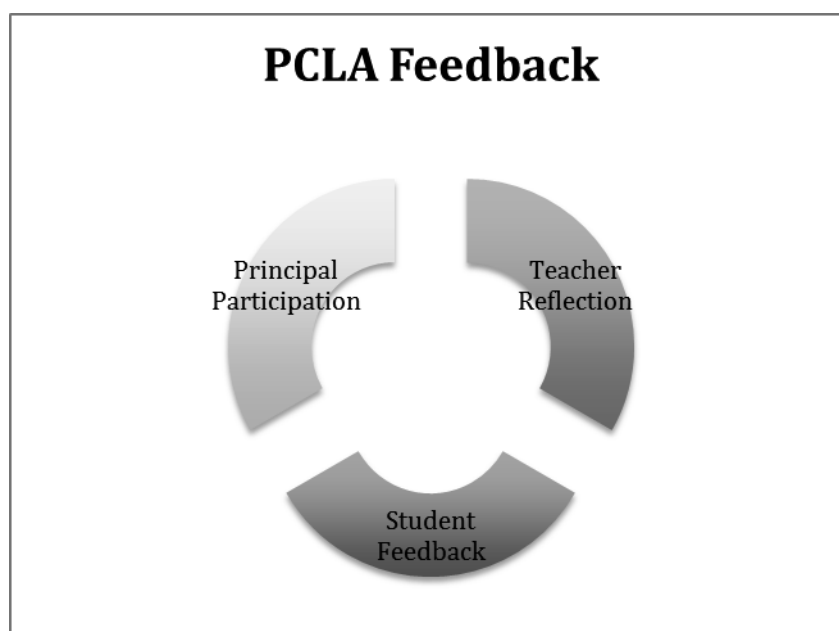


Figure 1. Three types of Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA) feedback.

Table 8

Teachers' Steps in Creating the Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA)

Step	Action
1.	Teacher selected 10 Descriptors from the PCLA learning framework.
2.	Teacher developed Observable Indicators for each chosen Descriptor.
3.	Teacher put each Descriptor on a 10-point Likert-type scale.
4.	Teacher and researcher communicated about the PCLA development.
5.	The four teachers audio recorded their first lesson (PCLA I).
6.	Students completed PCLA I anonymously immediately after the lesson.
7.	Teacher used the audio recording to complete PCLA I feedback form.
8.	Two of the teachers received PCLA I feedback from the researcher.
9.	Teacher analyzed PCLA I results and planned changes for PCLA II.
10.	Teachers audio record second lesson (PCLA II).
11.	Students completed PCLA II anonymously immediately after lesson.
12.	Teacher used audio recording to complete PCLA II feedback form.
13.	Two of the teachers received PCLA II feedback from the researcher.

Source: Adapted from 2015 CUIIN 6370 syllabus, by H. J. Freiberg (1995-2017).

Coaching by the Principal

The point of any form of feedback is to be made aware of the results and to take appropriate action (Whitaker, Whitaker, & Lumpa, 2009). At the target campus, teachers receive feedback from administration throughout the year. Most administrators rise from

Table 9

Example of a Person-Central Learning Assessment (PCLA) Data Chart

Descriptor	Teacher-selected Descriptors	Teacher-selected Observable Indicators	Student PCLA average	Teacher self-rating	Comments
22	The learner treats the teacher and other students with dignity and respect.	All conversation, teacher-to-student and student-to-student is respectful and encouraging. No disparaging remarks are allowed at all.	7.7	8	Teacher: "I tend to be sarcastic and have quick wit which to a teenager may be misinterpreted." Students: "Holds grudges past a playful sarcasticness." "Some kids were talking while others were." "Students yell at one another from across the room a lot." "We all listen to others." "Respectful and encouraging language."

the ranks of classroom teacher and assume that, when they become an assistant principal, they will understand the needs of their staff colleagues (Goodman & Berry, 2010).

One method for meeting the needs of the teachers is coaching. Coaching can provide support and consultation in collaboration with the teacher in efforts to fine tune intervention strategies in the classroom context (Reinke, Stormont, Webster-Stratton, Newcomer, & Herman, 2012). I have seen coaching used only as an intervention, not as

an additional tool to aid the teacher in the classroom. During this study, the researcher provided support to two of the teachers to determine whether student feedback and teacher reflection improved.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 did not receive coaching guidance from the researcher, other than explaining the instrument and showing how to develop indicators for the selected descriptors. Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 were given more support than were Teachers 2 and 4. The researcher provided coaching during PCLA I and PCLA II, along with ratings for each of the selected Descriptors. This allowed the researcher to develop interview questions to assist the teachers in reflection. This interdependent, or collegial, method allows the supervisor or coach to pose reflective questions in conversation and engage in dialogue in the future if the teacher so chooses (Downey, Steffy, English, Frase, & Poston, 2004). These additional data points provided the teacher another perspective for self-assessment. It will changed the dynamic of the post interviews, as the researcher is moderately participating with Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 but acting as a nonparticipant with Teacher 2 and Teacher 4.

Audio Recording

The researcher audio recorded the post-observation interviews with the teachers after PCLA I and PCLA II. Interviews after PCLA I provided perspective as to how the teachers viewed their affective instruction after the first classroom recording. Each teacher listened to the recording, completed the PCLA, composed a one-page summary, and participated in a post interview with the researcher. Post-observation interviews focused on data from the summary written by the teacher to engage with the teacher on what had been learned prior the PCLA implementation. The summary was a reflection of

the teacher based on the student and outside observer ratings on the PCLA, along with the teacher's ratings. The summary provided details in narrative format, combining the teacher's view of the class along with the perspectives of the students.

There was a 3-week window between PCLA I and PCLA II to allow the teachers to reflect, process, and make any necessary changes to the Observable Indicators. Those changes, if any, served as a reflection of the one-page summary written by the teacher and the post-observation interview discussion.

Post-Observation Interviews

Interviews were conducted after the one-page summaries were submitted after PCLA I and PCLA II during the teacher's off-duty time. Carspecken's (1996) interview protocol was used to formulate the interview questions. The protocol was similar for all teachers after PCLA I but varied in PCLA II based on summary.

Carspecken's (1996) protocol utilizes topic domains. Topic domains are themes created from the data and begin with opening questions to guide the interview. In this study, one of the topic domains addressed feedback, allowing the teacher to discuss views on the current feedback received in the PDAS observation system. This is not the same as the domains utilized in the PDAS system. The researcher creates the domains within interview protocol as themes in which the data are to be gathered. The domains provide a starting point for the researcher to gather in-depth information on the topic. The domains are created to gather data from the teachers to provide insight on their perceptions of the standard observation process conducted by administration and the feedback that they receive. It also gathers information on their previous understanding of self-assessment and what they have learned from utilizing the PCLA. The data were compared and

contrasted to determine how the teacher saw the self-assessment as a tool for instructional improvement. Table 10 presents an example of the interview protocol.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 did not receive assistance or feedback from the researcher between PCLA I and PCLA II. Their interview protocols were the same, predicated on their responses. Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 received feedback from the researcher. Therefore, the interview protocols and interviews were much more specific to each teacher.

PCLA use in data collection. The PCLA (Freiberg, 1995-2017) allows the educator to take an in-depth look at the culture and climate of the classroom. It permits a level of self-reflection that is often absent from the daily role of a teacher. Teachers often reflect on a lesson taught, particularly after students are not as successful as expected on an assessment. The PCLA is unique in using three points of data: the audio recording, their self-assessed rating, and student feedback. This is different from the standard feedback received from administration and district content specialists in that it involves the students. The teacher can reflect on what works but, perhaps more important, how students perceive the teachers' actions toward them.

The teachers selected descriptors from the following areas of the PCLA: Educator, Student, Materials, and Curriculum. Each will teacher selected descriptors that he or she wished to have rated, with the restriction of selecting four from the Educator section, three from the Student section, two from the Materials section, and one from the Curriculum section. This breakdown is based on placing emphasis on what the teacher has most control over, the instruction and learning, rather than areas of less

Table 10

Example of the Interview Protocol

Topic domain	Lead-off question	Follow-up questions
1 Teacher's Perception of Affective Instruction	Who was your favorite teacher growing up? What made that teacher special?	<p>Are you familiar with the affective domain of teaching?</p> <p>Have you been trained to understand affective instruction in your classroom?</p> <p>Does your current mode of evaluation address affective instruction in your classroom?</p> <p>How do you view your relationship with students in relation to their achievement?</p>
2 Administration Evaluation Measures	Is there specific feedback you have received from PDAS that impacted you?	<p>What do you learn from the 15-minute walkthroughs? 45-minute observation?</p> <p>Do you feel there is consistency between different administrators that observe your classroom throughout the year?</p> <p>In the past, has your direct supervisor gone into depth with in relation to your summative evaluation at the end of the year? If so, in what ways? If so, in what ways/?</p>
3 Feedback	Does feedback from administration, or lack thereof, helped or hindered your instruction?	<p>Is instructional feedback important to you and your instructional practices?</p> <p>How do you utilize the feedback that is provided to you through the PDAS evaluation system?</p> <p>Did you receive instructional feedback over the past year? If so, how?</p> <p>Do you see instructional feedback as an integral part of your professional growth?</p>
4 Teacher Self-Assessment	Outside, of the PDAS system, what other forms of teacher self-assessment are you familiar with?	<p>What advantages and disadvantages do you see with self-assessing your own instruction?</p> <p>How do you think the feedback would differ using a self-assessment tool for your instruction?</p> <p>What do you believe there is to gain from receiving feedback from your students?</p>

control, such as the materials used in the classroom and the overall curriculum, scope, and sequence (Freiberg, 1995-2014).

The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest. The teacher and students answered a survey of the 10 PCLA Descriptors selected from 37 possible Descriptors. The role of each descriptor is to provide feedback to the teacher to assess teaching in the affective instruction domain. Based on the number of students in the classroom, student averages were used to be compared with the teacher's ratings.

Another important facet of utilizing the PCLA is the audio recording of classroom instruction. Teachers can listen to their instruction after PCLA I and PCLA II to provide insight regarding the ratings prior to the post-observation interviews. The entire lesson taught on those days was recorded to provide feedback to the teacher. Both PCLA I and PCLA II lesson lengths will be the duration of the class period, approximately 50 minutes. The teachers provided the recording device and were responsible for recording their own lessons, analyzing the recording, and writing a one-page summary for each lesson.

Audio recording of PCLA I and PCLA II lessons. Video to record lessons has been used to recreate the voice, behavior, and movement of teacher and students (Tochon, 2001). This is a valuable tool that, when applied effectively, can give the teacher the view from the students' perspective. The PCLA focuses on the verbal dialogue between the teacher and the students and among students. In the development of the PCLA process, Freiberg (1987) stated that the use of audio taping (compared to videotaping) is less obtrusive, allows greater flexibility in analysis, and allows teachers to

focus on verbal teacher-student interactions. The teacher's focus is on what is said and the interaction with the students, versus movement.

Each teacher recorded a lesson within the chosen class period. Class periods are on average 50 minutes long. The teacher used the audio recording as a source of feedback to score the PCLA measure, using both the 10 Descriptors and the Observable Indicator for each descriptor. The researcher utilized the classroom audio recording to assist in formulating interview questions, in addition to the one-page summary.

Data Collection

This exploratory study investigated two research questions with regard to teachers' use of the PCLA:

1. Does student feedback on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and PCLA II?

2. Does assistant principal participation in the PCLA improve the level of teacher reflection between PCLA I and PCLA II?

Two of the four teachers who participated in the study were provided support by the assistant principal, while the other two did not receive any support. The research was based on several data points provided to the four teachers.

Student feedback. The students provided feedback on the PCLA to the four teachers by rating them on a 10-point Likert-type scale, with 1 being the lowest rating and 10 being the highest. The teachers selected 10 PCLA Descriptors to be rated and wrote Observable Indicators for the 10 Descriptors to provide detail of what would be observed in the classroom by the students. The students were encouraged to provide written feedback to the teachers, as well as responding to the scale.

Audio recordings. Teachers reviewed their lessons by listening to their two audio recordings prior to reviewing student responses.

Self-assessment. After listening to the audio recordings, the teachers rated themselves on the PCLA using the 10-point Likert-type scale and provided written self-assessment feedback. This enabled them to compare their ratings with those given by their students. The teachers were directed to conduct the comparisons after they had finalized their own self-assessments.

Reflection summaries. Each teacher compiled thoughts on the PCLA lessons based on data received from the student feedback, the audio recordings, and the teacher self-assessment. Each teacher wrote a one-page reflection summary after PCLA I and after PCLA II and submitted them to the researcher.

Post-observation interviews. The teachers were interviewed following each PCLA lesson. The one-page reflection summary served as the foundation of the interview. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using critical ethnography (Carspecken, 1996). The coding of reflections and interviews identified themes.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using three of Carspecken's five stages for conducting critical qualitative research (Carspecken, 1996, p. 43): (a) Stage 1: Compiling the primary record, (b) Stage 2: Preliminary reconstructive analysis, (c) Stage 3: Dialogical data generation, (d) Stage 4: Describing system relations, and (e) Stage 5: Systems relations as explanations of findings. The first three stages of analysis were utilized in this case study with the same teachers on the same campus. Stages 4 and 5

were not utilized because the study was not conducted on multiple campuses and with multiple teachers.

The interview protocol allows the researcher to examine the subjective experiences that often occur in the classroom. Carspecken's model is designed to study social interaction taking place in one or more social sites and to explain this action through examining locales and social systems intertwined with the site of interest (Carspecken, 1996).

During Carspecken's Stage 1, the primary record was compiled by the classroom audio recording utilized in PCLA process, along with the teacher reflection summary. The teachers collected information on themselves by using the Likert-type scale on the 10 chosen PCLA descriptors. The teacher also received feedback from the students. Through the use of audio recording, the researcher compiled a thick record of the observed activity (Carspecken, 1996). Scripting the audio recording verbatim allows the researcher to detect the tones and moods of both teacher and students in the classroom.

In Stage 2, following Carspecken protocols, the researcher utilized the audio recording to determine interaction patterns, meanings, power relations, roles, interactive sequences, and evidence of embodied meaning. Meaning fields allow the researcher to articulate the meanings that others might infer, either overtly or tacitly (Carspecken, 1996). The researcher can never know exactly the impressions received by others but can provide a range of possibilities. Meaning fields were set to determine all possible meanings of the data, followed by determining whether validity claims of the data produced are true to what occurred, claims that the analysis performed on the data was conducted correctly, and claims that the conceptual basis of the analytic techniques used

was sound. The next step was to code the recorded observations and interviews. The researcher used low-level codes to capture what was said and high-level codes to allow for inference (Carspecken, 1996).

Once the coding was complete, the actual interview analysis or dialogical data generation from Stage 3 took place. Dialogical data is generated through dialogues between researcher and the researched that are rarely naturalistic. These data were gathered during the post-observation interviews. The interviewee talks in ways different than normal life because rarely does anyone ever listen so intently or value them like the researcher (Carspecken, 1996). The purpose of the interviews was to begin conversation with the participants. The researcher facilitated this process to create a safe, normative environment. The types of questions created for the interview protocol, interviewer responses, and data analysis characterized the qualitative interview. The data retrieved during this stage should challenge the information from Stages 1 and 2.

Chapter Summary

In this exploratory, qualitative case study, Carspecken's (1996) critical ethnography model provided the opportunity to explore whether PCLA effects change in how teachers see their instruction. Case study research focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings, which was beneficial in this study (Eisenhardt, 1989). The PCLA was used to facilitate teacher self-assessment; the instrument was not evaluated in the study. The focus of this study was on the affective domain of instruction.

The study provides data on whether assistance from the assistant principal improves the level of feedback and teacher reflection. With feedback being provided to

two of the selected teachers of this study, the researcher assessed whether the guidance of a school administrator stimulates self-reflection by the teacher when using the PCLA.

The researcher use analysis of PCLA data, PCLA reflections in the form of written one-page summaries, and analysis of interviews. Results provide information to enhance self-assessment and the use of student feedback.

Chapter IV

Findings

This chapter presents the findings for Teacher Self-Assessment: A Facilitative Process for Principal Instructional Support. The findings were derived using Carspecken's (1996) qualitative methodologies working with four teachers at a junior high campus in a suburban school district in the southwestern United States. Teachers completed two audio recorded lessons using the PCLA (Freiberg, 1995-2017), a formative self-assessment measure that allows educators to reflect on their teaching. The lessons were taught in a normal classroom setting. Each teacher completed two classroom lessons and analyzed the teaching using the PCLA twice over a period of 3 weeks. The classroom students and the teacher provided separate feedback, utilizing the PCLA measure for each lesson. Data were collected from the four teachers via two interviews in May and June 2016. Each interview lasted 21 to 44 minutes and was coded to identify common themes.

Participants

Four teachers in a junior high school, serving Grade 7 and Grade 8 students in a school district in the southwestern United States, participated in the study. Table 11 describes the participants. Table 12 depicts the length of the post-observation interviews and the number of pages written in the reflections following PCLA I and PCLA II.

Results for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked, *Does student feedback on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and PCLA II?* This question investigated how students' feedback via the PCLA related to changes in instructional methods by the

Table 11

Research Participants

Teacher	Content area
Teacher 1	Choir/Music, Grades 7 and 8
Teacher 2	Mathematics, Grade 7
Teacher 3	Science, Grade 8
Teacher 4	Mathematics, Grade 8

Table 12

Lengths of Interviews and Teachers' Written Reflections

Teacher	Reflection 1	Interview 1	Reflection 2	Interview 2
Teacher 1	1 page	34 minutes	1 page	25 minutes
Teacher 2	1.5 page	44 minutes	1.5 page	21 minutes
Teacher 3	2 pages	37 minutes	2.5 pages	27 minutes
Teacher 4	2 pages	32 minutes	1 page	31 minutes

teachers, as recorded in the teachers' written reflections and interviews. All four teachers made adjustments to their instruction from PCLA I to PCLA II.

Using Carspecken's method (1996), themes were identified through analysis of the findings. Three common themes emerged that consistent among the four participating veteran teachers: (a) Use of audio recording in self-assessment, (b) the significance of student feedback, and (c) the role of the administrator as a facilitator in

the self-assessment process. Teacher feedback in their written reflections and responses in the interviews identified these common themes. The four teachers identified changes in pedagogy over the 3-week period from PCLA I to PCLA II. They also identified planned changes in pedagogy for the upcoming school year. These two areas are discussed below.

Changes in pedagogy from PCLA I to PCLA II. During the interviews and within the reflection summaries, the four teachers discussed pedagogical changes to their instruction for PCLA II.

Data. The teachers discussed using all available data resources to collect data on the changes that they would like to implement. They first listened to the audio recording of their instruction, then rated themselves using the Descriptors that they had chosen from the PCLA. After self-reflection, the teachers reviewed their PCLA student ratings and written feedback. The teachers summarized their findings in written reflections. The teachers' findings and the summary were discussed in the interviews with the researcher, as summarized in Table 13.

Analysis. Differentiation was an area of focus for three of the four teachers. Differentiation is tailoring instruction to meet the individual needs of students. Three teachers also addressed pacing and two placed emphasis on classroom management.

Differentiation. Teacher 2 stated a concern that she was not meeting all students in the interview after PCLA I: "I'm concerned I'm not challenging those students who are those true pre-AP level students who are pretty much [ready for] anything you throw at 'em" (Personal communication, May 24, 2016). Teacher 2 selected Descriptors on the PCLA that she thought would relate to differentiation, as this was a concern prior to

Table 13

Pedagogy Changes Prior to Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA) II

Teacher	Changes in pedagogy from PCLA I to PCLA II (Sources)
Teacher 1	Pacing: Keeping a quick pace to get all the curriculum while ensuring that all students have time to pick up the material (Reflection I, Interview I, Student feedback from PCLA I)
Teacher 2	<p>Differentiation: Providing instruction at different levels (Reflection I, Interview I, Interview II)</p> <p>Formative assessment: Moving around the room to assist students versus them coming up to ask questions (Reflection I, Interview I)</p> <p>Classroom management: Maintaining a quieter classroom when applicable to the lesson (Reflection I, Interview I, Student Feedback from PCLA I)</p> <p>Pacing: Slowing instruction down for students to keep up (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I, Student feedback from PCLA I)</p> <p>More individual assignments/assessments: Less collaboration for student assignments (Reflection I, Interview I, Student feedback from PCLA I)</p>
Teacher 3	<p>Differentiation: Providing different avenues for completion of class projects (Reflection I, Interview I)</p> <p>Student desk arrangement: Moving desks in a way that allow for more teacher movement and monitoring (Student feedback from PCLA I, Interview II)</p>
Teacher 4	<p>Differentiation: Making specific changes for the individual (Interview I)</p> <p>Increased student participation: Involving all students in discussion/activity (Interview I)</p> <p>Kinesthetic instruction: Getting students active in the classroom (Reflection I, Student feedback from PCLA I)</p> <p>Pacing: Slowing down the process; increasing wait time (Reflection I, Interview I, Student feedback from PCLA I)</p>

PCLA I. The descriptors that she chose to address this area were 1 (The Educator interacts with individuals and small groups of learners most of the time), 19 (The Learner is a classroom citizen engaged in instruction, organization, and self-discipline), 20 (The Learner demonstrates involvement with her or his learning materials), and 26 (The resources are directed towards various ways of learning, i.e., auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic). The review of her audio recording confirmed her thoughts. Students did not provide specific comments but, through her own evaluation of the audio recording, Teacher 2 wrote in her reflection, “I guess I’m not involving the students as much as I thought” (Reflection I, 31-32). Teacher 2 received feedback from students stating, “We do group work a lot” (Personal communication, May 24, 2016). The teacher reflected on the students’ feedback, “I’m guessing they’re okay with it, but maybe it’s too much sometimes. It’s not like they love it but they don’t hate it” (Personal communication, May 24, 2016). Teacher 2’s response to the student feedback does not suggest that she had not previously seen the collaborative work environment that she provides as an issue but she now understood that at least one of her students saw that it happened too often.

Teacher 3 also viewed differentiation as an area in need of improvement after PCLA I. Specifically, her concern was based on the variety of methods given to students to show mastery of content. In her reflection after PCLA I, Teacher 3 cited, “One way that I can improve is to offer more interdependent projects that have more choices” (Reflection I). In the PCLA I interview, Teacher 3 stated that she felt that she had provided options for student choice but was disappointed that the students did not understand those options. This was also discussed as a possible disconnect in

communication, which is addressed later in the analysis. In science, student choice is imperative for Teacher 3 due to her project-based learning approach.

Teacher 4 saw issues in differentiation concerning being sure that each individual student receives instruction at a level at which the student understands. When discussing the value of student feedback from PCLA I, Teacher 4 stated, “I can make specific changes for, and not even as a class as a whole, I can make specific changes for the individual. I can make those necessary changes from the feedback that I receive” (Personal communication, May 27, 2016). Teacher 4 saw pertinent feedback from PCLA I that would lead to change prior to PCLA II.

Pacing. Teachers 1, 2, and 4 cited pacing as a pedagogical change that they planned to address prior to PCLA II. The three teachers stated that they noticed pacing as an issue when listening to the audio recording and discussed this in their reflection and interview after PCLA I. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 received student ratings that indicated that the students saw pacing as an issue.

Teacher 1, a choir teacher, felt pressure to ensure that the curriculum was taught within an appropriate amount of time for the students to learn the comprehensive curriculum, while still allowing time for students to learn the performance songs for concerts and to feel confident with their understanding. This was also evident in the student feedback that Teacher 1 received from PCLA I. During the interview following PCLA I, Teacher 1 stated that students reported that they moved from one concept to the next at a quick pace. She explained that students are not only taking a class but are also involved in competitions.

Teacher 2 noticed when reviewing the audio recording how fast she was talking. She wondered whether all of her students were able to keep up with instruction at that pace of delivery. In her reflection she cited a student's suggestion "that I sometimes go too fast and I do not give enough information" (Reflection I). When questioned about this in the interview following PCLA I, she responded, "That was one thing that I looked at and I tried to think about how I can differentiate my instruction to slow down the pacing, because in math, it's just one concept after another" (Personal communication, May 24, 2016). Teacher 2 was concerned that she was moving fast to prevent some of her pre-Advanced Placement students from becoming disengaged but realized that the pace might be too much for some students. Teacher 2 was one of the two teachers who received feedback from the assistant principal between PCLA I and II. The feedback is discussed in the analysis of results for Research Question 2.

Teacher 4, a mathematics teacher, identified pacing as an area of concern. She specifically noticed the lack of wait time, the amount of time students are given to answer a question after it is asked, when reviewing the audio recording. She stated in her reflection, "I noticed that I prompted the students quite often which did not allow for their true ability levels to be revealed at times" (Reflection I). She said that, when listening to herself teach, "I was more concerned with presenting the lesson" (Reflection I). Teacher 4 also felt the same pressure as Teacher 3 to ensure that all of the content was covered and that students had a foundational understanding of the mathematical concepts. But she stressed in her interview that the burden of providing information may have overshadowed the responsibility to assess whether students truly understood.

Classroom management. Two of the teachers identified classroom management as an area to adjust between PCLA I and PCLA II. Teacher 3 did not discuss this change until her interview after PCLA II. She stated, “I was trying to interact with more students than I had interacted with the first time.” This was based on a comment from a student on the PCLA that the teacher tended to call on the same students all the time. Since Teacher 3 moves around the room consistently during instruction, she decided that changing the desk arrangement would help. In her interview after PCLA II, Teacher 3 explained the effect of this change: “I was able to go to almost every single student and talk to them at some point during the class” (Personal communication, June 20, 2016).

Teacher 2 also received student feedback from PCLA I in reference to classroom management. Students responded via the PCLA that “the class can be too noisy at times, which is something I can correct in the future” (Reflection I, 27-28). The teacher acknowledged that the room does get loud due to her collaborative approach in instruction. However, the feedback caused her to reflect on how that type of class management may affect some of the students. She stated that she would seek to avoid student chatter from being too loud, even if the discussion is based on the subject matter.

Teacher 4 identified in her audio recording that students were not as involved as she thought they were.

At one point, years ago, I would draw Popsicle sticks. I noticed through hearing the audio, I wasn’t observant of how much kids kept talking versus the kids that weren’t talking. It gave me the opportunity to see, I need to draw those other kids in. (Teacher 4, Interview I, 27:55)

Changes in pedagogy in future teaching. In addition to the changes that teachers made between PCLA I and PCLA II, all four identified areas in which they chose to make changes in their pedagogy moving forward in their teaching career.

Data. As Table 14 illustrates, there were no specific themes regarding changes in pedagogy in future teaching that were shared by all of the teachers.

Table 14

Pedagogy Changes Planned by the Teachers Beyond Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA) II

Teacher	Changes in pedagogy for future teaching (Sources)
Teacher 1	Student involvement: Including all students in all aspects of the course (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA I, Student feedback from PCLA II)
Teacher 2	Differentiation: Need to provide instructions at different levels (Reflection I, Interview I, Interview II) Pacing: Slowing instruction down for students to keep up (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I) More individual assignments/assessments: Less collaboration for students assignments (Reflection I, Interview I, Student feedback from PCLA I)
Teacher 3	More individual assignments/assessments: Less collaboration for students assignments (Reflection II, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA II) Classroom management: Ensuring all students are disciplined fairly (Interview II)
Teacher 4	Pacing: Slowing the lesson down to be more focused on individual needs (Reflection II, Interview II) Decreased lecture: Providing more hands-on learning opportunities for students (Reflection II, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA II)

Analysis. The four teachers found areas in their teaching in which they wanted to make changes for future instruction, based on their PCLA I and PCLA II self-assessments. All four teachers looked for more ways to address students individually. The only common theme among the four teachers was communication.

Teacher 1 planned to utilize more methods to involve all students in the educational process. During the process of completing the PCLA twice, she realized that some students did not feel included in the group, as she had thought. This lack of inclusion caused a disconnect that could affect their learning potential. Based on student feedback, Teacher 1 concluded, “95-98% of the students did feel included” (Personal communication, June 8, 2016). But she believed that it was important that she reach the rest of the students and suggested that she would begin the year with purposeful intent to engage all students. “I need to speak and be careful about the whole playing favorites thing. At the beginning of the year I would let them know I cannot be best friends with 200 kids but if you wanna talk to me, then you can come and talk to me” (Personal communication, May 23, 2016).

During the interview after PCLA II, Teacher 2 continued to discuss her use of differentiation in her classroom. She was still reflective from PCLA I and was looking to provide more individual assignments as suggested by feedback from students who felt unnoticed in the collaborative group work required in the class.

Teacher 3 echoed that more individual assignments would be needed in her class, as well to allow students more opportunities for distinctive expression to show their mastery of the content. Her planned changes for future classroom management strategies

were reflective of her desire to create more connectedness and involvement in the classroom.

After listening to the audio recordings of PCLA I and PCLA II, Teacher 4 decided that the amount of lecture used for instruction did not allow each student to have hands-on learning opportunities. Like the other three teachers, she saw this as detriment to students exhibiting individual ownership in their learning as she was solely in control of the classroom for the majority of the time, having neither a person-centered nor student-centered classroom, but a teacher-centered classroom.

The four teachers had exhibited high levels of ability as teachers and were on waiver from the current state appraisal system (PDAS) as a result of meeting the district qualifying measures discussed in Chapter III. Yet, these teachers had not identified weaknesses or focused on addressing them prior to the PCLA process. They noted the specific feedback received via the PCLA that was lacking in the PDAS process:

I'm always criticizing myself, as far as what I need to improve on. I don't think I have anything documented as far as a student evaluation. I think that I should, especially now that I've done this process just to get feedback from my kids. That kind of helps me think about what to improve on. (Teacher 1, personal communication, May 23, 2016)

I would like some more in-depth suggestions, ways of changing things completely in my classroom to make it look differently. (Teacher 2, personal communication, May 24, 2016)

I get feedback every year, through walkthroughs and evaluations, but as far as specific techniques, strategies, things to change the classroom dynamics as a whole, very rare, very rare. (Teacher 2, personal communication, May 24, 2016)

I don't feel in the times that I've been evaluated that someone has really sat down with and said, "Hey, this is really good, but you could change this." Never really in-depth conversation about how I could grow as a teacher. (Teacher 3, personal communication, May 25, 2016)

I try to do my best, but I always wanna know, "Did I do what I needed to do for the benefit of the kids?" So there are times where I ask other math teachers to chime in and then let me know, "Did I do this well?" (Teacher 4, personal communication, May 27, 2016)

The four teachers had been placed on waiver from the PDAS evaluation tool based on their high evaluation marks but reported that they had not received the in-depth feedback and reflection that occurred during the PCLA. They were now aware of these issues and were investigating methods to make significant changes on how they provide instruction to their students.

Communication. The common theme among the four participating teachers was communication. They discussed, in different ways, the need to improve teacher-student communication. The audio recording served as a significant resource for the teachers to listen and evaluate their tone, attitude, approach, and level of positive and negative communication with students.

Two of the four teachers received feedback from the assistant principal on the PCLA with regard to communication in the classroom. The student feedback and teacher

reflection were based on teacher-to-student interactions, not student-to-student interactions. However, for Teacher 1, the teacher-to-student communication had a direct effect on how students interacted with each other in the classroom, as described below.

Data. The teachers provided perspectives on their communication with the students in the reflection summaries and in the interviews. The teachers cited listening to the audio recording as a key component in evaluating their communication with students. Teacher 3 shared, “I noticed during listening to the recording that I redirected student behavior and praised beneficial behaviors” (Reflection I). Teacher 2 stated, “After listening to myself, I felt that my tone wasn’t friendly or very inviting” (Reflection I). Student feedback on the PCLA was also a data point analyzed by the teachers. Table 15 exhibits the distribution of changes in communication that the teachers planned to make.

Analysis. Teacher 1 admittedly had problems with letting her frustration be seen by students, verbally and nonverbally (Interview I). The teacher chose Descriptors on the PCLA that focused on teacher communication, evidence of her concern prior to the process. The students also observed the teacher’s frustration and short temper, adding in their feedback, “She can come across really harsh. She doesn’t mean to but . . .” and “Sometimes she gets too angry too fast” (Personal communication, May 23, 2016). In Reflection I, Teacher 1 wrote, “I can sometimes be short tempered and that’s actually something I’ve been working on this year.” After PCLA II, she acknowledged the need for change, “I am going to continue to manage my frustration and how I communicate that to my kids” (Reflection II).

Teacher 1 also received student feedback from PCLA I and PCLA II that raised the issue that some students in the classroom felt that the teacher played “favorites” with

Table 15

Planned Changes in Communication

Teacher	Changes in communication (Sources)
Teacher 1	<p>Warm approach: Showing less frustration verbally and nonverbally with students (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA II)</p> <p>Patience: Better control of short temper (Reflection II, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA II)</p> <p>Inviting to all students: Ensuring that all students are comfortable and eliminate idea of “favorites” in the classroom: (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I, Interview II, Student feedback from PCLA I, Student feedback from PCLA II)</p>
Teacher 2	<p>Tone: More welcoming voice; more approachable (Reflection I, Reflection II, Interview I, Interview II)</p> <p>Nonverbal communication: Fewer facial expressions; more positive body language (Interview II, Student feedback on PCLA II)</p>
Teacher 3	<p>Clear expectations: Communicating verbally and providing examples of assignment expectations (Reflection I, Interview I)</p> <p>Verbal interaction: Speaking/interacting with each student daily (Interview II)</p>
Teacher 4	<p>Positive feedback: Using encouraging communication with students (Reflection I, Interview I)</p>

the students. She discussed this in the interview following PCLA I. She acknowledged that students could feel that way, saying “I need to speak and be careful about the whole playing favorites thing” but then adding “some of that is just junior high kids,” partially shedding responsibility for the students’ interpretation of her communication (Personal communication, May 23, 2016). This contradiction remained during the interview as she said that she could understand why the students might feel that way about her, but then

made the students accountable for the possible lack of relationship with them individually. The body language suggested that Teacher 1 was uncomfortable with this discussion and often laughed nervously during this portion of the interview. At one point she relayed a conversation with a student about this topic; she told the student, “But you don’t need me, and you come from a great home and you don’t talk to me, so I know what’s going on with you” (Personal communication, May 23, 2016).

This dialogue continued in the interview following PCLA II. Teacher 1 suggested that students who were feeling ignored were not selected to perform in the end-of-the-year concert. However, when asked whether the students whom she perceived to be closest were performing in the show, she answered that they were not. Once again, her body language began to shift, as this challenged her previous idea that junior high students were simply jealous of their peers due to performance. This also created an opportunity for the teacher to investigate her communication with students and explore how it forms the culture of her classroom and possibly limits her ability to reach all of her students. During the second interview, she was asked how she knew that some students needed her more than other students, to which she responded, “Because I read my kids,” followed by a nervous laugh (Personal communication, June 8, 2016). The teacher then related an incident that brought her to the conclusion that students valued having a relationship with the teacher.

Kids who come from a divorced family, and then their parents are separated, and their brother’s living with dad, and she is living with mom. I mean, that definitely happened this year to two of my kids. And I know that I got closer to one of them

because she's gone through heck this year. (Teacher 1, personal communication, June 8, 2016)

Within this discussion, the teacher self-reflected that there was a need for her to communicate to all students in a way that built an appropriate teacher-student relationship in which favoritism would not seem to be as prevalent as it was in her classroom currently.

Teachers 2, 3, and 4 did not have such in-depth revelation on their communication with their students but each found significant areas in interacting with students that called for a focus on change. However, Teacher 2, who received feedback from the assistant principal, cited in PCLA I and PCLA II reflections and in both interviews that she did not like the tone that she used in the classroom. "When I heard myself talk, I was very stern and serious and to the point" (Personal communication, June 16, 2016). She stated that, when she heard herself on the audio recording, she could visualize her nonverbal expressions and felt that those were also harsh. She discussed softening her tone and using fewer facial expressions and body gestures.

Teacher 3 was concerned that her communication was not clear and therefore the expectations that she had for students, both academically and behaviorally, were not fully comprehended. She planned to focus more on interacting with all students on a daily basis and treating all students fairly.

When listening to the audio recording, Teacher 4 noted a lack of positive feedback and encouraging words spoken by her to her students. She planned to work to improve this in the future, as she believes that students can become discouraged in mathematics, especially when they feel that they do not understand the lesson. During

the interview after PCLA II, Teacher 4 shared that she had already begun to implement this after PCLA I: “I paid more attention, trying to give more positive feedback. I was totally conscious from the beginning to the end of the lesson in trying to give more positive feedback” (Personal communication, June 29, 2016). Teacher 4 stated that she intends to continue to be conscious and purposeful in her communication during instruction in the future.

Summary. Research Question 1 investigated whether teachers made changes to their instruction for PCLA II after listening to the audio recording, reflecting, and receiving student feedback on PCLA I. All four teachers were presenting findings through their self-assessment and made changes based on their PCLA II findings. Each veteran teacher found specific areas of teaching of which she was unaware prior to PCLA I that required improvement; all made adjustments.

Results for Research Question 2

Research Question 2, asked *How does assistant principal participation in the PCLA improve the level of teacher reflection between PCLA I and PCLA II?* This question investigated whether the two teachers who received feedback and coaching from the assistant principal reached different conclusions in level of teacher self-reflection. Data for this question were found in the written reflections and interviews.

Data. The four teachers completed the steps of the PCLA process in the same order. The four teachers provided summaries of at least one page after each PCLA, and each was interviewed after PCLA I and PCLA II. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 received feedback from the assistant principal (researcher) between PCLA I and PCLA II. They were invited to ask questions regarding how they could adjust their instruction or

implement strategies to improve in areas from PCLA I to PCLA II. In this process, the teachers received input that could affect their future teaching. These sessions were not recorded and did not follow a protocol. The meetings lasted between 30 minutes and 1 hour. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 both met with the researcher twice between PCLA I and PCLA II. Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 did not receive any feedback from the assistant principal between PCLA I and PCLA II.

Feedback by the assistant principal. Research Question 2 investigated whether the role of the assistant principal in the PCLA process improved the level of reflection by the teacher. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 received feedback and could ask questions of the assistant principal between PCLA I and PCLA II.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 held separate meetings with the assistant principal. The meetings took place outside of the school day in the campus library. The teachers shared in detail the surveys provided by the students and how they had rated themselves. They asked specific questions regarding ways to make changes prior to PCLA II. Each teacher led the meeting, discussing areas in which she was seeking feedback.

Teacher 1 was most influenced by the PCLA in the area of communication. Teacher 1 was verbally and visually disappointed in the student comments in relation to how she communicated with them and the perception of favoritism that this reflected. In Reflection I, she wrote, “I was at first, discouraged because I definitely had one or two girls who were obviously unhappy.” In her interview after PCLA I, she added, “It was interesting because I was not expecting a couple of haters but there definitely were ones [chuckle]; that was interesting.” (Personal communication, May 23, 2016). The student feedback regarding communication was both unexpected and upsetting to Teacher 1.

It was shown on her PCLA that Teacher 1's students reported that she played favorites. This provided in-depth conversation during the interviews as she inquired more prior to PCLA II. In the discussion, Teacher 1 recognized that this was a deeper issue than just the lesson presented for PCLA I. The students were made to feel this way by the communication that took place during the entire school year, not specifically in relation to the PCLA I lesson. In her reflection after PCLA II, she stated, "There were more comments about me wanting their opinions and feedback for choreography ideas or just their creative ideas in general" (Reflection II). The assistant principal's role seemed to provide an opportunity for Teacher 1 to consider ways for her students to be more involved, which was reflected in student feedback on PCLA II. After PCLA II, Teacher 1 discussed involving students even more to create this equal partnership in future instruction.

Teacher 1 was advised by the assistant principal to communicate to all students the same, regardless of their level of talent in the class or any outside circumstances. Teacher 1 has nearly 200 students and she focused on interacting with all of her students in the days between PCLA I and PCLA II. Student feedback on PCLA II showed that her students had noticed this change and were appreciative. After PCLA II, she wrote, "There were more comments about me wanting their opinions and feedback for choreography ideas or just their creative ideas in general" (Reflection II). This was an indication that the students acknowledged that she involved them more by the way in which she communicated with them. Teacher 1 took the positive communication a step further by having the students write positive notes to each other. She stated in her

reflection, “I had them write positive things about each other one day in class and they liked that, so that confirms that I need to do that again” (Reflection II).

Teacher 1 reflected on the idea of favoritism leading up to PCLA II. Afterward, she provide more reasons for feeling that some students required her more than others. The interviews and discussions between PCLAs were uncomfortable for Teacher 1. Teacher 1 is well liked on campus and students enjoy being around her. However, the PCLA results indicated that not all students were receptive to her methods, which was unacceptable to her. As she stated later in her reflection, “I am going to continue to manage my frustration and how I communicate that to my kids along with me treating my students as equally as I can so they don’t feel I am playing favorites” (Reflection II).

Teacher 2’s greatest concerns were the pacing of her lessons, differentiation at pre-Advanced Placement level, overuse of group work, and the sternness of her communication. She questioned how to slow the lesson pace while not boring students who were able to keep up with the lesson. It was proposed by the assistant principal that she use an “I Do, We Do, You Do” method when introducing new material. This would allow her to model instruction for all students, work with all of the students in replicating the task, and then having students work individually with the teacher to check for understanding. During the “We Do” portion, she could assess the student levels and then provide “You Do” tasks that were appropriate to the students’ understanding. She could then assign work at the level of the each individual student. After reflection and practice, the teacher discussed with the assistant principal that she paced the lesson better, while also providing differentiation and providing more individual assignments versus group work.

The tone that Teacher 2 used in her instruction was a point of emphasis for her. She continued to work on this leading up to PCLA II. She received student feedback on PCLA I stating, “I normally have the students approach me rather than approaching them myself. This is something that I will try to change in the future” (Reflection I). Teacher 2 commented that her tone “wasn’t friendly or very inviting,” which was part of the reason students felt awkward (Reflection I). Based on student feedback in PCLA II, she improved in this area.

Teacher 2 stated that she was comfortable with a louder classroom as students are collaborating, but after PCLA I she realized that that might not be the best environment for all students and, after reflection and discussion with the assistant principal, she made adjustments. She maintained a lower volume in the classroom after PCLA I. She used the method of No Voice, Partner Voice, Group Voice, and Sharing Voice. She reminded students of the levels of voice based on the activity in which they were involved. After PCLA II, students no longer commented that the volume of the class was too high for their concentration levels.

Summary. Research Question 2 examined whether the teachers who received assistance (Teachers 1 and 2) improved their reflection, in contrast to the teachers who did not receive assistance (Teachers 3 and 4). Based on the information in Tables 12 and 13, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 provided more feedback on changes that they would make to their instruction, even though they did not write as much in their reflections as did Teacher 3 and Teacher 4. Teacher 1’s focus was communication, while Teacher 2’s reflection cited pedagogical changes that she could make. The assistant principal’s involvement in the PCLA process made a difference in the level of reflection, thus

promoting more thought on changes in teaching to be implemented. This provided a different perspective for the administrator-teacher discussion on making classroom adjustments. The teachers brought their own ideas based on their in-depth reflection and the administrator's action as facilitator. From the point of view of the administrator, the dialogue for instructional support was a smoother process.

PCLA Descriptors

Each teacher had discretion in choosing PCLA Descriptors (Freiberg, 1995-2017). They were asked to choose four Descriptors from the Educator domain, three from the Learner domain, two from the Resources domain, and one from the Curriculum domain. During the interviews, the teachers discussed the descriptors that they chose and why. Table 16 shows the distribution of descriptors that were chosen by more than one teacher.

Descriptors chosen by participants. Descriptors 6, 19, 22, and 26 were the most frequently chosen. The more frequently used descriptors address the affective domain, including warmth when interacting with students (6), the student acting as citizen in the classroom as opposed to tourist (19), the learner treating the teacher and other students with dignity and respect, and the teacher interacting with individuals and small groups of learners (26).

Descriptor 6, the Educator demonstrates the quality of warmth when interacting with students, and Descriptor 26, resources are directed toward using multiple senses, (i.e., auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic) were selected by three of the four teachers. Descriptor 19, the Learner is a classroom citizen engaged in instruction, organization, and self-discipline, and Descriptor 22, the Learner treats the teacher and other students with dignity and respect, were also selected by three of the four teachers but reflect the

Table 16

Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA) Descriptors Chosen Multiple Times by Participants

Number	Descriptor	<i>f</i>
2	The Educator sends positive “you matter” verbal and nonverbal messages to students.	2
4	The Educator concentrates on the students’ demonstrated behavior when making reference to appropriate and inappropriate behaviors.	2
6	The Educator demonstrates the quality of warmth when interacting with students.	3
10	The Educator fosters independence, self-reliance, and self-motivation in the learning environment.	2
18	The Learner is encouraged to make judgments about their needs, interests, and abilities.	2
19	The Learner is a classroom citizen engaged in instruction, organization, and self-discipline.	3
20	The Learner demonstrates involvement with his/her learning resources.	2
22	The learner treats the teacher and other students with dignity and respect.	3
26	The resources are directed towards various ways of learning, i.e. auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic.	3
27	The resources are considered challenging, engaging the learner for at least 15 minutes.	2
34	Originality and creativity is encouraged.	2

students’ role in the classroom. The majority of the chosen descriptors were within areas in which the teacher would receive student feedback to focus on the teacher.

Analysis. Teacher 1 was intentional in selecting descriptors related to student feedback. She specifically discussed the descriptors that she chose that dealt with her

interaction with students in her interview after PCLA I. She chose Descriptor 2, which addressed the educator sending positive “you matter” verbal and nonverbal messages to students, and Descriptor 6, which evaluates the warmth of the teacher. These two Descriptors led to in-depth conversations about communication and the culture that is created in the classroom, specifically the perception of favoritism. Teacher 1 did not expect to receive the feedback that she received, but found valuable insight in areas that were in need of improvement.

Teacher 2’s approach was to “choose Descriptors that I thought were closest to my teaching style. Things that I felt I could work on personally, things that pertain to my content area, that were relevant to my content area” (Personal communication, May 24, 2016). Instructional methods were key to Teacher’s 2 selection of Descriptors and she received significant feedback that led to a self-reflection of instructional changes such as pacing, differentiation methods, and not overusing collaborative assignments.

Teacher 3 selected Descriptors that related to the lessons that she would be teaching. She stated that “it was challenging” and “took thought” to ensure that the PCLA would be a useful tool for self-assessment (Personal communication, May 25, 2016). Teacher 3 also mentioned that she had conversations with at least one other teacher in reference to Descriptor selection. She stressed that Descriptor 6 was the most informative because she had felt that she was more warm towards her students than her students felt. However, she did not institute any changes from PCLA I to PCLA II in this area and did not express any planned changes to future teaching based on that finding.

When asked about the selection of Descriptors, Teacher 4 stated, “I used the ones that I felt that was most important to me and what would be most important to my

students” (Personal communication, May 27, 2016). The Descriptors measured areas of instruction that were important to her and what she believed should also be important to her students.

Limitations of the Study

As noted in Chapter 3, the participants in this study were exempt from the standard observation and appraisal system, PDAS. The researcher is an administrator at the school and therefore is responsible for evaluating all teachers in the school. Each teacher is assigned one of the three administrators on campus as official appraiser. The researcher was not an official appraiser of any of the participating teachers and their participation in the study was not reflected in any way in their annual summative evaluation. To ensure that the researcher did not supervise any of the participating, the teachers constituted a small sample size for the case study. The study was conducted in the second semester of the school year. This was the third year in which the researcher held the position of assistant principal on the campus.

The researcher did not listen to any of the audio recordings or review the student PCLA surveys. The researcher read the reflection summaries and conducted the interviews. The conversations between the researcher and the two teachers receiving administrative support (Teacher 1 and Teacher 2) during the process were not recorded. Only the notes taken by the researcher during those conversations were used in the findings. The researcher wanted the teacher to be in full control of the PCLA process and not bring any biases to the interviews. This allowed the administrator to maintain a facilitative role, which separated this process from the normal observation process to which teachers are accustomed, in which the administrator provides the data.

Chapter Summary

The four teachers had individual approaches to selecting their Descriptors and creating the Observable Indicators for each Descriptor in their PCLA. The selections of Descriptors did not limit the feedback from students nor did it limit the self-reflection of instruction and interaction with students. As an administrator, I observed teachers being much more in control of reviewing their own instruction and providing ideas on instructional changes and how communicate and interact with their students. The discussions were honest. Topics that could be difficult were easier to discuss because the teacher had already identified areas of weakness by reviewing the audio recording and receiving feedback from students. This study highlights a need for teacher self-assessment and the role that the administrator can play in that process. The study also underlines the significant uniqueness of the PCLA (Freiberg, 2001-2016) as a formative evaluative tool, using real-time data and moving beyond perceptions.

Chapter V

Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

“So . . . I have to pull up my best teaching that day. Why? Why isn’t your best teaching everyday and why isn’t it that someone can come in on any given day and see you’re normal teaching?” (Teacher 3, personal communication, May 25, 2016)

Freiberg’s (1995-2017) PCLA provided a unique opportunity for teachers to self-assess their classroom instruction in a personalized manner. The four teachers involved in this study selected 10 Descriptors that related to areas of their instruction that they sought to investigate. One of the adages of education is, “They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” The PCLA allowed teachers to look at the affective domain of their instruction, an area often overlooked in education (Martin & Briggs, 1986). Through the use of audio recording, the four teachers listened to their interactions with students to identify areas of weakness in how they communicate the curriculum and build relationships with students. In addition to the self-assessment, the PCLA allows teachers to receive feedback from students. This perspective had not been assessed in any way in these four teachers’ previous evaluations under the PDAS. On PCLA I and PCLA II, teachers received genuine feedback from students. In addition, the study investigated the role of the assistant principal in facilitating the PCLA process.

This chapter reviews the purpose of the study and restates the research questions. It then presents a summary of the findings reported in Chapter IV and provides a discussion of the study and implications of the study. Suggestions for future research are presented.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of the PCLA with veteran teachers. The four participant teachers taught at the same suburban junior high (Grades 7 and 8) and were not currently being evaluated via the PDAS instrument. The data collected in this exploratory study provide an example of how the PCLA could be used by campus teachers as a self-assessment tool for potential growth as they look at themselves without waiting for others to tell them whether they are effective.

Research Questions

This study addressed two research questions:

1. How does student feedback to experienced teachers on the PCLA change affective instructional methods between PCLA I and II?
2. How does assistant principal participation in supporting a cluster of experienced teachers in their use of the PCLA improve the level of student feedback and teacher reflection between PCLA I and II?

The data for the research questions were collected using case study methodologies involving the PCLA, teacher summaries, and teacher interviews.

Summary of the Findings

“Because I didn’t get just positive feedback on the PCLA. That’s huge. ‘Cause it’s not all unicorns and rainbows” (Teacher 1, personal communication, May 23, 2016).

The four participating teachers provided positive feedback regarding the PCLA process. The teachers agreed that the self-reflection process and student feedback aspect of the PCLA provided a vantage point for teacher evaluation that was different from the processes previously utilized in their careers. The four teachers individually selected 10

of the 37 Descriptors to investigate areas of their instruction and created Observable Indicators for each Descriptor. All four teachers made adjustments to their instruction between PCLA I and PCLA II and each shared experiences of learning of deficiencies of which she was not aware prior to the PCLA process.

The audio recordings during PCLA I and II provided distinct feedback that four teachers had not received during formal observations during their careers that spanned a collective 38 years of teaching. The four teachers reported that listening to the recordings forced them to hear themselves from the student perspective. Three of the four teachers specifically identified areas of concern through their recordings. Teacher 2 felt that her tone was much more harsh than she had previously noticed. When one of Teacher 2's students reported on the PCLA not liking her approach in class, she understood why from listening to the recording. Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 both recognized that they did not include all students in the instruction, as they assumed they had been doing.

The teachers discussed in their interviews the power of the student feedback. They had never surveyed their students previously and, outside of informal comments or second-hand information provided by parents or administrators, they had not scrutinized student perceptions of their instruction or interactions with students. Teacher 1 found that some students felt isolated by the teacher and that she played favorites. Teacher 2 learned that not all of her students enjoyed the controlled, noisy environment that she allowed and preferred a quieter environment. Teacher 3 was surprised to hear that her students did not like the amount of assigned collaborative work. On a more positive response, Teacher 4 learned that her students believed that she cared about their well-

being as much as she was concerned about their absorption of the content. This was surprising to her, and she was moved by students recognizing her care for them.

These findings are significant for any teacher at any point in a teaching career. This research sheds unique light on an important phenomenon. These veteran teachers, based on previous evaluations and subsequent waiver status for future evaluations, are good teachers. While each was a very active participant in the study in looking for ways to grow, the findings suggest that even those who are highly successful in the classroom can utilize Freiberg's PCLA to provide new evidence to assist in their ongoing development. Teachers rarely get the satisfaction of knowing how they are doing in the classroom (Freiberg, 1987; Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005). The PCLA seemed to fill that void for these four teachers.

This study took teachers through the process of understanding more about the affective domain of teaching. As stated in Chapter II, students are more engaged in classrooms with teachers who understand and implement the affective domain (Pierre & Oughton, 2007). The four participating teachers stated in their interviews that they did not have an understanding of the affective domain prior to the PCLA. Cornelius-White (2007) wrote that to have significant affective outcomes, the innovation must be specific to that need. The PCLA encouraged students to rate the teacher based on the Descriptors selected by that teacher and add written confidential comments to elaborate on their rating. This allowed students to share their specific perspectives and needs to the teacher, who could adjust instruction and communicative style to address those needs. The four teachers do this consistently within the cognitive domain through questioning strategies,

quizzes and tests, and other modes of academic assessment. Now, the teachers also had data reflecting the students' affective needs in conjunction with their cognitive needs.

This study also investigated the role of the administrator (assistant principal in this study) as a facilitator in the PCLA process to provide instructional support. The findings suggest that the teachers who received the additional support were better able to identify areas of potential growth and propose changes for implementation. The following sections of this chapter focus on implications for practice and suggest how the PCLA instrument could be utilized in future research.

Discussion and Implications

“And even the negatives can be positive if you're willing to accept them and do something about it. But I think you would really have to shift the way we think in order to convince people that it's okay to hear those negatives” (Teacher 1, personal communication, May 23, 2016).

This study potentially provides context to the conversations by effective teachers regarding evaluation. Three themes were consistent among the four participating veteran teachers: (a) valued use of audio recording in self-assessment, (b) the significance of student feedback, and (c) the role of the administrator as a facilitator in the self-assessment process.

Value of audio recording. Each of the four teachers discussed the importance of the audio recording; none had audio recorded a lesson prior to this experience. The teachers focused solely on verbal interactions with their students and how they communicated content. As noted in Chapter II, the use of video has been used in the past to help teachers to evaluate their teaching (Teacher 2 had used video while working on a

master's degree). But each of the teachers saw the unique benefit of using digital audio recordings rather than video recording. During Interview II, Teacher 1 stated,

I like that you hear it and then you don't watch it, so I'm not distracted by things that are going around. I can just focus on what I'm saying and how the students respond versus, "Oh, someone just raised their hand and I didn't call on them."

The audio recording allowed teachers to concentrate on the affective domain of teaching while not being distracted by classroom routines.

Teacher 3 noted in her self-reflection summary (Reflection I, 17-19) that, after listening to the recording, she had a "warm greeting at the beginning of the class and had a respectful tone throughout." She later noted (Reflection I, 33-35) that the students did a great job of assisting each other, "working in collaborative discussions" and "mostly respectful to others." This reassured her that she was implementing the person-centered environment that she had chosen as a daily goal. However, Teacher 2 indicated that the audio had shown that she "wasn't friendly or very inviting" (Reflection I, 13). Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 gained clarity and positive confirmation of their interaction with students by using the audio recordings.

Student feedback. The four participating teachers had not received formal feedback from their students with respect to the classroom experience. Students informally communicate to teachers their perception of the learning environment (which unfortunately can be viewed by the teacher as disrespect) or teachers have received information from the parents regarding how a student feels about the class. The feedback that teachers received from their students directed teacher decisions on how to institute changes between PCLA I and PCLA II and in their future pedagogy.

The PCLA provided Teacher 1 (personal communication, May 23, 2016) with a new outlook on student feedback: “I don’t think I have anything documented as far as a student evaluation. I think that I should, especially now that I’ve done this process just to get feedback from my kids.” Teacher 2 expressed in Interview II the significance of using student feedback: “I would take what they are saying into consideration and change, either my style of teaching or my classroom structure to fit the needs of the student because it’s about the student and what they need in order to be successful.” Feedback from students allowed for a change in viewpoint and clear ideas of ways to improve instruction.

Administrators as facilitators. The ratio of teachers to administrators on the study campus was 18:1, with 55 teachers, two assistant principals, and the principal. The district has one curriculum specialist for each content area: mathematics, English Language Arts (reading and English), science, and history. Each specialist is responsible for each teacher in the content area at each of the four junior high campuses. There are eight mathematics teachers, 12 reading and English teachers, seven science teachers, and seven history teachers on the study campus. The district has one overall teacher specialist serving 23 campuses, working specifically with new teachers or teachers who are identified by their school or departmental administration as struggling.

Accurate feedback is at the heart of change in teaching, but the process is often dependent on others (Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005). The administrators and specialists are trained to evaluate and provide feedback to teachers. In this study, the teachers indicated that the usual feedback was adequate but not always as in depth as they would prefer. The ratio of teachers to administrators and specialists suggests the difficulty in teachers

receiving a deeper level of feedback, along with the struggle of evaluators to observe classrooms frequently. With 177 school days, campus administrators may visit a teacher's classroom four to five times during the year, with the specialist conducting additional observation visits. The PCLA allowed the teacher to have more opportunities to receive feedback through the process of self-assessment.

In addition to the teachers assessing themselves, the administrator is still able to participate in the process as a facilitator. The teacher shares with the administrator the feedback received from the self-assessment and the data received from the students. This provides an opportunity for the administrator to suggest ways in which teacher may improve in areas identified as weaknesses. This facilitative process creates a more accepting situation for the teacher because the teacher is not simply being told what is being done wrong but is creating unique own data and soliciting support from the evaluator.

The best leaders allow others to lead (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). The PCLA process allows teachers to become leaders through self-assessment. The assistant principal's role as facilitator allows teachers not to relinquish control of their development but to have an additional perspective, different from that of the teacher and the students but directed by data and with the teachers providing the analyses. It is important to develop teacher leaders to solidify the campus beyond administrators, who may come and go. C. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) expressed this point: "When a school has clearly identified a vision and taken ownership of it, then leaders can come and go; the vision grows because there is a foundation upon which to build new ideas." (pp. 116-117).

Teachers 1 and 2, who received feedback from the assistant principal, had opportunities to create and institute change in their classroom, as did two teachers who did not receive feedback. But the teachers who received feedback also had a collaborative session with the assistant principal. They presented data to the assistant principal, which is not done in the usual administrator-teacher assessment meetings. The teachers shared areas that were weak and where they looked to improve. They discussed student feedback. The teachers who received assistant principal support solicited suggestions for change based on their own collected data versus being told what they should be doing by someone who might not fully understand the content, teaching philosophy, or students. In PCLA, the observation and not taking is done by the teacher, not the assistant principal. This helps to create a climate in which teachers learn and share successes and failures, which creates a partnership between teachers and administrators (C. Rogers & Freiberg, 1994).

Recommendations

The four participating teachers are veteran educators with extensive teaching experience. They found value in the PCLA process and its outcomes. It is recommended to implement the PCLA as a required professional development for teachers each year, working with supervising administrators. Teachers are seeking to identify areas for their own improvement and the process should be guided by their own assessment and feedback received from students. This could provide opportunities for (a) more student feedback, (b) formal teacher self-assessment, and (c) opportunities for teachers to take the lead in their evaluative process.

Student feedback. Teachers need more opportunities to receive feedback from students. The participant teachers in this study were strongly influenced by the feedback that they received from students. Such student feedback is not a normal occurrence in schools but it is a key component of the PCLA process and an important factor in change. The teachers in this study used the feedback from students and the digital audio recording to identify areas to improve in the classroom, instructionally and communicatively, between PCLA I and PCLA II. They also discussed areas of change that would be made beyond PCLA II.

The value of teachers having a three-point data collection—student feedback, listen to audio recordings, and an opportunity to reflect on their teaching with a planned format—cannot be overstated. Successful businesses are concerned with the perspectives of their customers, and teachers should understand the needs of their students. The PCLA is a natural process that takes place in the normal classroom setting and is not intrusive on the educational process but it provides important results to assist teachers.

Teacher self-assessment. Teachers must self-reflect to be successful in the classroom, and many do this often but in an informal way. The consistent informal reflection is effective and helps to teachers to maintain instruction and discipline in the classroom. Each of the four participating teachers in this study involved themselves in this sort of reflection. The teachers also expressed through the reflection summaries and interviews that they were introduced to previously unknown data about their teaching. While they were praised by administrators and felt that they were doing well, they were not fully aware of specific aspects that directly affected their students. This case study

recognizes the need for all teachers to use self-assessment for development and improvement.

Teacher initiative in the evaluative process. The PCLA empowers teachers to take a leadership role in their teaching. It helps to reduce dependency on an administrator to determine what is working and not working in the classroom. These empowered educators can then transform into teacher leaders, enhancing their value to their campuses.

Students are changing rapidly in the information-driven age and they will become more difficult to reach if teachers continue to use traditional strategies. Teaching today is a more complex set of roles and responsibilities than ever before and requires a different set of skills and knowledge to engage students and prepare them for a quickly changing environment (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2015). The power of self-assessment creates an environment of continuous growth of teacher leaders, which will improve overall instruction.

Traditional assessment and the PCLA. When recommending the PCLA as a tool of professional development for teachers, it is important to note differences in the PCLA compared to traditional evaluation processes. Teachers in this study were on waiver from the PDAS used in the school district. They reported that the PCLA revealed new data about their teaching. Table 17 summarizes differences between the two instruments.

Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System. For the 2016-2017 school year, the school district where the study was conducted adopted the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS; TEA, 2016) to replace the PDAS system.

Table 17

Differences Between the Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS) and the Person-Centered Learning Assessment (PCLA)

PDAS	PCLA
Evaluator directed	Teacher directed
Based on what the evaluator observed	Based upon the digital audio recordings reviewed by the teacher
No student input involved	Students provide numeric feedback and written comments to the teacher as feedback
The observable areas are set for each teacher regardless of years of service, content area, are areas of concern	The teacher is able to select 10 from 37 Descriptors based upon the areas they seek growth
Three of the seven domains do not address the classroom instruction, but the teacher as an employee	The PCLA Descriptors are classroom specific and related to instruction
The seven domains have pre-determined meanings and how they are to be observed and rated	The teacher is able to create Observable Indicators for them to personalize the feedback process by determining how the Descriptor is observed

The T-TESS system is comprised of three components: goal setting and professional development plan, evaluation cycle (preconference, observation, postconference), and student growth measure (at this time the school district has not implemented the student growth measure component). According to the T-TESS Guidebook (2016), the goal of T-TESS is to capture the holistic nature of teaching by having a consistent loop between teachers and students and assessing the effectiveness of how students respond to the teacher's practice. It consists of four domains: planning, instruction, learning

environment, and professional practices and responsibilities. There are 16 dimensions within the four domains.

While preconference and postconference were suggested options for PDAS, they are now mandatory for T-TESS. This provides clarity prior to the observation of what will occur during the observed time period for the administrator and an opportunity to discuss the observation prior to scoring. These added measures allow for more instructional support from the administrator than did the PDAS but is still not fully led by the teacher.

PCLA and T-TESS. The goal setting and professional development component allows teachers to have more control over their evaluative process. Teachers are required to create two goals in areas in which they seek growth at the beginning of the school year. Each goal must be tied to one of the dimensions within a particular domain. Near the end of the year, teachers meet with their supervising administrators in a summative conference to discuss the professional development that was completed during the year to complete their goals.

As a current principal, I believe that there is potential for the PCLA process to be an integral part of the goal setting component of T-TESS. The four participating teachers in this study chose PCLA Descriptors and wrote Observable Indicators based on areas in which they either sought growth or desired feedback from their students. Campuswide, teachers could create goals and then use the PCLA as part of their professional development to measure their progress in meeting their goals. During their summative conference, the teachers would present data collected in their classrooms under their own direction to show the feedback that they received and how they implemented changes

based on those data. This would require training on the PCLA for all instructional staff. Assistant principals would also require training to understand the PCLA and act as facilitators during the process, as I did during this study. In the early stages of the T-TESS implementation, the PCLA could be a powerful professional development tool to enhance teacher growth, which fits in the structure of the new evaluative process without adding work for the teacher.

Suggestions for Future Research

I learned there are some areas that I can work on even with all my years of teaching and I'm not the type who think that I'm perfect by any means and I'm always looking for improvement in my classroom, but it's always interesting to hear from your students, how they feel about your classroom, and your instructional style, and the things that they are getting from your classroom.
(Teacher 2, personal communication, June 16, 2016)

This exploratory study investigated the PCLA with veteran teachers and the administrator's role as a facilitator in the teacher self-assessment process. The study was conducted on a single campus in a suburban school district, with participating teachers who have been successful enough to receive a waiver of traditional appraisals. The findings in this study and other studies (Snead, 2014) suggest that the PCLA could be used as an instrument for teacher self-assessment for both veteran and new teachers. Future studies could be combined with the standard assessment or the PCLA without the standard assessment.

Further research should utilize a broader range of classroom teachers. It would be valuable to see the potential effects of the PCLA with teachers of a wider spectrum of

content areas. The four participating teachers had taught at Grade 7 and Grade 8 levels. With the PCLA uniquely evaluating both the cognitive and affective domain, it would be important to see the range of results for teachers at the elementary and high school levels. There would also be significance in comparing results from teachers in a suburban environment and those in rural and urban areas.

Chapters I and II highlighted the significance of the achievement gap in American schools and the importance of closing this gap. One of the deciding factors in student success, particularly for African American students, is the level of concern that the student believes teachers has for them (Moses-Snipes & Snipes, 2005). One of the substantial findings of this study was the effect that student feedback had on the teachers' self-assessment process.

This study could be valuable for all teachers who teach a diverse population of students. There is the possibility of even more benefits for teachers who teach in largely minority-populated schools and those who have many students categorized as low socioeconomic background. Research suggests that these students are interested in how much their teachers care for them (Flaxman, 2003). Therefore, it would be valuable for the teachers who serve them to listen to how they interact with these students and heed the feedback that students provide for the teacher's self-assessment through the PCLA.

Conclusion

“Although knowledge is power, knowledge about yourself is perhaps the greatest power” (Freiberg & Driscoll, 2005, p. 456)

The PCLA provides a distinctive resource for teachers to assess their instruction and classroom management from their own perspectives. In addition, the PCLA allows

teachers to hear directly from students as they provide a perspective that is often not solicited or perhaps ignored in education. The PCLA potentially gives teachers a viewpoint to make significant changes in how they teach, and possibly more important, how they address their students. As a principal of a junior high campus and seeing the impact of PCLA on these four participant teachers, I will seek to train my teachers and assistant principals on the PCLA process to create a culture of teachers self-assessing their teaching for improvement. Administrators must empower teachers to become the instructional leaders of the campus. They must foster an environment where the voice of students is heard.

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