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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, THE STUDY OF LITERACY COACHING OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS WITH ELEMENTARY TEACHERS, by RHONDA SEGLER HAYES, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

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ABSTRACT

THE STUDY OF LITERACY COACHING OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS WITH ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

by
Rhonda S. Hayes

The purpose of this study is to examine the coaching interactions of two literacy coaches and four classroom teachers in order to explore how these interactions serve to support teacher learning. The analysis of the study describes how the coaches support teacher reflection and teaching for processing strategies during guided reading lessons. The literature review suggests that reflective practice (Schön, 1996) involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences while being coached by a professional in the discipline. I conducted observations and interviews for two cycles of teaching and coaching sessions per teacher coach dyad, for a total of eight guided reading lessons, 16 pre/post conferences, and conducted interviews with each teacher and literacy coach.

The research questions for this study are:

1. How does the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the coaches?
2. How does the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the teachers?
3. What patterns of discourse are seen within coaching interactions?
 - a. How do the interactions support teacher reflection during the dialog?
 - b. How do the interactions support the teachers' understanding of teaching for processing strategies within small group reading instruction?
4. What if any are the differences related to training and knowledge of the coaches?

The findings of this study are presented through: (a) case studies; (b) the participants' descriptions of coaches supporting student and teacher learning; and (c) a description of the characteristics and interaction patterns within pre-and post-conferences. My analysis showed that these coaches support reflection-on-action through their post-conferences with teachers and that the support varies with the expertise of the literacy coach. Analysis of the data revealed that these teachers believe that literacy coaches support them in the following ways: (a) by giving them feedback; (b) giving them confidence; (c) making connections to learning theory; (d) praising their teaching; (e) helping foster teacher reflection; (f) identifying professional texts; (g) providing language to use while teaching reading and writing; and (h) identifying observable evidence of how the teachers' supported student learning.

THE STUDY OF LITERACY COACHING OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS
WITH ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

by
Rhonda S. Hayes

A Dissertation

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Degree of
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in
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Professors try to prepare you for the commitment: The physical, mental, and financial costs that will challenge a doctoral program. But no one can truly understand the price that is paid, until the journey begins. My family has experienced this journey with me. My husband committed to support me in this endeavor to the very end. And he did. My daughter supported me too. Since I've been on this journey, she's graduated from high school and college, has moved from Georgia to Alaska, and has been engaged. Both my husband and my daughter have been my cheerleaders. They have encouraged me and pushed me when I really did not have it in me to keep going. My mother, father, brother, sister, and grandmother have listened to my stories and waited patiently for me to finish so that I could spend more time with them. Families endure great sacrifices during a journey such as this. Our family dog, Emma, has been my constant companion. She's snuggled next to me either in my lap or at my feet throughout this journey. Sometimes, her head even rested on the keyboard of my laptop. Because of their consistent love and support, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ELL	English Language Learner
ESEA	Elementary Secondary Education Act
IES	Institute of Education Sciences
IRA	International Reading Association
L1	First language or home language
L2	Second language
LC	Literacy Collaborative
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NRP	National Reading Panel
REA	Reading Excellence Act
RR	Reading Recovery

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Societal changes, rising expectations and accountability, evolving definitions of literacy, and new ways to teach children to read have created a chasm between classroom instructional practices and the research knowledge base of literacy development.

Coaching has become a popular model for providing professional development in schools for teachers. “Seeking to improve instructional practice and, ultimately, student learning, districts across the country have embraced an old idea and given it a new application” (Neufeld & Roper, 2003, p. iii).

Neufeld and Roper explained that districts have taken cues from athletics, where coaches have enabled athletes to strengthen their skills, and have adopted a coaching model for professional development of teachers and principals. “The goal is to engage educators in collaborative work designed to contribute to the development of intellectual capacity in schools” (Neufeld & Roper, 2003, p. iii). Literacy coaching has emerged as a way to fill in the gaps of teacher knowledge and support schools facing diversity like they have never before seen. Neufeld and Roper (2003) noted that “there is good reason to believe coaching holds promise” (p. iv).

This multiple case study will focus on one aspect of literacy coaching, the one-on-one coaching interactions that occur between a teacher and coach. It will explore the interactions that occur specifically related to guided reading, the teaching of small group

reading instruction and how the dialogue between coaches and teachers can provide support for teachers in their professional learning.

Background

The concept of literacy coaches is protean, varying through the years and across regions of the country. Bean and Wilson (1981) traced the literacy coach movement to the 1930's.

In looking at the evolution of the reading specialist as a support person, it is interesting to note that the early specialists (1930s) were essentially supervisors who worked with teachers to improve the reading program. It was after World War II, in response to the raging criticism of the schools and their inability to teach children to read, that remedial reading teachers became fixtures in many schools, public and private, elementary through secondary. The primary responsibility of the specialist was to work with individuals or small groups of children who were experiencing difficulty in learning to read. (p. 2).

In the mid-1960's, the role of the reading specialist shifted from one of resource to one who works with parents, administrators, and other resource workers.

The functions of the specialists might be viewed on a continuum. Remedial reading teachers at one end of the continuum have little opportunity to interact with teachers; generally, they spend most of their time instructing students who have difficulty with reading. Conversely, reading specialists who function as resource people may never work with children. These specialists spend much of their time on both informal and formal staff development. (Bean & Wilson, 1981, p. 1).

As early as 1981, classroom teachers supported the resource teachers' role. In 1981, Bean and Wilson (Bean & Wilson, 1981) directed a project that studied specialists' roles and their impact on reading achievement of students as well as on teachers. The specialists assumed four major roles: diagnosis, instruction, providing staff development, and serving as a resource to parents. Teachers were asked to evaluate the various roles according to their impact on children. The findings concluded that three of the four most highly valued roles were those that demanded the specialist function as a resource to the

teacher (providing in-service, developing materials, and conferring). “Instruction of children by the specialist was rated fourth in importance. The teachers valued most whatever enabled them, the classroom teacher, to become better instructors of reading” (Bean & Wilson, 1981, p. 5).

Title I Evolves Under Elementary and Secondary Education Act

A comparison of Title I as it evolved under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and the new role of the reading specialist as coach under Title I of the reauthorized ESEA of 2000 (NCLB) establishes the context for understanding the role for reading specialists. “Title I ESEA of 1965 was the first federal initiative specifically designed to establish funding for compensatory reading education in U.S. schools” (Dole, 2004, p. 462). Title I’s funding goal was to improve reading achievement for the schools with many students living in poverty and was originally established as a funding source for schools rather than a specific program. Over time, it became a program for at-risk students. Often times schools had a Title I teacher, a reading specialist, who worked with struggling readers by pulling them from their regular classrooms and working with them in small groups.

Dole (2004) explained that the instructional focus was on supplementary intervention. “Classroom teachers continued to teach most of the students, and those students who were failing were sent to the Title I teacher for supplementary instruction” (Dole, 2004, p. 463). This model provided little attention to instruction of the regular classroom teacher. Furthermore, there was very little interaction between the Title I teacher and the classroom teacher.

“Despite the large amount of time and effort as well as the literally billions of dollars funneled into pullout programs under Title I, researchers found very limited success in these programs” (Dole, 2004, p. 463). Of particular importance is that Puma et al. (1997) found that these programs did not lead to student improvement and success when the students were back in their regular classrooms. Dole (2004) explained, “...this model of intervention and the billions of dollars that went into it have not delivered the anticipated significant improvement in academic learning at-risk students” (p. 463).

In 2000, Congress reauthorized ESEA of 1965. The new Title I provides supplementary resources to schools with large numbers of low-income students to ensure that all of them obtain a high-quality education, but the goal remains the same as that of the old—improved reading and academic achievement for all students. However, under the new ESEA of 2000, the process of ensuring this achievement has changed quite substantially (Dole, 2004). Under the new ESEA, all teachers need to be highly qualified to teach reading in order to minimize the number of students who need supplementary instruction or intervention and also to minimize the number of students recommended for special education services. Another significant change requires schools to use scientifically based reading instructional strategies and programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Finally, schools are required to maintain effective and efficient informal assessment techniques to assist teachers in monitoring the progress of each child.

The changes in ESEA were made after a significant body of research pointed out what it takes for all students to achieve. One important finding indicated that the best teachers produced students who progressed the most (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Highly trained teachers made a significant difference in student achievement (Ferguson, 1991; Ferguson & Ladd, 1996). A second feature of the new ESEA legislature is that instructional strategies and programs be scientifically based. Panel studies such as Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) and *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) have identified phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, fluency, vocabulary, and strategies for comprehension as the basic concepts necessary for quality literacy instruction. The final feature for ensuring reading achievement is the use of classroom-based assessment to inform instruction and monitor reading progress. A body of research suggested that frequent monitoring of student progress decreases the number of students who read below grade level (Good, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 2001).

Dole (2004) explained that there will always be students who need supplementary instructional intervention. Additionally, there are a variety of effective ways in which to provide that instruction. It is at this point that reading specialists have an opportunity for a unique role. Reading specialists have a knowledge base to provide classroom teachers with the support they need to learn the new content and research-based instruction to assist teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999).

Therefore, the reading specialist's role continues to evolve. The new role conceptualizes the reading specialist as someone who works directly with the teachers as a coach and a mentor (Quatroche, Bean, & Hamilton, 2001). "In the new role, the reading specialist supports teachers in their daily work—planning, modeling, team-teaching, and providing feedback on completed lessons in collaboration with classroom teachers in a school" (Dole, 2004, p. 462). Additionally, the reading specialist helps teachers in

various ways-- from helping them understand the assessment and instructional cycle and how that cycle can help them as they develop lessons and organize their classes for instruction (Dole, 2004).

Neufeld and Roper (2003) explained that there are not, as of yet, enough studies about how this form of professional development influences teachers' practices and students' learning. However, the authors stated that "in light of our current knowledge about what it takes to change a complex practice like teaching, there are reasons to think that coaching, in combination with other professional development strategies, is a plausible way to increase schools' instructional capacity (2003, p. 1). Nevertheless, there is a good amount of agreement on the purpose of the position to provide high quality professional development for teachers with the ultimate goal of increasing student achievement (International Reading Association, 2004).

Inconsistencies are found in the name for the position (e.g. reading specialist, reading coach, literacy coach etc.) (Rainville, 2007). The title literacy coach is the most prevalent term used to designate the role of the literacy leader within the schools and amongst educators in the state and location for this study. Hence, the term "literacy coach" will be used when specifically writing about this study, but "reading specialist" will be used to refer to the role in general.

Systems Thinking as a Base of Professional Development

As early as 1967, Dietrich (1967) suggested that professional development must be provided for the specialists in the field. Dietrich stressed the importance of communication skills for effective performance of specialists. Ivers (1975) conducted a study of classroom teachers, principals, and reading specialists to identify and compare

their concepts of the ideal role and functions of reading specialists with the actual role and functions. The findings suggested that there was a need for improving communications between classroom teachers and reading specialists in order for the specialist to be more effective. Ivers reported that the specialists had great difficulty assuming the resource role, further suggesting professional development was needed.

Lyons and Pinnell (2001) explained that most efforts of professional development are "...scant, piecemeal, and scattered. There is no cohesive system to assure learning for either teachers or students. Efforts are not rewarded with lasting improvement; resources, while not completely wasted, do not achieve the intent of the investment" (p.44). Lyons and Pinnell suggested that a systems approach to professional development is essential to create an effective professional development plan that will have lasting effects.

A system is an arrangement of things so intimately connected that they form a unified whole. A system is greater than the sum of its parts. The components of a system work together in synergy, producing an effect greater than each could accomplish alone. (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001, p. 44).

Furthermore, Lyons and Pinnell explained,

Professional development, therefore, is an interrelated system whose components form a unified whole. 'Systems thinking' is the only way to improve literacy education and create more satisfying roles for teachers. The interconnected components of the system include: ways to start an exciting, relevant program of professional development; initial training courses; in-class demonstration and assistance; coaching for shifts in teaching; shared experiences that extend teachers' learning; ways to work toward independence in learning and development; ways to monitor and assess the professional training program. (Lyons & Pinnell, 2001, p. 45)

This new role of reading specialists as a literacy coach has emerged as one of the systems to provide professional development (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). However, there is little research about what it is that effective literacy coaches do to develop teacher expertise to improve student literacy.

Previous Research

Although the volume of literature on the topic of literacy coaching is rapidly growing, a preponderance of the research that is found on literacy coaching is found in publications other than peer reviewed journals or unpublished dissertations and very few are specifically focused towards working with teachers in small group reading instruction (Belcastro, 2009; Deweese, 2008; Gibson, 2002; Heineke, 2009; Ippolito, 2009; Poglinco et al., 2003; Nowak, 2003; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Most of the available studies on literacy coaching focus on roles and responsibilities of coaching (e.g. Dole, 2004; Poglinco, et al., 2003)

There is an overarching goal of literacy coaching leading to improved instruction therefore increased student achievement (Neufeld & Roper, 2003; International Reading Association, 2004). Researchers are beginning to report findings related to the effects of coaching, increased student learning, indicating that literacy coaching is making a difference (Biancarosa, Bryk& Dexter, 2008; L'Allier & Elish-Piper, 2007). The small number of empirical research studies, however, is not sufficient to document the impact literacy coaching on student achievement (Dole, 2004). Of the twenty-three dissertations I reviewed on literacy coaching, only six provided pertinent information (Belcastro, 2009; Deweese, 2008; Gibson, 2002; Heinke, 2009; Ippolito, 2009; Nowak, 2003) and three focused specifically on one-on-coaching (Belcastro, 2009; Gibson, 2002; Heinke, 2009) and are further discussed in Chapter 2. Of these three, only one pertained to one-on-one coaching and also focused on the conversation between the literacy coach and the teacher about the teaching of reading in small groups (Gibson, 2002).

Literacy Coaching in Georgia

In 2000, the Georgia Department of Education challenged all schools to get at least 50 percent of their students to proficiency in English language arts and mathematics on a new state test within three years (America's Choice, 2009). Literacy coaching began to emerge in Georgia through several models. Poglinco et al. (2003) explained that the greatest teachers need training to become coaches and the coaching that emerged in Georgia included a range of training experiences. Entitled America's Choice/Georgia's Choice, a literacy coaching model scattered across Georgia in approximately 119 schools (Georgia Department of Education, 2010). America's Choice/Georgia's Choice's coaching training consisted of a five-day institute that empowered coaches to support ongoing collaboration and change through professional learning communities and teams (America's Choice, 2009). During the five days, the program's modules consist of training on skills, process, and culture. The modules are designed to help coaches hone interpersonal skills, create coaching plans, support classroom instruction and meet the needs of all students. Optional on-site technical assistance and follow-up were available.

In 2001, Georgia was awarded approximately \$48 million in Reading Excellence Act (P.L. 105-277) (REA) grant funds to improve reading instruction throughout the state. The Reading Excellence Act amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This initiative was a building block for Georgia's Reading First and established in approximately 50-75 schools. Each school was awarded an average of \$735,000 per year over a two year period. REA was established to improve the reading skills of children and the instructional practices for teachers based on scientific reading research, including findings related to phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency,

and reading comprehension; to expand the number of high-quality family literacy programs; to provide early literacy intervention to children who are experiencing reading difficulties (P.L. 105-277).

I had the opportunity to help write and implement two REA grants for a school district in Georgia. The grants totaled over 1.5 million dollars over a two-year period and consisted of the hiring of a literacy coach and a family literacy coordinator for each school, providing intensive professional development for teachers on research based literacy practices, establishing an adult education center and a child care center for the parents on the schools' campuses. I was hired as a literacy coach for one of the schools. The State of Georgia contracted with Sharon Walpole, Associate Professor at the University of Delaware, as architect of the professional development for the REA coaches across the state. Monthly professional development sessions were held coupled with summer institutes.

While working with the literacy coaches in Georgia, Walpole (Walpole & McKenna, 2004) conducted a research study and subsequently published, *The Literacy Coach's Handbook: A Guide to Research-Based Practice*. Walpole's study and book was focused towards supporting literacy coaches. I was influenced by working with Walpole and began wondering about how teachers felt about working with literacy coaches, how the dialogue between teachers and coaches supported teacher learning, teacher reflection, and student achievement. It was during this period in my life that the seed was planted for this research study.

As state accountability increased, school districts searched for partners other than America's Choice to provide professional development for their teachers. Several school

districts in Georgia (approximately seven) chose Literacy Collaborative®. Literacy Collaborative (LC) was developed at The Ohio State University in 1986 and is currently a service mark of The Ohio State University, Lesley University, and Georgia State University. Literacy Collaborative is a comprehensive school reform project designed to improve literacy instruction (Literacy Collaborative, 2008) (see Appendix E).

The cornerstone of the Literacy Collaborative is long-term professional development. School based literacy coaches are trained in research-based methods and provided with on-going professional development. Training for a literacy coach within Literacy Collaborative is a multi-year process, beginning with initial training of seven weeks and site visits made by university trainers and ongoing training each subsequent year (Literacy Collaborative, 2008). The focus of the LC professional development program is on developing each literacy coach's ability to (a) implement an effective, research-based framework for K-8 literacy instruction; and (b) design and present professional development sessions, in-class assistance, and coaching for the teachers at their own school site. Each literacy coach is required to continue to teach children for a minimum of three-hours per day, work with a school-based leadership team, enroll in nine hours of graduate credit at Lesley University, complete a variety of assignments, collect and maintain data, and attend a literacy conference. The district where this study is located selected Literacy Collaborative as a partner to train their literacy coaches and guide professional development of their teachers.

As REA transitioned to Reading First (2002), literacy coaching began to gain momentum. Another promise of literacy coaching rests in the large amounts of money that are available to those who are willing to accept the terms that are attached, because

some of the money is specifically allocated for literacy coaches. Reading First provided funds to improve schools with large numbers of children achieving at low levels. More than 5,000 schools participated in Reading First nationally and virtually of them used some of their funding to employ literacy coaches, and Georgia was no exception (Beaty, 2009). Reading First provided a multitude of training for the literacy coaches including lectures, book studies, conferences, and sessions held one day per month for literacy coaches (Georgia Department of Education, 2009).

A literacy coach's salary varies in amount; however, \$72,000 is the approximate cost of an average teacher's salary with benefits in Georgia (Personal Communication, Porter, 2008). Because literacy coaches are not typically regular classroom teachers and do not teach children on a regular basis they would not earn any money from the state. Therefore, a literacy coach is an additional expense for a district and is usually paid for out of local or Title I dollars (Personal Communication, Porter, 2008).

Georgia was awarded approximately \$200 million in Reading First funds between 2002-2007 and impacted as many as 47,365 students in 142 of Georgia's 1,224 elementary schools (Georgia Department of Education, 2009). National Reading First focuses on putting proven methods of early reading instruction in classrooms. The primary focus of this unprecedented level of funding is to provide professional development of sufficient intensity and duration to ensure that all teachers have the skills they need to teach reading effectively (Georgia Department of Education, 2009). Approximately 3,000 teachers received professional development through Georgia's Reading First program (Georgia Department of Education, 2009). All funds awarded to the schools were to be used for materials, professional development (including hiring a

literacy coach), and supplies. All personnel involved in the Reading First program were required to complete 30 hours of staff development during the school year which was provided by literacy coaches (Georgia Department of Education, 2009).

A summary of the key findings from Reading First in Georgia of 109 schools during 2008-2009 indicated that achievement trends in phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency are generally positive. Interactive read alouds and small group differentiated instruction were the targets for the comparison (Walpole & McKenna, 2009).

Another indicator of the promise of literacy coaching as a preferred model of professional development is the increased interest in developing high quality instruction. Effectiveness of traditional professional development has been questioned by researchers and educators. According to multiple correlation studies on teacher quality and professional learning, higher levels of student achievement are associated with educators who participate in sustained professional development grounded in content-specific pedagogy (Barth, 1990; Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1997, 1998; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Robb, 2000). Conventional formats, such as workshops, seminars, or conferences are not effective. Moreover, there is a growing awareness that the key to successful professional development lies in an organized system that provides on-going, job-embedded, systemic, focused efforts (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Guskey, 2005; Lyons & Pinnell 2001). When professional development “connects the curriculum materials that teachers use with the district and state academic standards that guide their work and the assessment and accountability measures that evaluate their success,” teachers view the

learning as more relevant and immediately useful (American Educational Research Association (AERA), 2005, p. 2).

Increased publications and availability of technical or “how to” books that discuss the role of the literacy coach have been created within the past several years (Bean, 2004; Burkins, 2007; Casey, 2006; Kise, 2006; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001; McKenna & Walpole, 2008; Moran, 2007; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007; Toll, 2007; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). Additionally, guidelines regarding coaching have been articulated from professional educator organizations such as IRA. Finally, there is pressure for schools and districts to be accountable for the results of all children as measured by standardized tests.

After an extensive study on coaching, Neufeld and Roper (2003) concluded that “there is no widespread evidence that coaching will improve student achievement” (p. iv). However, “coaching does increase the instructional capacity of schools and teachers, a known prerequisite for increasing learning” (Neufeld and Roper, 2003, p. v). Yet, how literacy coaches provide supportive professional development to teachers and how the literacy coaches themselves are supported are key questions, among many that need to be explored (Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse, 2006; Neufeld & Roper 2003; Quatroche, D. J., Bean, R. M., & Hamilton, R. L. 2001).

The dialogue between teachers and coaches provides a platform for reflection and analysis of teaching practices that are seen as effective. More importantly, decisions about instruction can be made in a supportive climate through a collaborative inquiry process between the coach and the teacher. The coach has the opportunity to provide formative support to teachers. “Most importantly, the literacy coach recognizes that as a student of teaching, he or she is learning with and from teachers rather than teaching

teachers....While literacy coaching might offer the promise of the best teaching...”
(Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007, p. xxi).

Research Problem

Literacy coaching is being utilized widely as a form of professional development for teachers. Although there is a growing body of knowledge about literacy coaching, little is known regarding the conversations between literacy coaches and teachers (IRA, 2004). Hence, learning more about literacy coaching and how literacy coaches scaffold professional development will contribute to the field. There is a need for detailed information on how literacy coaching supports teachers as they change their teaching practices and how teachers document the changes in their instruction based on having worked with a literacy coach (Literacy Coach Clearinghouse, National Advisory Board, 2006). This information is needed because of the challenges to the funding of literacy coaches, justification for the use of teacher time with a literacy coach, and to learn more regarding teaching diverse learners, specifically, English language learners (ELLs). This study adds to the small but growing research on the process of literacy coaching by exploring the dialogue between teachers and literacy coaches and how coaches provide professional development that scaffolds (the way structures are created to learn) teachers’ knowledge development specifically in teaching the strategic actions of reading (see Appendix D).

Significance of the Problem

“The connection between professional development and student learning has been difficult to establish” (Heineke, 2009). Guskey (2000) stated that “one constant finding in the research literature is that notable improvements in education almost never take place

in the absence of professional development" (p. 4). Furthermore, Guskey stated that professional development may not bring about gains in student achievement, but it is a critical factor in all school improvement efforts. Additionally, Guskey cited coaching as an example of a variable that has the potential to positively or negatively effect professional development. Therefore, research on the coaching discourse and how it is influences teacher learning, could contribute to a growing knowledge base on effective professional development. Additionally, little of the academic literature examines how coaches scaffold teacher knowledge through observation and feedback. Vygotsky (1978) used the term scaffold to refer to the support provided by others—parents, peers, teachers, or reference sources which enables one to perform increasingly well.

Although there are many resources and studies emerging that are primarily prescriptive describing how to coach, these investigations have been designed and carried out with little regard for the background experiences and knowledge of the teachers who participated in them. For example, Burkins (2007), a practicing literacy coach, shared steps in the dance of change and descriptions of things that have worked in the school in which she works. Moreover, most of the studies have failed to focus on the processes of interaction between the teachers and coaches. Finally, little consideration has been given to the discourse in coaching interactions through which teachers and coaches co-constructed their understandings about the reading process. Such knowledge could assist in developing tools for coaching and further develop methods for to be used by those designing and evaluating programs of study for literacy coaches.

The Purpose Statement

This multiple-case study will examine the coaching interactions of two literacy coaches and four classroom teachers to explore what is happening during one-on-one coaching discourse and how these interactions serve to support teacher learning.

Theoretical Perspectives

Vygotsky, one of the earliest and most famous theorist in Social Constructivism, developed a theory that learning is a social process (Vygotsky, 1978). One important concept underlying Vygotsky's Social Constructivism is the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The zone of proximal development (ZPD) maintains that the child follows the adult's example and gradually develops the ability to do certain tasks without help or assistance. The premise of the idea is the level at which a child can be successful with appropriate support. Vygotsky defined the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development level as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86, author's italics).

One central feature of ZPD related to this study is the role of language and the dialogue between the literacy coaches and teachers and the social construction of knowledge. According to Vygotsky (1978), dialogue is where learning takes place (Vygotsky, 1978).

Another salient feature of Vygotsky's Social Constructivism that is pertinent to this study is scaffolding. Scaffolding is a fundamental concept in social constructivism and means changing the level of support. Over the course of a teaching session, the more

knowledgeable other adjusts the amount of support and guidance the learner needs to accomplish the task at hand. Dialogue is an important tool in the concept of the ZPD. Learning takes place as a result of the scaffolding of others.

There are several implications for adult learning and literacy coaching related to Vygotsky's theory. Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) explained that it is especially helpful in providing guidance to coaches who want to look at teacher participation in activities as a measure of change. Rodgers and Rodgers stated "an essential feature of effective scaffolding is pitching help at just the right level of sensitivity) (p. 74). Therefore, a central feature related to literacy coaching is not only the kind of help that is offered but also, when it is offered.

Research Questions

1. How does the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the coaches?
2. How does the discourse found within coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the teachers?
3. What patterns of discourse are seen within coaching interactions?
 - a. How do the interactions support teacher reflection during the dialog?
 - b. How do the interactions support the teachers' understanding of teaching for processing strategies within small group reading instruction?
4. What if any are the differences related to training and knowledge of the coaches?

Researcher Positionality

In order to address my own potential bias, I must disclose my role as an insider in the world of literacy education and coaching. I realized from the very beginning that my

own beliefs and experiences would shade my perspective as I collected and analyzed data. In an effort to minimize this impact of personal bias, I took great precaution to guard against my own subjectivity. As I collected the data for this study, I explained to the participants the importance of their honesty. Through collaborating with others, one can learn about strengths and needs of a project, and thusly, make improvements.

Early in my career of education, I realized that I had a love for teaching reading and that has served as a catalyst over the years, propelling me to pursue an educational focus on literacy. I received my Masters as a Reading Specialist from Georgia Southwestern State University in 1982. My teaching experience has spanned all grades kindergarten through sixth grade. Over the last twelve years, I have received intense training in literacy ranging from training as a Reading Recovery Teacher at Georgia State University, a Primary (Grades K-2) Literacy Coach at Georgia State University, an Intermediate (Grades 3-6) Literacy Coach and a District Trainer of Primary and Intermediate Literacy Coaches at Lesley University. I am currently Curriculum Director for grades Pre-K through fifth grade of the school district in which the study was conducted. Although I do not serve in a supervisory capacity or have direct authority over the coaches or teachers, I have indirect authority over them through decisions related to the effectiveness of the district's literacy initiatives. It is important to note that trust had been developed between me and the participants in this study through my previous role in the district thus making it possible for the participants to participate without fear of harm for participation. Additionally, to guard against any potential bias, triangulation was provided through multiple data sources, multiple methods of data collection, and utilization of a district level trainer to validate the interpretations and conclusions.

My first hand experiences with one-on-one coaching, as well as a provider of professional development of literacy coaches have influenced my views of literacy coaching. My work has motivated me to explore more deeply the interactions and characteristics that empower coaching discourse as supportive professional development or adversely, characteristics that prevent coaching discourse from meeting this potential.

Definition of Terms

Coaching cycles—The coaching cycles (sessions) investigated in this study consisted of three components a pre-conference, lesson observation, and a post conference. The goal of the literacy coaches within the district in this study, is to complete two cycles with each novice teacher per month and one cycle per month with each experienced teacher (see Appendixes A and B).

Coaching discourse—Discourse carries multiple meanings, however, this study is focused on the actual talk occurring between the teacher and a literacy coach. Therefore, “discourse” herein is generally used to mean the “language in use” (Cameron, 2001, p. 13). Two major components of the literacy coaching process are pre-and post-conferences and supporting classroom instruction. Essential to the work of a literacy coach is fostering non-threatening dialogue (coaching discourse) about teaching practices with the teachers. Through these discussions the coach has the opportunity to provoke reflection and prompt teachers to change teaching practices (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Moreover, through dialogue and classroom support literacy coaches helps teachers make decisions based on their beliefs and provides the support necessary for teachers to make changes in their teaching (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007).

Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) described this kind of collaboration as potent because it is the teacher who voluntarily decides to change her practices, rather than having someone else compel her. Because teaching is complex and hinges on a multitude of factors, the literacy coach can assist a teacher by giving feedback about what the teacher is trying to change, enabling the teacher to make the changes, and monitor progress towards the desired changes.

Guided reading—A homogeneous, small flexible group (no more than six children) of children reading a teacher-selected text. The teacher provides explicit teaching and support for reading increasingly challenging texts. “The heart of the guided reading continuum is a description of the expectations for thinking on the part of readers...” (Pinnell & Fountas, 2007, p. 230) (see Appendix C).

Lesson observations—A literacy coach observes many components of classroom instruction. For the purposes of this study, the *lesson observations* consisted of observing guided reading lessons.

Literacy— Au (1993) defines literacy as “the ability and the willingness to use reading and writing to construct meaning from printed text, in ways which meet the requirements of a particular social context” (p. 20). She notes the importance of teaching literacy “to affirm the cultural identities of students of diverse backgrounds” (p. 29) and to “help students of diverse backgrounds understand their own experiences, as well as the experiences of others, in terms of the dynamics of the larger society” (p. 33). She adds:

An expanded definition of literacy goes beyond skills to include people's willingness to use literacy, the connections between reading and writing, the dynamic process of constructing meaning (including the role of cultural schemata), and the importance of printed text. Social context is a particularly important concept for teachers to consider, both in terms of understanding literacy and of understanding how typical school literacy

lessons might need to be adjusted to be more beneficial for students of diverse backgrounds. Patterns of literacy use and beliefs about literacy may differ from community to community. Literacy practices are very much a part of culture. For the benefit of students of diverse backgrounds, school literacy should be redefined to highlight the study of multicultural literature, instructional practices that involve an active process of meaning making, writing instruction that makes students' background experiences central, culturally responsive instruction, and the development of critical literacy. (pp. 33-34)

Current standards for English language arts include viewing and visually representing (how people gather and share information) as important as the traditional areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (International Reading Association & National Council of Teachers of English, 1996). Higher levels of thinking skills are now required, which allow students to embrace critical literacy (Au & Raphael, 2000). Critical literacy encourages readers to analyze texts through a critical and questioning approach. The changes have important implications for educators as they are held accountable for educating all students, especially students from diverse backgrounds (Moll, 1994) and also for the definition of literacy itself.

Literacy coach—A more expert other who is a model and a teacher; one who gives ideas; suggests next steps; helps break down complex processes; and offers support, encouragement, and guidance for a school's literacy program. This leadership includes creating and supervising professional development processes that supports both the development and implementation of the literacy program at a school. In a review of the literature, numerous terms are used to refer to the work of literacy coaches, including but not limited to: reading specialist, instructional coach, literacy coach, literacy coach, content-focused coach, academic coach, cognitive coach, and peer coach. To further clarify, the IRA (2007) defines a literacy coach as:

A reading specialist who focuses on providing professional development for teachers by providing them with the additional support needed to implement various instructional programs and practices. They provide essential leadership for the school's entire literacy program by helping create and supervise a long-term staff development process that supports both the development and implementation of the literacy program over months and years. These individuals need to have experiences that enable them to provide effective professional development for the teachers in their schools. (Category III, bullet 2)

Literacy Collaborative—A school reform program designed to transform school literacy achievement from kindergarten through grade eight. It is a long term, collaborative professional development program between Lesley University, The Ohio State University, Georgia State University and individual schools that partner with Reading Recovery to ensure successful literacy achievement for every children. School-based literacy coaches are trained in research based methods. The support includes: A research-based instructional model that is language-based, student centered, process-oriented, and outcome based; creating in-school and in-district leadership through training and support of school-based literacy leadership teams, administrators, and literacy coaches; establishing long-term site-based development for every member of the school's faculty; and helping schools monitor the progress of every student through systematized assessment, data collection, and analysis (Literacy Collaborative, 2008).

Pre-conference—A focus for the lesson is established and the teacher and the literacy coach establish how the coach can best support the teacher. A pre-conference typically spans approximately 15-30 minutes.

Post-conference—A follow-up conversation between the teacher and the literacy coach discussing the teaching decisions and student responses that occurred during the lesson. The post conference typically lasts approximately 30-45 minutes, with the coach and

teacher both referring to notes taken during the lesson itself. Next steps and goals are established for subsequent instruction with the students

Reading Recovery—A research based, highly effective short term early intervention of one on one tutoring for first graders children experiencing extreme difficulty with reading and writing. Individual students receive a half-hour lesson each day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher. As soon as students can meet grade level expectations and demonstrate they can continue to work independently in the classroom, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction (Literacy Collaborative, 2008).

Scaffold—A process that enables a learner or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or a goal that would be beyond his/her unassisted efforts (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Strategic processing—While reading, a highly literate individual processes information and constructs meaning all the time: while anticipating reading; during reading; and sometimes long after reading is over (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006). This work is invisible to the reader and teacher because it is done in the child's head. Comprehension involves an individual deliberately selecting cognitive, linguistic, sensory-motor, artistic, and creative strategies for making meaning of the text (Almasi, 2003). The value of teaching students how to process text strategically is grounded in research on theory and advanced learning (Pressley, Goodchild, Fleet, Zajchowski, & Evans, 1989) because strategies enhance learning. However, it is not necessarily a regular part of the school curriculum. There are six reasons for teaching students to become strategic readers: (a) strategies enable readers to organize and evaluate texts; (b) it coincides with students' cognitive development in other areas; (c) strategies are self-selected, therefore students can take control and use

them flexibly; (d) it fosters metacognition development; (e) research shows it can be taught to children, and; (f) teaching students to become strategic readers promotes their growth and development in all areas of the curriculum (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). Teaching students to use strategic actions will enable them to read text with greater comprehension and retention.

Fountas and Pinnell (2006) identified twelve systems of strategic actions readers employ: solving words; monitoring and correcting; searching for and using information; summarizing; maintaining fluency; adjusting; predicting; making connections; inferring; synthesizing; analyzing; and critiquing. Understanding these systems of strategic actions is foundational to planning explicit lessons, helping students during individual conferences, introducing texts in guided reading and guiding discussions after reading. A teacher's goal is to enable readers to assimilate, apply and coordinate systems of strategic actions. Three ways of thinking about a text while reading include thinking *within*, *beyond*, and *about the text*. Thinking *within the text* involves efficiently and effectively understanding what's on the page, the author's literal message. *Thinking beyond the text* requires making inferences and putting text ideas together in different ways to construct the text's meaning. In thinking *about the text*, readers analyze and critique the author's craft.

Thinking about the text--Readers analyze and critique the author's craft.

Thinking beyond the text--Requires the reader to make predictions; to make connections gained in personal experiences, knowledge of the world, and from reading other texts; to make inferences and; to synthesize the text by putting ideas together in different ways to construct new meaning.

Thinking within the text--Readers use a range of strategies to solve words and understand what they mean.

Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters, a reference section, and Appendixes. Chapter 1 serves as the introduction and includes the historical background leading to the research problem, a brief look at previous research, the research purpose, research questions, researcher's positionality, the definition of terms, organization of the study, and a summary of Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes a comprehensive review of the relevant literature on literacy coaching, teacher learning, reflection, and teaching for strategic actions in the reading process. Literature about teaching English to second language learners is also included in Chapter 2. The overall design and trustworthiness of the study and methodology are discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 begins with an explanation of the findings beginning with a description of each of the participants and their beliefs about students and teaching. The second phase of Chapter 4 consists of the findings related to the dialogue between the teachers and the coaches as it relates to reflection. The final section of Chapter 4 summarizes the findings of the coaching dialogue as it related to the teaching of processing strategies during guided reading. Finally, a discussion of the findings is included in Chapter 5 and recommendations for further research.

Summary

Chapter 1 introduces the study. The research problem is presented as emerging from a historical background including its social and political context. A brief glimpse into the body of research on coaching indicates the need and significance of the study. The purpose statement and research questions focus the study and help define the study's

boundaries. My own experiences influencing my personal interest, interpretation, and inquiry are shared. A definition of terms is included to provide clarity. Chapter 1, provides an exploration into the existing literature related to this problem.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Walpole and McKenna (2008) explained that literacy coaching touches on areas that previously have been peripheral to literacy, including leadership and policy, adult learning, professional development, and coaching directed at content areas. Although my study did not explore all of these areas, the review of the literature parallels the complexities they suggested, by including teacher learning as a combination of adult learning and professional development. Additionally, I included a review of the literature on the reading process, which corresponds with Walpole's and McKenna's area of coaching directed at content areas. Finally, the location of this study has a large population of English language learners (ELLs). Therefore, I also reviewed the literature related to teaching children who speak English as a second language.

This literature review is organized in five themes: (a) literacy coaching; (b) teacher learning, (c) reflective (coach-teacher) dialogue, (d) theories of the reading process, and (e) theories of literacy learning for English language learners. Within each theme there is theory or definition and the relevant research related to the theme. Through this review of the literature review I will identify the weaknesses in the literature, the preponderance of "how to", and the dearth of research about coaching.

Literacy Coaching

"Literacy coaching currently is one of the responses to the need to improve reading achievement and reduce the achievement gap that exists in the United States"

(Belcastro, 2009, p. 10). Poglinco, Bach, Hovde, Rosenblum, Saunders, and Supovitz (2003) explained that the rationale behind having a literacy coach is rooted in research on creating an effective professional development environment, one characterized by providing ongoing support to teachers and creating a learning community that include structures for focusing on instruction and curriculum. Puig and Foelich (2007) defined literacy coaches as co-learners who assist in shifting classroom teachers to better understand critical pedagogy and the need for change based on evidence. Puig and Foelich also explained that literacy coaches support colleagues by collaboratively forming questions as co-learners. They explained that changing teacher's practices are grounded in the coaches' pedagogical knowledge of literacy processing and founded on collegial trust.

The International Reading Association (IRA) (2004) identified five requirements of reading/literacy coaches: (a) documentation of successful teaching including positive outcomes for student achievement; (b) in-depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisition, assessment, and instruction; (c) experience working with teachers to improve their practices; (d) excellent presenter, skilled in leading teacher groups and facilitating reflection and change for colleagues; and finally, (e) experience or preparation that enables the coach to master the complexities of observing and modeling in classrooms and providing feedback to teachers. Technical skills for these coaching tasks must be developed. Moreover, coaches must be sensitive to the need to develop open, trusting relationships with the teachers they are coaching.

Researchers were beginning to learn how coaching supported teachers as early as the 1980's. Joyce and Showers' (1980) proposed peer coaching as an on site dimension

of professional development. In the 1970's evaluations of staff development that focused on teaching strategies and curriculum revealed that as few as 10 percent of the participants implemented what they had learned. Joyce and Showers (1980) discovered that even if the participants volunteered for the training, that the rate of transfer was low. In a series of studies, beginning in 1980, Joyce and Showers tested hypotheses related to the proposition that weekly seminars would enable teachers to practice and implement the content they were learning. The seminars, or coaching sessions, focused on classroom implementation and analysis of teaching, with an emphasis on students' responses. The results were consistent. Implementation rose dramatically, whether experts or participants conducted the sessions. Thusly, they recommended that teachers who were studying teaching and curriculum form small peer coaching groups that would share the learning process. In this way, they posited that staff development might directly affect student learning.

Their findings have influenced the field of literacy coaching (International Reading Association, 2004). Joyce and Showers (2002) asserted that only five to ten percent of teachers implemented strategies learned in staff development sessions, while they incorporated the strategies at a 90 % level if provided coaching. In summing of Joyce and Showers conclusions, in order for teachers to transfer new knowledge or skills in their classroom practice they need professional development designed with multiple components: theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and coaching. However, in later research, Joyce and Showers (2002) indicated that utilization of coaching involves collaboration, They removed "feedback" from their coaching process altogether. They have found that when teachers try to give one another feedback, collaborative activity

tends to disintegrate. Peer coaches told them that they found themselves slipping into supervisory or evaluative comments, despite their intentions to avoid them. Teachers began sharing with them that they began expecting the cycle of first the good news, then the bad news. Omitting feedback in the coaching process has not depressed implementation or student growth (Joyce and Showers, 1995). The authors suggested that learning to provide technical feedback requires extensive training and time. Now, as they work with teachers, the one teaching is called the “coach”, while the one observing is the “coached”. There is no discussion of the observation in the technical feedback sense. The one observing does so to learn from their colleague. Joyce and Showers (2002) continue to encourage peer teams to observe one another’s teaching, although they structure the experiences so that they are learning from each other. This theory has influenced the widespread adoption of coaching as an integral component in the new paradigm of job-embedded, ongoing professional development.

The IRA (2004) identified five requirements of reading/literacy coaches: (a) documentation of successful teaching including positive outcomes for student achievement; (b) in-depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisition, assessment, and instruction; (c) experience working with teachers to improve their practices; (d) excellent presenter, skilled in leading teacher groups and facilitating reflection and change for colleagues; and finally, (e) experience or preparation that enables one to master the complexities of observing and modeling in classrooms and providing feedback to teachers. Technical skills for these coaching tasks must be developed. Moreover, coaches must be sensitive to the need to develop open, trusting relationships with the teachers

they are coaching. The IRA expects that literacy coach will provide feedback to teachers while Joyce and Showers (1996) state,

Many educators believe that the essence of the coaching transaction in the offering of advice to teachers following observations. It is not. Teachers learn from each other in the process of planning instruction, developing the materials to support it, watching each other work with students, and thinking together about the effect of their behavior on student learning. The collaborative work of peer coaching is much broader than observations and conferences. (p. 94)

Gibson (2006) investigated the practices of an expert reading coach providing lesson feedback to one experienced kindergarten teacher. Gibson's study was influential in the research design for this study. Data sources for Gibson's study consisted of three cycles of observation of coaching sessions and guided reading instruction, along with interviews of one coach and one teacher. Gibson's (2006) study was as a follow-up to a larger study (Gibson, 2002) of four coach/teacher dyads. Gibson reported that the sample size allowed for detailed analysis of details of the interaction between the coach and the classroom teachers. Each cycle of observation included (a) observation and video recording of a classroom guided reading lesson, (b) observation and audio recording of a coaching session, (c) observation and recording of a second guided reading lesson, and (d) audio taping of an interview with the coach. Each interview was standardized open-ended formation including a short segment of audiotape of the coaching session was played for the coach, who was then asked to comment on her thinking and decision-making. A qualitative verbal analysis of each of the coaching transcripts was conducted to determine the nature of the conversations between a literacy coach and a teacher following a guided reading lesson.

Gibson's (2006) findings addressed three themes: (a) the way the coach has conceptualized her coaching practice; (b) the nature of the coaching conversation; (c) the relationship between coaching interactions and guided reading instruction. Gibson posited that these findings are significant to developing an understanding of the nature of the most intensive form of coaching. This study identified the development of the coach's understandings of teaching and coaching, an interaction pattern for coaching sessions that exemplified co-construction and pedagogical reasoning, and the difficulties associated with the teacher's shifts in teaching behavior in relationship to coaching. Furthermore, Gibson's suggested if classroom-based literacy coaching is to be relied on as a necessary component of instructional reform, then those who hire and support coaches must be knowledgeable regarding the demands of the role. The study concluded that the technical aspects of lesson observation and feedback require many areas of expertise, developed over time including training and reflection.

Heineke (2009) examined the coaching interactions of reading coaches in context to explore what is happening during one-on-one discourse and how these interactions serve to support teacher learning through a multiple case study. Participants included four dyads, each made up of one elementary school-based reading coach and a teacher. The four coaches taped themselves engaged in coaching discourse with one teacher, creating the four dyads. Through semi-structured interviews, Heineke questioned the participants' about the coaching discourse that had been previously recorded. Through an interpretive and structural analysis, Heineke's findings indicated that the richest discourse within the case studies were some of the shorter episodes. Additionally, she concluded that coaches involved in the episodes that supported teacher learning were the coaches with

specialized reading credentials. She noted a dramatic contrast between credentialed and non-credentialed coaches that extended across various aspects of their work.

Belcastro (2009) examined the nature of talk a literacy coach used during coaching conversations to guide collaborative inquiry to support teachers' needs. The descriptive case study examined the coaching process, the talk used in the coaches' conversations with three kindergarten teachers, by analyzing the content of conversations, levels of support provided by the coach to scaffold teacher understanding about instructional practices, and the types of questions posed by the coach to prompt teacher thinking about instructional practices. Data were collected from several sources over a 10-week period to capture a snapshot of how the coach engaged three different teachers in conversation to prompt teachers' thinking about pedagogical practices. Audiotaped coaching conversations between the teachers and the coaches were analyzed. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the coach and the teachers following each coaching conferences. Analysis showed that content and scaffolding support differed in the coaching conversations between the literacy coach and teachers.

Mraz, Algozzine, and Watson (2008) conducted a study to explore the perceptions of principals, teachers, and school based literacy specialists on how literacy coaching can be effectively used and to consider implications of these perceptions and expectations in terms of the potential for coaching to contribute to the development and implementation of effective literacy programs. Through a single research question they gathered multiple perspectives with several data sources. Six metropolitan elementary schools within one school district were sites for the research. The schools administrators designated the schools as high-risk and comparable to schools across the nation involved in efforts to

support, reform, and improve literacy instruction of low-performing students. Six principals, 85 classroom teachers, and eight professionals providing literacy coaching from the six schools participated in the study. The grade levels ranged from kindergarten through fifth grade. Participants experience ranged from one to more than 15 years.

The participants completed a survey that listed specific behaviors of a literacy coach's role. Using a Likert-type scale of one to five, the participants indicated the extent to which they believed that each behavior should be the part of a literacy coach's role. The validity of the survey was grounded in the importance placed on the previous research on these roles in schools with exemplary programs. In an effort to obtain an in-depth perspective of the views of each of the groups represented, the researchers (Mraz, Algozzine, and Watson, 2008) also used naturalistic inquiry for a portion of this study. By applying naturalistic research methods to the study, they completed semi-structured interviews with the six principals, the lead literacy coach from each of six schools, and one classroom teacher from each school. The teacher was randomly selected from a list of respondents who indicated that they were willing to be interviewed. The interviews sought to ascertain the perspectives on how literacy coaches could best contribute to the success of their school's literacy program and the type of support and resources needed to optimize the role of the literacy coach. Additionally, literacy coaches' schedules were requested.

According to Mraz, Algozzine, and Watson (2008), analysis of the mixed-method inquiry of the perceptions of the role of the professionals providing literacy coaching in elementary schools indicated no differences from the respondents for the total survey scores. All three participant groups expressed the view that the coordinator of the reading

program was currently and should be in the future a key part of the literacy coach's role, although each participant group indicated a slight variance into the coach's level of involvement in the reading program. All participant groups spoke of the importance of the coach's role in serving as a resource to classroom teachers. All three groups indicated that literacy coaches currently engaged in activities such as modeling lessons for teachers, observing teachers at work in their classrooms, mentoring, gathering materials for classroom use, and developing professional learning for teachers. The principals indicated that they could no longer accomplish their jobs without the literacy coaches due to the high accountability being placed on the schools. The results of this study indicated that literacy coaches are bridging the gaps between administration and classrooms.

Studies such as Kohler and Ezell (1999) have typically investigated reciprocal coaching (two teachers observing and providing feedback to each other) rather than expert coaching (lesson observation and feedback from a more knowledgeable other). Three general education kindergarten teachers and their classes participated in Kohler and Ezell's study (1999). All three teachers were asked to participate by the elementary education director and had more than 20 years of teaching experiences, including at least 10 years in teaching kindergarten. The purpose of the investigation was to examine the effectiveness of reciprocal peer coaching for promoting changes in kindergarten teachers' conduct of student pair activities. Two teachers participated in all assessments and experimental conditions, and a third teacher participated in peer coaching activities. This study examined the effects of peer coaching on teachers' methods of monitoring their peer assisted activities. Two teachers implemented their activities alone during baseline and later participated in reciprocal peer coaching. The results indicated that the teachers

increased their use of suggestions, prompts, questions, and related talk to facilitate the students' socialization. Additionally, a second phase of coaching enabled the teachers to make adaptations in the materials or interaction processes with the student pairs. Their results indicated more procedural changes occurred when a teacher worked with a peer coach than independently. Furthermore, their study revealed that areas not discussed with a coach showed little or no refinement.

Teacher Learning

As one strategy for increasing student achievement policymakers have focused on improving the quality of teachers (Borko, 2004; Corcoran 1995b; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Garet). "Some policy initiatives focus on improving the quality of teachers entering the profession through state certification tests, more stringent degree requirements, and recruitment efforts" (Parise & Spillane, 2010, p. 323). According to Parise and Spillane (2010) educational researchers have focused on two areas: teachers' formal learning opportunities, including structured professional development and graduate education; and teacher's on-the-job learning by exploring aspects of schools' organizational conditions that may affect teacher learning and change.

"Within schools teacher learning is often referred to as workplace learning" (Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2010). Jurasaitė-Harbison and Rex (2010) distinguished formal and informal professional learning. The authors explained that formal professional development occurs through systems of workshops, presentations, or projects. "Conversely, informal learning occurs in interactions among teachers and their reflections upon their practice, sometimes planned and often happenstance" (Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2010, p. 267). According to Jurasaitė-Harbison and Rex (2010) the key

to understanding teacher learning as a socio-cultural phenomenon is that learning is constructed through and is visible in discourse or in communication between people.

Jurasaite-Harbison and Rex (2010) compared informal learning from the teachers' perspective through ethnographic case studies of school's cultures. The study illustrated the historical, political, and administrative contexts of professional learning. The data included observations at three elementary schools in the United States and two elementary departments within a Russian and a Lithuanian secondary school over a two-year period. The study hypothesized the relationship between the nature of informal learning and what teachers learn in different cultures. Specifically, the authors examined "how teachers view school cultures as contexts that provide opportunities for their informal learning and how they engage in professional growth within these contexts" (Jarasiate-Harbison & Rex, p. 269). The observations included field notes, video and photographs, interviewing teachers and administrators, and artifacts such as the school's mission. Their findings revealed that importance of acknowledging informal learning as a method of professional development. Additionally they suggest that further research is necessary on how to structure this in a school setting.

Parise and Spillane (2010) collected data from an evaluation of a leadership professional development program in 30 elementary schools striving to link both formal and on-the-job learning opportunities and teacher change. The average school had approximately 600 students. Using a mixed-method evaluation, school staff were asked to complete an 18-page questionnaire about school staff members' work in an out of the classroom and their involvement in school improvement efforts. The focus was on teachers' learning opportunities, including formal professional development and on-the-

job learning that occurs through interactions with colleagues. Results suggested that formal professional development and on-the-job opportunities to learn are both significantly associated with changes in teachers' instructional practice in literacy and in numeracy.

“Teacher professionalization—the movement to upgrade the status, training, and working conditions of teachers has received a great deal of interest in recent years,” (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). Professional organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards have set standards for teachers that include requirements for professional development.

Wilson and Berne (1999) suggested that we know very little about what teachers learn and how they learn best. In a national, random sample survey administered to 2,530 National Education Association's members, Smylie (1989) asked teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of fourteen sources of learning to teach. The overall response rate was 71%. Teachers ranked direct classroom experience as their most important site for learning; the findings suggested important relationships between new knowledge and the contexts of teachers' classrooms and between learning and practice. Teachers learn the most in their own classrooms, according to Smylie (1989). In order for this to occur, restructuring schools as a context *for* teacher learning will be necessary (Imants, 2002). “Organizing schools to create more supportive conditions for teachers to teach more effectively can clearly enhance student learning” (Imants, 2002, p. 716). Additionally, Imants' identified feedback and collaboration as learning opportunities for teachers.

Literacy coaching is one way to create quality professional development in schools (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Literacy coaches embed professional development during the school day by working with teachers in their own classrooms, working along side the teacher. Coaches also lead grade level meetings and tailor professional development to the teachers' needs. Additionally, some literacy coaching models provide a university partnership to further support the professional development of teachers and coaches (Literacy Collaborative, 2008). The university provides professional development for the literacy coach and a liaison from the university makes on-site visits to the schools (Literacy Collaborative, 2008).

After two years of study and discussion, The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, led by Darling-Hammond (2006), Executive Director of the 26-member bipartisan blue-ribbon panel concluded that reforming elementary and secondary education depends foremost on restructuring the teaching profession itself. The panel recommended creating schools that are organized for student and teacher success—i.e. learning organizations for both students and teachers. These learning organizations would embrace respect for learning, they would be places where teaching is honored, and everyone is teaching for understanding. Additionally, the panel's report revealed that the teaching profession has suffered from decades of inadequate funding and virtual neglect when compared to other professions and other countries. For example, the panel reported that financial support of teacher education programs is poor or uneven and teacher recruitment and teacher salaries lag other professionals producing shortages of qualified teachers in fields such as mathematics and science.

The research findings of this panel made it clear that the problem facing educators today is not that America's schools are not as good as they once were, but rather it is that schools must help larger numbers of students reach levels of skill and competence that were once thought to be within reach of only a few. The challenge, the panel reported, is that our complex, knowledge-based, and multicultural society creates new expectations for teaching and these expectations require that teachers' content knowledge be deeper than simply dispensing information.

Ball and Cohen (1999) answered the question: What would teachers need to know in order to teach in the ways researchers and educators imagine they should? First, teachers would need to know the content of the subject they teach in order to know the connections and greater meanings of the content, not simply the basic information. In order to teach children conceptual understandings, the teachers must themselves have great depth of knowledge and make connections across fields and into everyday life. Second, teachers need to know about the children they teach, their strengths and weaknesses. Third, teachers need to know children in a broad way, not simply to know what an individual child likes or can do, but rather, to know and understand children's cultural and gender differences, and know how to meet the needs of all learners. It is important for teachers of English language learners to know the cultural differences represented in classrooms. For example, in some Latino cultures, children do not make eye contact with the teacher out of a sign of respect, while in other cultures, making eye contact is a clear indicator of respect. For teachers to develop and expand their ideas about how children learn, they would need to have advanced pedagogical knowledge. Additionally, teachers would need a repertoire of ways to engage learners effectively and

would need to know how to make shifts in their teaching in response to their students' learning.

Ball and Cohen (1999) explained that teachers should take the stance of inquiry, and must actively learn as they teach. They explained that a stance of inquiry means that teachers “need to learn how to investigate what students are doing and thinking, and how instruction has been understood, as classes unfold” (p. 11). They suggested focusing opportunities for learning on teachers' practice by analysis of student work samples, curriculum materials, and videotaped lessons.

Darling-Hammond and Ball (1999) explained that teacher education significantly influences teacher effectiveness. They offered the following premises pertaining to improving teacher learning opportunities: teachers' prior experiences and beliefs affect what they learn; learning to teach new standards is difficult and requires time; and opportunities for analysis and reflection are central to learning to teach. Furthermore, they suggested teacher learning should include integrating theory and practice, developing professional discourse around problems of practice, content-based professional development, and learning from practice. Standards-based reform, redesign of teacher education and induction, and restructured professional development are offered as promising strategies for improving teaching and teacher learning. Comparatively, these premises for improved teacher learning were well suited to the literacy coaching model examined in this study and described in Chapter 3.

The concept of embedding professional development into a teachers' workday was explored by Wood and McQuarrie (1999). They defined job-embedded learning as a result of teachers sharing what they have learned from their teaching experiences, such as

reflecting to uncover new understanding, and listening to colleagues share best practices they have discovered while trying out new programs, planning, and project implementation. Study groups, action research, and reflective logs are among the formal structures that have been created to promote job-embedded learning (Wood & McQuarrie, 1999).

Learning First Alliance (2000), an organization of seventeen leading United States education associations, also recommended job-embedded professional development that provides teachers the time to reflect collaboratively with others working on similar goals. Members of the Alliance are: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Association of School Personnel Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American School Counselor Association, Association of School Business Officials International, Council of Chief of State School Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National Middle School Association, National PTA, National Staff Development Council, National School Boards Association, National School Public Relations Association, and Phi Delta Kappa International. Moreover, the Alliance suggested professional development should include an average of 80 to 100 hours per year divided among professional book study, collaboration, observation of master teachers, and research.

Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001) suggested several ways for improving professional development, including sustained and intensive professional

development focusing on an academic subject, giving teachers the opportunity to practice their learning within their own classrooms. Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, and Birman (2002) examined the effects of professional development on teachers' instruction by using purposefully selecting 207 teachers in 30 schools in 10 districts in five states. They designed "a series of studies that allowed them to examine the relationships between alternative features of professional development and change in teaching practice in a cross-sectional, national probability sample of teachers and a smaller, longitudinal sample of teachers" (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002, p. 3). In their study they hypothesized that six key structural features improved teaching practice. These structural features included: reform work type, such as a study group, mentor, committee, research project, course, or conference; duration of the activity, the number of contact hours; and the degree to which there is an emphasis on the collective participation of groups, such as grade level groups, participants from the same school or department. They considered the remaining three factors as characteristics of the activity such as the extent of active learning, the coherence of the activity, and the degree to which the activity had content focus. Through surveys administered over three points in time (the fall of 1997, the spring of 1998, and the spring of 1999) they collected two-level data, a set of data as strategy and also teacher-activity levels. The analyses were conducted on the basis of data from three waves of Longitudinal Teacher Survey. They sought to explain teaching practice in year three based on the year two's professional development experiences, while controlling for teachers' classroom experiences in year one. They estimated the effects of professional development by using a hierarchical linear model. Separate analyses for each of the three areas studied (use of technology, higher order instruction,

and alternative assessments) were conducted. They concluded that active learning, coherence, and content focused opportunities positively increased the effect of professional development on teachers' instruction. These authors suggested professional development could be a cornerstone of systemic school reform.

Borko, Davinroy, Bliem, and Cumbo (2000) examined the process of change experienced by two veteran teachers during their participation in the University of Colorado (CU) Assessment Project. The project's purpose was to help teachers design and implement classroom-based performance assessments that were compatible to their instructional goals in mathematics and literacy. The two case studies provided an in-depth examination of teacher change within the context of reform-based staff development. The study addressed research questions about ways in which the teachers changed or did not change their teaching beliefs, the factors that influenced the process of change for each teacher, and how these factors influenced the change process. The CU Assessment Project involved a partnership between researchers from the University of Colorado at Boulder's School of Education and 14 third-grade teachers. They worked with teams of third-grade teachers from three schools in a district outside of Denver that serves a lower- and middle-class population. The research site was selected based on the ethnically diverse student population, a history of standardized accountability testing, and a willingness to seek a two-year waiver from standardized testing in the three participating schools. Because of the time involved, the researchers sought volunteers to participate. From the three schools that decided to participate, two decided to extend the study to a third year. From those schools, the authors invited two teachers to participate as case studies.

During the first year of the project, the CU team met with teachers, after school, in workshops, one day a week (Borko, Davinroy, Bliem, and Cumbo,2000). Written notes, audio tapes, and artifacts (samples of materials and student work) were collected during the weekly workshops. The researchers interviewed the teachers three times during the year. The semi structured questions focused on teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and reported practices related to reading and mathematics instruction and assessment. The second year, the researchers observed the teachers one time per month, during their math or literacy instruction.

Collaborative working relationships, workshop sessions, resources provided by the CU team, personal factors such as beliefs about teaching and learning, and the timing of the project in the participants lives, contributed to the teachers' attempts to change their practices. The authors, Borko, Davinroy, Bliem, and Cumbo (2000), suggested that professional development for teachers must vary and be flexible in order to accommodate the characteristics of specific people and situations. They offered professional development recommendations based on this case study that supported teacher change. The first was personal support provided in the form of working collaboratively with colleagues at one's school site. The researchers explained that site-based teams maximize the probability that teachers will have common goals, share materials, and have the time to support each other on an on-going basis, efforts that are often fostered through common planning periods. Workshop experiences also supported teachers by providing opportunities for discussion and thoughtful reflection including critical conversations about their teaching. The authors found resources to be central to reform efforts and that teachers must have convenient access to resources in order to embrace the reform, but the

resources alone were not enough. Teachers needed to be able to use the resources as a part of their own professional learning before they could use the materials with their students. The researchers found time to be a key element and that teachers may require several years of experimentation before they truly integrate new ideas into their teaching practice. Furthermore, teachers needed time to interact with other teachers who were trying to use the same teaching strategies. The authors, Borko, Davinroy, Bliem, and Cumbo (2000), also suggested that teacher change begins with changing teacher beliefs and that eventually, practices and beliefs must become the objects of reflection and scrutiny. They concluded by stating there was no single best way to facilitate teacher change. Successful professional development programs must provide multiple paths and multiple resources that accommodate the needs of all learners.

Sharon Feiman-Nemser (2001) proposed a framework for thinking about a curriculum for teacher learning over time including approaches to teacher preparation, induction, and professional development balanced with the challenges of learning to teach in reform-minded ways. She offered examples of promising programs and practices at each of these stages. Feiman-Nemser's single premise rested on far-reaching consequences—if the public wants schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, educators have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers. She posited that conventional programs of teacher education and professional development are not designed to promote complex learning by teachers or students. Her analysis took into account the learning needs of teachers at different stages in their career and analyzed the major obstacles preventing the development of reform-minded teachers. The author analyzed the current discourse on professional development and found three common

themes: (a) professional development takes place through serious, ongoing conversation; (b) it focused on the particulars of teaching, learning, subject matter, and students; and (c) engagement in professional discourse with like-minded colleagues grounded in the content and tasks of teaching and learning allowed teachers to deepen knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, refine their instructional repertoire, hone their inquiry skills, and become critical colleagues. The description of the discourse is a clear guide that describes the purpose of literacy coaching.

Wold (2003) conducted a two-year study that examined how teachers learned to act on and move toward more advanced literacy teaching by examining the efforts of three teachers to implement guided reading and interactive writing. The teachers were selected by on-site literacy coaches as those who shifted most in their thinking and deepened literacy practices during an on-going literacy project. Data collection included videotaping 30-to 60-minute guided reading and/or interactive writing lessons for K-2 teachers in October, November, January, February, and March. In addition to the videotaped lessons, other data sources included field notes, audiotaped transcripts of teacher interviews, interim and exit interviews, verbatim transcripts of guided reading and interactive writing lessons, and data displays/matrices that verified and triangulated the data. The analysis included six points over a two-year period (October, January, and March). Raters scored the videotaped sessions using interactive writing and guided reading scales (Lyons & Pinnell, 2000).

The results of Wold's (2003) study were not generalizable but revealed "that 'learning to act on reflection' is more effective when teachers have a clear sense of 'which knowledges to teach when' " (p. 52). Wold reported that changes in teaching

practices happen when teachers become aware of what is needed to make themselves smarter about effective teaching. “Such behavior is more strategic when teachers learn to integrate decision-making procedures with knowledge-based actions to advance learners’ literacy independence” (p. 52). Small gains in improved literacy teaching may be important gains on the journey for teachers in becoming more effective. For example, teachers’ awareness of their own strengths and needs helped them monitor the effects of their teaching. Wold (2003) found that coaching was needed for the teachers to support their increasingly strategic decision-making, indicating long-term professional development seemed necessary for developing deliberate literacy instruction. Furthermore, Wold stated that “learning to act on reflections is complex” (p. 52).

In Wold’s (2003) study, “excellence in effective teaching required skillful integration of procedural routines alongside a trajectory of teaching toward students’ independence” (p. 66). Wold (2003) posited that teachers need an integration of knowing “what knowledges to teach when, how, and why” (p. 66). Wold’s (2003) study of Literacy Collaborative consisted of literacy coaching that was intended to support teacher development. Although the coaching practices were designed to offer strategic support for teachers’ actions, no formal structure of the coaching process was provided. Little information was provided in the study about coaching. Wold explained a structure for coaching would offer a method to judge effectiveness and offer a way to explain any correlations between the process and teacher outcomes. Wold suggested further research is needed “to determine when coaching is most productive and why” (p. 67).

Joshi et al. (2009) built on the concept that teachers need to know content at deep levels and suggested that elementary teachers may be inadequately prepared to teach

reading based on reports from the National Reading Panel (2000) and the U.S Department of Education (2001). Joshi et al. (2009) explained that although in-service teachers may be knowledgeable about children's literature, they may not have enough understanding to address the building process for the teaching of language and reading. "The authors hypothesized that one of the reasons for this situation is that many instructors responsible for training future elementary teachers are not familiar with the concepts of the linguistic features of English language" (Joshi et. al., p. 392). According to these authors, teachers may not be knowledgeable in the basic concepts of the English language. "If pre-service and in-service educators do not have the knowledge of effective literacy instruction, it is likely that they did not acquire the concepts in their reading education courses or from the prescribed textbooks" (Joshi et al, 2009, p. 394). Effective literacy instruction is defined by the National Reading Panel (2000) consists of phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, fluency, vocabulary, and strategies for comprehension. Joshi et al. (2009) suggested providing ongoing professional development opportunities for preservice reading instructors as a means to improving teacher education. One way to provide this training is through ongoing professional development and collaborative opportunities with reading specialists. This lack of understanding about how children grow and develop as readers and writers is the area of weakness literacy coaches are challenged with bridging for the teachers in whom they work.

To summarize, teacher learning may be the cornerstone to school reform and takes shape in many ways, from teacher education with pre-service teachers to in-service education with experienced teachers. The literature indicates that teacher learning should integrate theory and practice. Also, teachers need to be provided with opportunities for

professional discourse, problem-solving, and active learning. Professional development must be multifaceted and flexible. When job embedded, teachers are afforded opportunities to discuss collaboratively and are more likely to create a culture of dissonance that is accepted.

Reflection

Schön (1987) defines two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action occurs when the person reflects on the behavior as it happens, in order to inform subsequent actions. Reflection-on-action occurs after the event, allowing the person to review, describe, analyze, and evaluate the behavior in order to gain insights for future actions.

Research on coaching is multidisciplinary (within leadership, human resources, management, psychology, mental health, and education). Reflection is an area that offers another layer of complexity to the work of literacy coaches. A preponderance of the literature written about reflection as related to literacy coaching is from technical or how-to sources. While these are not peer-reviewed journals, they do provide insights into what is expected of literacy coaching.

Literacy coaches encourage and support teachers to improve their instruction through reflection. In the past, professional development was offered to teachers as a way to learn a skill. However, according to empirical studies by Lyons and Pinnell (2001) the goal of professional development is not to perfect an approach to instruction, but rather to promote ongoing learning. Literacy coaches provide opportunities for on-going learning by working with teachers as they design instruction, conferencing with them before they teach lessons, observing lessons being taught, and conferencing with teachers after

observations of lessons. Lyons and Pinnell (2001) suggested that teaching requires constant investigation of the materials, plans, and interactions that illicit the best responses from children by the teacher. Literacy coaching is one way to afford teachers the support to make this happen. According to Lyons and Pinnell (2001), teachers learn from testing their own theories as they teach groups of children. For these teachers, their practice is always evolving. The repetitive cycle looks something like this: they teach, they observe the children's reactions, they document evidence of learning, they learn from their teaching, and the cycle begins again. Lyons and Pinnell (2001) stated that "Coaching provides the support teachers need to engage in classroom inquiry" (p. 154).

The dialogue within a coaching interaction provides a platform for reflection and analysis of teaching practices (Belcastro, 2009). "Hence, professional development that goes deeper than skill training and strives to develop thoughtful, responsive decision makers, includes time for reflection and collaboration" (Heineke, 2009).

By describing what it is *not* before describing what it *is* Dewey (1933) explained that reflection is not just a flow of ideas or a simple belief (such as I think it is hot). Reflection is, according to Dewey (1933) a "chain", a "constant movement to a common end". It "impels inquiry" (pp. 1-8)

When Does Reflection Happen?

Reflection is a cognitive process of inquiry (Loughan, 2002). As literacy coaches work with teachers, the instructional routines become easier and the focus shifts from teaching procedures to discussing student learning. Educators may think that a literacy coaches' job is simply to help a teacher learn a new strategy or instructional routine and after the instructional routines are embraced, the work for coaches is over. Instead, just

the opposite is true. This is when coaching can become the most valuable (Lyons and Pinnell, 2001). Once the instructional routines are established, the teacher is freed from thinking on the procedural level or technical level and can shift focus to a higher level, to begin to reflect in and on her actions. Working alongside teachers, reflecting, analyzing, and interpreting student work, building and testing theories of literacy learning is the deeper level of coaching. Schön (1983) stated that reflection-in-action may stretch over minutes, hours, days, weeks, or months and when someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice content.

Experimenting is an integral part of the reflection process (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1987). Schön (1987) suggested that practitioners observe a situation and begin to think about solutions or answers that they later test. It is at this point, that the artistry of practice, design, that connects to the science of research (Schön, 1987). As teachers hypothesize, design, and experiment they base decisions on unconscious beliefs and understandings.

Johnston (1994) followed three elementary classroom teachers through a two-year master's degree program and then continued to follow them two more years. During the program, the researcher collected various kinds of data (interviews, classroom observations, videotaped segments of teaching followed by interviews, journals, and course work). The data was analyzed using analytic induction and constant comparisons across categories. Once the categories were identified, the interview data were coded to the categories. The data were analyzed and trends and changes were interpreted. At the end of the master's program, Johnston asked each teacher to write a metaphor that described her experience in the program. He paid attention to the ways that the

participant had changed or not changed over the two years. Using the metaphors to guide the interpretations, the researcher found that all three teachers became more reflective.

Johnston (1994) focused primarily on the differences in the way the changes occurred rather than on the fact that reflective thinking occurred or which factors influenced the reflective thinking. Reflective thinking was defined as being on a continuum from a focus on the micro aspects of teaching, learning, and subject matter to one on the macro interests in sociopolitical and moral principals of teaching. The working definition for this study fell towards the latter end of the continuum. “Teachers were encouraged to examine their beliefs and teaching practices in ways that considered more than the technical aspects of teaching. The aim was to think critically about oneself, one’s assumptions, and one’s teaching choices and actions” (Johnston, 1994, p. 12). At the end of the two-year master’s program, Johnston stated that “all three teachers spoke of increased professional confidence because they were clearer about their beliefs and had reasoned justifications to support them” (Johnston, 1994, p. 23). The results pointed to the complexity of becoming more reflective and to the variations that occur within individuals. *How* the reflection occurred was significantly different for each teacher along with how the reflective thinking changed her beliefs in teaching practices. All three teachers’ complex thinking increased, but each one valued it differently. According to Johnston, “teachers bring their own background and beliefs, they will be working in contexts that are more or less supportive to continued reflection, and they will interpret programmatic emphases in different ways” (Johnston, 1994, p. 24).

How Does Reflection Happen?

Schön (1983) referred to collaborative inquiry as the process of reflection-in-action and knowing-in-action. Coaching could be considered collaborative inquiry. Schön explained that people go about everyday actions and show ourselves knowledgeable although we may not be able to describe what it is that we know. Schön (1983) stated that we try to put our knowledge into words and often can not; hence, our knowing is exhibited *in* our action. He also explained people often think about what they are doing, while they are doing it, turning their thoughts back on action and on the knowing. Schön compared reflecting-in-action to phrases like thinking on your feet and learning by doing, suggesting not only that we think about doing something, but that we can think about doing something while we are doing it. Therefore, if literacy coaches are helping teachers learn new strategies, then not only is it important for coaches to reflect on their own practice, but their ability to help teachers become self-reflective is also critical.

Schön (1983) argued that professional education should center on enhancing the professionals' ability to reflect-in-action in order to develop the ability to continuously learn and problem solve. Schön described the reflection process through a visual image of a ladder, the ladder of reflection. He described the ladder as a way to analyze the dialogue between a student and a coach. Designing is a process of reflection-in-action and is the base of the ladder. One rung up the ladder is description. Description takes the form of advice or criticism and is sometimes referred to as knowing-in-action. The next rung up the ladder, reflection on description, takes the form of questions. The coach or student may reflect on the meaning the other has constructed. At the fourth level of the ladder, the conversation might be the parties reflecting on the dialogue itself. For example,

questions might be asked such as, how has this helped you today or have we come closer to a shared understanding. Schön (1983) explained, “progress in learning need not take the form of climbing up the ladder of reflection” (p. 116).

The Ladder of Reflection

When telling/listening and demonstrating/imitating are combined, they offer great opportunities for reflection to fill the gaps between the processes (Schön, 1987).

Moreover, Schön explained that questioning, answering, advising, listening, demonstrating, observing, imitating, and criticizing are each connected together and one response builds on the other. The dialogue between student and coach is made up of reciprocal actions and reflections and can be analyzed in a multitude of ways (Schön). Schön refers to students and coaches, for the purposes of this study, the students are the teachers and the literacy coach is the coach. Beginning with a simple sequence of actions, the coach demonstrates and the student observes and listens, then the student imitates, and the coach criticizes. A vertical dimension of analysis as explained by Schön can be thought of as the rungs on a ladder. To move *up* on the ladder of reflection, one would move from an activity to reflection *on* that activity. Moving down the ladder of reflection, one would move towards taking action that enacts reflection. This influenced my thinking significantly in the data analysis aspect of this study.

Design is Learnable, but not Teachable

Schön (1987) explained that all professional practice is design-like in a broad sense. Drawing from his architectural design experiences, Schön outlined reflective practice as an artistry. “Designing, both in its narrower architectural sense and in the broader sense in which all professional practice is design like, must be learned by doing”

(Schön, 1987, p. 157). Several features make the design process learnable, coachable, but not teachable. This aspect of Schön's work is significant to this research because both of the schools in this study embrace the notion of teachers as designers. One feature is that designing can only be made sense of when students are in the midst of designing something—knowing-in-action. Another feature of design is that it is a holistic skill. Therefore, in order to grasp it all, one must grasp it as a whole, rather than in small pieces. The pieces are interconnected and the total is not a sum of the parts. Additionally, when one may have learned to carry out the smaller parts but not yet learned how to integrate them into the larger design process, the whole process may still be very confusing. Design also depends on the designer's ability to recognize design qualities, both desirable and undesirable. Schön stated that if a student is unable to recognize these qualities, verbal descriptions alone will not help the student. A coach can show examples, naming and demonstrating the qualities along the way; the student will learn and begin to discriminate amongst the examples given. Coaching helps to guide the student through—learning by doing. Even after the student has learned to recognize the qualities, she still may have trouble recognizing it in her own work. Schön explained that the student will learn to recognize the quality in her own work through the same process as she learned to produce it.

Furthermore, Schön (1987) explained that being able to articulate and express oneself is itself a skill that designers may possess in varying degrees. Another factor that makes designing learnable and coachable is that it is a creative activity. Through reflective conversations and use of materials, discoveries and new meanings can be created. Schön argued that no amount of description or demonstration can enable a

student to make the next discovery without engaging in her own version of reflection-in-action. Schön continued to explain that, “In order for such descriptions to become useful for action, students must be engaged in learning by doing and in dialogue with someone in the role of coach” (p. 162). Schön underscores the importance of coaching process for learning the artistry of practice.

Starting the Coach/Student Reflective Practice

According to Schön (1987) the key to this continuous learning process begins with the coach and the student establishing a relationship. Schön shared the following guidelines on the affective dimensions of this practice. He explained that feelings and understandings are critically interwoven. Moreover, the ability for the process of reflection to work hinges not only on the ability of the coach and the student to play their part, but also on their willingness to do so. The relationship should be based on establishing how the coach and student will share information with each other because, in most instances, the student will experience a loss of control, loss of confidence, and may even become defensive. The coach has to operate at two levels—because the work is so complex. The coach has to accept that she cannot tell the student everything. Therefore, the coach is constantly coping with the student’s reactions to a predicament that she helped to create because the coach has not taught the student everything yet. One additional dimension that coaches deal with is the coaching tasks itself—dealing with the problems of the student’s performance, the particulars of it and describing it. For example, the coach has to articulate for the student her performance level of the particular action.

Schön (1987) offered many suggestions on building a coach/student relationship conducive to learning. Whether it be implicit or explicit, a contract setting expectations for the dialogue should be created, which would include things such as: How will they share information between each other? How will they hold each other accountable? In conclusion, Schön outlined coaching as a threefold task: establishing general frameworks for reflecting-in-action, customizing moves to the student, and building a relationship conducive to learning.

Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) described reflection in terms of a cyclical model known as ALACT, for example: (a) action; (b) look back on the action; (c) awareness of essential aspects; (d) create alternative methods of action; and (e) trial. They explained how a reflective model can be used to support teachers' reflection on practical issues and their behavior, skills, and beliefs in various situations.

Penlington (2008) explained how dialogue might be best designed and used with teacher professional learning. Penlington noted that dissonance is a necessary and constructive aspect of teacher to teacher dialogues. She further explained that the focus of teacher to teacher dialogue should shift away from examining teacher activities, and look more at teacher reasoning as the focus for effective outcomes. The dialogue should push the teacher to examine the assumptions upon which her practice is predicated, and the effects of her practice on students. Literacy coaches encourage teachers to examine their practice by asking questions about how decisions were made and what next steps might be (i.e. choosing an easier or harder book for the child, offering a richer introduction to the text being read, or moving the child into another reading group).

Powell (2005) explored teachers' understanding and facilitation of active learning in primary, secondary, and higher education in the United Kingdom. Data consisting of video-stimulated reflective dialogues of classroom practices illustrative of active learning were collected from nine teachers. The first year of this project primarily revealed teachers' thinking, feelings and actions as facilitators of active learning. The second year of the research focused on using video-stimulated reflections to critique teachers' practice as well as the data-elicitation method. The research was developed as a reflective critique of reflective practice. Findings indicated the teachers associated active learning with higher order thinking skills and cooperative group activities. Classroom practices reflected an emphasis on discourse between the students and teachers, learning as a social process, and discovery learning guided by the teacher. The evidence suggested that video-stimulated reflective dialogues were an effective method for revealing teachers' knowledge about their pedagogy because sometimes teachers know more than they can easily communicate.

Postholm (2008) reported the results of a project involving researchers and a teacher team encouraging teachers to reflect on teaching processes to show what the form and content of the reflection processes could be. This initiative was a mutual effort from the practice field and researchers. The teachers involved worked at a school that emphasized school development with student learning being the main focus. A team of six researchers worked together with a team of 12 teachers. The researcher observed the teachers during learning activities and class meetings. The research took part in some of the meetings. Group interviews with teachers, conversations with teachers, and observational notes were collected. The initial observations helped to form a context for

subsequent observation. The data material included the teachers' planning documents for the lessons that were observed. Findings from the project indicated that when teachers question their own practice, they can transcend their teaching and identify what they could do to improve student learning. By connecting theory with practice, teachers were shown how to reflect before action, in action, and on action, which facilitated the use of theories as tools in the reflection process and improvement of practice.

Reflection as Praxis

Praxis is the process by which a theory, lesson, or skill is practiced, embodied, or realized. Schön (1983) claimed the study of reflection-in-action is critically important because adults' growth and development depend on their ability to reflect on their learning, adjust their behavior based on that reflection and develop a theoretical framework and set of understandings based on their own experience. According to Lindsay and Mason (2000), the majority of initial teacher reflection focuses on rule-governed practice, or how practice reflects or conforms to predetermined criteria. Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, and Lopez-Torres (2003) argued that reflection is embedded within a larger process, teaching and learning. They outlined a vision of teacher reflection that advances ideas of teacher reflection as an important contribution to teacher education and professional development--teacher learning as praxis. As such, they situated reflection in a more complex construct of teacher learning. They argued that teachers in schools of great diversity cannot afford to ignore power differentials and struggles experienced by racially marginalized groups. Therefore, they posited that teachers need to reflect on the political and historical dimensions of their work. Sharing an example of

educators reflecting on topics such as multi-culturalism, they suggested that more complex discourses about reflection and teacher learning should be authorized.

Servage (2007) found that be able to reflect and critically discuss the problems in education enabled her graduate students to return to their schools with renewed enthusiasm and innovation. She suggested the importance of keeping hope and urgency alive in the work of teachers by providing opportunities for teachers to connect with colleagues through reflective practice. Furthermore, Servage explained open-ended reflective dialogue allows teachers to examine their own beliefs and understandings about education. This finding is important because teachers benefit from having conversations about the meanings behind what they do.

Reflection as it Relates to Coaching

Burkins (2007), Kise (2006), Moran (2007), and Rodgers and Rodgers (2007), authors of technical books on coaching, consider reflection an essential component of coaching although each one describes it differently. Because of the multi-faceted nature of the work of literacy coaches, it is important that all aspects of reflection are considered. Burkins (2007) identified four essential traits of literacy coaches: (a) a coach must have content expertise; (b) a coach must have relationship competence; (c) a coach must be an efficient manager; and (d) a coach must be reflective. She further clarified reflection as the most important trait of a literacy coach and suggested it is the surrogate to analytical thought. Reflection affects all of the other traits and is the constant evaluation of the work a literacy coach is accomplishing. Foremost, the literacy coach must be reflective herself in order to assist teachers in becoming reflective. Burkins

explained when teachers accumulate knowledge and instructional strategies, literacy coaches can begin to support the work of teachers through reflection.

Reflectiveness is a prerequisite in the effectiveness of teachers. Reflectiveness involves the analysis of the parts against the big picture, reconstruction when instruction does not go well, and giving in to the healthy stress that keeps us moving forward. There is no growth in instructional skill without reflection; it is a strategy that teachers can use in any context and creates a system of learning that supports itself. (Burkins, 2007, p. 107)

Moran (2007) offered three essential principles of coaching: (a) to establish a school culture that recognizes collaboration as an asset; (b) to develop individual and group capacity to engage in problem solving and self-reflection; and (c) to provide a continuum of professional learning opportunities to support adults in their acquisition and use of specific knowledge and instructional strategies. Moran suggested that teachers approach teaching as a series of opportunities to “respond to” rather than “react to” and because teaching is such important, complex work, it should not be done in isolation but with colleagues.

Kise (2006) examined three levels of collaboration. Level one is superficial collaboration involving teaming for things such as fund raisers and field trips. Level two is segmented collaboration such as teaching teams. Level three is instructional collaboration which includes teams of teachers engaged in discussion about teaching and learning. Within level three, teachers discuss their assumptions about teaching, share teaching strategies, and discuss possibilities, all of which involved reflective practice or critical reflection. “Coaches can help teachers move from ‘contrived’ to... collaboration” (Kise, 2006, p. 63).

Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) claimed that the job of the coach is to work with teachers on the edge of their learning, or in Vygotsky's words, in their zone of proximal development. The authors are involved in the world of teaching, and they ground their work in the research literature. They provide many practical examples of how literacy coaching can improve instructional practice. When working with novice teachers, the coach might be working strictly on basic teaching techniques. When working with more experienced teachers, the coach may be working at her edge of expertise as well as that of the teacher's. Together, they problem-solve. Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) found several types of coaching that scaffold reflection and fostered change in teachers' practices. One type is side coaching (coach sits beside the teacher during instruction allowing for quiet conversation and collaboration), which supported reflection-in-action (Schön, 1987). Reflection-in-action occurs in the mind of the teacher and is invisible to the observer. The coach observed a lesson, the teaching might have paused ever so briefly, and at that exact moment, the coach provides explicit directions, limited to only two or three words.

Visiting is another type of coaching that scaffolds reflection (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). There are several types of visits a coach might embrace: cluster visits, school visits, rolling cluster visits, colleague visits, and targeted coaching. A coach might embrace any one or a combination of these depending on the needs and the circumstances of the learners. A cluster visit or cluster coaching promotes reflection-in-action because it takes place after the teaching and is easier to document. A cluster visit occurs when a coach is joined by several other teachers who are also being coached. The focus is on the teaching and learning of all the teachers rather than on one teacher's teaching. This is accomplished by momentarily suspending the teaching, allowing time for the group to

reflect. A school visit would be specifically targeted for the purposes of conducting observation and reflection focused on a specific task. A rolling cluster visit builds on a cluster visit combined with individual coaching. For example, a coach might work individually with Teachers A, B, and C, then Teachers A, B, and C would go visit Teacher D at the same time. This builds on the work of the cluster visit but takes the work into an individual teachers' classroom. Colleague visits (teacher(s) visiting in another teacher's classroom) provide the opportunities for teachers to undertake reflective practice by questioning assumptions, choosing courses of action, and implementing possible plans. Focused coaching allows the opportunity for the coach to observe a teacher teach a lesson. Prior to the lesson, the teacher establishes a goal and discusses it with the coach. The teacher implements the lesson and the coach observes. After teaching the lesson, the teacher reflects on the lesson and discusses it with the coach.

In summary, reflection is a construct that holds promise for changing teaching practice. "Scaffolding the teacher through genuine conversations and questioning will prove to be most productive and generative" (Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007, p. 71).

Theories of the Reading Process

While there are many factors that appear to influence reading achievement, researchers agree that the knowledge, skills, and experience of the classroom teacher play a pivotal role in student reading success (Block, 2000; Bond & Dykstra, 1967; Brady & Moats, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1988; Moats & Foorman, 2003). Teaching students to read is a complex task which requires understanding of the reading process, how students learn to read, and an ability to use a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Reading Process

The reading process includes pronouncing words, identifying words and knowing their meaning, and the reader bringing meaning to the text in order to get meaning from it according to Allington and Cunningham (1996), the International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children (1998), and Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998). Learning skills in the context of authentic reading and writing experiences and recognizing the importance of skill instruction is also considered part of the reading process. Additionally, the reading process consists of each reader building a system for processing texts that becomes an integration of strategic actions for a learner (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). The construction of the systems is in the head (Clay, 1991) and unique for each student. The teacher can observe the behaviors of the readers as they process texts and can infer how the reader is problem-solving to gain meaning.

Dole, Duffy, Roehler, and Pearson (1991) reviewed and synthesized the research on reading comprehension and teaching students to comprehend and developed a set of instructional recommendations. Traditional views have conceptualized reading as a set of discrete skills to be mastered. But, reading is now seen as a process in which the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning. Readers use existing knowledge along with other strategies to construct a mental image of the text. They monitor their comprehension, and when something does not make sense, they adjust their strategy selection until it does.

Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) summarized the findings of the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. Their core finding centered on the importance of reading instruction being integrated into the daily classroom activities

capitalizing on how reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing support one another with special attention focused on the construction of meaning and providing children with opportunities to develop fluency. The committee emphasized the importance of high-quality preschool and kindergarten environments and their contribution to providing a critical foundation that would facilitate children's acquisition of essential reading skills. The importance of the integration of reading instruction with the realization that reading is a meaning-driven process is central to the theory of teaching reading that serves as the basis of this study.

The National Reading Panel Report (NRP) (National Reading Panel, 2000), which is central to the conceptualization of reading research and effective reading instruction in the NCLB legislation, found five areas of effective curricular components that merited implementation: phonemic awareness instruction; explicit, systematic phonics instruction; repeated oral reading practice with feedback and guidance; direct and indirect vocabulary instruction; and comprehension strategies instruction. Other reviews, such as the Report of the National Academy of Education on Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) have corroborated many of the NRP findings. Although the National Reading Panel's report is significant, it is important to note that it has been controversial. Garan (2002) noted inconsistencies between the report of the subgroups (a 500 page document) and the summary booklet (a 32 page booklet), and the National Reading Panel video (15 minutes) primarily because the summary booklet was not written by the NRP but rather by a public relations firm.

In the first large-scale, systemic study of teachers and students in 140 high-poverty classrooms, Knapp (1995) found that effective teachers of reading stressed higher

level thinking skills in addition to lower-level skills. 140 first through sixth grade classrooms located in 15 elementary schools that serve large numbers of low-income families participated in this study. To increase the likelihood of identifying a variety of effective practices, schools in six districts across three states were chosen that had attained better-than-average performance on conventional measures of academic achievement. Experienced teachers within these schools were selected at each grade level to represent variations in approach to math, reading, and writing instruction. The schools were studied over a two year period, drawing from a wide variety of data sources, including classroom observations, repeated interviews with teachers, examination of materials, information observations of children, daily kept teacher logs, and various forms of student assessment.

The classrooms that adopted strategies that aimed at maximizing children's comprehension of what they read and increased the amount of time the students were actually reading, explicitly taught comprehension strategies were compared to those that were skills-oriented. The researcher found clear evidence that students exposed to instruction emphasizing meaning are likely to demonstrate a greater grasp of advanced skills at the end of the school year. Knapp (1995) urged teachers to promote higher levels of thinking while simultaneously building a quest for meaning into their learning experiences.

Ten years later, Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2005) came to the same conclusions. The authors studied the impact of both school-level programs and class-level curricular and pedagogical practices. They also found the most effective teachers provided higher-level questioning and emphasized applying word recognition

strategies irrespective of the schools in which they taught. The purposes of this study were two-fold. First, they wanted to determine the effectiveness of the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) School Change Framework as a structure for school reform. Secondly, the authors wanted to determine specific classroom or school related factors that accounted for student growth in reading and writing achievement. Thirteen schools spread across the United States were included in the study which ranged in diversity from high poverty to low and from urban to rural.

The researchers used three measures of written language growth to measure student achievement in the fall and the spring. The teachers that were involved in the professional development through the school reform effort were asked to keep brief monthly logs summarizing the activities pertaining to the school change project. Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez (2005) stated, “as in earlier work, we found a consistent cluster of influential practices—teachers learning and changing together over an extended period of time, reflection and dialogue on practice and implementation of research based strategies, and collaborative leadership” (p. 57). As they looked at classrooms across grade levels, they found that “higher level questioning contributed to the between teacher variance in students’ fluency scores in grades 2-5, whereas rote comprehension skill practice...negatively related to both reading comprehension and fluency...” (p. 57). When asked about helpful opportunities for learning instruction, teachers were clear that study groups were helpful and they valued reflection and learning from one another.

Effective Teachers of Reading Understand How Children Learn

Understanding how children learn to read influences the instructional approaches employed by effective teachers. A generation ago, students learned to read by emphasis on discrete skills (e.g. learning the alphabet, memorizing sight words) and completing worksheets (Tompkins, 2003). Reading instruction has changed over the last 25 years and presently is explained through four interlocking theories of learning, language, and literacy: the constructivist, interactive, sociolinguistic, and reader response theories. Piaget (1969) posited that children are active learners, relating new information to prior knowledge and organizing related information in schemata. Interactive learning theories described how students use both prior knowledge and features in the texts as they read, in conjunction with comprehension strategies to help them understand what they read (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich, 1980). Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986) contributed a cultural dimension to our understanding of how children learn by explaining that social interaction is important in learning and that teachers provide scaffolds for students.

Instructional Strategies

There are a variety of instructional strategies that are effective in developing the reading process. Chin, Anderson, and Waggoner (2001) studied fourth grade classrooms and found that literacy discussions compared to recitation, stressed collaboration, and fostered higher levels of thinking and greater engagement. The authors analyzed lesson transactions and individual children's reasoning during reading lesson discussions. They highlighted two literary stances: Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional theory of reading and the critical/analytical stance. According to Chin, Anderson, and Waggoner (2001), "a critical/analytic stance means a focus on a major dilemma or problem facing a character,

a consideration of reasons for different courses of action, and appeals to the text for evidence and for interpretative context” (p. 382). This approach to literature discussion stimulates critical reading and thinking (Chin, Anderson, and Waggoner, 2001).

Fountas and Pinnell (1996) based their theory of guided reading on Clay’s (1991) theory of reading continuous text. Letters and words within continuous text offer different kinds of information support than they do when isolated. Fountas and Pinnell (2006) offered ten underlying principles of good reading instruction: (a) students learn to read by reading continuous text; (b) students need to read high-quality texts to build a reading process; (c) students need to read a variety of texts; (d) students need to read a large quantity of texts; (e) students need to read different texts for different purposes; (f) students need to hear many texts read aloud; (g) students need different levels of support at different times; (h) students’ reading level means different things in different instructional contexts; (i) the more students read for authentic purposes, the more likely they are to make a place for reading in their lives; and (j) students need to see themselves as readers who have tastes and preferences.

Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (1999) conducted a national study of effective schools to uncover the practices of accomplished teachers within schools that were promoting high achievement among students for whom failure was a common experience. Fourteen schools geographically dispersed throughout the country took part in the study. They began by identifying schools with two characteristics: (1) those that had recently implemented reform programs to improve reading achievement, and (2) those with a reputation for obtaining positive results with low-income populations. Additionally, they selected three other schools, as comparison, or control schools. Within

each school, the principals were asked to select two teachers whom he or she felt were good or excellent teachers and who would be willing to participate in the study. Their goal was to collect pre-and post-test data for four children per classroom (two average performers and two low performers).

The experiences of high-achieving schools were compared to those that were moderately and less effective. Their results indicated time spent in small-group instruction for reading distinguished the most effective schools from the others in the study. According to Taylor, Pearson, Clark, and Walpole (1999), the small groups were based on the students' ability to read and the teachers used assessments to inform their interventions and to move the children fluidly between groups. Students in the most effective schools also spent time in independent reading, approximately 28 minutes a day, as compared to 19 minutes in the least effective schools. Students in the most effective schools also reported spending 134 minutes a day on total reading instruction. In contrast, less effective schools averaged 113 minutes a day on reading. Phonics instruction in the most effective schools was evident as the teachers coached the children on how to apply the word identification skills they were learning in phonics while reading everyday texts. The most effective schools were also noted as having teachers who used higher level questions during comprehension instruction. The most effective schools also reported home-school connections as a reason for their success. The home school connections included one or more of the following: an active site council in which parents make decisions; focus groups, phone surveys, or written surveys to find out parents' needs and concerns; family education programs on site in which meals and day care were provided; or a principal who called parents regularly to deliver good news about their children.

Additionally, the results indicated that the teachers expressed sharing observations with colleagues as an effective approach to professional development that had been used in their school. A majority of the teachers rated district or school sponsored yearlong workshops and graduate level courses as effective professional development. When giving reasons for their success, all of the most effective schools cited the importance of ongoing professional development.

Theories of Literacy for English Language Learners

The research on the theories of English literacy learning tells us much that informs literacy coaching. There have been significant recent advances on effective instructional strategies for teaching English language learners (ELL). However, the research is limited, and there are various opinions of these best practices. Perhaps the greatest debate centers on the best language to use for initial reading instruction. Should the ELLs be taught to read in their native language or should they be taught to read in English simultaneously to learning to speak English? There are experts who support each of these methods. Schools across America operate under an array of policies set by state and local school districts and the individual schools often do not have a choice in deciding what method of instruction to use. It is important to note that the schools within the context of this study teach students to read in English simultaneously with students learning to speak English. The schools offer support to English language learners in that there are a few bilingual teachers and other support personnel in the building that offer assistance to the students and parents when needed. Additional small group instruction is provided to those students who qualify for the ELL program based on state requirements, which vary by state.

Gersten, et al. (2007) provided five recommendations based on scientific research that they integrated into a comprehensive approach for improving the literacy achievement and English language development of English learners in the elementary grades. Research for this study was gathered from the What Works Clearinghouse at the U. S. Department of Education. The schools in this study embrace these recommendations. The first recommendation was to conduct formative assessments using English language measures of phonological processing, letter knowledge, and word and text reading. Gersten et al. (2007) recommended using the data to identify English language learners who require additional support and monitoring their reading progress over time. The second recommendation was to provide focused, intensive small-group interventions for English language learners who have been identified as being at risk for reading problems. The intervention should include the five core reading elements: phonological awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction should be delivered in an explicit, direct manner. The third recommendation was to provide high quality vocabulary instruction throughout the day. Essential content words should be taught in-depth, and instructional time should be used to address the meanings of common words, phrases, and expressions not yet learned. The fourth recommendation was to ensure that the development of formal or academic English be a key instructional goal for the English learner. Lastly, the fifth recommendation given was to ensure that teachers of English learners devote approximately ninety minutes a week to instructional activities in which pairs of students at different ability levels or different English language proficiencies work together on academic tasks in a structured fashion.

Genesee, Lindholm-Learny, Saunders, and Christian (2005) discussed major findings on the importance of English as a second language (L2) oral language, the time it took for ELLs to develop proficiency, the nature and effects of L2 use, and the role of language learning strategies. These findings add another important layer to the complexity of my study because of the many English language learners in the schools where this study takes place. The authors listed above posited that the development of L2 oral language is vital to the school success of ELL students; as oral language proficiency developed, capacity to further learn, acquire, and use the language also improved. As English language increased, a second language learner was more likely to interact with English-speaking peers, providing additional opportunities to speak English (Strong, 1983, 1984). While ELLs' oral English proficiency develops, they demonstrate more language skills, specifically, higher level question forms (Lindholm, 1987; Rodriguez-Brown, 1987) and definitional skills (Carlisle, Beeman, Davis, & Spharim, 1999; Garcia-Vazquez, Vazquez, Lopez, & Ward, 1997; Goldstein, Harris, & Klein, 1993; Royer & Carlo, 1991; Saville-Troike, 1984).

ELLs achieve oral language proficiency over time, typically within three to five years. ELLs who tend to use English more in the classroom during interactions with peers and teachers tend to make stronger gains in English (Chesterfield, R. A., Chesterfield, K. B., Hayes-Latimer, & Chavez., 1983; Saville-Troike, 1984). More proficient ELLs demonstrate a repertoire of language learning strategies, like repetition and memorization, as they learn words and phrases. In more advanced stages of L2 acquisition, ELLs use monitoring strategies such as appealing for assistance.

Literacy coaches and teachers should understand that English-L2 literacy development is quite similar to first or home language (L1) literacy development. Both types of literacy development are influenced by the child's oral language skills and by the metacognitive strategies that are linked to reading. "The relationship between English oral skills and English literacy, however, is more complex for ELLs than it is for native English speaking students" (Genesee, Lindholm-Learn, Saunders, and Christian, 2005). For example the complexity is the relationship between achievement in English reading because ELLs are learning to speak English while learning to read it. Comprehension is significantly related to the depth of vocabulary knowledge in English and the underlying story structure and meaning whereas it is not related to oral language proficiency (Goldstein, Harris, & Klein, 1993; Peregoy & Boyle, 1991). Phonological awareness is most directly linked to word decoding (Carlisle, Beeman, Davis, & Spharim, 1999), enabling ELLs with well-developed phonological awareness skills in English to acquire initial reading skills more easily.

English language learners face unique learning challenges. They are developing content knowledge while simultaneously acquiring a second or perhaps a third language, often times when their first language is not fully developed such as with young children. Then, they have to demonstrate their learning on assessments in English, which is their second language. Several states have experienced unprecedented growth in their ELL population; Georgia is one of these. This suggests a strong need for teacher professional development in order to provide effective instruction to English language learners.

Summary

This chapter reviewed current research in five areas: literacy coaching, teacher learning; reflective dialogue; theories of the reading process; and theories of literacy learning for English language learners. The focus of this research project is the observation of the process of literacy coaching and an exploration of the dialogue between the coaches and the teachers. The goal is to learn how coaches provide professional development that scaffolds teachers' knowledge development, specifically in teaching reading and how the coaches support teacher reflection.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

After a brief review of the problem, purpose, research questions, the design, procedures and processes of the study will be discussed in detail. This discussion will include the rationale behind the design, my role, participant's selection, data sources, data collection, data analyses procedures, and trustworthiness.

Review of Problem, Purpose, and Questions

Literacy coaching is an increased form of professional development for teachers, although, little is known about what actually occurs during the one-on-one coaching discourse between literacy coaches and the teachers they are coaching or how effectively this discourse serves or impedes professional development for the teachers involved. This multi-case study examines the coaching interactions of two literacy coaches and four teachers to explore what is happening during the one-on-one coaching discourse and how these interactions serve to support teacher learning. The questions guiding this study included:

1. How does the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the coaches?
2. How does the discourse found within coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the teachers?
3. What patterns of discourse are seen within coaching interaction
 - a. How do the interactions support teacher reflection during the dialog?

- b. How do the interactions support the teachers' understanding of teaching for processing strategies within small group reading instruction?
4. What if any are the differences related to training and knowledge of the coaches?

I conducted observations and interviews (see interview for literacy coaches Appendix F and interview for teachers Appendix G) for two cycles of coaching. The data collection and analysis documented the actual coaching conversations between two literacy coaches and four teachers. The challenge was in making transparent the words spoken between literacy coaches and teachers and examining how this classroom discourse supports teachers as they make pedagogical decisions.

This chapter explicates the methodology and accompanying methods for data analysis for this study (Crotty, 2003). The data collection and analysis documented what actually transpired in individual coaching sessions between a coach and a teacher and the relationship these conversations have on the teachers' beliefs and instructional practices about the reading process. I begin this chapter by describing the methods used and the rationale for the methodology. Next, I describe the research setting and participants. I conclude the chapter with the methods of collecting data and data analysis procedures.

Rationale and Assumptions for the Design

The choice of methodology and accompanying methods guide the findings that can result. The goals and focus of this study, as previously mentioned, were best served by adopting a qualitative and interpretative stance. Qualitative methods were used to develop this case study because it allowed for the complexities and potential richness involved in coaching to surface. Creswell (2007) noted that qualitative research is

conducted for a number of reasons: because a problem needed to be explored; a complex understanding of an issue was needed; people needed to be empowered to share their stories; and interactions needed to be captured. According to Yin (2003), case studies are the preferred method when events occur naturally, and the conversations between literacy coaches and classroom teachers were naturally occurring events.

Case study, as described by Merriam (1998), was well-suited for this study because case studies help us to understand processes of events, projects, and programs and discover context characteristics that highlight an issue. Merriam (1998) concluded that qualitative research consists of learning how individuals interact with their social world and the meaning it has for them. By studying the conversations between literacy coaches and teachers, insights may be gained in how the conversation and observations (i.e. word choice, posing questions, examples, and modeling) supports teachers of varying years of experience in their pedagogical practice of teaching reading.

Furthermore, the goals and focus of this study were best served by adopting a qualitative stance through a multi-method approach (i.e. interviews, observations of coaching sessions, observations of teaching guided reading) that allowed for the complexities involved in coaching to be identified. Using a social constructivist (Vygotsky, 1978) perspective, I explored how the conversations between a literacy coach and teacher supported teacher thinking and teaching practices. “Social constructivism provides a psycholinguistic explanation for how learning can be fostered effectively through interactive pedagogical practices” (Yang & Wilson, 2006, p. 365).

Case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context

(Yin, 2003). There are multiple cases represented in this study—four teachers and two coaches within one school district. Therefore, in order to add richness and power to the description of the coaching discourse, a multiple case design was chosen. The same methodology was used to examine each individual case which facilitated a cross-case comparison of the coaching discourse (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Yin (2003) explained that a consistent theoretical framework within a common analytic approach across cases is a type of replication within a study that can yield compelling findings. Moreover, Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that multiple case designs can result in more “sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations” (p. 172).

When examining the discourse between the literacy coaches and the teachers, multiple influences may need consideration, including, but not limited to the goals of the coaching session, the coaching model utilized, the participants’ relationships, the coaches’ qualifications and knowledge, the coaches’ understandings and application of the principles of adult learning, as well as the perspectives and professional background of the participating teachers (Hathaway & Risko, 2007; Nowak, 2003; Rainville, 2007). Coaching discourse is situated in particular contexts and circumstances (Hathaway & Risko, 2007) and is dependent upon the perceptions, beliefs, and cooperation of both the literacy coach and the teacher (Rainville, 2007).

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explained that qualitative researchers embrace a wide range of interpretive practices in hopes of gaining a better understanding of the subject matter. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), “the researcher does not just leave the field with mountains of empirical materials and then easily write up his or her findings” (p. 34). Field notes are created, documents are indexed, and the text is re-created all the

while the writer is attempting to make sense of what she has learned (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). The authors stated, “The interpretive practice of making sense of one’s findings is both artistic and political” (p. 35).

Merriam (1998) established three distinct categories of case studies: descriptive, interpretative, and evaluative. In a descriptive case study, a process is under study or a detailed account is presented. Interpretative case studies are generally descriptive but include analysis of the issue under study to the point of offering theories about what is meant within the study. Case studies that are evaluative in nature explain and describe the phenomenon while producing judgment about the issue under study. This study followed the design of an interpretative case study, as I sought to describe with rich texture and depth of the phenomenon of the discourse between the literacy coach and the teacher that enabled the reader to understand it within context and interpret the phenomenon through analysis of data gathered.

Interpretative analysis

First, an overall interpretive analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was conducted on the transcripts from both the pre and post conference coaching discourse and the interviews. This approach included listening, transcribing, reading, rereading, and reviewing the coaching and interview transcripts searching for salient features or themes. The most important themes or features of the coaching discourse were recorded, thus summarizing and reducing data sets (Miles & Huberman, 1994). An example of these matrixes can be found in Appendixes N, O, P, and Q.

Next, information was drawn from the pre and post conferences and entered on a matrix and color coded for easy reference back to the original source. A matrix was

constructed for each research question so that the information could be reduced and organized as a body of information relating to each question (see Appendix X). An interpretive analysis of the post interviews was conducted in a similar manner.

The final step of the interpretive analysis involved examining the matrixes and writing analytic text. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) it is through the writing that the writer begins to think through the organized data. I found that the writing itself, slowed my thinking and the analysis process so that I could draw conclusions and make further interpretations from the data.

The Research Setting

Miles and Huberman (1994) explained that “thick descriptions” of a phenomenon and its context produces rich data and lends itself to describing and explaining the complexities of real life subjects and situations. Setting a focus and boundaries is necessary according to Miles and Huberman because there is a limited amount of data that can be collected on any given phenomenon. The following description of the setting, the participants, and the data sources define the boundaries of this study.

Site Selection

Porter Public Schools, a small rural school district that has implemented Literacy Collaborative®, a long-term professional development program for literacy instruction, was selected as the site for this research. This school district was selected because of its affiliation with Literacy Collaborative® (LC) and its focused, professional development in literacy for their teachers and administrators for the past five years. Porter Public Schools have literacy coaches in every elementary school and multiple years of training have been provided to all teachers and administrators.

Literacy Collaborative (2008) (LC) provides support through on-going professional development for literacy coaches in an effort to be a strong model for training coaches. Additionally, the LC literacy framework provides flexibility that integrates the range of reading, writing, and word study activities considered essential for promoting early literacy (Literacy Collaborative, 2008). Porter Public Schools affiliated with Literacy Collaborative in 2004 primarily due to the superintendent's knowledge of LC. Superintendent O. Porter (personal communication, March 2008) held a high regard for the beliefs embraced by Literacy Collaborative due to former experiences with the project, dating as far back as the project's first inception in Georgia, 1998. The superintendent arranged for members of the school board, administrators, teachers, and community members to observe in schools that affiliated with LC in various locations in Georgia on numerous occasions over the 2003-2004 school year. During debriefing sessions held after the visits, it was determined that LC was indeed a framework the district wanted to pursue.

Upon the superintendent's recommendation, the school board voted unanimously to affiliate with Literacy Collaborative in the spring of 2004. According to O. Porter (personal communication, March 2008), Literacy Collaborative was selected as the district's number one priority due to the desire to provide focused professional development that would begin to foster learning communities and the need for an instructional framework that would meet the needs of all learners. The superintendent believed the language rich framework provided the necessary tools for the teachers and the students to meet the needs of the large numbers of English language learners in the elementary schools.

The LC framework builds on a foundation of oral literacy because language is fundamental to learning and communicating. In the primary years, students need a safe environment where they are free to take risks (it is acceptable to make mistakes or not understand) and are guided to explore by a more experienced other, either a peer or a teacher. The teacher provides direct instruction through specific mini-lessons and designs multiple opportunities for students to practice through individual, small group, and whole group work. These instructional practices support the literacy development of all learners.

This school district was a suitable site for the study because the school district has invested in primary (grades K-2) literacy coaches and intermediate (grades 3-6) literacy coaches in each of the six elementary schools in the district. All classroom teachers, resource teachers, para-professionals, and administrators have had the opportunity to participate in varying amounts of professional development on literacy over the past five years. The outcomes show promise as each school has met adequate yearly progress as measured by the end of year test required by the state of Georgia.

The population of the city of Porter is approximately 30,000 of whom 40% are Latino, 7.7% are Black, and 52.3% are White (U. S. Census Bureau). The city is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in a largely rural county. The textile industry has created jobs that have attracted Latino immigrants for over 20 years. At the time of this study, the school district reported demographics of 2.8% Asian, 64.8% Hispanic, 5.3% Black, 23% White, and 4.1% Multi-Racial.

Hispanics now constitute about one-fifth of the nation's young children (birth to eight-year-olds) and are projected to be a quarter of all young children in the United States by 2030 (National Task Force on Early Childhood for Hispanics, 2008). The

number of Hispanics, however, has far surpassed these national projections in the community where this study will be conducted. The Hispanic population of the community in this study began growing approximately 20 years ago due to the workforce required in the textile industry.

The National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics (2008) reported Hispanic children lag far behind their white counterparts on measures of school readiness when they start kindergarten, and subsequently achieve at much lower levels in the primary grades, with this low academic pattern continuing through high school and college. The major reason reported for the low levels of school readiness is the high percentage of Hispanic children who are from low socioeconomic status (SES) families because the parents have little formal education and low incomes. The situation is further complicated by the large numbers of children who do not speak nor understand English when they begin kindergarten. Of the six elementary schools in the school district where this study took place, all qualify for school wide Title I assistance, due to the high percentage of poverty amongst the children the school serves.

Permission to conduct the study was readily obtained from the school district's superintendent (see approval from district Appendix D). Subsequently, I made a presentation regarding the purposes and procedures for the study at a meeting with the district trainers for the literacy coaches. After discussing the research with the district trainers, I selected potential coach participants. I sought coaches and teachers with varied teaching and coaching experiences and backgrounds as participants. I requested individual meetings with each of the literacy coaches in order to further explain the project, the expectations for the participating coach and teachers, and how the study

would contribute additional knowledge to the field of literacy coaching. At these individual meetings, each literacy coach had opportunities to ask questions.

The literacy coaches agreed to participate and were asked to recruit two teachers, one novice and one experienced. A novice teacher was defined as one in her first year of participating in professional development with the literacy coach and coached two times per month according to the district's coaching guidelines. An experienced teacher was defined as one who had at least three years of experience participating in professional development with a literacy coach. I sought teachers with varied experiences who were willing to participate in the study, interacted regularly with the coach, willing to allow me and their coach to observe their reading instruction (including video-taping lesson) and were willing to be audio-taped during pre conferences and post conferences with the literacy coach.

The choice of the classroom teachers was left up to the coaches. After the coaches made their selections and asked the teachers if they were willing to participate in this project, I then met with each nominated classroom teacher, and explained the purpose and procedures of the study. I granted each participant a full disclaimer of the research process. At individual meetings I guaranteed in writing that great caution would be exercised to minimize risks, the interviews would take place at the participants' discretion, and that the participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Additionally, I strived for confidentiality for the participants by changing all of the names of the study participants and of the school district to protect their identities. No personnel or medical information was sought from the participants. Permission to participate in the study was obtained from the participants. Furthermore, I

sought and was granted approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Georgia State University. On the first observation visit, each participating coach and classroom teacher signed and kept one copy of the IRB consent for participation form (see Appendixes J & K).

The coaches were asked to continue with their usual routines and schedules and notified me when they would be working with the selected teachers in order to set up for the audio and videotaping. Coaches were required to plan and submit schedules and coaching calendars to principals and district trainers, so habitually they would plan with whom they would be working. I asked the coaches and teachers for copies of lesson plans, notes, or other documents related to their sessions (see Lesson Plans and Coaching Notes, Appendixes V and W).

Participants

Two literacy coaches and four teachers participated in this study creating four teacher/coach dyads. The literacy coaches and teachers were purposefully selected (Patton, 1990) because they each offered specific qualifications and unique experiences. According to Patton, purposeful sampling affords the researcher the opportunity to select a sample from which the most can be learned. Therefore, purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions being studied.

The literacy coaches were selected to participate in the study based on their experiences. They each had been trained through the Literacy Collaborative® professional development program (see Appendix E), an approach to literacy instruction that emphasizes skilled reading as a system of strategic cognitive actions (Clay, 2001;

Fountas & Pinnell, 2006), Additionally, they possess other experiences that are uniquely different. Furthermore, they work in schools with starkly different populatio

KeKe, Literacy Coach

KeKe has had a wide array of professional development specifically focused on literacy. Because the primary role of a literacy coach is to support classroom teachers' literacy instruction, it is essential that the coach has in-depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisition, assessment, and instruction (IRA, 2004). KeKe's story provides insights into one literacy coach's development and the many ways this knowledge can be gained.

KeKe is White, the mother of two young children and is married. Even though KeKe does not live in the school attendance zone where she coaches, she brings her children with her each day so they can attend school where she works. She explained that she believes in the type of education they are providing in the school and therefore wants her own children to benefit from the instruction. KeKe's Bachelor's and Master's degrees are in Early Childhood Education and her Specialist degree is in Educational Leadership. The school in which KeKe works is school-wide Title I, and all children have free breakfast and lunch. Over 90% of the students are Latino and are English language learners (ELL). Many of the students have exited from the school's ELL program and are bi-lingual. Most of the parents speak Spanish, and translators are provided at all parent events. Although KeKe speaks conversational Spanish, she does not consider herself bi-lingual. She is, however, a certified teacher of English language learners.

KeKe's Development as a Teacher and Literacy Coach

KeKe focused on teaching kindergarten the first seven years of her teaching career. When the school in which she worked was awarded a literacy grant, KeKe became the school's literacy coach. She participated in weekly professional development provided by the founders of the grant through video conferencing. During the summer, multiple weeks of training were provided, including a study abroad program in London. KeKe expressed that it was through the work in London that she learned the most. She talked to and observed a literacy coach in a model classroom in one of the lowest socio-economic schools in the area with more than 180 languages spoken in their district. She explained that the children were mandated to start school at two years of age. KeKe observed teachers using hands on, real-life problem solving methods to teach, such as slicing bread in half to teach fractions. She observed children understanding long division and mastering multiplication tables at very young ages.

Due to administrative changes in KeKe's district, the literacy grant was not renewed and the school's literacy focus changed to include implementing Reading Recovery in first grade. KeKe was selected to become a Reading Recovery teacher and spent the following year in training. The next year, the district embarked on a comprehensive school reform model, Literacy Collaborative. In her second year as a Reading Recovery teacher, KeKe was asked to train as a primary literacy coach by the district trainer for the Literacy Collaborative framework. For the past three years, KeKe has been a primary literacy coach. She has taught all grades from kindergarten to third grade over her 14 year career. The district invested in training KeKe over a 14 year career

affording her opportunities to train as a Reading Recovery teacher and as a literacy coach for two separate literacy projects.

Missie, Literacy Coach

Missie is White and the mother of two older children. She has taught in the same school her entire teaching career. Her father is a federal judge, and she began her college experiences as a history major. Eventually, she shifted to major in Early Childhood and graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree. Her Master's degree is in Early Childhood. Additionally she is certified as a Teacher Support Specialist, which indicates she has additional training experiences to enable her to serve as a role model and mentor for pre-service, beginning, and in-service teachers.

The school in which Missie works is school-wide Title I. Even though over 60 percent of the children are Latino and are English language learners, the school is strongly supported by the White middle class residents. The district has an out of zone, out of district policy and many Whites wait in long lines to complete applications for their children to attend this school. Many of the second language learners have exited from the school's ELL program and are bi-lingual.

Missie's Development as a Teacher and Coach

Missie had received very little specialized professional development prior to becoming the school's literacy coach. When she was asked to go to Cambridge, Massachusetts to Lesley University to be trained as Primary Literacy Coach for her school, because there had been so little value in her school placed on professional learning, she stated that she was honored to be asked to participate. In subsequent years,

she also had the opportunity to participate in effective Literacy Coach training through Lesley University. The current school year marks her 20th year of teaching.

To learn more about Missie's beliefs on the teaching of reading and writing, I inquired as to how the extensive coaching training in which she had participated at Lesley University and being a literacy coach had influenced her teaching of reading and writing. She responded that she was continuing to strive to put everything she learned into practice and identified critical elements she had gained from the experience: a deeper understanding of coaching—what to coach for and the language of coaching, a deeper understanding of the reading process, and learning the importance of knowing the students' strengths and needs. She said, "It really helped me with the language I needed to use with teachers and the questions to ask to them."

Both coaches provide job-embedded professional development by teaching two courses for their teachers and working with teachers and students on a regular basis. Their responsibilities include teaching: (a) one 40-hour class on literacy instruction for the K-2 teachers at their sites who have not had Literacy Collaborative Course One and one 20-hour class of on-going professional development for the K-2 teachers; (b) in-class coaching for all the K-2 teachers at their school sites; and (c) continuing to teach children for three hours each day.

Tami, Experienced Teacher, Coached by KeKe,

Tami is in her third year of teaching, all in second grade. She has a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a Master's in Curriculum and Instruction. Tami explained that her knowledge during her first year of teaching was strictly textbook definitions. She explained that she thought she understood things about teaching.

However, after working closely with KeKe, she realized that what she had originally thought and understood were not accurate.

Jo, Novice Teacher, Coached by KeKe

Even though KeKe selected Jo as the novice teacher for this project, she is not a typical first year teacher. This is a second career for Jo. In her first college experience she focused on nursing and was a registered nurse for several years before deciding to change professions. When she made the decision to go back to school, she became a para-professional in the district and took education classes at night until she graduated. Jo is married and has a son who attends the school where she teaches.

Two of the four teachers were in their first year of teaching and the other two teachers had at least three years of teaching experience. Both of the schools in this study receive school-wide Title 1 assistance due to the high percentage of low socioeconomic status of the children served.

Jodi, Experienced Teacher, Coached by Missie

Of the four teachers in this study, Jodi had the most teaching experience. Jodi worked in schools for four years as a para-professional in special education prior to completing her teaching degree. This current year marks her fourth year as a certified teacher, all in first grade. Her Master's degree is in Reading and she has a Specialist degree in Leadership. Additionally, she has training in teaching English as a second language and describes herself as strong-willed. When she first began teaching at this school, reading was taught through a basal text. Jodi had just completed her Master's in Reading. One major professor for her literacy classes placed heavy emphasis on balanced literacy. Therefore, with great confidence, she asked the principal for permission to

depart from the literacy program the school was using, and to implement balanced literacy. She was allowed to proceed. From her Master's program, Jodi had developed strong beliefs about teaching children in small groups based on their needs as compared to teaching from a basal, a one size fits all model.

Jenni, Novice Teacher, Coached by Missie

Jenni taught Pre-K for three years prior to teaching first grade and is a novice first grade teacher. She has a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. She does not have any additional specialized training.

Methods for Collecting Data

Though there are a variety of ways to explore a question using qualitative research design, the case study is used to explore specific events or activities taking place within an educational setting, providing a comprehensive and detailed description for the reader (Yin, 2003). The case study format holds several advantages, which include providing the reader with a thick description of the situation within a defined context, offering a glimpse into the actual setting and the interplay between the participants. Hence, allowing the reader to make judgments about the trustworthiness and transferability of the findings based on the descriptions. According to Yin (2003) cross-case analysis contributes to the trustworthiness of the case study. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that cross-case analysis added external validity to a qualitative study.

Prior to this study, I conducted a small pilot study. The pilot study informed the research design in various ways (see Pilot Study, Appendix H). This study consisted of four coach/teacher dyads. Each dyad consisted of one coach and one teacher from each of two schools. Data was collected in two cycles including semi-structured interviews and

observations of both guided reading instruction and observations of coaching sessions during a seven week period of data collection. Each cycle included the following activities:

1. Audio recording a pre-conference coaching sessions between the literacy coach and classroom teacher.
2. Observation and video-taping of a guided reading lesson.
3. Audio recording a post conference coaching session between the literacy coach and classroom teacher. The pre conference and post conference always occurred during the same day as the guided reading lesson. The post-conference was held immediately following or shortly thereafter the lesson.

Separate interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher and the literacy coach. Initially I conducted interviews with the coach and the teacher immediately after their coaching sessions. After transcribing the first set of interviews, I realized that the information obtained was a duplication of the post conference. I decided to conduct the interviews after the post conference related to the second guided reading lesson.

Each coach held two pre conferences, observed two guided reading lessons, and held two post conferences with each teacher they selected, one novice and one experienced, which included eight coaching dialogues, for a total of 16 audio-taped conversations that were transcribed later by the researcher and coded for analysis (see Data Timeline Appendix L).

The data collection cycles with each of the four coach/teacher dyads occurred during their regularly scheduled coaching sessions over a four week period. Therefore, the coaching sessions were held once every two weeks. The units of analysis for this

study included (a) the eight individual cycles across the coach/teacher dyads, (b) four cases consisting of each coach/teacher dyad, and (c) cross case analysis. The transcriptions of the pre and post conferences and interviews total 396 pages of typed text (see audio tape log Appendix M).

The literacy coaches in this district as with all literacy coaches affiliated with Literacy Collaborative continue to teach children 50 percent of their time daily while being released to provide professional development for classroom teachers as a regular part of their instructional day the remaining 50 percent of their time (see Cycle of Learning Appendix A and Framework for Professional Development Appendix B). One component of the professional development includes coaching. The coaching cycle generally focuses on one topic and includes a series of pre conferencing, teaching and post conferencing (debriefing) with the literacy coach (see Sample Lesson Plans Appendix V and Sample Coaching Notes, Appendix W). Additionally, the literacy coaches build a reflection component into the process. Sometimes the reflection is in the form of a written reflection, completed in the presence of the coach or immediately following the session. I did not obtain access to these reflections for this study. The sessions are aimed at supporting the teacher as she hones her teaching practice. Therefore, the process is very flexible which affords the coaches the opportunity to decrease the amount of support provided as they deem necessary.

The literacy coaches emailed me the dates and times of their coaching sessions. I provided the audio-recorder for the pre and post conferences. The amount of time varied with each session and each coach/teacher dyad. Although the times varied, the average time for pre-conferences was approximately 15 minutes; the classroom observations

ranged in duration from 35-45 minutes each; finally, the post conferences averaged 27 minutes (see audio tape log of pre and post conferences and interviews, Appendix M).

In order to give the participants privacy and freedom to discuss topics openly, I did not observe the pre and post conferences. Occasionally, I supported the teacher by staying in her classroom during the pre or post conference, if the teacher needed someone to watch her students while she conferred with the literacy coach. When the coaches observed guided reading instruction with the classroom teachers, I video-taped the lesson. This assured that the literacy coaches were able to focus on the teacher and the children, rather than the taping of a lesson for a research study. At the onset of this study, I anticipated that the data from the video-taped lessons may be needed for analysis. However, as the study progressed, I realized that it was not necessary to analyze the contents of the guided reading lessons. However, I continued to collect them in the event it was needed.

Interviews were conducted with participants to provide a better understanding of their instructional beliefs for teaching reading (see Appendixes F and G). Additionally, the interviews elicited how teachers believe literacy coaches have supported their thinking and scaffolded their knowledge development of the reading process. The interviews with teachers were approximately one hour in duration and the literacy coaches' interviews were approximately 90 minutes in duration (see Appendix M for Audio Tape Log). Both were held at the participants' convenience and a location of their choice. I collected copies of lesson plans (see Appendix V) and coaching notes (see Appendix W). However, as the study progressed, I realized that it was not necessary to analyze these documents because they were not used during the coaching interactions.

Researcher's Role

Krathwohl (1998) stated that nonparticipant observation “provides the research freedom to concentrate entirely on observation and to become sensitive to the significance of what is occurring” (p. 252). My role during the observation of each of the eight guided reading lessons was that of a non-participant observer and was explicitly discussed with each participant prior to the onset of the study. My role altered somewhat because I did not observe the pre conferences or post conferences in order to allow the participants more freedom and protection. However, at the onset I began the audio-tape and upon conclusion, the participants stopped the tape. The observations and interviews occurred in the natural setting, that is, in the classrooms and the schools. The observations were prescheduled with the camera or tape recorder visible to all participants. During the interviews I continued to function as a non-participant by asking the participants’ perspectives without offering suggestions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of making sense of the data according to Miles and Huberman (1994). In this section I describe the methods employed for data management, data reduction, data analysis, and data interpretation. As the data were collected, a system for organizing the data for efficient analysis was essential. Coding the data, reducing them into meaningful segments, combining the codes into broader themes, and making comparisons in the data tables, charts, became the core of qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2007). Consequently, I coded and indexed from the very beginning, and finally represented the data in figures and charts. As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), designing the display assisted in the data analysis process. I looked for patterns,

similarities, and differences across the cases and created tables and charts to assist in my analysis.

Data Reduction

Miles and Huberman (1994) referred to the process of data reduction as one that enables the researcher to manage the data by summarizing, coding, and selecting themes (see sample matrix and themes Appendix X). To reduce the raw data collected in the form of field notes, tape recordings of interviews and observations, I expanded the field notes and transcribed the audiotapes immediately following data collection. I personally transcribed all of the interactions recorded—the personal interviews (see Sample Interview Appendix S), the pre-conferences (see Sample Pre Conference Appendix T), and the post-conferences (see Sample Post Conference Appendix U). By transcribing the tapes myself, I had multiple opportunities to listen carefully and focus on the data collected (see Audio/Video Tape Log Appendix L). The transcription process varied in duration by the length of the tape. I used a digital recorder and slowed the tape to the speed in which I could type. I listened and typed, simultaneously transcribing the words. Then rewound the tape, reread the transcription to verify if they matched the words I was listening to on the tape. It often took multiple rereadings and retyping to accurately capture every word, pause, and utterance spoken. I listened and reread until each phrase spoken was accurately transcribed.

The first phase of analysis consisted of focusing on the discourse that occurred between the literacy coach and the teacher during their coaching sessions, both pre-conference and post conferences in the following domains: (a) The content or topics of the coaching conversations that supported teacher learning about the teaching of guided

reading, specifically the teaching of the strategic actions for processing text (see Appendix P) and (b) the content or topics as it related to the coach supporting teacher reflection (see Appendix R). The second phase of analysis consisted of noting what if any were the differences between the two coaches and their work as it related to the teachers in this study. The interviews were the third phase of data analysis. Each research question was placed in a matrix. The information gathered from the interviews and the pre and post conferences were categorized by research question. To facilitate the ease of data retrieval, I color coded the text, indicating if the information was gathered from an interview or from a pre/post conference session (see Sample Matrix for Research Questions Appendix X).

Systems of Strategic Actions, A Strategic Processing System

There are many aspects of the teaching of guided reading (see Description of Guided Reading, Appendix C). However, this study focused on one aspect, the systems of strategic action. Another step of data analysis for this study consisted of how the literacy coach supported the teachers' knowledge development as it related to helping students build a strategic system for processing a variety of texts. An individual processes information and constructs meaning all the time: while anticipating reading; during reading; and sometimes long after reading is over (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006). This work is invisible to the reader and teacher because it is done in the child's head. Comprehension involves an individual deliberately selecting cognitive, linguistic, sensory-motor, artistic, and creative strategies for making meaning of the text (Almasi, 2003). Ways of processing a written text are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Ways of Processing a Written Text

Ways of Thinking	Systems of Strategic Actions for Processing Texts	
Thinking Within the Text	Solving Words	Using a Range of strategies to take words apart and understand what words mean while reading text
	Monitoring & Correcting	Checking on whether the words being read look right, sound right, or make sense
	Searching for and Using Information	Searching for and using all information in text
	Summarizing	Putting together important information while reading; disregarding unimportant
	Fluency Adjusting	Reading that is fluent, phrased, & expressive Reading in different ways based on text; adjusting rate if necessary based on purpose
Thinking Beyond the Text	Predicting	Thinking about what would follow next while reading
	Making Connections	Searching and using connections to personal experiences, learning from the world, and reading other texts
	Inferring	Going beyond the literal meaning of a text but what is implied by the author
	Synthesizing	Putting together important information from the readers own experiences and background knowledge in order to create new understandings
Thinking About the Text	Analyzing	Examining elements of a text to know more about how it is constructed
	Critiquing	Evaluating text based on the readers personal, world, or text knowledge

(Fountas and Pinnell, 2006)

To analyze the coaching dialogue as it related to teaching for strategic processing, I adapted the work of Fountas & Pinnell (2006). Table 1 illustrates this framework. I analyzed the coaching discourse in each of the sixteen pre and post conferences as they related to the teaching of strategic processing (see Sample Data Analysis for Strategic Actions, Appendixes P and Q)

To further explain how the above framework can be adapted to analyze coaching for the use of strategic actions, the following is an excerpt of a transcript from a post conference between one of the coach/teacher dyads. I categorized and coded the kind of strategic processing the coach is scaffolding for the teacher. During the post conference conversation the coach is discussing with the teacher the previously taught guided reading lesson using a nonfiction text.

Coach: Think about the readers and the reading process, what did you do to help build the reading process....thinking about your introduction, what did you notice that the children were able to use or what were you teaching through the text?

[Coach was scaffolding the teachers thinking around the strategic actions]

Teacher: Well...I was seeing if they could make any predictions or if they already knew anything about Japan.*[Predicting]*

Coach: You gave each student opportunities when you started with your hook question, “what do you know about Japan?” I wrote down everybody made some little comment about what they knew about Japan, so as you were doing this, you were giving them an opportunity to...*[Coach gave evidence of teacher and student actions, then paused for teacher to process; thus,, scaffolding the teacher to think about a strategic actions.]*

Teacher: Personal connections [*the teacher responded with one of the strategic actions; during the interview the teacher explained that this type of support from the coach was the most help to her as it helped her realize that this is important for her to continue to do*]

Coach: To make personal connections. [*Coach repeating, affirmation.*]

Teacher: Would that be considered worldly connections, knowing what they know? [*Teacher realizes there is more than one kind of connection*]

Coach: Absolutely, that would be worldly connections, and they were connecting it to Mexico, and even to eating the food with sticks [*giving more evidence*]

Teacher: and the way they dressed [*giving more examples*]

This portrays an example of how I adapted Fountas and Pinnell's (2006) systems of strategic actions for processing texts to code the dialogue between the teachers and the coaches. To further clarify, a processing system refers to having access to and working with several different types of information to arrive at a decision (Clay, 2001). Processing a text involves a wide range of actions consisting of thinking within the text, thinking about the text, and thinking beyond the text (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006). Fountas and Pinnell (2006) identified twelve systems of strategic actions readers and understanding these systems of strategic actions is foundational to planning explicit lessons, helping students during individual conferences, introducing texts in guided reading and guiding discussions after reading. A teacher's goal is to enable readers to assimilate, apply and coordinate systems of strategic actions. Each of the literacy coaches in this study have had training in these strategic actions. When the district trainers observe the literacy

coaches within the district, they often analyze their work with teachers based on the use and discussion of the strategic actions.

The value of teaching students how to process text strategically is grounded in research on theory and advanced learning (Pressley, Goodchild, Fleet, Zajchowski, & Evans, 1989) because strategies enhance learning. However, the authors explained that this is not necessarily a regular part of the school curriculum because the strategic process approach is relatively new and may be unfamiliar to some classroom teachers. There are six reasons for teaching students to become strategic readers: (a) strategies enable readers to organize and evaluate texts; (b) it coincides with students' cognitive development in other areas; (c) strategies are self-selected, therefore students can take control and use them flexibly; (d) it fosters metacognition development; (e) research shows it can be taught to children; and (f) teaching students to become strategic readers promotes their growth and development in all areas of the curriculum (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). Teaching students to use strategic actions will enable them to read text with greater comprehension and retention.

Dialogue related to Tactical Components of Guided Reading

As I coded the coaching discourse, two broad topics emerged that were tactical in nature. One related to the teaching of guided reading and the others related to coaching in a general nature (i.e. next steps, coach offering supporting, etc.). The below dialogue is from the same coach/teacher dyad used in the above illustration. As the coach/teacher dialogue continued during their post conference, the following excerpt is an example of other topics that were discussed:

Coach: You could tell that the students were very engaged in this book because they shared connections....they talked so much....and during the intro they wanted to go ahead...[*book selection*]....do you feel like they were engaged?

Teacher: Yes, I think they used a lot of connections. They used a lot, like with the language and connecting it to what they already know about Mexico...so I feel like they were ready to dive in and start reading. [*making connections*]

Coach: At the same time, you were showing them about the boxes, showing them the variety of non-fiction formats [*book selection/demands of the text*]

Teacher: The different boxes that were in there with Japanese characteristics? [*book selection/demands of the text*]

Coach: Yes...You took them to the part of the non-fiction...pointing out the table of contents and then you gave them opportunities to locate [*book selection/demands of the text*]

Teacher: Yea, and use it

Coach: You took them to the glossary, and they were able to make that connection that the words to remember were the same as the glossary, “island”. [*book selection/demand of the text*]

The topics that were discussed by teachers and coaches that were not related to the teaching of the strategic actions (see Description of Guided Reading Appendix C). were characterized in my data analysis as tactical.

Teacher Reflection

Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, and Schock (2009) explained that “examining real-life literacy coaching interactions can provide insight on the elements of coaching

conversations that are the most effective in fostering teachers' reflection on their instruction and on students' reading and learning (p. 500). To analyze the reflection, I reviewed each sentence based on the work of Schön (1983) who first identified that people used reflection to improve their practice. Rodgers and Rodgers (2007) stated "coaching teacher reflection is the kind of work that lends itself to exploration through conversation; reflection, therefore, fits hand in glove with the coaching process" (p. 63). Transcriptions of pre and post conferences were read multiple times determining the reflective nature of the discourse using Schön's model of the ladder of reflection (see sample analysis of post conference for reflection Appendix N and sample analysis of pre and post conferences for reflection, Appendix O).

The next step of the data analysis was the interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). First, I prepared the transcripts: finding, refining, and elaborating concepts, and events; and coding the interviews to retrieve what the interviewees have said about the identified concepts, themes, and events (see Appendix X). Next, I compared the concepts and themes across the interviews, seeking to answer the research questions in ways that allowed me to draw broader conclusions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

External Validity

A cross-case comparison of the data from each of the four case studies was the final step of the analysis process. Cross case data displays were helpful for this part of the analysis (see Appendixes O and Q). The cross-case analysis added external validity to this qualitative study (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Establishing Credibility

Beyond these data analysis strategies, Miles and Huberman (2004) presented different phases in the data analysis process such as writing marginal notes, drafting summaries of field notes, and noting relationships between the categories. Verification of the conclusions is as important as the conclusions that are drawn, otherwise “we are left with interesting stories about what happened, of unknown truth and utility” (Miles & Huberman, p. 11). Therefore, I asked a district level trainer of literacy coaches to analyze the transcriptions of the coaching interactions and share his thoughts. The trainer analyzed each pre-conference and post conference, verified my analysis with 92 percent accuracy. This cyclical process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification occurred before, during, and after data collection.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a procedure used to establish the trustworthiness of the data and the integrity of the analysis. This was ensured by using multiple data sources such as interviews of teachers and coaches, observations of teachers teaching guided reading lessons, observations of coaching sessions, and observations of the literacy block of the teachers involved in the study. As noted above, I examined the data from multiple vantage points. By comparing the interviews of the teachers to the coaches and comparing the work of the teachers in multiple coaching sessions, the data from these different sources were aggregated. The trustworthiness of the data was strengthened using multiple methods of data collection. Member checking, according to Krathwohl (1998), is one check on the authenticity of the researcher’s analysis. Therefore, as outlined by Krathwohl, during the interviews, I restated, summarized, and paraphrased the

information received from the participants. Additionally, during the data analysis process, I contacted participants for further clarification as needed to confirm accuracy.

Ethical Considerations

“Regardless of the approach to qualitative inquiry, a qualitative researcher faces many ethical issues that surface during data collection in the field and in analysis and dissemination of qualitative reports” (Creswell, 2007, p. 141). I fully explained the purpose of the study and secured informed consent from participants; and I did not share any personal experiences with participants during interviews in order to allow every opportunity for the participants to share and respond openly to me without limitation. All participants remained anonymous and could withdraw from the study at any point. The participants’ anonymity is protected by assigning aliases to the individuals. The participants did not have any more professional risks than in a normal day of life. Additionally, I strived to minimize risks by building a rapport with the teachers. Trust existed prior to the onset of the study with the literacy coaches because of my previous role in the district. I have only worked in the district for four years and was initially hired as a district literacy trainer. Because of this, the majority of my focus has been working with the literacy coaches and providing professional development for them. I did not have relationship with the teachers in the study. Therefore, I thought that it was important to build a relationship prior to the study by stopping by their classrooms prior to the study and talking briefly with them.

Storing Data

According to Creswell (2007), the storage of qualitative data varies by

approach to inquiry. From the onset, I developed a filing system for the information gathered, whether the data were field notes, transcripts, or rough jottings. Data collected remained confidential and stored in a secured location. Backup copies of secure computer files were developed. I used high-quality tapes for audio and video-recording information during interviews and observations. I adhered to the following principles about data storage and handling: (a) developed a master list of types of information gathered; (b) protected the anonymity of participants by masking their names in the data; and (c) developed a data collection matrix (see Appendixes L and M) as a means of locating and identifying information for the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The data timeline (Appendix L) was very helpful to document where I was in the data collection process. The log (Appendix M) was necessary to document the information collected in the digital recorder. I transcribed the recordings directly from the digital recorder in order to have the capability to slow the tape to a speed in which I could type. Then, after the transcriptions were completed, I saved the files on my computer and burned them to a CD, and finally deleted the files on the tape. This allowed me to continue to have enough space on the digital recorder throughout the research process.

Summary

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing semi-structured interviews (Appendix A) and observations as primary investigative tools. Triangulation, accomplished through examination of multiple data sources, provides credibility for the study. Through creation of a thick, rich description of the research findings, analysis of

data gathered, and careful notation of themes found within the study, I delved deeply into the conversations between literacy coaches and teachers, the support literacy coaches provide teachers and how each individual conceptualized this support, and how literacy coaches support teachers' understanding of the reading process and reflection. In chapter 4 I report on the findings of this research

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine the conversations between teachers and literacy coaches to determine how teachers perceive support from coaches. In this chapter, I report on these findings in three main sections:

1. Biographical information about each participant and her beliefs about students, teachers, and learning will be highlighted. This section will contain findings for research questions one, two, and four: How does the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the coaches? How does the discourse found within coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the teachers? What if any are the differences related to training and knowledge of the coaches?
2. A description of the characteristics and interaction patterns of reflection within the pre and post conferences will be included. This section will contain findings from research question three: What patterns of discourse are seen within coaching interactions: (a) Do the interactions support teacher reflection during the dialog? If so, how? (b) Do the interactions support the teachers' understanding of teaching for processing strategies within small group reading instruction? If so, how?

Additionally, a description of teaching for processing strategies within the pre and post conferences will be highlighted.

The following descriptions of the participants provide the context in which subsequent findings are set. I have used pseudonyms in an effort to protect the anonymity of participants. The coach and teacher interviews are the primary data source for the descriptions. Through interviews, I was able to capture the thoughts, descriptions of coaching interactions, and the background of experiences of two literacy coaches, KeKe and Missie, and the four teachers they coached. KeKe coached Tami and Jo while Missie coached Jodi and Jenni.

Coaching Interactions as Described by the Coaches

KeKe, Literacy Coach

A number of themes permeated KeKe's talk about coaching and reading instruction, including (a) belief in balanced literacy, (b) designing lessons based on student needs, (c) power of modeling specific teaching strategies for teachers with children who are struggling, and (d) the importance of having conversations with teachers to help them reflect on why they made specific teaching decisions. Each theme is discussed below.

KeKe Describes Supporting Student Learning

KeKe stated that she believes in teaching balanced literacy and has seen it make a difference in children's lives. She explained that balanced literacy is an instructional framework consisting of a mixture of language and word study activities, reading workshop, and writing workshop. The framework is flexible, allowing numerous variations in grouping and teacher directed instruction. Prior to embracing a balanced approach to teaching reading and writing, the district utilized direct instruction to teach reading in the elementary schools and every teacher in each grade had to teach the same

lesson, the same day. KeKe explained "...There was no teaching for meaning; it was not reading for meaning....and students didn't have the comprehension..." Her strong belief about designing lessons and building on children's strengths was evident as she talked about learning from the assessment of children's strengths and needs. KeKe shared, "Prior to Literacy Collaborative it would just break my heart.... when you know a child is here, and you are being asked to have him on lesson 100 on this day, whether he is really there or not." During the interview she shared a story that had touched her personally and professionally. KeKe shared:

I taught a Reading Recovery student in first grade, who began at level zero [below the lowest reading level], who could write only one word, and now he is going into fifth grade. He was in my son's first grade classroom. My son was reading at level M/N while in first grade [approximately third grade reading level] and now this little boy has caught up and he is reading in the same reading group as my son, they are at T/U [approximately fifth grade reading level]...It just shows that it doesn't matter where you start....this little boy was one of the first Reading Recovery students I taught... I had him first round and so, that's my success story.

KeKe believes literacy coaches help teachers reflect on their teaching of reading, which impacts their teaching practices in general. She shared, "Literacy coaches probably help teachers reflect 100% on their practice in general, talking about the whole child, reflecting on other subject areas too." KeKe realizes how much she helps teachers think about their teaching. Reminiscing about how difficult it was for her to reflect on her teaching practices while in college when she was asked to write a reflection about her teaching, she determined that not having anyone to talk to was the missing piece for her. "I can't imagine," KeKe stated, "what would happen if we didn't have a literacy coach or someone to facilitate that....we are constantly reflecting....it's a collegial conversation. It's just the relationship...and trust is so important."

When asked to describe expert teaching practices for teaching children to read KeKe explained that a teacher has to know each individual child. To that end, KeKe explained that a teacher must take running records on each child weekly. “Running records capture what the readers said and did while reading books or text” (Clay, 2000) Through the analysis of running records, KeKe described how a teacher would have developed knowledge of the actions a child was making, the sources of information a child is using, and whether or not the child is self-correcting, monitoring, and rereading. To KeKe, teaching reading includes helping children make connections during interactive read aloud and other literacy activities. For example, KeKe asks herself and the teachers she coaches to think about what can be done to support the reading process during interactive read aloud or in other literacy activities. In an interactive read-aloud the teacher engages students in a series of activities, including pre-viewing the book, asking students to make connections and using prior knowledge. The teacher stops periodically to emphasize story elements and asks focused questions. During interactive read aloud, the children are actively involved asking and answering questions, rather than passively listening.

To learn more about KeKe’s beliefs about teaching reading and writing, I asked how Reading Recovery training and being a literacy coach had influenced her teaching of reading and writing. She responded, “It’s influenced my teaching in lots of ways.... The most influential for sure would be being able to individualize and start with where the students are and move them.” KeKe shared, “I have a strong belief about building on children’s strengths, from where they are, and that’s always been my belief, before even any kind of professional training.”

KeKe's Describes Supporting Teacher Learning

Designing professional development based on teacher and student needs was clearly one way KeKe supported teachers. She planned most of her training to occur during the school day. By designing the training during the school day, children are available for observation and demonstration purposes. A typical teacher training session began with talking and reading a little about a topic during which time KeKe gathered information about what the teachers already knew about the specific topic they would study. Then, she took the teachers into a classroom, and they observed her teaching children. She modeled for the teachers exactly what they had just talked and read about in their professional texts. She realized it was important for them to see her work with children, especially children who were not easy to teach and to make a connection to the professional readings. Additionally, it was evident that she wanted teachers to experience seeing how a teacher's actions could make a difference in how children learned. KeKe explained:

I select a group of children that I am struggling with so the teachers can see the shifts the children make when we try the things that we are learning about in our training....plus, I think that helps them to hold onto what we just talked about and what we are learning when you see it right then, in action....and then we post con [post-conference] about it and see what they took away...what they learned ...and what they can try in their own classrooms with their own kids.

Missie, Literacy Coach

A number of themes emerged through conversations with Missie about coaching and reading instruction including (a) expanding teachers' thinking through questions, (b) designing instruction based on student needs, and (c) helping teachers become more careful observers of student behavior. Each theme is discussed below.

Missie Describes Supporting Student Learning

When asked to describe the expert teaching practice for teaching children to read, Missie explained that it is the understanding of all the dimensions of reading—phonemic awareness, phonics instruction, fluency, background information and vocabulary, and comprehension. Missie believes that students cannot be taught these dimensions in isolation. Missie explained that as a coach, she observes children through multiple coaching opportunities and then she begins to ask herself and the teacher with whom she is working questions about what they are observing about the child. She also notices the actions a teacher takes and what happens with the students as a result of these actions. Additionally, she analyzes why the actions might have occurred.

Missie was a classroom teacher during all the years the district supported direct instruction, but for her, it was not that great of a shift to move towards designing lessons based on student needs because she innately taught this way. Missie said:

This whole process is...guided reading...not having a basal in front of me telling me everything to do, and just freeing kids up...it hasn't changed me drastically, because I did a lot of this on my own before...but just thinking about what it takes to be a reader and a writer, especially the writing, is where I've probably changed my instruction, big time.

Missie's Describes Supporting Teacher Learning

When asked about the professional development she designed for her teachers, Missie shared information about her most recent design, cluster coaching. She explained how she selected three out of six teachers from one grade level to work together for approximately one hour. They observed one of the teachers teach a guided reading lesson. Afterwards, the group planned the lesson for the next day. Each teacher who

observed on day one was asked to take one part of the lesson to teach the following day. She explained that the group planned the lesson for day two together. This work illuminated many ideas and various strengths from each teacher. Missie explained that the group of teachers worked together to select a book to teach that would best meet the needs of the children. Additionally, they planned each part of the lesson together. The teachers had the opportunity to do things differently than they might have done in their own classrooms. Missie provided the cluster coaching for the remaining three teachers in the grade level later in the week, replicating the same design. She explained that there were distinct differences in the receptiveness of the groups. Missie shared that one group was much more open than the other group. Missie stated “It’s one of the most powerful opportunities I’ve designed...I received a lot of positive feedback.....although it wasn’t as powerful with the first group of teachers... it really made me think about how to group the teachers from now on.”

Missie explained that she had hang-ups about asking teachers questions in which she already knew the answer because it felt like she was being manipulative. During the interview, Missie gave these questions as examples of things she asked teachers, “What did you notice happened when you said.... and...How did the child respond to that?...Why do you think the child responded that way?” She has learned that questions in which she already knows the answer are important to explore with teachers to help them begin to think in different ways about their teaching practices.

Coaching Interactions as Described by Teachers

Analysis of the four teachers’ interviews revealed ten common themes. Teachers believe that literacy coaches support them by giving them feedback, giving them

confidence, making connections to learning theory, praising their teaching, helping foster teacher reflection, identifying specific behaviors students are exhibiting, modeling teaching practices, referencing professional texts, providing language to use while teaching reading and writing, and identifying observable evidence of how the teacher's practice supported student learning. I have highlighted, through quotes, the dominant themes. The information is presented in three sections: biographical information about the teacher, teacher beliefs on how literacy coaching supports teacher learning, and teacher beliefs on how literacy coaching supports student learning.

Tami's Description of Literacy Coaches Support of Teacher Learning

At the onset of the interview, I asked Tami about how literacy coaches support teachers. Laughingly, she responded, "I was just having this conversation with a friend of mine...my friend said, what's a literacy coach... and I compared it to a sports coach and how that person is there to guide you and support you." The recurring theme from Tami was that KeKe named things for her. Tami would teach a lesson, then afterwards KeKe would tell her what she was doing and then how the children responded. From the interview with Tami it became apparent how important it was for her to know that her teaching practices are more than simply gut reactions and responses to children. By the coach referencing professional texts to describe the things that she was doing, it seemed to give her teaching actions credibility. Tami shared:

The follow up part...[during post-conferences after the lessons, KeKe says] this is what I noticed you doing and names it and shows you...I had no idea that's what I was doing....it was beneficial to the students, but I didn't realize that it was actually something specifically that I was doing.

When I questioned why it was important that the coach name it, Tami responded:

It just... gives me clarification... a concrete something that I could go back to.....it's like painted in my head.... if it hasn't been addressed and noticed, you may just never do it again...It depends on what the actual situation may be, but the fact that she would say this is what you were doing and show me in a book that this is what you were doing and this is an example.....and what it is doing for the students... it helps you to go back and continue to do these things for your students.

Tami's appreciation for the literacy coach was evident as she explained how much she had learned over the past three years. She felt like she had grown as a teacher due to the help and support of KeKe. Furthermore, Tami believed that over 90 percent of how she teaches can be attributed to the support of the literacy coach. The other 10 percent she attributes to her own experiences.

Tami's Description of the Coach Supporting Student Learning

Tami explained that the interactions she had with the literacy coach were always focused on the students and what they needed to know and be able to do. She shared a specific example of how the literacy coach supported student achievement by extending her role to support any struggling learners in first and second grade by offering an extra tutoring session before school. One of Tami's students was in this group and the child exceeded on the state test in the spring. Tami attributed the child's success to working with KeKe.

Tami shared that KeKe designed test taking genre studies for the teachers which included teaching strategies. Additionally, KeKe scheduled time to come into their classrooms and work side by side with the teachers, modeling for the teachers and the students test taking strategies. Tami shared that supporting teachers with test taking as a genre study was only one aspect of how KeKe supported student learning. When questioned about the greatest impact the coach had on student achievement, Tami

responded, “I know that when she names exactly what I’m doing, and I’m like OK, that’s what this is, and I’m going to keep doing that....I would say that’s been very impacting.”

Jo Description of the Coach Supporting Teacher Learning

Jo attended high school with KeKe and they have been friends for a long time. Initially I wondered if Jo’s friendship with KeKe would influence her responses during the interview, but this subsided when she was able to talk about KeKe critically. When I asked Jo what she would do without a literacy coach, she quickly responded that she wouldn’t be nearly the teacher that she is now, without KeKe’s help and support. Then Jo explained:

We go back a long way and she is a dear friend too. I feel like sometimes she doesn’t feel uncomfortable...but having that relationship....I know how to take what she is saying and I don’t take it in a critical way...I know it’s positive criticism and coming from her, being the person that she is...you know, I just take it and then move forward because.... she has never ...meant it to come across [negatively] that way, but I know that’s part of her job...this is what I’m seeing...this is what we need to do next to move forward....she’s fabulous.

As a first year teacher, Jo describes the literacy coach as her “go to” person for any literacy based need. From our conversation it was evident she believed the literacy coach had offered her tremendous support this year. In particular, the feedback she gained has helped to establish her teaching practice. When asked how much of her teaching practice resulted from the professional development experiences offered by the literacy coach, Jo responded, “All of it.” When I probed for her to put a percentage with it, she said, “100 percent.” While pondering how she would feel as a teacher if the school did not have a literacy coach, Jo shared:

I don’t think it [professional development] would be effective...because to me, everything that we are doing... has to be some kind of link or tie back into the classroom... I would perceive it as just going into a college

classroom and just sitting there and them giving it to you...it would not be as effective....she's taking everything that she's teaching us...she's doing the follow-up, the modeling....it would not be near as effective.

A key point in Jo's statement is her reference to the "link or tie back" into the classroom provided by the coach. This statement captures the significance of having a literacy coach on site providing professional learning as compared to attending a workshop or conference. Secondly, Jo referenced her pre-service experiences and indicated it was less effective in comparison to on-site coaching. Jo continued to explain the full range of professional development experiences: theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1995) which is provided by the literacy coach in the teachers' classroom while working with her students. Jo stated:

I don't think it would be nearly as effective if she couldn't come back into our classrooms....we wouldn't get ANY feedback....and we wouldn't know if we were doing it right or not...if you don't have anyone coming there to observe you or coach you, you may be thinking, well I'm doing everything wonderful and I'm doing it just the way it needs to be done....if you didn't have anyone else to observe you and tell you otherwise, and she gives very great feedback!

Jo's Description of the Coach Supporting Student Learning

As we continued to talk about how the coach had supported her, Jo shared how her confidence had increased because she knew that KeKe was checking in with her on a regular basis. During Jo's interview, her responses to questions regarding teacher learning and student learning were intertwined, one hinged on the other. As evidenced in the following excerpt from an interview, it was clear that she valued someone lifting her thinking and how this type of work translated to increased student learning. Jo said:

Yes... it gave me more confidence... she gives us pats on the back and tells us, I can see great work that you're doing...she sends us emails to let us know that she's been in the classroom.... I don't think that I would be near the teacher that I am now....she's so enthusiastic and her enthusiasm

just flows over into the kids and the teachers...I don't think our school would be near as successful K-2 if we didn't have that...but having that relationship...I know how to take what she is saying and I don't take it in a critical way...I know it's positive criticism and coming from her, being the person that she is...you know, I just take it and then move forward because... I know that's part of her job...this is what I'm seeing...this is what we need to do next to move forward.

Jo continued to explain that the support the coach had given her made a difference on how she taught children. She shared how her knowledge had increased on the importance of text selection for read aloud due to working with the coach. She has learned how to integrate across the curriculum by purposefully selecting read alouds. Additionally, she learned that she should have a rationale and a purpose for selecting books to read aloud to the children. She has seen how this purposeful teaching has helped the students in their school become more successful. Jo stated, "I don't think, not only would I not be as successful, but I don't think our students here would be ...I think it's [having a literacy coach] a huge component of our students success."

Jodi's Description of the Coach Supporting Teacher Learning

During my first year in the district, I had the opportunity to observe in Jodi's classroom. She volunteered to be the host teacher for the literacy coach, Missie, and Missie and Jodi invited me to observe their writing workshop. The host teacher is the classroom teacher of record and the literacy coach acts as a guest teacher in the classroom, working side by side with the classroom teacher. I was excited that Missie selected Jodi to participate in the project because I was eager to observe in her classroom again.

Because Jodi had worked very closely with Missie through the years, she has an in-depth knowledge of the coach/teacher relationship. She was quick to respond that the

role of the coach was to help teachers get better at what they are doing and perhaps for the coach to get better at what she is doing. Jodi continued to explain that Missie always tries to support and expand her thinking, to help her grow in her professional knowledge of teaching literacy. However, there was doubt of the value of this support as evidenced when Jodi shared:

But sometimes I feel like, its' maybe just because she needs to find something to improve in, do you know what I mean? I can almost always see myself, which is I know, the point of it, they want you to see...what did you think that you didn't do as well in, but I can almost always come up with it on my own, so sometimes I feel like, not every time, but sometimes I feel like it's not always the best use of my time.

As I listened to Jodi share, I began thinking about how the things I was hearing her say were about her, as a teacher. She identified herself as strong-willed. As such, she has definite beliefs about what and how to teach. If she believed that the coach's role was to find something inferior in her teaching every time they worked together, then she may resent the work of the coach. She also stated that she was capable of determining for herself what she might need to change or improve upon, almost always without assistance, a possible indication of her reflective nature. Because of these statements, I inferred that Jodi may not fully understand the coach's role. She may believe that the coach was trying to mend her teaching although Jodi attributes 50 percent of her teaching to what she has learned from Missie.

Jodi's Description of the Coach Supporting Student Learning

One aspect of the coach's role is to support the teacher's learning, however, there is another significant role of the coach, to improve student learning. Therefore, probing further, I asked Jodi if she had ever thought about how the coaching, although it may support her as a teacher, may be more about helping her teach the students, than really be

about her teaching? She paused for quite some time to think and then shared many examples of how Missie had offered her feedback on student behaviors related to her teaching. Jodi explained that she always tried to make sure that she implemented whatever Missie suggested to improve student learning. This aspect of the interview was significant because it highlights the importance of clarification of the literacy coach's role, clarification that could benefit teachers and coaches. Literacy coaches need to ensure their work with teachers is focused on the students' work and learning. Moreover, by grounding the work with teachers in student learning, the coach can simultaneously create shifts in teachers' practices that might otherwise be lost if disconnected from student learning.

Another theme Jodi indicated as important was the coaches' language when she works with children. She shared her experiences of observing the literacy coach as she modeled lessons and worked side by side with her in the classroom. She believes that the most helpful knowledge she has gained from the coach is acquiring the language the coach used as she taught the students during writing. The most helpful phrases she acquired are "Writers, today, we are going to learn....and... Watch and listen as I... and Good writers.... and ...I've been noticing that...and....Turn and talk to the person beside you about..." Jodi realized language such as this helped the children begin to believe that they are "real readers" and "real writers." According to Jodi, prior to working with a literacy coach, the language she used with children did not reflect her expectations of them as learners. Even though she had strong beliefs about teaching literacy through a balanced approach, she stated that she did not treat her students as writers or readers previous to working with the literacy coach.

Jenni's Description of the Coach Supporting Teacher Learning

During the interview Jenni explained that this year working with the literacy coach had helped her to realize that she needed more education. Jenni stated:

This year has given me the opportunity to realize that is something that I need, there are so many things that they [the students] would not understand vocabulary wise and you really have to watch the language you use and maybe say it several different ways. I don't have any preparation at this point, but is something I am definitely working towards.

Additionally Jenni alluded to the need to learn more about working with English language learners. Since she had previously taught pre-k for three years, she began wondering why it was something she had noticed this particular school year. I probed further by asking if there was a specific reason she noticed it more this year. Jenni said:

In Pre-k there's not a whole lot of you know, testing... So this year with running record and the comprehension questions and things like that we asked in guided reading. It really opened my mind to think, these kids don't have the same experiences, not necessarily the same experiences, but they don't use the same vocabulary at home, so where one child may know what a phrase means because their parents use it at home, these ELL and other language children, their parents, don't use the same language in those experiences, and so you know I can remember, I had a student this year thatwe went through the whole story and I explained at the beginning of the story what the term meant, and at the end of the story, he said now Ms. Jenni, what is that? What does that mean? I had explained it to them... and it was a very simple experience but he had no.....there's was no prior knowledge of it, and it is something that I need to be more aware...

As I talked with Jenni I was struck by her honesty and learning spirit. She conveyed how much she depended on the literacy coach for support throughout the year. As indicated in the quote below, the relationship between the two is so strong that one would think they have been close friends for many years, when in fact, the two only met

at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. The relationship has been strengthened through the work they have done together. Several dominant themes emerged from my conversation with her including (a) the confidence she gained from working with the coach, (b) the benefits of the coach modeling lessons for her, and (c) the importance of the relationship between her and the coach. When asked how she was supported by the literacy coach, Jenni responded:

As a new teacher.... she's....my go to person, if I need anything she's there. If I have a question....she's there. She comes into the classroom and watches me to see....if I'm really understanding what I'm supposed to be doing.... For me...it's more like a friendship, there is a lot of trust....I trust her with my strengths and I trust her with my failures.... it's a safe kind of relationship where I can go to her for anything...that I'm struggling with and to know that she's always going to be there and she's always... going to make time to come in if she needs to and model.... I really appreciate that....I'm a visual learner and I like to see it... so that I can implement it and practice.

When I asked Jenni how much of her teaching is a result of the professional development experiences from the literacy coach? Jenni responded:

For me this year, it's probably close to 85% because I've really leaned on her...I can come up with some things on my own but a lot of it, I rely on Missie to at least...run my ideas by her, you know, and ask her things like, what do you think about this? Is this appropriate?

Because Jenni spoke with such passion about the coaching experience, I asked her if it had changed the way she felt about herself as an educator. She responded:

I think it gave me more confidence, someone actually cares about what I'm doing...and whether I'm succeeding and if I'm not. It's not pushing me down. It's building me up and helping me become better. But it's definitely given me a lot more confidence.

Summary of Participants

Learning how coaches support teachers from the teachers' perspective and from the coaches' perspective was my entry point into this study. I purposefully selected

literacy coaches with varying degrees of experience and training. I learned that the teachers and coaches were thoughtful and dedicated colleagues, who are working together to increase student learning. Through the analysis I learned that the coaches' perspectives and the teachers' perspectives of the way coaches support teachers varied greatly. I believe this is due in part to their roles. From the training coaches receive, they have a clear understanding of the reading process. Additionally, they use their understandings of the reading process as a basis to compare what the teachers know and understand as demonstrated by their teaching practices. This information can then be used to design professional learning experiences for the teachers, based on their individual needs.

The participants' responses to the questions asked during the interviews answer research questions one and two. The most prevalent theme that emerged from teachers and coaches was the power of modeling as a way to support teachers. As evidenced by the comments in the interviews, each participant is very passionate about improving instruction. In the next section of this chapter I analyze interaction patterns within the pre and post conference coaching sessions.

Characteristics and Interaction Patterns within Pre and Post Conferences

This section will include the findings from four dyads, each of whom participated in two pre and two post-conferences related to classroom observations of guided reading lessons, for a total of eight coaching sessions. I conducted two phases of analysis on the pre and post conferences. The first phase consisted of analyzing the interactions as they related to reflection. The findings from these interactions answer research question three: What patterns of discourse are seen within coaching interactions? Specifically, how to the

interactions support teacher reflection during the dialog? How do the interactions support the teachers' understandings of teaching for processing strategies within small group reading instruction?

The first phase of this category of data analysis consisted of studying the interactions during the pre- and post-conferences seeking to learn if and how the dialogue scaffolded the teacher's knowledge of teaching reading and the reading process strategies. The interactions of each dyad occurred in the following sequence. The first interaction was the pre-conference. It allowed the coach and teacher an opportunity to discuss the upcoming lesson. The second interaction was the classroom observation. The coach observed the teacher in the classroom, teaching the lesson discussed during the pre-conference. The concluding interaction was the post conference that was held after the lesson, at the earliest possible time, in order to discuss the lesson while it was fresh on everyone's mind. This interaction pattern is on-going, occurring approximately every two weeks.

Conversations between Teachers and Coaches and Reflection

In order to analyze the conversation and how the coaches supported teacher reflection, the pre-conference and post-conference conversations were analyzed through multiple, line-by-line readings. Then the interactions were categorized using Schön's (1987) descriptions (see Appendixes N and O). The analysis included finding evidence of the following: affirmation, questions, answers, criticism, demonstration, imitation, telling, description, advice, and descriptions of design. Additionally, I found all of the pre-conferences to be much shorter in duration than the post-conferences. During the pre-conferences, questions were asked by the coaches more than any other type of

interaction. For example, during a pre-conference KeKe asked Tami, “Last time we talked about two children in particular: Anna and Neva. You were a little worried at times about their comprehension and their talking about the story. Is that still accurate?”

The coaches used the pre-conferences to determine the focus of the lesson and how the teacher might be supported. For example, during a pre-conference KeKe said:

I noticed the last time when we were working with that group, you had done a lot of work with fluency, and you had really been teaching to that, and trying to get them to read with expression. Tell me about what we’re going to focus on today.

This is a significant finding and I will discuss it further in Chapter 5. If the teacher wanted the coach to look for something specific regarding students’ reading behaviors and/or the teacher’s actions, the teacher requested this during the pre-conference.

Further analysis of the conversations during the pre and post conferences revealed telling/describing (Schön, 1987) as the next dominant element of the conversation. This element allowed several kinds of learning to be interwoven into the work between the teachers and coaches. The teachers were learning how to design guided reading based on students’ needs, the strategic teaching moves should be concomitant with these needs. The teachers were learning how to design (Schön, 1987) guided reading lessons. The post-conferences consisted of twice as much dialogue because they were inclusive of the teacher’s actions and how the children responded to those actions. The post-conferences consisted primarily of questioning, telling/demonstrating, and descriptions (Schön, 1987). As I analyzed both pre/post conversations, often the teachers and the coaches were talking at the same time, sometimes they even finished each other sentences. Schön (1987) explained these are all elements of reflective dialogue between a coach and a

student (in this study, the student is the teacher). The chain of actions and reflections described by Schön were clearly illustrated in the coaching conversations.

When I interviewed KeKe, I asked her how she thought coaches helped support teacher reflection, she responded:

Well.....of course they are always reflecting when we have a post-con [conference] or really even a pre-con [conference].... because you're thinking and reflecting on why you chose that book, and why you came up with what you're doing, your plan for the kids and why you're doing that.

From KeKe's response, it became clear that the conversation between a literacy coach and a teacher during the pre and post conferences is the beginning phase of reflection-in-action as described by Schön (1987). As I probed further, KeKe added:

Then asking them, why did you choose this word work for today?
.....They're reflecting, OK, why I am choosing this word work...what did my students need...there is so much more behind it, than just coming up with some words for word work, and then the form of how they are going to do the word work and why they thought their students needed that.... their introduction, how much they are giving, how much they are not giving, they are having to reflect on that, and then the reasons why.

When asked if teachers are able to change their teaching practices based on reflection-in-action, KeKe responded, "Yes, some people definitely change more than others, you know, your most reflective teachers and the ones that you know that are really willing to take it on." Schön (1987) explained reflection-on-action occurs after teaching. Literacy coaches facilitate reflection-on-action when they post-conference with teachers immediately following lesson observations. KeKe shared more thoughts about post-conferences:

And...it's been very interesting...and then for post-conferences of course for reflection, because they are thinking about their students, student learning, what their next steps should be, they are reflecting on the strategic actions, what did they use, and then we are reflecting on...and they write their reflection in the post-conference.

Table 2 presents the type of interactions between the coach and the teachers representing the largest percentages of interactions noted in the pre-conferences and post-conferences.

Table 2

Percentages of Coaching Interactions and the Reflective Dialogue Represented

<i>Level of Experience</i>	<i>Novice</i>	<i>Experienced</i>	<i>Novice</i>	<i>Experienced</i>
<i>Coach</i>	<i>KeKe</i>		<i>Missie</i>	
<i>Telling</i>	<i>38%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>28%</i>
<i>Questioning</i>	<i>21%</i>	<i>27%</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>22%</i>
<i>Description of Design</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2%</i>

How does the coach support the teachers' teaching for processing strategies?

The question in this phase of the data analysis is how does this dialogue support the learning of the teacher? It is this dialogue that develops and increases teachers' understandings of the reading process.

The next step of data analysis consisted of analyzing each pre-conference and post-conference for how the coaches supported the teaching of the strategic actions of reading: solving words, monitoring and correcting, searching for and using information, summarizing, maintaining fluency, analyzing, critiquing, inferring, synthesizing, making connections, and predicting as explained in the review of the literature. The next section of this chapter contains the results of this analysis.

Teaching for Processing Strategies

I purposely selected literacy coaches with varying degrees of experience to ask to participate in this study because I was hoping to learn if the variation would bring insight into the importance of literacy coaches' background of experiences. KeKe had Reading Recovery training and Missie had a specialized coaching training in addition to the literacy coaching training that they each had. As I examined coaching interactions—pre-conferences and post-conferences, my goal was to gain insight into how the coach was helping the teacher use observable evidence to build the teacher's understanding of the reading and writing process.

Within-the-text interactions included conversations about solving words, monitoring and correcting, searching for and using information, summarizing, fluency, and adjusting. About-the-text interactions included conversations about analyzing and critiquing. Beyond the text interactions included conversations about inferring, synthesizing, making connections, and predicting. Tactical interactions included discussing introductions, writing about reading, the overarching meaning of the book, word work, meaning, structure, and visual information, book selection, prompting, integrating across the framework, next steps, additional support from coach, and implications for English language learners. The percentages were calculated based on the total interactions.

Table 3

Percentages of Coaching Conversation

<i>Type of Strategy</i>	<i>Within</i>	<i>About</i>	<i>Beyond</i>	<i>Tactical</i>
KeKe	35%	10%	22%	33%
Missie	17%	3%	13%	67%
Total Responses	52%	13%	35%	100%

The second phase of this analysis consisted of analyzing the interactions related to teaching for processing strategies of novice and experienced teachers. Table 3 represents the percentages of interactions related to teaching for strategic actions for processing text between the coach and experienced or novice teachers.

Table 4

Percentages of Coaching Conversation Related to Strategic Actions for Processing Text

<i>Level of Experience</i>	<i>Novice</i>	<i>Experienced</i>
<i>KeKe</i>	35%	31%
<i>Missie</i>	11%	23%

KeKe's (the coach with more specialized literacy training) coaching emphasis was on helping teachers focus on within the text actions such as solving words, monitoring and correcting, searching for and using information, summarizing, and maintaining fluency. Of those interactions, solving words was the primary theme of her coaching interactions and maintaining fluency was the next most discussed. When supporting teachers on within-the-text strategies, KeKe's coaching interactions focused

on talking with the teachers about analyzing text. She often referred to her own personal work with students and how she was striving to pose more questions related to critiquing the text. Beyond-the-text strategies include using inference, synthesis, connections, and predictions. Of those strategies, as much as 40 percent of KeKe's interactions were focused on making connections. Overall, KeKe's analysis of the coaching discourse indicated that 67% of her conversations were about strategies that would support the teaching of strategic actions of within, about, and beyond the text; while only 33% of her coaching discourse is related to the tactical components of guided reading.

Missie's coaching interactions and emphases were very different than KeKe's. As coaches work with teachers, there are numerous topics other than the strategic actions that occur during the coaching interactions. I will refer to these interactions as "tactical in nature." As I was analyzing the conversations around teaching for processing strategies, I realized there were many other interactions occurring and that these also provided insight into the real-life coaching interactions.

Additional topics during pre-and post-conferences may include selection of text discussed, prompting for the various reading strategies, and special needs related to specific children. After analysis of the pre-and post-conferences was complete, the findings indicated that Missie's coaching during the pre and post-conferences primarily emphasized concepts related to the basics of "how to" teach guided reading. Missie's interactions focused on designing book introductions and giving the overarching meaning of the book to the students. Further analysis of data revealed the discussion on the overarching meaning was situated within conversation that related to the book introduction. Although these interactions are important, I was surprised to learn that such

a large percentage of the interactions related to the more basic understandings of how to design a guided reading lesson, rather than strategies “about” and “beyond” the text.

Below are examples of the coaching interactions from each coach and teacher dyad to give examples of how the coaches provided support using observable evidence to build the teachers’ understanding of the reading process. Furthermore, it is an example of the coach talking more than the teacher.

KeKe and Jo

The dialogue that follows is an excerpt taken from a post-conference. It indicates how KeKe (K: the coach; J: the teacher) specifically references the processing strategies, refers to her notes, and gives the teacher concrete evidence of the students’ behaviors:

K: What do you see as we’ve talked about their strengths and some things we’re noticing...all these are down for strengths...them solving words...monitoring and correcting, searching and using information, fluency, summarizing, do you see anything that you might be a next step...um....I know when we looked at the running records before they had there were few miscues...

J:...um-hum..

K:...hum....let’s look at your lesson plan and my notes from today....we know it’s about structure...but it’s obvious that they are able to break words apart, they are able to find, they are able to problem solve on the go, they were able to find parts they knew, going from left to right, they are using lots of strategies, they are putting their finger in at the tricky part, and like you said, they are not just dropping down to the visual information because they were checking the picture too.

KeKe and Tami

Table 5 is an excerpt from a post-conference which illuminates KeKe using observable evidence as feedback for the teacher regarding teaching decisions she made based on student actions, she affirmed the teacher for the actions, and she

poses questions to help prompt the teachers thinking towards next steps.

Additionally, it is another example of the coach dominating the discussion.

Table 5

Excerpt from Post Conference-Coach Uses Observable Evidence as Feedback

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations	Description
<p>K: Yes, land surrounded by water is what he said...so at the end... you had modeled for them, you had done almost some pre word work that tied in well with some word work at the end of the lesson, I know, “erupted” that you had not planned to go to that word.</p>	<p>Coach gives evidence of what students said</p>
<p>T: They had first started calling it exploring, then Alondra was like it can’t be exploring because there’s not an x in there, but we had to go in there, we weren’t planning to, but it kinda presented itself to us.</p>	<p>Teacher interpreting student ‘s response</p>
<p>K: After that, instead of moving on in and starting in with their reading, you did a really nice job of restating your principle statement... to help build their reading process, this work that you’ve done in the introduction is not just about going to the pages and locating words, when they were locating the words,... I noticed you all were reading it together in text, so it was always meaning based, and you have the context there, and you did a very nice job of summing up your principle statement and when we read a word we have to make sure we read all the words around it to help us see what it means. That was just a really nice job of helping them to think about when they read a word and you even said, when they figured out erupted, ok we broke it apart, and we know how to break it apart, and read it, but what is the meaning of that word, and then you prompted them again, so what are we going to think with this book, because even in non-fiction books they are going to do extra thinking because it does have that content in there. You did a really good job of summarizing all the work and teaching you had done in the introduction. So, as far as the reading process, what was one thing that you taught into there?</p>	<p>Coach affirms teacher for specific teaching actions</p>

Table 5

*Excerpt from Post Conference-Coach Uses Observable Evidence as Feedback
(continued)*

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations Continued	Description
<p>T: I guess, ...going back to not only do they have to decode the word I'd guess you'd say, but they have to read it and try to figure out within context, infer what the meaning is, based on the words and sentences around it</p>	<p>Teacher reflecting on student moves</p>
<p>K: Right, yes. And the meaning and the comprehension, you said that was going to be your focus for your lesson and that was one of the reasons you had selected the text and... Did you feel like it was meaning based and they did have lots of opportunities and you had lots of opportunities to model for them and help them with their comprehension?</p>	<p>Coach questions teacher, pushing for further reflection</p>
<p>T: I think so, I'm still concerned about one in particular, most because it has to go back with visual with her, she's just read a word or started at the beginning of the word and go on, so mostly going back and getting her to self monitor so she can get that comprehension, I think she has more comprehension than I see. I think she is still getting a lot of the meaning, even though she is missing some of the visual things.</p>	<p>Teacher reflecting on student work and student strengths/needs</p>
<p>K: Right, I'm hearing you say Nada, she is attending, she's relying mostly on the visual information and what we want her to do is to use both sources, really all three sources, the meaning, the structure that it sounds right, and the visual, but we need her for sure cross-check the meaning and the visual information. And I know when she got to that word boar, and after she read it and you helped her get to the word, you reread and you were helping her trying to get to the meaning of the word and you said, well it talks about a snow monkey and a deer, those are both animals, so what do you think a boar is? So I know that you are really providing that extra support for her to try to get to the meaning of words. I think she understood that it was an animal... She said it was a kind of a monkey. So I'm going to have to show her....</p>	<p>Coach restating strengths of student Coach affirmed teacher actions</p>

Missie and Jodi

Table 6 is an excerpt from a post-conference that exemplifies Missie, the coach, helping the teacher understand the importance of ensuring that the book introduction sets the students up for success in grasping the overall meaning of the book. By exploring this during the post-conference, Missie uses evidence from the lesson to build the teachers' understanding of the reading process. The teacher selected *The Flood* for the children to read. In anticipation of the children not knowing the meaning of a flood, the teacher found a real picture of a flood on the internet and printed it for the children to see. She referenced the picture during the book introduction. One could interpret that a teacher with a Master's degree in teaching reading would have learned the basics of designing a book introduction that would give the gist of the book and support the children's successful processing of the text. However, someone observing the children other than the teacher can offer additional insight into the children's learning. The teacher is making many teaching decisions, on the run, while teaching. It is very difficult for a teacher to see and understand every interaction within a guided reading lesson. A literacy coach assists the teacher by actively noticing how the children respond to the teacher's language and actions.

During the post-conference, at the onset, Missie and the teacher both shared examples of the children's reading fluency because the teacher had specifically asked Missie to note the children's fluency (ex. school plays instead of school picnics, Saturday instead of Sunday, part instead of party). It is important to pay close attention to fluency because it is closely connected to reading comprehension. According to the National

Reading Panel (2000) fluency has been a neglected area of reading instruction. The National Reading Panel (2000) defines fluency as "...the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression" (p. 3-5). Prior to the National Reading Panel's report, fluency was easily seen as word recognition and oral reading phenomenon. Samuels (2002) a pioneer in research and theory in reading fluency, explained that the construct of fluency includes reading comprehension. "To experience good reading comprehension, the reader must be able to identify words quickly and easily" (Samuels, 2002, p. 167). Pikulski and Chard (2003) extends this definition of fluency to "the rapid, efficient, accurate word recognition skills that permits a reader to construct the meaning of text. Fluency is also manifested in accurate, rapid, expressive oral reading and is applied during, and makes possible, silent reading comprehension" (p. 2).

Pinnell et al., (1995) established a clear correlation between fluency and comprehension in a large-scale analysis of data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress in Reading. In that study, 44 percent of the subjects were found to be disfluent when reading grade level material that had been previously read silently. The study also showed a significant, positive relationship between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension performance. Developing meaning and comprehension of a text is connected to fluency. It was important for Missie to discuss the children's fluency because the teacher asked her to look for this during the lesson. However, Missie might have extended this work to higher levels than simply reporting back to the teacher by sharing examples of "how" the teacher could teach *for* fluency if she had the knowledge base and the understanding herself.

During the next phase of the post-conference, Missie shifted the teacher's thinking towards the overall meaning of the story. The teacher shared that she thought the picture had indeed helped the students understand a flood. However, Missie had evidence supporting that the students had difficulty understanding the overall meaning. Concepts in the story such as the water coming up to the treetops and a boat coming up to the house were not familiar to the children. By using this evidence of the children's inability to access the meaning, Missie was able to shift the teacher's thinking. Without the support of the literacy coach, the teacher would have never realized the picture she shared with the children was not enough information for them to gain full understandings. The teacher realized that the coach was accurate in her analysis that the children did not understand, evidenced by this excerpt during the post-conference. The teacher asked Missie to help her with the next book introduction. Missie used the opportunity to demonstrate other options of how the book introduction may have looked.

Table 6

Excerpt of Coach/Teacher Interaction Focusing on Book Introduction

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations	Description
J: So maybe you could help me on the next story...how could I prompt them to figure out the meaning? So are you saying my introduction should be a little less? ...I mean still giving them some, but not...	Teacher asking coach for assistance on prompting for meaning; Teacher asking coach for assistance with book introduction
M: But maybe you giving them everything... for instance in this book	Coach analyzing lesson
J: Or maybe just telling them, after we've talked about the way that I helped them build meaning, now remember you can do this yourself when you start reading	Teacher beginning to reflect and rethinking teaching actions
M: Or in this book, when they said OK....you showed them what a flood was, so as we looked at, and you took them into page 5, so what are you noticing about a flood, so what does it look like? And then, because I even thought about it like, you know, gosh, look at the car...	Coach models the book introduction and questions that may have been posed
J: uh-hum	
M: Just a quick minute...OK and look...there's a branch going down, and then you could, like right here, oh, my goodness look, and the water's coming in the house....so maybe getting, letting them, really understand, because we've never been in a flood....so maybe and I'm thinking...they, we can, figure that out on our own, what it may be like, but do they have that capability, in order to take themselves from knowing this is what it looks like	Coach continuing to model book introduction
J: And in a way, they kinda did that	Teacher reflecting
M: (both talking at one time) They did a great job!	Coach affirming

Table 6

Excerpt of Coach/Teacher Interaction Focusing on Book Introduction (continued)

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations	Description
M: I wondered about right here with the boat, when they had a hard time with boat, why would a boat come up and this picture right here, look at what's happening, the water has gone up, there's the treetops... and is this really where you would see a boat? So maybe helping them understand that a boat normally doesn't come up to your house...	Coach continuing to model book introduction
J: uh-hum...	
M: But in this story, it does, and this could be afterwards...that's what I'm wondering, if they had a little more conversation, that maybe you could do a teaching point right there so just as we started looking at this and thinking about this flood and what does it look like. You could do that when you are reading a book, you know, just think about what's happening, if you don't understand a piece of it, think about what's going on, what it looks like....so that's what I'm sorta thinking.	Coach asking teacher to consider giving the students more opportunities for conversation during the book introduction
J: OK...	Teacher agreeing
M: Does that make sense...and we'll work on it with that...I was....	Coach verifying teacher understands
J: Just prompting them to stop and think about what's going on,	Teacher clarifying
M: Exactly because if our goal	Coach confirming
J: Story said, instead of me reminding them	Teacher realizes she had only asked students to think about a flood and had not really helped them to think about the impact the flood would make
M: Right, as I thought, your picture, that was so good, and right here [referenced <i>Comprehension and Fluency</i>] it says you and your students can talk about the pictures and any text, any time. So I really thought about it; instead of just pointing out something, have them talk about what's happening, so wonder what that would do for them as they move on through....	Coach references professional text

Missie and Jenni

In the following excerpt (Table 7) from a post-conference, Missie supports Jenni, a novice teacher, by using observable evidence from the lesson to affirm the actions she's taken and noting the shift she has made in her own teaching regarding the realization that reading is a meaning-driven process. This excerpt further demonstrates how Missie uses questions to promote teachers' thinking.

Table 7

Excerpt of Coaching Interactions Demonstrating Coach Affirming Teacher Action.

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations	Description
<p>M: (reading over her notes)...you're right here...what.....it was after you got them in the book, who can tell me what an island is.....how can you get there, look at the picture, what do you need to do with a boat, when you get it there, boom, and then you said, OK, what do you need to do as good reader. And LaShay said, you gotta know something about the book, what is one thing a good reader thinks? And she said, "about the book." Then you tried to get a little bit more specific and she said, pictures</p>	<p>Coach refers to notes where teacher asks students what good readers think about...she provides a replay for the teacher of teacher and students comments</p>
<p>J: Pictures, look at the pictures</p>	
<p>M: And then Megan said, "sounding it out, words," and then you got it, lead her to making sense; and then they did something ...Zack...about what would happen and you let him know that. So right here, maybe, you know, if you had said, so as a reader, we have to get an idea about what this book is about and keep that meaning. Why do they have to know it?</p>	<p>Coach uses evidence of student and teacher actions. Coach emphasizes the importance of teachers helping students understand the meaning of the text and offers suggestion to teacher</p>
<p>J: What the book's about?</p>	<p>Teacher clarifying</p>
<p>M: Yea, why...what does a good reader do.....they do these things but.....why?you see, J: Uh-huh...to connect</p>	<p>Coach encourages teacher to think about the rationale and to share rationale with students....teacher has made a big shift in her teaching and thinking and the coach is trying to make sure that teacher knows exactly what she has done and the importance....and now she wants the teacher to go to the next step....and teach the children the "why"</p>
<p>M: To connect, so.....I was thinking if this piece after you do your introduction and you talked about it, so then, as a reader, we've got to.....think about what's happening in the story to help us</p>	
<p>J: Understand it</p>	
<p>M: And make sense and all...and if we are thinking about the story, we are thinking about the words that make sense on the page....they are so....you were...all of ya'll are just I mean look at the....to me....you're shift was so huge though today when you said, something about the meaning in that pre-con</p>	

Table 7

*Excerpt of Coaching Interactions Demonstrating Coach Affirming Teacher Actions.
(continued)*

Dialogue in Coaching Conversations	Description
J: Yea	
M: When you were like....oh my gosh, the meaning is what's...	
J: The meaning needs to come first...	Teacher clarifying
M: AndI thought.....oooh....could I please have this quoted and hung up! But anyway....but that's what I'm thinking.....they did process this a lot better....but did they understand why they were doing it? And then, how could we condense that so that they had a little bit more of the story....to help them create that meaning. Does that make sense? Do you know what I'm saying?	Affirming teacher regarding her personal shift towards more of an emphasis on meaning; Coach reaffirms this shift in thinking
J: Yea....so I guess..... I think at this point, that they... they're actually thinking about the stories	Teacher reflecting; critically analyzing student learning.
M: Yes	
J: Where before...they weren't	
M: They weren't	
J: There was no meaning	

In other comparisons of the pairs of coaching dyads' discourse, other dimensions stand out more than others. From the above excerpts, one can note that overall, the coaches talk more than the teachers. Language connects ideas and issues during the learning process and has been shown to be an important tool (Cazden, 2001; Johnston, 2004; Rogoff, 2003). Therefore, if coaches dominate the conversations, teachers have little opportunity to utilize language to think through an idea for consideration.

Additionally, when examining the coaching discourse for the coach “telling” rather than using inquiry to promote the teacher’s reflective thinking, the data revealed that KeKe used inquiry based discourse more than Missie (see Table 8).

Table 8

<i>Percentages of Coaches “Telling” or “Using Inquiry” to Promote Reflection</i>		
	<i>Telling</i>	<i>Inquiry</i>
KeKe	34%	40%
Missie	37%	30%

Summary of Teaching for Processing Strategies

When I compared the coaches’ interviews and the pre-post coaching conversations, I realized the coaching conversations varied greatly between Missie and KeKe. Of the total coaching interactions for KeKe and Missie in this study, KeKe supported teachers by coaching for processing strategies 67 % of the time, whereas Missie supported teachers by coaching for processing strategies 33 % of the time. Each coach/teacher dyad consisted of two pre/post-conferences and observation of two guided reading lessons. The first pre/post-conference and the second pre/post-conference of each dyad were very similar. Each time the coaches worked with the teachers, the conversations were quite similar. The significance of this rests in that I observed two coaches working with two teachers on two separate occasions. Since there was very little variation between the first pre/post-conference and the second pre/post conference, one could interpret that the observations were typical and likely to reoccur. When a coach predominantly focuses on the “how to” of teaching, the dialogue between the coach and the teacher is necessary but not sufficient to impact student learning. Conversely, when a

coach is primarily focusing on teaching for processing strategies, teachers and students are being supported to predict, critique, synthesize, analyze, and infer.

Differences in Novice and Experienced Teachers

This phase of data analysis consisted of noting the differences between how the coach worked with novice and experienced teachers and how the novice and experienced teachers responded to coaching. In the interviews, the novice teachers reported overwhelming support and appreciation for the literacy coach. Jo and Jenni were the novice teachers. Both considered the coach their “go to” person for most all needs and indicated the coach modeling lessons for them was a critical element to give them a clearer understanding of expectations. When asked, how much of your teaching is a result of working with the coach? Jo responded, “All of it.” Jo also explained that the coach gave her extra attention during the year because she was a first year teacher. Jo stated, “She gave me a lot more support to make sure things were going well...checking to see if she could help me with anything.” When asked to describe the coach’s role, Jenni stated, “If I need anything she’s there. If I have a question about anything she’s there.” The experienced teachers each also reported that the coach supported them, although the most experienced teacher (the one having the most years of teaching experience) described the support from the literacy coach as less important. One reason for this variation may be differences in pre-service experiences and the background knowledge of the participants. Another explanation could be differences in personalities. Other explanations could include the coaches’ personal biases or that the participants were simply telling the researcher something that they thought I wanted to hear. I have no evidence to support the differences because I did not capture what the teachers knew and

understood about the teaching of literacy prior to the onset of their work with the coaches.

KeKe reported she believes there are several types of novice teachers. KeKe stated, “Really there are two categories of novice teachers of what I’ve noticed, and this has kinda been new for me this year... you have your novice teachers who just completely want to absorb and take everything in and they are just like, on fire about everything. They would have me in their room every day.” According to KeKe one type of novice is possibly a novice to the grade level, but not necessarily a novice to the teaching profession. The second type of novice, as characterized by KeKe, is one who has learned many of the teaching strategies the coach is working on while in college. Working with this type of novice presents a fine line for the literacy coach. The coach has to acknowledge that the background experiences of all teachers. The coach has to learn what the teachers know. Through this inquiry, the coach can begin to discover what the novice teacher’s beliefs are and the understandings she has about teaching the reading and writing process. KeKe said, “And so, they are just starting out... not wanting to make them feel like they don’t know anything.” KeKe explained that if a coach tries to begin working with a novice teacher too early, it is difficult to determine the teachers’ needs. It can become tricky because sometimes the novice teacher simply does not know that she does not know. Additionally, KeKe explained, “Sometimes, they need to feel like they can kinda get their feet wet and try it on their own and it’s hard because sometimes, they are like, I had some of this in college.” A third type of novice according to KeKe is one who is an experienced teacher, but was not trained by the coach; therefore the teacher is novice to working with the literacy coach. This presents similar difficulties because the

coach does not know what the teacher knows. The coach did not originally design the professional development opportunities for the teacher. KeKe explained the importance of grade level meetings and observations both within and between grades to bridge the differences between the teachers with whom she works.

Missie does not report many differences between working with novice and experienced teachers although she does approach working with the two types differently and she believes they approach her differently as well. Missie notes that novice teachers ask more questions, come to her more frequently, and desire her help in more ways than experienced teachers. Missie shared that she feels more comfortable working with a novice teacher. In particular, Missie explained, it is much easier for her to make a suggestion to a novice teacher than an experienced one. One difference Missie has noted between working with novice and experienced teachers is the difference when selecting individuals for cluster coaching sessions. Missie reports considering the dynamics of how individuals will react to one another is critical and should remain of paramount importance prior to selecting groups and designing experiences for teachers to work together.

Summary

I analyzed the coaching conversations for how the literacy coaches supported teacher reflection and teaching for processing strategies. Additionally, within these areas, I noted differences between the coach working with novice and experienced teachers. The literature suggested that there is little empirical evidence that having literacy coaches in schools leads to increased student learning nor is there documentation or analysis of coaching conversations (Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, & Schock, 2009). This study

contributes to the field in this area by focusing on the coaching conversations in pre-and post conferences between literacy coaches and teachers.

Teacher reflection has long been touted as an important means for developing subject matter and pedagogical knowledge (Dewey, 1933; Schön, 1983; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Therefore, the purpose of the first analysis was to describe the actual conversation and to examine the elements that relate to fostering teacher reflection. The analysis may contribute to our understanding of how teachers modify instruction based on reflective conversations with coaches. I analyzed the interactions using the following categories: affirmation, answering, criticizing, demonstrating, questioning, imitating, telling, a combination of telling and demonstrating, a combination of telling and describing, and a description of the design of a lesson (Schön, 1987). As I examined the data using Schön's descriptions of reflective conversations, each conversation in its entirety fell into one of the categories. This led me to notice the frequency of one category over another. The communication between the teacher and coach consisted primarily of the coach "telling." One could interpret this to mean that the teachers being coached lacked the knowledge that only the coach could provide. Therefore, the coach needed to "tell" the teachers more information. Both literacy coaches used "telling" as their primary method of communication with novice teachers. The second type of communication consisted of the coach asking the teacher questions. When working with experienced teachers, the communication consisted of a more balanced representation of questions, answers, telling, and description of design of lessons. This may be an example of how the discourse between a coach and a teacher changes over time as teachers gain

more content knowledge and as coaches gain more knowledge of what the teachers know and understand.

Analysis of the coaching conversations for strategic processing indicated the coaches provide support for the teachers. The data suggested that a larger percentage of KeKe's coaching conversations were spent on coaching for the strategic actions than Missie's. The use of protocols could be helpful in order to ensure specificity of language within the coaching conversations (see Appendixes Y and Z).

In this chapter, I have reported findings of this inquiry into how literacy coaches support teachers, how the teachers conceptualize this support and how the coaches conceptualize this support. Additionally, I have reported findings on how each coach, during the coach-teacher dialogue, supported the learning of the teacher through teacher reflection and teaching for processing strategies. I provided detailed descriptions of each coach and teacher to capture the thoughts, beliefs, and background of experiences of the two coaches and the four teachers in the study. I included excerpts from the coach and teacher interactions as examples of the support the coaches give the teachers through reflective dialogue. In the next chapter, I summarize these findings and discuss (a) how the findings fit within the literature, (b) how the findings extend the knowledge base, and (c) how the findings set an agenda for further research in this area.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter I discuss key findings concerning the discourse within coaching interactions that support teacher learning and reflection. Following the discussion I describe the limitations of the study and suggest directions for future research. Finally, a vision is shared as a catalyst for considering regarding training of literacy coaches.

Attempt at large-scale educational reform in the United States has typically been top-down, legislated, and/or sponsored and promoted by government agencies or other special interest groups or organizations (e.g. NCLB, 2001, IRA, 2004; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). The intent of the reform has been ultimately to ensure that all children are prepared with the skills and instruction they need to learn to read. Snow, Burns, and Griffin revealed that within the last decade, knowledge of how to teach reading has increased (National Reading Panel, 2000), creating need for professional development for teachers. Because of this increase in knowledge on how to teach reading and the complexities involved, literacy coaching has emerged as a method of professional development that has the potential to significantly impact the teaching profession.

Exploration of the literature revealed that reflection is at the heart of coaching. Schön (1996) suggested that reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one's own experiences while being coached by a professional in the discipline. Through this

process, Schön (1996) and Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, and Schock (2009) explained that individuals could use reflection to improve their practice.

Literacy coaches can provide the scaffold Schön (1996) suggested is needed for teachers to use reflection to improve their own practice. They can help teachers implement instructional strategies and become more effective literacy teachers (Bean & Isler, 2008). However, there is little research about what it is that effective literacy coaches do to develop teacher expertise to improve student literacy.

Within this study, I examined how literacy coaches the discourse between a literacy coach and a teacher. I focused on several important aspects of the work of two literacy coaches and four teachers: (a) How the discourse found within the coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the coaches; (b) how the discourse found within coaching interactions support teachers in their learning as described by the teachers; (c) the patterns of discourse within the coaching interactions related to teacher reflection and teaching for processing strategies within small group guided reading lessons; and (d) what if any are the differences related to training and knowledge of the coaches.

In this final chapter, I will discuss the findings of this study and connect them to each research question explaining how they interface with the literature and extend the knowledge base. Additionally, I will explain how the findings can be used to set an agenda for further research. It is important to mention that the data from the practice of two literacy coaches and four teachers cannot be generalized. However, the observations of these teachers and coaches do underscore the range of practices that others might define as ways in which literacy coaches could support both novice and experienced

teachers in the areas of teacher reflection and the teaching of reading for processing strategies. They also illustrate the rich complexity involved in literacy coaching and the teaching of reading.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers value literacy coaches. While almost twenty years ago, Joyce and Showers (1980) introduced data that teachers implemented strategies at a 90% level if provided coaching, it was only when Reading First (2002) supported literacy coaching on a national scale that many school districts in the United States began hiring literacy coaches for the first time. Three of the four teachers in the study reported that they attributed between 85-100 % of what they know and understand about teaching to their literacy coach. The teacher with the most years of teaching experience contributed 50% of what she knows about teaching to the literacy coach. They greatly exceeded my expectations of what I imagined the responses would be. When I formed the question, “How much of your teaching is a result of your professional development experiences from the literacy coach?” I expected responses that would be broad in nature such as, a lot, a good amount, or not much. However, the first teacher I interviewed immediately equated the response numerically. Hence, in subsequent interviews, if the teacher did not state a numerical response, I probed further by asking, “If you had to equate this to a number, what would it be?” A great learning for me was the clarity a numerical response gives to a question. Often professional development evaluation forms have broad questions such as, “How did you find the information from this session—very helpful, somewhat helpful, helpful, or not helpful.” Equating the response numerically provided great clarity on the significance of the professional development impact on teachers and their teaching as reported by the

teachers in this study. Additionally I learned that literacy coaches support teachers in varying ways and with varying intensity. I discuss these levels of coaching in the next section.

Teachers Describe the Support Coaches Give to Teachers

Bean (2004) identified three levels of coaching. Level one consists of informal conversations, identifying needs or issues, and providing materials based on student needs. Level one provides support to teachers. The coach serves as a literacy expert while remaining the teacher's peer. Level two is more intense, involving co-planning lessons and analyzing lessons. At level two, the teaching is connected to student learning on a small scale. Level three may create anxiety on the part of the teacher and the coach and involves modeling, visiting classrooms, and providing feedback. Each level of coaching is significant and varies in intensity. Level three coaching has the potential to impact student learning in the greatest ways.

Throughout this study, all three levels were present. During the pre-conferences I observed a combination of level one and level two conversations with colleagues, where the coaches and the teachers held informal conversations to design lessons, but the conversations grew more intense in nature as they increased in focus related to student needs. The post-conferences, a combination of level two and three, were more intense in nature. As the coaches and teachers dialoged about the lessons, the interactions consisted of the coaches modeling, providing feedback, and using observable evidence based on the students' performance to build the teachers' understandings.

Relationships

The varying levels of coaching are important because each one plays an integral part in the coach/teacher relationship. Relationships are built through informal conversations with colleagues. As one literacy coach/teacher dyad shared, “relationships are everything to literacy coaching.” For example, one teacher in this study shared that the literacy coach stops by the teachers’ classrooms to ask how things are going and if they need any materials or supplies. Multiple times during interviews the teachers shared that literacy coaches were their “go to” person for literacy related needs. This was later expanded to include most any need.

Role of Coaching

An outcome revealed by the teachers in this study was that literacy coaches are far more knowledgeable about the teachers’ classrooms, their students, and their teaching than administrators. The teachers explained that the literacy coaches spend time in their rooms observing, modeling lessons, noticing student behavior, assisting teachers in analyzing data, and trying to increase student learning. The relationship they have with their coach is far different from that of their administrators. Jenni explained:

Missie is just like another, for me, collaborative teacher. She’s as if she’s a part of our grade level, so for me, she’s more on the lines of a colleague. Principal and assistant principal there’s not as much trust there...just being honest...I think it’s because I feel like they don’t know me and Missie knows me...she knows what kind of teacher I am, she knows my strengths, she knows my weaknesses.... Because she was in my classroom... I get that the principal and assistant principal don’t necessarily have the opportunities that she has to do that...I think that’s the biggest thing...trust.

Jo explained that:

The administrators are always around, but I think it’s a difference because the literacy coach works so much with the children and she’s in the

classrooms versus administration, being as it may, I'm not really in contact with them unless...they come by the classrooms and speak or whatever, but it's a different level of interaction versus with the literacy coach...the literacy coach sometimes knows a lot more about what's actually going on and what the needs are and can communicate some of those things more effectively back to administrators...because she **is** so much more involved in the classrooms and ...picks up on a lot of things that are going on with children....I think it's just a different type of relationship with the principal.

Tami shared that the literacy coach is very involved with her and her students; therefore, her interactions with the coach are a lot different than those with her building administrators. She sometimes was unsure if her building administrators really knew much about her students' abilities. She further explained that in the previous year she had an administrator who knew great details about the children, and if asked what reading level a student was on, the principal typically knew. However, Tami explained that she had a new administrator who did not know much about the literacy project and she simply dropped by the room to notice if they were working or not. Jodi explained that her interactions with administrators may include talking about students or what she was doing in her class, unless she had a question, an overall question that might have to do with education in general.

Principals may have worked traditionally in an input-focused (per pupil expenditures, number of books in the library, student-teacher ratio) environment and believed that the professional development the coaches are providing simply updated teachers about literacy practices. However, in today's environment where accountability is so important in every level of an organization, there has to be coherence within the school and district. Principals as instructional leaders are held accountable for student and school progress. Mraz, Algozzine, and Watson's (2008) study (discussed in Chapter

2) concluded that it is very difficult for principals to do the work in which they are held accountable. The principals in their study stated that they could no longer accomplish their jobs without literacy coaches. Classroom teachers do not function independently within their schools. The work should ripple through multiple layers of the organization, from teachers, to administrators, to parents.

Because literacy coaches seem to have the advantage over principals of knowing students and teachers strengths and needs in more intimate ways than administrators, this raises an invitation to me for administrators to work collaboratively with literacy coaches. One responsibility of the principal should be working closely with the literacy coach to stay apprised of student progress and teacher progress relating to professional learning goals of the teacher. The teachers and literacy coaches have painted the picture that they are very comfortable with the literacy coach being a part of their classroom; therefore, literacy coaches could bridge the relationship between the students, the teachers, and the administrators. As Jo explained, literacy coaches know what the needs are in such an intimate way that they can communicate some of those needs more effectively back to administrators. Additionally, because the literacy coach is so much more involved in the classrooms and knows what the children are expected to know and be able to do, he or she could act as the administrator's guide, sharing the strategies the children are working on and the professional goals of students/teachers while walking in classrooms. This could be accomplished through bi-weekly or monthly meetings. The literacy coach can bridge the administrator to the work of the students and teachers; however, it has to be done with intentionality.

Teacher Learning

As the teachers shared their descriptions of the role of the literacy coach, their examples included the literacy coaches modeling lessons with their students, in their classrooms. The literature references the importance of job-embedded professional learning (Smylie, 1989; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999). Job-embedded professional development opens the door for the work explored by Putnam and Borko (2000) on teacher learning from the situational perspective. They suggested that teacher learning is (a) situated in a particular social context; (b) social in nature; and (c) distributed across the individual, other people, and tools. In what context should teacher learning be situated? From this question, I am led to wonder about the role of the coach. One could extend the concept of “literacy coach” and simply think of this person as a designer of teacher learning: one who situates the learning in various contexts: in the classroom with children, in a small grade level groups, within a vertical team of teachers, or in a wide array of conferences, individual conferences, small group conferences, or a large conference. If we think about the situated perspective (Putnam & Borko, 2000) and if we also remove the terminology of literacy coach, it will allow us to think of professional learning experiences differently. This may help researchers and teacher educators help teachers learn and change in powerful ways.

Teachers in this study extend the knowledge base of the literature on how teachers learn best as they shared how they had learned the language to use when teaching reading and writing by listening to the literacy coach work with their students. If teachers have learned the language to use when teaching by listening to and watching a coach work

with children, and as reported by the teachers in interviews, they decided to use this language, I suggest it may be because they saw the children responding to the language in ways they had never before seen. Additionally, if the teachers borrowed the language of the literacy coaches, it could mean either that they do not have the language of their own yet or that the teachers valued the results being demonstrated and that they wanted to replicate the results. Moreover, the teachers shared that they learned to embrace new strategies when the coaches modeled the teaching strategies with students. By modeling for the teacher, the literacy coach made the work visible and explicit, thus providing a blueprint for the teachers, something with which to compare themselves. The coaches in this study provided many opportunities for the teachers to observe them teaching children. Consequently, how does a literacy coach ascertain what a teacher has learned?

Schools as Learning Organizations

Another idea that has emerged from this study that should be explored is the transformation of schools into learning organizations. Christensen (2008) wrote about schools forcing new innovations into existing structures. Innovations are often considered disruptive and not easily accepted. Rather than allowing an innovation to take root in a new model and allowing it to grow and change how things operate, schools often force new innovation into existing structures. If schools were allowed to be restructured around a context of teacher learning, what might occur? This idea deserves much more attention than I can give in the confines of this study, but it is worthy of further research.

Walpole and McKenna (2008) explained that literacy coaching touches on areas that have previously been peripheral to literacy, including leadership and policy, adult learning, professional development, and coaching directed at content areas. Although this

study did not explore all of these areas, teacher learning as a combination of adult learning and professional development was included.

Every opportunity begins with questions and for literacy coaches to determine what teachers have learned is essential because without knowing, how will the literacy coach continue to work within the teachers' zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978)? Teaching for processing strategies is a skill. What a teacher has learned related to this is vital to literacy coaches supporting teachers' knowledge development. Discovering what the teacher has learned can be accomplished in many ways; however, it will take intentionality on behalf of the coaches.

There is a lack of data connecting coaching directly to changes in teacher practice and student learning (Peterson, Taylor, Burnham, Schock, 2009), perhaps, because we have not captured what the teacher has learned. The research from this study has gotten closer; however, further research should examine the teacher's practices after the post-conference. For example, video-taping a teacher's first attempts at teaching guided reading will allow the teacher and the coach, in subsequent coaching sessions, the opportunity to reflect on the teacher's and the students' progress. By viewing the videotape together, the coach can articulate the teaching and learning process. The coach can support the teacher by verbalizing how the parts fit into the whole, by drawing the lens in and out, scaffolding and supporting the teacher into a higher level of understanding. For example, while viewing the tape, the coach could ask the teacher to verbalize her thoughts, what was important for the children to know and understand. Subsequently, the coach could verbalize what she noticed that was significant and intentional on the teacher's part.

Teacher Learning Connected to Student Learning

An additional strategy coaches could employ is grounding all coaching conversations in evidence of the behaviors the students are exhibiting. Coaching with this type of intentionality is highly targeted and can be accomplished during the post-conference. Situating this as stretching the learning across people: the teachers, the coaches, the students, the administrators, the knowledge is being socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1986). Working with a teacher on consecutive days with the same focus and intentionality, fosters continual growth and allows new learning to emerge. Coaching schedules need to be modified and recalculated to include work of this nature. Coaching schedules are discussed in the next section related to research question two. Without determining what a teacher knows, the dialogue between literacy coaches and teachers could become stagnant and eventually deteriorate.

Professional Development

The teachers in this study suggested opportunities for hands on work that could be integrated into the daily life of the school. This is a superior design of professional development, which is confirmed by motivational research. Renwick and McPherson (2002) reported that when students are interested and have choice in the activity they are more likely to engage in high-level cognitive functioning, concentrate more easily, persevere, and enjoy their learning. During the teacher interviews, when asked to describe the most useful professional development experiences provided by the literacy coach, the teachers cited examples of the literacy coach polling teachers, asking the needs of their students and their desires for upcoming professional development. Additionally, the teachers reported that on occasion, depending on the professional development topics,

the coach broke the group up by grade levels. One teacher reported that when the coach designed professional development based on teacher input, the training was always far superior than when the literacy coach provided training without their input. It was superior because the teacher believed that the work was more relevant, more authentic, and supported the work being done in the classroom. This finding is congruent with those of Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon (2001). Biancarosa, Bryk, and Dexter (2008) concluded from a four-year study of student achievement in 18 Literacy Collaborative schools across the United States that teaching expertise improved and student achievement increased significantly as a result of the professional development provided to teachers by the literacy coaches.

Coaches Describe the Support They Give to Teachers

Literacy coaching is suggested as one way to fill the gaps in reform left by various types of traditional professional development by connecting teacher learning to classroom practice (Wilson & Berne, 1999). The findings from this study certainly support that teacher learning is connected to classroom practice. Both literacy coaches shared examples of the opportunities for collaboration they were building into their literacy training through vertical visits (visiting the grade level above or the grade level below the teacher's current grade level), grade level meetings, and cluster coaching (several teachers working together with the coach) sessions. One might interpret that collaboration amongst teachers improves student learning. There are implications here for further research in this area. Putnam and Borko (2000) explained three themes—learning and knowing as situated, social, and distributed have important implications for research

on the learning of preservice and in-service teachers. Collaboration amongst teachers aligns with learning being social in nature.

Pedagogical Knowledge

Ball and Cohen (1999) explained that teachers needed to have advanced pedagogical knowledge and know how to make shifts in their teaching in response to their students' learning. During professional development sessions and coaching conversations, the literacy coaches in this study provided teachers the pedagogical knowledge that Ball and Cohen described. During post conversations, the literacy coaches were able to give the teachers observable evidence of student behavior from the lessons they observed. Subsequently, the coaches used this evidence to build the teachers' understanding of the reading process. Analysis of the coaching conversations illuminated the disposition of inquiry as teachers and coaches sought to design lessons to increase student learning and to alter teaching practices. For example, the language the coaches used when working with the teachers included phrases such as, "I wonder what would happen if... and what do you think about...?"

Teaching to Reflection

Teacher learning opportunities as described by Darling-Hammond and Ball (1999) should include integrating theory and practice, learning from practice, and having opportunities for analysis and reflection. Professional development and coaching conversations were designed by the coaches to include opportunities for teachers to learn from practice. Additionally, opportunities for analysis and reflection were central to the work I observed between the coaches and teachers. The pre-post-conferences between the teachers and literacy coaches afforded opportunities for reflection. As KeKe stated, the

sheer nature of having someone to converse with the teachers about the texts selected to read and the teaching decisions made during the lesson, epitomize reflection at the highest levels. One must remember that this may be true sometimes, but not necessarily every time. At the conclusion of every post-conference, the teachers in this study wrote a reflection based on the conversations with the coach during that particular session. I did not have access to this reflection data; it was for the teachers' personal use. This was a formal opportunity for reflection, although reflection occurred continually, throughout the coaching-teacher dialogue.

The literature suggests that changes in teaching practices do not happen easily nor do they happen within a short time frame. Rather, considerable time is needed. Recommendations consisted of spreading the learning over the course of a school year, with summer institutes, and follow-up with coaches encouraging teacher reflection (Corcoran, McVay, & Riordan, 2003). Researchers have found that teachers who had 80 or more hours of content-related professional development during the previous school year were more likely to use reform-based teacher instruction than those who had fewer hours (Supovitz & Turner, 2000; Corcoran, McVay, & Riordan, 2003). The literacy coaches in this study provided an array of professional development experiences for the teachers in their schools from course work, to grade level meetings, and pre- and post-conference sessions. The amount of time each coach spent with the teachers depended upon the number of years the teachers had been involved in the district's literacy initiative, but reported that it could exceed 80 hours annually. Although one could interpret that the literacy coaches in this district provide adequate hours of professional learning, it would be important for this to be monitored.

Implications for Training of Literacy Coaches

I purposefully selected literacy coaches with varying degrees of experience and training in order to observe the contrast between the two and to observe what, if any, the differences. One significant discovery from this study was the importance of the coach's knowledge base. The International Reading Association (2004) suggests that school districts hire individuals to be literacy coaches who have an in-depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisitions, assessment, and instruction. How might one acquire this type of knowledge base? Shanahan and Neuman (1997) reported that no study has so successfully influenced remedial instruction than Marie Clay's *Reading Recovery* program. Clay's *Reading Recovery* emphasized instruction based in the context of real reading, using teacher observation as a key assessment technique, and high-quality teacher education. Cox and Hopkins (2006) posited that the instructional and teacher professional development components of Reading Recovery can be considered as core to good literacy instruction. They argued that Reading Recovery has strong implications for university teacher educators at the graduate level (i.e. in courses for in-service teachers) and at the undergraduate level as well. Preservice and in-service teachers need conceptual understandings of the literacy process as it develops for diverse children.

A thorough understanding of how both beginning and proficient literacy develop through the increasingly more effective and strategic use of the various sources of information in a text is critical to avoid the simplistic acceptance of reading as a "theory of reading words." (Clay, 1998, p. 7)

One of the literacy coaches in this study had Reading Recovery training and one did not. From the data collected it was clear that KeKe, the coach with Reading Recovery training, had a better understanding of the reading process and spent a higher percentage of the coaching interactions working with the teachers on the processing strategies, the

use of the strategic actions. Additionally, KeKe used inquiry to support teacher reflection more than simply telling the teacher. Missie, the coach without Reading Recovery training, spent the majority of her time focusing on coaching on the lesson components, more related to tactical knowledge. Tactical knowledge is important, it is the “nuts and bolts” of teaching teachers “how to” teach guided reading, but should not require the majority of the coach’s attention. Focusing on the strategic actions of reading is of far greater value to the students and teachers, because it involves working with higher level thinking skills. It is important to note that the research clearly supports the theoretical principles and instructional assumptions of Reading Recovery (What Works Clearinghouse, 2007). Missie also used inquiry to promote teacher reflection 30% of the time in comparison to KeKe using inquiry 40% of the time.

Literacy coaches without in-depth knowledge of literacy may not fully understand the complexity of the reading process. While in training to become a literacy coach within the coaching model embraced in this district, the participants learn about teaching within a balanced literacy framework, including the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings. They learn about the importance of becoming keen observers of student behaviors and assessing changes in literacy development. However, in order to assist teachers by using observable evidence to build the teachers understanding of the reading and writing process, the literacy coach must fully understand the reading and writing process. Therefore, as the IRA suggested, literacy coaches should have an in-depth knowledge of literacy development (IRA, 2004).

One option as a prerequisite to become a literacy coach may be through an advanced degree program focusing on literacy. In my position in our district, this takes on

great meaning in how I support our current literacy coaches because only one of the 12 has any advanced program training in literacy. This may also be true for other districts that have literacy coaches. In our district, a partnership could be formed with our Reading Recovery teacher leader and additional professional learning opportunities could be designed for our literacy coaches to grow in their knowledge of the reading and writing process. There are implications for literacy coaches in every district that is supported by Reading Recovery to enhance their repertoire and understanding of the reading process through extensive professional learning experiences led by the Reading Recovery teacher leader. Developing the knowledge base of literacy coaches is critical. Jodi, the teacher with the most years of experience who also had advanced preparation at a Master's Level specializing in reading, indicated one of her greatest areas of growth and learning from the literacy coach was in the area of writing.

From the interviews with the coaches, I learned that the most basic conversations between the literacy coaches and the teachers supported teacher reflection. The key to reflection is in taking action or moving forward on one's reflections. Missie realized that there was a great possibility that classroom teachers would not take action based on the conversations with literacy coaches and shared that she worried that they would not. From her, I learned that there is a definite need for literacy coaches to follow up with teachers within the next few days. Missie had not been following up with her teachers. An idea that has emerged from this study is to consider how to intentionally design follow up experiences. Because following up has the potential to impact coaching schedules, perhaps it could be considered as a necessary component embedded within a coach's work day. For example, if a literacy coach works with a teacher one day, within

the next week, the literacy coach should schedule a time to observe the teacher working with the same group of students within the next few days. This would provide the literacy coach an opportunity to determine whether or not the teacher has made shifts in teaching that may have a positive influence on the students' learning. In the absence of follow-up, literacy coaches could focus on a variety of topics with teachers and never know for certain how the children or the teacher have progressed on anything.

Intentionality of Pre-Conferences

From the eight pre-conferences I observed, it was clear that the coaches rarely use the pre-conference to discuss the strategic actions. This leads me to believe that creating a coaching protocol may be helpful (see Sample Protocol for Pre-Conference for Guided Reading, Appendix Y). Potential components of the protocols might be developed for pre-conferences and post conferences. The protocols could include questions that would prompt discussion of how the children are performing in reading in relation to the strategic actions. Use of the protocols during pre and post-conferences would support the discussion of the strategic actions and the likelihood of the discussion occurring should increase. The pre-conferences analyzed in this study were much shorter in duration than the post conferences and were used by the literacy coaches to determine the focus for the upcoming lesson. Through the use of a protocol, the pre-conference could become of greater importance. For example, the protocol could ask the teachers to discuss their students' reading behaviors related to the strategic actions. Additionally, an overarching question for a pre-conference protocol might include, what do you believe are the students' greatest needs? Follow-up questions might include points such as: Based on the students' needs how will you teach *for* them before the lesson, *during* the lesson, and

after the lesson. Moreover, protocol use supports literacy coaches by providing questions for reflection and an organizational structure for their dialogue with teachers.

Currently, the literacy coaches in the district where this study was conducted do not use coaching protocols. They simply go into coaching sessions using their anecdotal notes (see Appendix W). The protocols could be used as a tool to foster reflection more intentionally. Use of protocols could have multiple benefits, one of which is to simplify the process, making the conversation more focused. Secondly, a protocol may increase the level of rigor and reflection during the dialogue if specific questions are given. Reflection is a process in which the teacher or practitioner is intensely engaged and is involved in continual self-evaluation (Showers & Joyce, 1996). For example, questions such as: how did you change your teaching practices today to accommodate the needs of your students or how did you use evidence of what the students know and can do to design your lesson, may be questions the coach would like to know, but may be difficult to articulate. When grounded in evidence of what the students are learning, protocols could support reflection, collaboration, and conversations that would lead to more effective teaching and learning. There are some protocols in a literacy coaching “how to” publication (Boyles, 2007), that are general in nature and are not designed specifically towards coaching for processing strategies during reading instruction.

Implications for English Language Learners

Another interesting discovery from this study was that although the teachers are working with a large number of English language learners (ELL), the questions and concerns discussed between the literacy coaches and the teachers were very minimal. This leaves me with more questions than answers. It could be important to know why the

teachers do not seek help and assistance for working with the ELL's. Additionally, it could be important to know how the ELL students and parents feel about the support and education provided for their children. Protocols (see Appendix Y) developed specifically to encourage conversation to focus on the needs of the English language learners may reveal more challenges than are currently noted by coaches and teachers. Increased knowledge of how to work with English language learners could be important.

Although limited, one additional finding emerged as I analyzed the data related to novice teachers: Age. The children who have grown up since the emergence of the World Wide Web and with an assortment of other digital technology (e.g. cell phones, video games, instant messaging) are now being referred to as the Millennial Generation (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Literacy coaches working with teachers born approximately between 1980 and 1994, may need to give special consideration to specific characteristics of this generation. Howe and Strauss (2000) introduced this cohort and used seven core traits to describe the Millennial Generation: special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving. The novice teachers reported that they loved the feedback from the coaches and found their work with coaches to be invaluable. Indicating that literacy coaches need to set aside time for checking in with the millennial teachers, giving positive, constructive feedback as often as possible. While age is a factor, it is critical to understand the "who" with which you are working. Therefore, it will be important for literacy coaches to adapt to the needs of all their learners, regardless of their age.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations. The participants in the study were purposefully selected. Creswell (2002) explained that in purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals who can provide rich information. The literacy coaches were selected based on their background and experiences, and in turn, they selected the teachers who possessed the required years of experience working with a coach. Another potential bias is the researcher's training and experience in literacy coaching and teaching the strategic actions of reading to children and adult learners. I have ties to the system in this study and this could have inhibited the participants. However, I did not supervise the participants; therefore, this could have decreased the participants' inhibitions. Krathwohl (1998) stated that bias can be reduced through member checking and is one of the most important means of verifying qualitative research. Participants were given the opportunity to read the transcriptions of the interactions for the purpose of verification. Additionally, this study was limited by the questions asked, the small number of participants, through data collection through observations, and my own understandings and abilities in qualitative research.

Summary and Suggestions for Further Research

Literacy coaching is a critical component of the literacy initiative in the district where this study was conducted. The findings from this study suggest that literacy coaches support teachers in significant ways. The teachers reported that the support is dramatic, attributing between 50 and 100 percent of what they know about teaching to working with the literacy coach. Literacy coaches are playing a key role in schools, and the teachers suggested that the coaches can become the link from the classroom to the

administration. Educators who work with coaches should make explicit how coaches are expected to work with the various levels of novice and experienced teachers. Lyons and Pinnell (2001) explained that the goal of professional development is not to perfect an approach to instruction, but rather to promote ongoing learning. As the teachers described their learning and made connections to the literacy coaches, it is possible that because of their “on-going” learning, it was difficult for them to separate the knowledge they learned prior to working with the coach from their current learning. Additionally, Wold (2003) explained that teachers become more effective when they have the knowledges to teach and when to teach it. Literacy coaches may offer this support to teachers, helping teachers to solidify their learning.

Cox and Hopkins (2006) “argued that the theoretical principles, instructional assumptions, and lesson components of Reading Recovery have many implications for the regular classroom, for teacher education, and for professional development” (p. 265). What could this mean for teacher professional development? Cox and Hopkins (2006) suggested that in-service teacher knowledge should emphasize collaborative, systematic work with teachers on knowledge development and teaching strategies. It should include opportunities for reflection, classroom visits focused on coaching, and monitoring by either university faculty or fellow mentors. Schön (1987) argued that teachers’ work is complex, requiring reflective practices. “Teacher reflection is an important contribution to the scholarship on teacher education and development” (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003, p. 253). Ball and Cohen explained that teachers’ should learn to take the stance of inquiry to become active learners while they teach. Literacy coaches may be

able to help teachers learn how to investigate what their students are doing and thinking and how their instruction is being understood by the students.

When calls are made for restructuring the teaching profession itself and redesigning schools to support high quality teaching and learning, one can barely grasp those concepts because they are unexplored frontiers. However, knowing that literacy coaching has emerged as a way to support teacher leadership preparation, as a way to fill in the gaps of teacher knowledge and support schools facing diversity like they have never before seen, is it possible to use the knowledge we have gained about what makes literacy coaching effective to redesign schools and restructure the teaching profession itself? The environment created in schools with literacy coaches embracing a school reform model such as Literacy Collaborative create learning communities. Smylie and Hart (1999) suggest that when changing school structures, the most important aspects are the changes that occur *within* the structures, not necessarily as much about the structures themselves. Thus, drawing attention to the teaching and learning conditions needed to make the new structures effective is important. Coaching may hold the potential to take on this responsibility.

Future research needs to focus on analyzing the shifts in teachers' practice as it relates to working with literacy coaches, within the classrooms. Because there is little evidence of connection between student achievement and literacy coaches, continuing to focus on capturing data related to this is important work. Additionally, an important consideration for future research is documenting what the teacher has learned, the shifts in the teaching practices related to coaching, and how these shifts have impacted student learning.

There are calls for research to document what actually occurs during the coaching interactions (Peterson, Taylor, Burnham & Schock, 2009). This study has contributed to the literature in this area. Moreover, this study sought to understand how coaches support teachers from the descriptions of the teachers and coaches. It is critical that these voices be heard in the conversations about literacy coaching. Neufeld and Roper (2003) wrote, “When coaching is integral to a larger instructional improvement plan that targets and aligns professional development resources toward the district’s goals, it has potential to become a powerful vehicle for improving instruction and thereby, student achievement” (p. 26). “Examining real-life literacy coaching interactions can provide insight on the elements of coaching conversations that are the most effective in fostering teachers’ reflection on their instruction and on students’ reading and learning” (Peterson, Taylor, Burhnam, & Schock, p.500).

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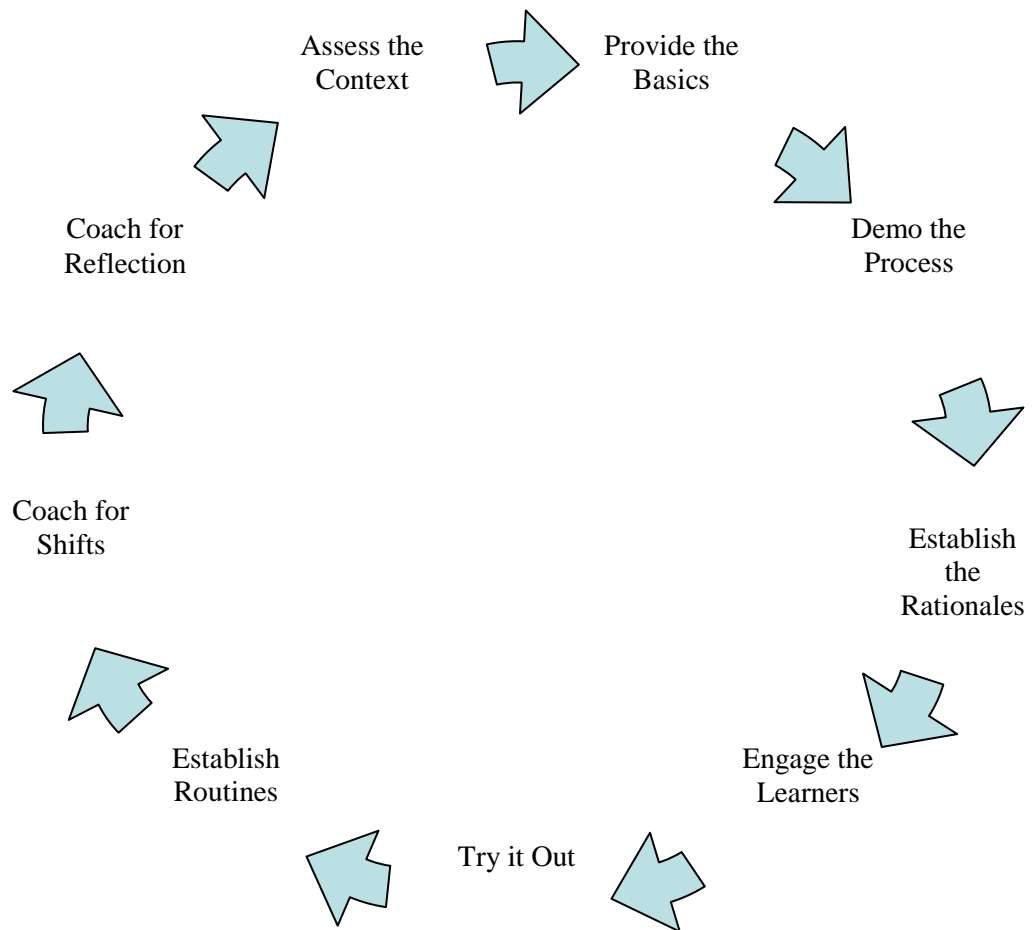
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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

CYCLE OF LEARNING



Modified from Lyons and Pinnell, 2001

APPENDIX B

FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LITERACY EDUCATION

Components	Process	Goal
<p>1. <i>Assess the Context</i> Primarily occurs during the pre-conference and lesson observation.</p>	<p>Observe teaching and learning in the school. Examine teachers' understandings. Observe teacher-student talk. Gather information about students. Gather other contextual information</p>	<p>To find out what the teacher knows and what they want to know. Discover what the teacher is doing that is effective and not effective. To gather student achievement data. To gather information about the school culture.</p>
<p>2. <i>Provide the Basics</i> May occur during professional development or coaching sessions.</p>	<p>Provide a limited number of materials at the beginning. Provide concrete examples of organization and routines.</p>	<p>To equip teachers with the basic materials they need to try a new approach. To help them learn how to organize and use the materials.</p>
<p>3. <i>Demonstrate the Process</i> Professional Development</p>	<p>Demonstrate the procedure explicitly. Provide good examples from experts.</p>	<p>To provide clear, explicit examples of the approach or procedure to be learned.</p>
<p>4. <i>Establish the Rationales</i> Primarily occurs during professional development. May occur during coaching.</p>	<p>Make rationales visible in writing and in talk. Engage participants in stating rationale.</p>	<p>To help teachers understand why the approach or technique is important to learn. To bring student learning to a place of high attention.</p>
<p>5. <i>Engage the Learners</i> Primarily occurs during professional development. May occur during coaching. Coach may model lessons.</p>	<p>Show and discuss examples. Link observation of student behavior to procedures.</p>	<p>To engage teachers in active learning and exploration. To help them visualize the approach in action. To help them begin to analyze student behavior and teacher behavior.</p>
<p>6. <i>Try it Out</i> Most often begins during professional development. However, may be a part of coaching sessions as coach and teacher work side-by-side.</p>	<p>Encourage teachers to try the new technique for themselves. Share the experience and results. Analyze the process for efficiency and good management. Analyze the process for evidence of learning—what was powerful? Why?</p>	<p>To enable teachers to use specific instructional approaches. To encourage “risk-free” approximations as a way of getting started. To work toward automatic use of routines by teachers and students.</p>
<p>7. <i>Establish Routines and Procedures</i> Primarily professional development. May occur in coaching sessions.</p>	<p>Provide concrete examples for changes in teacher behavior and/or organization and use of time. Establish plan of action. Support refining of procedures.</p>	<p>To provide specific guidance for establishing good, efficient routines. To practice the teaching behavior related to the approach. To refine and polish the sets of actions that make up the approach.</p>
<p>8. <i>Coach for Shifts in Behavior</i> Occurs during post-conference. Experienced coaches who know their teachers may work on this in pre-conferences.</p>	<p>Observe the process in the classroom. Analyze and discuss examples from the teacher's own teaching. Connect teacher behavior and student behavior. Discuss changes for greater student learning and/or better management.</p>	<p>To provide opportunities for teachers to become sensitive to the impact of their instruction on student behavior. To help them analyze their own teaching. To provide specific suggestions for changes in behavior that will make the approach more effective.</p>
<p>9. <i>Coach for Analysis and Reflection</i> Pre-Conference or Post Conference.</p>	<p>Coach to support reflection. Coach to widen the repertoire of teaching actions. Coach to promote analysis. Act as a co-investigator.</p>	<p>To help teachers engage in analysis and reflection on their own. To support them in the continual refining of their teaching.</p>

Modified from Lyons & Pinnell, 2001, p. 12

APPENDIX C

DESCRIPTION OF GUIDED READING LESSON

Guided reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006; Pinnell & Fountas, 2007) is a form of small-group reading instruction. Based on assessment, the teacher forms a group of readers who are similar in their reading development. The teacher supports the reading in a way that enables the students to read continuing more challenging text with effective reading processing.

A teacher's role is to select an appropriate text, based on the students interests and needs, introduce the text to the students, observe the children reading the text, lead the children in discussing the text, teach for processing strategies, provide word work as needed, and opportunities to extend the text (optional). Consideration is made to the following:

Selecting the Text—Genre, text structure, content, theme, ideas, language and literary features, sentence complexity, vocabulary, words used, illustrations, book and print features.

Demands of the Text—As the teacher prepares the introduction, the teacher should be mindful of the type of thinking the readers will be required to do based on the level of the complexity of the text.

Introducing the Text—The teacher provides the readers with an understanding of the overall meaning of the book (trying to make this succinct), pointing out aspects that may be new to the students, actively involving the students in conversation about the

book that will get them thinking about the meaning, language, print, and encouraging their interest in the book. This allows the students to begin to anticipate the language and text in the book and activates their prior knowledge.

Reading the Text—The readers engage in a range of actions while reading the text. It is important to note that all of the children will read the whole text or a unified part of it. The teacher may listen to one child read a portion at a time, or listen to all of them if they are whisper reading. The teacher may engage in brief teaching or interactions to support the effective reading actions. The teacher may take notes about difficulties or successes that occur.

Discussing the Text—The teacher and the students have a meaningful, brief, conversation about the text. Students are given the book so that they can reread the book multiple times over the next few days/weeks.

Teaching for Processing Strategies—The teacher provides a brief, explicit teaching point focused on any aspect of the reading process. Teaching is grounded in the text the students have just read, but it is important that the readers go beyond it to understand something important and useful. In other words, the teaching needs to be generative.

Word Work—The teacher provides one or two minutes of work with words. The teaching may focus on any aspect of word solving and is not related to words in the text that has just been read. Typically this is pre-planned, based on student needs. The work is hands on, possibly with magnetic letters or with dry erase markers/boards.

Extending the Understanding of the Text (optional)—The teacher may invite the students to extend the understanding of the text through further talk, drawing or writing. Often times, the teacher is working with students demonstrating ways to write about texts.

APPENDIX D

SYSTEMS OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Ways of Thinking

Systems of Strategic Actions for Processing Texts

Thinking Within the Text	Solving Words	Using a Range of strategies to take words apart and understand what words mean while reading text
	Monitoring & Correcting	Checking on whether the words being read look right, sound right, or make sense
	Searching for and Using Information	Searching for and using all information in text
	Summarizing	Putting together important information while reading; disregarding unimportant
	Fluency	Reading that is fluent, phrased, & expressive
	Adjusting	Reading in different ways based on text; adjusting rate if necessary based on purpose
Thinking Beyond the Text	Predicting	Thinking about what would follow next while reading
	Making Connections	Searching and using connections to personal experiences, learning from the world, and reading other texts
	Inferring	Going beyond the literal meaning of a text but what is implied by the author
	Synthesizing	Putting together important information from the readers own experiences and background knowledge in order to create new understandings
Thinking About the Text	Analyzing	Examining elements of a text to know more about how it is constructed
	Critiquing	Evaluating text based on the readers personal, world, or text knowledge

Modified from Pinnell & Fountas, 2007

APPENDIX E

DESCRIPTION OF LITERACY COLLABORATIVE® Literacy Collaborative, 2008

The Literacy Collaborative is a comprehensive school reform project designed to transform school literacy achievement from kindergarten to grade eight. It is a long-term, collaborative professional development program between Lesley University and the individual schools that's designed to ensure successful literacy for all children.

Professional development for teachers is at the heart of Literacy Collaborative. The program helps schools and teachers develop exemplary literacy programs by:

- Implementing proven teaching methods (including Reading Recovery and small group literacy support) that are student center, language focused, and process oriented
- Establishing in-district and school based leadership teams and literacy coordinators who monitor the program's implementation and train literacy teachers
- Providing in-depth professional development on-site for every member of a school's literacy team
- Assessing student and teacher progress and delivering ongoing professional development

Implementing Literacy Collaborative

Literacy Collaborative is implemented in several phases. Phase one consists of a school based leadership team participating in a series of seminars that provide a model for instruction and professional development. This helps the team define their role as a

leadership team and then develops a long-term plan for implementing Literacy Collaborative over the next several years.

Phase two consists of training a literacy coordinator (coach) and awareness for the individual school site. The literacy coach participates in a year-long training, held over the course of eight weeks at Lesley University. The coach teaches literacy approximately three hours per day. During this phase the school-based leadership team educates teachers, parents, and community members and other stakeholders about Literacy Collaborative. The team purchases books and materials and establishes a book room of leveled texts. The literacy coach along with the leadership team collects school-wide student data in order to determine baseline information from which to measure program progress and student growth over time. To provide support, a Lesley trainer/liason schedules two or more on-site visits.

During phase three, classroom teachers participate in a year-long professional development training of 40-45 hours taught by the school-based literacy coach. Classroom teachers who are involved in this training course also are coached on a regular basis by the literacy coach. This should also include a regular teaching analysis with the coach. To implement this phase, the literacy coach has 30—50% release time to work in classrooms demonstrating coaching and supporting colleagues who are participating in Literacy Collaborative. It is critical that the literacy coach continue teaching children in a literacy block approximately three hours daily. The literacy coach also participates in on-going professional development through attendance at an Early Literacy Conference and professional development sessions at Lesley University.

Phase four is a continuation of professional development and coaching for classroom teachers and is provided by the literacy coach. The school-based team reassesses school needs and realigns their school goals, based on data. They continue to monitor the implementation of the literacy project and communicates school outcomes. In phase five, the literacy coach continues to provide professional development and the team continues to monitor implementation.

Literacy Coordinator (Coach) Training

Literacy coordinator (coach) training is an in-depth, two-year professional enrichment opportunity for teachers who are committed to literacy. The training includes eight weeks of intensive work at Lesley University spread over the course of the first year, enrolling for nine hours of graduate credit from Lesley University, attending and completing assignments, on site visits and discussions throughout the year, videotaping ones' own teaching and sending written reflections along with the tape to the trainers at Lesley. All assignments must be successfully completed. During the training, the participants develop a strong knowledge of the instructional components of the Literacy Collaborative framework that they are required to implement in their classrooms. Participants are exposed to principles of the constructivist theory of learning, working with adult learners, and designing professional development experiences. Additionally, the participants learn about coaching. The university trainers coach the participants and give them feedback throughout the year. In turn, over the course of the year, the university trainers begin to shift the participants' focus towards gaining their own coaching expertise. The focus on coaching includes guidelines for coaching sessions (i.e. pre-conferences, lesson observation, and post conference). The participants learn

important issues pertaining to coaching such as building trust with the teachers and focusing on the teachers' goals, coaching for analysis and reflection, and problem-solving. During the second year of training, the coach attends on-going professional development at Lesley University, continues to teach children 50-70% of the week, implementing the Literacy Collaborative framework, and is released 30-50% of the week for coaching teachers.

Standards and Guidelines

To ensure the best results for students and schools, the Literacy Collaborative has development a series of standards and guidelines for participating schools.

District Trainer

Training to become a district literacy coordinator/trainer (coach) is offered as a two-year process. During year one, the participant is involved in completing the literacy coordinator (coach) training. Year two involves training as a district-level trainer of literacy coordinators (coach) while serving as a school's literacy coach. Years three through five involve continued training and professional development. It is not a requirement of a district to have a district trainer. However, districts that intend to train a coach for all schools and implement this framework with all teachers, may choose this option in order to train coaches locally (in-house) rather than incurring the expense of travel to Lesley University.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW FOR LITERACY COACH

1. State name, number of years teaching, and explain professional background/training.
2. Describe the role of the literacy coach.

Probes:

- Describe the experiences you have provided for your teachers and the rationale behind those decisions. (Both coaching and professional development)
 - What do you find particularly challenging about training teachers? Why?
 - When a teacher was experiencing difficulty what did you do?
 - What are your hopes/expectations for this year related to teaching/training teachers?
 - What would help you to learn more as a coach?
3. Describe the process (expert teaching practice) for teaching children to read.
 4. Describe how you have assisted teachers in understanding the reading process.
 - How have you helped decrease the failure rate of children in the classroom/school?
 5. Describe your role in helping a teacher reflect on her practice.
 - What has been the most difficult aspect of your role as a coach?
 - How is the teachers' instruction the same/different than the instruction from novice to experienced teacher?
 6. Is there anything else that I should know that would help me understand how coaches support teacher learning?

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW FOR TEACHERS

1. Describe background—how many years have you been teaching, degrees/training, and current grade level of instruction.

Probes:

- What has been your preparation to teach minority students?
- Do you feel like you have been successful teaching a certain group of students? Why/Why not?

2. Describe the role of the literacy coach.

Probes:

- How often has your coach had an opportunity to visit in your classroom?
- What has been the primary focus of your interactions with the coach? Anything specific?
- How are your interactions with the coach the same/different than interactions you typically have with assistant principals ? With other teachers in your grade level? With your principal?
- What is your role when working with the coach? Have the interactions been helpful? Why or why not?
- Have you sought the services of the coach? If yes, specify explain the reason. Did the coach help? If so, why/why not.
- Does the coach assist with increasing academic achievement of students? If so, how/how not?
- Describe the role of the coach that has the greatest impact on your teaching? On student achievement

3. Talk about your experiences working with the literacy coach.

Probes:

- What are the pros and cons of the coaching experience?
- What has been valuable? How have you learned from your coach? What have you learned?
- Do you think it is valuable to have literacy coaches in schools and why?
- How would you feel as a teacher in this school if the schools had to drop coaches because of budget constraints? Would it affect your teaching and your own professional development?
- Describe concerns or problems you perceive as a teacher when encountering a coach?
- If you could design an effective professional development opportunity, what would it include?

- As you reflect on the coaching experience, do you do anything differently in your classroom after going through the coaching experience?
- If the coach asked you to help her design her professional development for next year, what would you suggest?
- If you could tell me anything you wanted about the coaching experience, what would it be?

4. Talk about what you have learned while working with the literacy coach.

Probes:

- What has been most useful about the professional development experiences provided by the literacy coach?
- What do you think has been the most useful feedback from coaching conversations?
- What particular aspects of professional development have been most clear to you? What aspects have been less clear to you? Why?
- Explain the challenges you have encountered while working with the coach during the professional development/courses? During coaching?
- What supports have you encountered?
- How might the professional development sessions be modified to make the experiences better for teachers?

5. How has your teaching changed because of the work you have done with the literacy coach?

Probes:

- How much of your teaching is a result of your professional development experiences from the literacy coach? How much is the result of your prior teaching experience and knowledge? (In other words, what are you learning from the coach and why do you think you are learning these things?)
- Will you use what you have learned during the course work this year in your room this year/next fall? Why? Be specific. Give an example of something you learned this year that you will be implementing next year.
- During your reflections on your instructional practice did you learn something anything about yourself as a teacher? Did you learn anything about your students?
- Did the coaching experience change how you feel about yourself as an educator?

6. Describe the process for teaching children to read.

Probes:

- Describe one particular student who struggled in reading. How is this student like and unlike students who struggled in your classroom during the past school year? What specific literacy strategies have you used with this student? Were they successful? Why or Why not?

APPENDIX H

PILOT STUDY

I conducted a small scale pilot study prior at the beginning of this study to get a better sense of interviewing, the questions to ask, and how to effectively probe. The participants included a kindergarten teacher, a first grade teacher, and their literacy coach.

The pilot study provided an opportunity for me to observe a teacher's instructional lesson and a post conference between the coach and teacher and to analyze the coaching conversations between the coach and teacher. The pilot study was instrumental in pinpointing necessary changes for the design of this study. It was from the pilot study that I realized my primary focus would be the teacher's interviews and the analysis of the post conferences.

I observed, recorded field notes, audio taped interviews with the literacy coach and the two teachers, then transcribed the tapes. This gave me the opportunity to practice a combination of verbatim and summary method transcribing, and create a key for transcribing interviews. Additionally, I analyzed my work and wrote reflections about the pilot study. My qualitative professor gave me feedback on the interviews, analysis, and reflection which served to inform the design of this study.

APPENDIX I
APPROVAL FROM THE DISTRICT



To Whom It May Concern:

Rhonda Hayes has the full support and cooperation of this District to conduct her research. The following are conditions for collecting and using any data from the District: (1) to the extent possible, individual student's and/or employees' identity must remain confidential and (2) a copy of the final document should be sent to the Superintendent of the District. If further information is needed, please advise.

Sincerely,

Orval Porter, Superintendent
Dalton Public Schools

APPENDIX J

IRB INFORMED CONSENT FOR LITERACY COACHES

Georgia State University
Department of Education Policy Studies
Informed Consent form for Literacy Coaches

Title: Language of Literacy Coaching

Principal Investigator: Sheryl Gowen

Research Personnel: Rhonda Hayes

I. You have been invited:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate the language of literacy coaching. You are invited to participate because you are a literacy coach. Two literacy coaches and four teachers will be recruited for this study. Participation will consist of interviews and observations. The observations will be of the normal work between the literacy coach and the teachers in addition to interviews. Participation will require 7.3 hours of your time during the months of May and June.

II. What will you have to do?

If you decide to participate, you will participate in interviews as well as observations. The interviews and observations will be scheduled in two cycles. The first cycle will consist of observations of the pre-conferences, observations of the guided reading lessons, and observations of the post-conferences with two of the teachers of your choice, one novice and one experienced. The second cycle will consist of observation of the pre-conferences, observation of the guided reading lessons, observation of the post conferences with the same teachers. It will conclude with an interview. The interviews will take place at a time and place as so designated by the participant. A tape recorder will be used during the interviews and the classroom instruction will be videotaped to ensure that all of the ideas and thoughts communicated are heard correctly. Upon conclusion of the observations and interviews, the participant will have the opportunity to review the notes to ensure accuracy in the reporting of the findings.

III. Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

IV. Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally because often times, when a person reflects on their teaching practices, deeper understandings of the teaching and learning process are developed. Overall, the researcher hopes to gain information about the language literacy coaches' use and how it supports teacher's pedagogical practices.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any point without losing any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. We will use a pseudonym rather than your name on study records. Only Sheryl Gowen and Rhonda Hayes will have access to the information you provide. It will be stored on a password protected, fire walled protected- computer and disk. The digital voice recordings and videotaped lessons will be stored in the same way. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in-group form. You will not be identified personally. As required by Dalton Public Schools board policy, the final report will be presented to the Superintendent. All findings will be kept and stored securely following the study for future reference.

VII. Contact Persons:

Call Sheryl Gowen at 404-413-8030, sgowen@gsu.edu or Rhonda Hayes at 706-499-8625, rhonda.hayes@dalton.k12.ga.us if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio and videotaped, please sign below:

Participant

Date

Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX K

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TEACHERS

Georgia State University
Department of Education Policy Studies
Informed Consent form for Teachers

Title: Language of Literacy Coaching

Principal Investigator: Sheryl Gowen
Research Personnel: Rhonda Hayes

I. You have been invited:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate the language of literacy coaching. You are invited to participate because you are being coached by a literacy coach. Two literacy coaches and four teachers will be recruited for this study. Participation will consist of interviews and observations. The observations will be of the normal work between the literacy coach and the teacher in addition to interviews. Participation will require five hours of your time during the months of May and June.

II. What will you have to do?

If you decide to participate, you will participate in interviews as well as observations. The interviews and observations will be scheduled in two cycles. The first cycle will consist of an interview prior to observations, observation of the pre-conference with the literacy coach, observation of the guided reading lesson, and observation of the post-conference with the literacy coach. The second cycle will consist of observation of the pre-conference with the literacy coach, observation of the guided reading lesson, observation of the post conference with the literacy coach, and will conclude with an interview. The interviews will take place at a time and place as so designated by the participant. A tape recorder will be used during the interviews and the classroom instruction will be videotaped to ensure that all of the ideas and thoughts communicated are heard correctly. Upon conclusion of the observations and interviews, the participant will have the opportunity to review the notes to ensure accuracy in the reporting of the findings.

III. Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you would in a normal day of life.

IV. Benefits:

Participation in this study may benefit you personally because often times, when a person reflects on their teaching practices, deeper understandings of the teaching and learning process are developed. Overall, the researcher hopes to gain information about the language literacy coaches' use and how it supports teacher's pedagogical practices.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any point without losing any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. We will use a pseudonym rather than your name on study records. Only Eric Freeman and Rhonda Hayes will have access to the information you provide. It will be stored on a password protected, fire walled protected- computer and disk. The digital voice recordings and videotaped lessons will be stored in the same way. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in-group form. You will not be identified personally. All findings will be kept and stored securely following the study for future reference.

VII. Contact Persons:

Call Sheryl Gowen, 404-413-8030, sgowen@gsu.edu or Rhonda Hayes at 706-499-8625, rhonda.hayes@dalton.k12.ga.us if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio recorded, please sign below:

_____	_____
Participant	Date
_____	_____
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent	Date

APPENDIX L

DATA TIMELINE

Source of Data	Coaches	Teachers	Dyad 1-Cycle 1	Dyad 2-Cycle 1	Dyad 3-Cycle 1	Dyad 4-Cycle 1	Dyad 1-Cycle 2	Dyad 2-Cycle 2	Dyad 3-Cycle 3	Dyad 4-Cycle 4	Post Interviews
1. Initial Contact-Researcher	X	X									
2. Researcher-Informed Consent of Coaches and Teachers	X	X									
3. Coach and Teacher: Taping of Pre-Conference (Researcher starts tape, participants stop)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Researcher, Coach, and Teacher: Classroom Observation of Guided Reading Lesson			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
3. Coach and Teacher: Taping of Post-Conference (Researcher starts tape, participants stop)			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Researcher: Transcribes Tapes			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
5. Researcher Meets with participants; Shares transcriptions and asks questions to clarify			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
6. Researcher and Teacher: Interview											XX XX
7. Researcher and Coach: Interview											XX
8. Researcher: Individual Case Analysis of Pre and Post Conferences for Reflection			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
9. Researcher: Individual Case Analysis of Pre and Post Conferences for Strategic Actions			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
10. Researcher: Cross-Case Analysis of Reflection			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
11. Researcher: Cross-Case Analysis of Strategic Actions			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
12. Analyzing and Writing Results	O	N	G	O	I	N	G				

APPENDIX M

AUDIO TAPE LOG OF PRE AND POST CONFERENCES AND INTERVIEWS

Audio Tape Log of Pre/Post Con & Interviews	Minutes	Pages	Source	
8041508	KeKe and Tami	5:28	4 pages	1st Pre Conference
8021002	KeKe and Tami	26:30:00	13 pages	1st Post Conference
8021003	KeKe and Tami	4:00	3 pages	2nd Pre Conference
8041509	KeKe and Tami	24:57:00	14 pages	2nd Post Conference
8031800	KeKe and Jo	18:25	8 pages	1st Pre Conference
8022401	KeKe and Jo	13:25	19 pages	1st Post Conference
8031803	KeKe and Jo	14:05	7 pages	2nd Pre Conference
8022403	KeKe and Jo	28:44:00	16 pages	2nd Post Conference
8040105	Jodi and Missie	35:44:00	17 pages	2nd Post Conference
8040104	Jodi and Missie	23:00	14 pages	2nd Pre Conference
8030201	Jodi and Missie	33:01:00	18 pages	1st Post Conference
8040104	Jodi and Missie	11:30	6 pages	1st Pre Conference
8030301	Jenni and Missie	16:48	9 pages	
8030303	Jenni and Missie	32:19:00	16 pages	1st Post Conference
8041302	Jenni and Missie	22:07	13 pages	2nd Pre Conference
8041304	Jenni and Missie	23:03	34 pages	2nd Post Conference
8048001	Jodi Interview	56:02:00	23 pages	Teacher
8048002	Jo Interview	56:40:00	24 pages	Teacher
8048003	Jenni's Interview	40:17:00	28 pages	Teacher
8022800	Tami's interview 1st	32:22:00	27 pages	Teacher
8048004	Missie's interview	90:30:00	41 pages	Coach
8048005	KeKe's interview	88:32:00	42 pages	Coach

APPENDIX N

SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF POST CONFERENCE FOR REFLECTION

KeKe and Jo	Analysis for Reflection
<p>Tape stopped 18:00 [folder full; restarted]</p> <p>K: OK...we've talked about the readers and what they've been doing...we talked about the text...and we were just talking about how difficult it is to try to narrow down...there are so many things that come up...</p> <p>J: too many teachable moments.</p> <p>K: thinking about the readers and the text and the sources of information the children were using...what sources of information do you think they were using, as far as meaning, structure, and visual? As you're looking at your notes....and we've already looked at some of the running records...</p> <p>J: Yea, I think they were using, meaning...and I think across the board, they were using all of them at different times....um....and a lot of them were having to rely on a miscue...and I'd have to stop them and they were using visual information and they were looking at that....definitely looking at the initial visual and leaving off like again, my focus of today's lesson was inflectional endings and I still have some that are still leaving those endings off....</p> <p>K: and that's going to go with cross checking the visual information all the way through the end of the word...and the structure</p> <p>J: and it sounds right (said together with Krista)</p> <p>K: so maybe a next step for the students...what do you see...this is what we're going to reflect on the next steps for the students...the first next step would be...looking at our notes having them....we need to....what is the next step, you tell me...what are we wanting them to with the two sources of information</p> <p>J: I want them to attend....I want them to attend...to the whole...to read through the whole word, and attend to the whole word and then ask themselves, does that look right?</p>	<p>Analysis for Reflection</p> <p>K-Telling</p> <p>J-Telling K-Questioning</p> <p>J-Telling J-Reflecting on Description of Design</p> <p>K-Telling</p> <p>J & K-Telling K-Questioning</p> <p>J-Answering J-Telling</p>

APPENDIX O

SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF PRE AND POST CONFERENCES FOR REFLECTION

Coaching Novice	Pre Con 1		Post Con 1		Pre Con 2		Post Con 2		
	KeKe	Jo	KeKe	Jo	KeKe	Jo	KeKe	Jo	
Affirmation	1		3	2			8		14
Answering	10	21	1	11	1		1	9	44
Criticizing			2	2					4
Demonstrating		3	11	5					19
Questions	14	2	18		10	1	17	4	66
Imitating							1	1	2
Telling			42	28	8	10	15	17	120
Telling/demonstration	1		2	3					6
Telling/describing			1		4	3	14	2	24
Descriptive of Design				1		4			5
Advising	3			6					9
Answering/telling				1					1
Answering/demonstrating				1					1
Links across framework				1					1
Observing	1								1
Reflection on description									
Talking together	1								1
TOTAL	31	26	80	61	23	18	56	33	318

APPENDIX P

SAMPLE DATA ANALYSIS FOR STRATEGIC ACTIONS

KeKe and Jo (about 4 minutes into the post conference)	Analysis for Strategic Actions
K: At so, what other things did you notice? What other strategic actions were the students using in the intro and then your questions after it.	K-asking about strategic actions
J: Well they did some summarizing because they went back or they were monitoring and correcting, because you know, a couple of them said he for the and they self-corrected.....summarizing, they went back and we went back and talked about the information and we talked you know, or questioning at the end... thinking about things that were within the text, but the end....we made them predict and the beginning, making them make those connections abouttheir own personal connection as far as you know the hook question at the very beginning...have you ever thought someone had forgotten your birthday and how did it make you feel (4:31)...	J-summarizing J-monitoring and correcting J-summarizing J-predicting J-making connections
K right and Saul said K & J together Saul said he had a party one time.	J & K-making connections
K: nobody came	
J: Yea, and how did it make him ...and he said he felt really sad...and so that was a good connection	J-making connections
K: yea, that really set the stage...for them to put themselves and feel how the character feels	K-synthesizing
J: to feel how the character feels in this story....and then...you know they made connections, they were doing predicting,	J-making connections and inferring; Predicting
K: well, and even inferring, inferring the meaning of the word disappointed, miserable....	K-inferring
J: inferring...because....uh-hum....what do you think this words means, what's another word we can put in there that would mean the same thing....	J-inferring
K: What did you think about Brittany when she ...there we w- [Jo started talking before KeKe finished]	
J: I know!! Disappointed....she just noticed it	

APPENDIX R

CONVENTIONS OF TRANSCRIPTION

Layout	Lines are numbered consecutively. Speakers are indicated by first initial of first name at the beginning of their turn.
. ? !	One period, question mark, or exclamation mark indicates a stop/end of the sentence unless the speaker did not stop at the end of the sentence.
,	A comma denotes a slight pause.
ohhhhhh	Repeated letters indicate word was spoken very slowly.
bold	Bold words indicate that the word was spoken emphasis.
....	Indicates a pause
()	Utterances that were not necessarily words but important to capture ; Example (Laughing) or Researcher's comments; Example (repeating question again to self)
(0:00)	Time recorded periodically to assist researcher in revisiting transcription/audio recording.
[]	Brackets indicate the researcher's/transcriber's interpretation.
"word"	Words in quotation marks indicate the word itself was an example, not simply a word being used in the dialogue.

APPENDIX S

SAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION INTERVIEW WITH JENNI

- 491
- 492 R: How often has your coach had an opportunity to visit in your classroom?
- 493 J: Oh, goodness...she's in here all the time...at least...two or three times a month...at
- 494 minimum and sometimes more than that...she's been here a lot.
- 495 R: OK...What has been the primary focus of your interactions with the coach?
- 496 J: Um....guided reading (laughing)....um....I don't know....it's immediate for me....if
- 497 there's a struggle, something that I don't understand, I say, Missie-- I need some help, I
- 498 need you to come listen to her [the child] and she can give me that immediate feedback
- 499 and the next day....and it's just so fast!
- 500 R: How are your interactions with the coach the same/different than interactions you
- 501 typically have with assistant principals ? with other teachers in your grade level? With
- 502 your principal? Talk about how those interactions are the same/different/alike.
- 503 J: Missie is just like another, for me, collaborative teacher. She's as if she's a part of our
- 504 grade level, so for me, she's more on the lines of a colleague....principal and assistant
- 505 principal there's not as much trust there...just being honest....I think it's because I feel
- 506 like they don't know me....and Mary knows me...she knows what kind of teacher I am,
- 507 she knows my strengths, she knows my weaknesses.
- 508 R: How did she get to know you?
- 509 J: Because she was in my classroom....and I get the principal and asst. principal don't
- 510 necessarily have the opportunities that she has to do that...I think that's the biggest
- 511 thing...trust.
- 512 R: You've mentioned that you have you sought the services of the coach specifically in
- 513 guided reading.
- 514 J: Absolutely...it's always, try this...and if that didn't work, then we would go back to
- 515 the drawing board and try again or she would be able to come in and listen herself and
- 516 there were always immediately responsibilities
- 517 R: What part of Missie's role has the greatest impact on your teaching.....(intercom
- 518 interruption) (11:00)
- 519 J: (repeating question).....Oh goodness....it's hard to pinpoint just one....I think the
- 520 collaboration....being able to sit down and talk to her about a given situation in the
- 521 classroom, whether it be the writing or guided reading, being able to collaborate with her
- 522 and figure it out together....
- 523 R: so in what part of her role has the greatest impact on student achievement?
- 524 J:probably in the guided reading just helping me....figure out what's wrong or what's
- 525 not working and modifying that so those kids can achieve.

APPENDIX T

SAMPLE PRE-CONFERENCE WITH JENNIE AND MISSIE

1

2

Jenni and Missie...2nd Pre Con ...Island Picnic

3

4 001-folder01-003-08030301

5

6 M: Alright Jennifer, thanks again, and OK...I know we are going to see the same group
7 we saw a couple of weeks ago with you and I was looking back on my notes and what
8 you said about them. You had talked about that they were using mostly the visual...they
9 were using mostly visual, right?

10 J: yes

11 M: and... you wanted to get them to start using more meaning...andword
12 solving....so....are they? Has anything changed much in that area?

13 J:well.....I've started giving them a much richer introduction and walking through
14 the book....and....um.....I'm seeing a lot of improvement insome of the
15 kids.....it's mainly the stronger ones you know, Victor, is doing better at picking up
16 the meaning....Mario still struggles.....a lot....and Colton still struggles.....with that,
17 which he, his RR teacher and I have been discussing his special little case, but the big
18 surprise for me has been Megan!

19 M ah-ah-hhhhhh tell me about that

20 J: Megan being the special ed child you'd think that there might not be as much

21 M: for her to work with

22 J: improvement

23 M: to work with...I meant improvement...

24 J: but she...before....where she was listening to whoever was around her and she was
25 picking and she was just picking up (interruption—phone call)....Megan has been doing
26 her own reading! And it's not always 100% correct. But the thing I've noticed about her
27 is that she tries to make sure that it makes sense....so for her it's kinda the opposite, she
28 uses visual when you can, but whenever it gets to the point where she doesn't know the
29 word, there's not a whole lot of word, there are some word solving but the meaning, she's
30 making sure it makes sense to Megan's extent, you know what I'm say

31 M: yea

32 J: for her, just the fact that she's doing it on her own and she's making her own attempts
33 at the story and not simply just

34 M: what do you think has caused that change in her?

35 J: I think that, I think probably walking through the story has given her a little more

238

APPENDIX U

SAMPLE POST CONFERENCE WITH TAMI AND KEKE

236

237

238 T: she did that with “yen” also

239 K: Uh-huh, uh-huh....so....this and your word work I can see that is really a need for the
240 group too, breaking apart the multi-syllabic words and that is

241 T: They can do it a lot, they can do it with me...and modeling it together, it’s just having
242 them do it independently.

243 K: Right.

244 T: So that’s what we’re trying to move towards.

245 K: Right. And they are seeing more complex, you know I’m looking at level M and in the
246 continuum and they have to be able to take apart you know and make words using more
247 complex phonograms and long vowel patterns and things and um, so, it’s good for them
248 to have opportunities to do that and then to know that what they are doing and at the end,
249 you were like so, (23:08), at the end instead of it being an isolated activity, in word work,
250 you asked them the question of how would you know um, what would you do if you were
251 reading this long word and text so you were taking it back, your word work. You were
252 taking it back to the text and what they will do and what they would do as readers and
253 again, it was all about the reading process, what they would do for that reading process.
254 So, thinking about what we’ve talked about, um...what um....what do you think ...we’ve
255 already talked about some things, what do you think might be some next steps for the
256 students.

257 T: Um, I think definitely for the multi-syllabic words, reinforcing them and making them
258 go back and self-correcting and noticing all the parts of the word like I said, they can do
259 it **with** me, or they can do it when I’m just listening one on one, but when they are doing
260 it just on their own they are not monitoring, so the multi-syllabic part...the

261 comprehension part is something that we need to go back on especially for non-fiction
262 text, the in the text questions, the things that are just right there in front of them, and
263 giving them strategies for giving them strategies for going back and if they don’t know
264 how to answer that question, what can they do, they can go back like you were saying

265 K: Having them to show you, show me, show me the evidence in the text, and having
266 them to go back and so then you were talking about self-correcting, so then thinking
267 about what we can do as teachers, what can we do as teachers to try to get them to self-
268 correct, um, and cross-check those different sources of information.

269 T: Um, going back to those prompts you were talking about, not only does it make sense,
270 does it look right, does it sound right. Is that how we would say it? Putting the work more
271 on them. Still modeling, then modeling and putting it on them also, reinforcing them also.

272 K: That sounds great. You did such a nice job of offering of Nada, because we’ve talked

APPENDIX U

SAMPLE TEACHER LESSON PLANS FOR GUIDED READING

Job

Group Lvl. B Guided Reading Planning Sheet Ch. 1, 2, 3
 Book Title & Level Finding The Titanic

Text Introduction: What do you already know about the Titanic?

Meaning: p. 10 wealthy first class passengers! * The Titanic was once the largest ship, but something tragic happened

Structure: p. 5 pic labels; italicized
p. 5 voyage p. 6 diver p. 10 steward p. 15 lounge

Survivors
Ch. 1
Ch. 2
Ch. 3

Discussion questions after reading: (In text & Beyond the Text) ch. 2
What caused the Titanic to sink? Who is telling the story?
What is the Genre? Describe how the Titanic looked.
Why do you think the author dated every chapter? ch. 3 Describe how the Titanic sank.

Teaching Point: Comprehension or Word Solving Strategies
Ch. 3 Could you think of a better way to save all the people on the board?

Word Work (2-3 minutes)
survived steward
unsinkable voyage
forgot passengers

Coast
Ship
Deck

APPENDIX W

SAMPLE COACHING NOTES

VI. A - 1st book
6 - 2 chapters.
* Luke: Name _____
Fluency
* Montserrat: *WV* **Coaching Session Summary**
* Accomplish: *WV* Coaching is all about relationships and creating contexts for learning together with the ultimate goal of increasing children's literacy achievement.
* Look w/ed
* The text: *Finding the Titanic* - *Fluency* * *Comprehension*
Pre Conference: *What do you know about Titanic?*
words in context
Framework Focus Area *Guided Read*
Questions: *Wordwork: Multi-syllabic words*
What is going well? *What perspective?*
Students: *Inferring mg. of unknown words*
in context, making connections, self-correcting on structure
Teacher: *Synthesizing information*
Next Steps:
Students: *Analyzing craft of the text,*
Critiquing
Teacher: *- higher level prefix, base, suffix & word meaning (word work)*
- character feelings * *figurative language*
- comparing now & then *look in book room!*
Other: *Suggested Readings, etc.*
Other Discussion:

Coaching Summary

Patricia Jenkins

How I've supported her:

Modeling lessons and small group guided reading, individual and cluster coaching, co-teaching, vertical grade level meetings and visits, grade level meetings, entering and examining data to determine next steps for students, monitoring student progress in literacy using text level and Thinkgate results, provided resources to use for interventions/re-teaching of select ELA standards, how to use assessments to inform instruction, help form guided reading groups and discussions daily about children's needs and flexible regrouping when necessary, help with classroom arrangement, resources, assessments, and planning. Work with children in small groups to reinforce and re-teach standards, work around the Georgia Prof. Lg. standards and the DPS ELA map for 2nd grade, ways we can integrate science, social studies, and math into literacy, testing as a genre, parent conferences

Ongoing Professional Learning: (In addition to Year 1 basics)

Building a reading process:

Guided Reading: Building Meaning: Hook questions, Introductions, Prompting to accelerate, questions after reading, character analysis, author's message, Meaning, Structure, Visual Information and reading processing statements, Analysis of running records, Strategic actions on text (12 systems of comprehension), teaching for fluency, text selection for IRA and guided reading, Read aloud comprehension, word study principles, The Continuum of Literacy Learning, The Prompting Guide, Comprehension and Fluency

Introduction to Writing Process/Architecture of a Mini-Lesson, Conferencing, Sharing, Writing genre studies, Teaching the writer's craft: Linking the read-aloud and mentor text to the writer's workshop to help build student's reading and writing process

Differentiated Literacy Instruction: Guided Reading, Interactive Writing, Shared Reading, Writer's Workshop, workstations

How to teach vocabulary to help build the reading process

Transitional Model: Transitioning into the Reader's Workshop with reading mini-lessons, (Guiding Readers and Writers), independent reading, literature response letters, book recommendations

APPENDIX X

SAMPLE MATRIX FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THEMES

Teachers Say

THEMES:	
How does a literacy coach support teachers?	
Answers teacher's questions	
Assesses student needs	
Clarify	
Coach identifies with teacher as being in the "trenches"	
Coach the teacher	Follow Up
Co-designing next steps for children	
→ Gives feedback	←
→ Giving the teacher confidence	←
"Go to" person	←
Guide the teacher	
Helps teachers' refine their practice	
Helps teachers reflect	←
Identifies for the teacher what behaviors the children are exhibiting	←
→ Identify for teachers what she noticed the teacher was doing that supported the children's learning (specifically "naming" the action taken)	←
Identify for the teacher what she noticed the children were doing as a result of the teacher's practice	
Increased teachers professional learning	
Influences the teacher	
Makes connections to learning theory	
→ Modeling	←
Offer suggestions	
→ Praises teacher	←

APPENDIX Y

SAMPLE COACHING PROTOCOL FOR PRE-CONFERENCE OF GUIDED READING LESSON

Coach: Describe the student(s) I will be observing you teach today? Do they have any exceptionalities, special needs, or speak English as a second language?

Coach: Ask the teacher to talk about their students' strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers related to the following strategic actions.

- Solving Words
- Monitoring & Correcting
- Searching for and Using Information
- Summarizing
- Fluency
- Adjusting
- Prediction
- Making Connections
- Inferring
- Synthesizing
- Analyzing
- Critiquing

Coach: Within these areas, what do you think is the children's greatest area of weakness? If there are students who are learning to speak English being observed, coach should ask: What are you going to do support the English language learner(s)? How will you ensure that he/she understands the concepts?

Coach: If _____ is the greatest area of weakness, what are your plans to teach "for it" before the lesson, during the lesson, and after the lesson?

If teacher is unable to think of something, then the coach could assist the teacher in designing a lesson to meet the needs of the students.

APPENDIX Z

SAMPLE POST CONFERENCE PROTOCOL FOR GUIDED READING

Coach: Think about the lesson you taught today? What were the strengths? What were the weaknesses?

Coach: How did you change your teaching today to accommodate the needs of your students?

Coach: How will you use evidence of what the students know to design your lesson for tomorrow?