

1-1-2011

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates for Classroom Literacy Instruction

Karen C. Waters
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

 Part of the [Other Education Commons](#), [Reading and Language Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Karen Waters

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Edith Jorgensen, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Jorge Figueroa, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Tom Cavanagh, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

David Clinefelter, Ph.D.

Walden University
2011

Abstract

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates
for Classroom Literacy Instruction

by

Karen. C. Waters

6th Year Certificate in Supervision and Administration,

Southern CT State University, 1995

MA, University of Bridgeport, 1979

BS, University of Bridgeport, 1972

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Teacher Leadership

Walden University

February 2011

Abstract

There is a pervasive reading crisis in the United States. Critics, including policymakers, educators, literacy scholars, and professional educational organizations have openly accused university teacher preparation programs of not preparing candidates to deliver effective reading instruction. This qualitative study used narrative inquiry to explore ways in which teacher candidates' participation in a research-based university clinical practicum contributed to their pedagogical understanding of literacy instruction.

Conceptually this study was based on constructivism and the ideas of Dewey, Freire, Vygotsky, and Schön. Data collection included multiple interviews and observations to determine how teacher candidates' participation in clinical practicum affects their assumptions about literacy instruction. Interpretive initially emanated from inductive analysis involving a typological framework, and proceeded to an in-depth level of interpretation and data transformation and member-checking to verify participants' evolving stories. Results of the study indicated that the clinical experience imbued teacher candidates with the confidence, skills, and knowledge to affect the literate lives of all children. Further, interpretation of findings revealed that teaching a child to read gave preservice teachers opportunities to explore multiple teaching approaches for ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse learners, while working through paradigmatic barriers and preconceived beliefs. Ultimately, this study helped the teacher candidate realize that the work of an emissary for social change begins with a commitment to increase the quality of life for the children they teach through masterful and responsive teaching.

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates

for Classroom Literacy Instruction

by

Karen. C. Waters

6th Year Certificate in Supervision and Administration,

Southern CT State University, 1996

MA, University of Bridgeport, 1979

BS, University of Bridgeport, 1972

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Teacher Leadership

Walden University

February 2011

UMI Number: 3444549

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI 3444549

Copyright 2011 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This edition of the work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Dedication

To my parents, Mel and Cynthia Carver, who never gave up trying to make me into a math student, whose business acumen I never inherited, but who passed along the strong work ethic that tethered me to this process. They found the means for me to finish college at a time when their finances were uncertain, their unconditional love never wavering. I no longer have Dad to proofread my work or remind me to align my margins; similarly, Mom will find it difficult to comprehend this dedication, but I will always have the memories and inspiration of strong and vital parents: a mother who broke the glass ceiling early on in the corporate world, and a father who never settled for excuses or anything less than my best.

To my grandmother, Jeannette Kalish, whose mantra about the importance of an education was instilled in each of her four grandchildren from the tender age of five. . . I feel her presence every time I open a book or play the piano.

To my son Dino, my favorite diverse learner and the recipient of the little that I know about reading instruction: You showed me that you needed to learn in many other ways, and we did it together. I was persistent, if not always patient, and for that I am sorry. But in the end you taught me how to teach you, and in doing so, you made me a better teacher.

To Gary, my love, anchor, and statistician, who taught me that you don't have to be spiritual to have vision. You listened to my dream and you became the self-appointed snow plow so that I could be single-minded about completing this journey. Performing the mundane, but necessary tasks associated with everyday living: the cooking, laundry,

gardening, grocery shopping, insulin injections, and more. Fixing broken wheelchairs and broken hearts, you have gone beyond what you signed up for. You let me sit at the computer while you juggled all the balls in the air—and kept the world at bay. I always looked forward to coming home to one of your perfect late-night broccoli and cheese omelets, which satisfied both body and soul: a culinary metaphor for all that you have done all these years. It is definitely my turn to cook, metaphorically and otherwise.

To my sister, Susan, who read the manuscript aloud in its primitive stages so that I could hear the syntactical errors. Only a sister would perform this task without asking why—Susan, who did inherit our parents' business acumen, whose own accomplishments are many, but whose greatest successes (with a little help from Richie, of course) are Jillian and Jordana.

Acknowledgments

The following people have accompanied me on this journey in one form or another and have provided encouragement and support along the way:

To Dr. Edith Louise Jorgensen EdD, my Dissertation Chair, who seamlessly and effectively crossed the boundaries of mentor, mother, and task-master. Louise not only provided wisdom, but stories, humor, and a slice of life from another perspective. Every doctoral student should have Louise in her corner.

To Dr. Edward T. Murray, esteemed colleague, constant critic, and beloved friend, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude, for insisting that I was old enough to retire from public education to start a brand new career at the university. I feel 21 again.

To Dr. Edward T. Malin, Director of the Isabelle Farrington School of Education and Department Chair, who took a chance on a pre-Ed.D, and who not only sanctioned, but also urged flexibility in my schedules each semester for over 3 years as I completed this endeavor.

To Dr. Thomas Cavanagh, whose single-mindedness and scholarship helped me to streamline my intent, and whose literary influence allowed me to scratch the surface in my ethnographic understanding of the powerful possibilities of one person's story just waiting to be probed.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vii
Section 1: Introduction to the Study	1
Introduction.....	1
Background of the Study	2
Problem Statement.....	3
Nature of the Study.....	5
Research Questions	5
Purpose.....	6
Bounds of the Study.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	8
Assumptions.....	13
Limitations	13
Scope	14
Delimitations.....	15
Significance of the Study	15
Summary and Transition.....	16
Section 2: Literature Review	18
Introduction.....	18
Theoretical Perspectives	20
A Closer Look at the Grand Learning Theories.....	24
Self-Reflection	25

Self-Reflection and Dewey	25
Self-Reflection and Schön	26
Self-Reflection and Freire.....	28
Vygotsky.....	29
Principles of Andragogy	30
Different Points of View	31
Relationship of Study to Previous Research.....	38
Dissenting Perspectives on Teacher Preparation	43
Concise Summaries of the Literature.....	51
Most Important Aspects of the Theory.....	52
Operational Definitions.....	53
Clinical Experience.....	53
Dispositions.....	53
Pedagogical Knowledge.....	54
Self-Reflective Practice	54
Conceptual Framework.....	55
Research Design.....	55
Instructional Methodology.....	57
Teaching Reading Well.....	57
Feature 1: Content	57
Feature 2: Faculty and Teaching	59
Feature 3: Apprenticeships, Field Experiences, and Practice.....	60

Feature 4: Diversity	61
Feature 5: Candidate and Program Assessment	61
Feature 6: Governance, Resources, and Vision	62
Standards for Reading Professionals	63
Clay's Seven Principles of Literacy Development.....	63
Themes and Perceptions	66
Justification for Using Older Sources	67
Literature Related to the Use of Differing Methodologies to Investigate the	
Outcomes of Interest.....	69
Section 3: Research Method	72
Introduction.....	72
Rationale for a Qualitative Research Design	73
Narrative Design	73
A Discussion of Other Qualitative Research Designs	77
Research Questions.....	82
Context for the Study.....	82
Historical Context of Clinical Practicum.....	84
Measures for Ethical Protection of Participants.....	89
Role of the Researcher	92
Criteria for the Selection of Participants.....	93
Data Collection Procedures.....	95
Semistructured Interviews	95

Researcher's Observations and Field Notes	96
Data Analysis	96
Validity and Trustworthiness	99
Section 4: Results.....	103
Introduction.....	103
Process for Generating, Gathering, and Recording Data	105
Interviews.....	105
Restatement of the Research Questions	106
System for Gathering and Storing Data	108
Presentation of the Findings.....	115
Responses to Interview Questions	139
Interview Question 1	139
Interview Question 2	141
Interview Question 3	144
Interview Question 4	147
Interview Question 5	150
Interview Question 6	153
Interview Question 7	155
Interview Question 8	158
Interview Question 9	160
Interview Question 10	163
Interview Question 11	165

Discrepant Data.....	167
Emergent Themes	172
Theme 1: Enhanced Perceptions of Content and Pedagogical Knowledge in Literacy	173
Theme 2: Connecting Theory to Practice and Bridging Coursework to Clinical Experience.....	175
Theme 3: Interactions Between Tutor and Child Influenced Instructional Decisions.....	178
Theme 4: An Enhanced Sense of Confidence Facilitates Increased Levels of Competence	181
Theme 5: Mentorship can Provide Beginning Teachers With Strong Learning Models	183
Evidence of Quality	184
Summary.....	185
Section 5: Discussion, Recommendations, Conclusion.....	187
Overview.....	187
Summary of the Findings.....	188
Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 1.....	188
Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 2.....	193
Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 3.....	195
Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 4.....	199
Practical Application of the Findings	202

Implications for Social Change.....	205
Recommendations for Action.....	209
Recommendation for Further Study.....	210
Self-Reflection.....	213
Conclusion.....	216
References.....	218
Appendix A: Interview Guides.....	236
Appendix B: Consent Forms.....	242
Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation.....	249
Appendix D: Participants' Stories.....	250
Debbie' Story.....	249
Ella's Story.....	255
Olivia's Story.....	261
Addison's Story.....	268
Stephanie's Story.....	273
Tatiana's Story.....	280
Gavin's Story.....	285
Appendix E: Sample Coding of One Transcript.....	294
Curriculum Vitae.....	310

List of Tables

Table 1. Relationship of Research Questions to Interview Protocol Questions 107

Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Today's classroom teachers must be as versatile in determining the most appropriate methodologies as they are pedagogically aware in responding to the literacy needs of an ethnically, linguistically, and socially diverse population in preparation for a world in which the ability to read is nonnegotiable. The classroom teacher should possess an extensive knowledge of the reading process that presumes a conceptual understanding of the discipline (LeFever-Davis, 2002; Rogers, Marshall, & Tyson, 2006). Yet recent research has affirmed the perception that colleges of education have been remiss in providing teacher candidates with the requisite foundational knowledge and skills of literacy instruction and has produced teachers who are ill-equipped to take their places as reading teachers in the field (Hess, Rotherham, & Walsh, 2005; Walsh, Glaser, & Wilcox, 2006).

Critics of teacher preparation programs have affirmed the need for substantive and innovative experiences that will not only fortify teacher candidates with the skills and knowledge of the classroom teacher, but will simultaneously require prospective teachers to confront and explore personal bias, reconsider deep-seated assumptions, and ultimately embrace the heterogeneity of today's classroom (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Tomlinson, 1999). Additionally, Risko et al. (2008) found that behaviorist models are still in evidence within the college classroom, which implies an inherent presence of a dichotomous philosophical paradigm in teacher preparation: Frequently the recipient of a transmission model in the university classroom, the teacher candidate is expected to

invoke a constructivist paradigm in the field-based classroom. Cochran-Smith (2006) argued that if the perception of teacher preparation is merely to provide the candidate with the skills and knowledge of the competent professional, then perhaps the transmission paradigm for teacher education should be reexamined (Cochran-Smith, 2006). She advocated for the creation of a context that will "complicate and deepen" candidates' understandings of "language and literacy" (Cochran-Smith, 2006, p. 3). Finally, education in the 21st century has jettisoned the traditional perception of teaching and learning as isolated activities, in favor of developing one's own interpersonal skills as a precondition for self-reflection, collegial interaction, and shared accountability in learning (LeCornu, 2005).

Background of the Study

Authentic apprenticeships that allow teacher candidates to openly discuss their literacy practices through collaborative problem solving are powerful opportunities to enhance one's learning (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Dearman & Alber, 2005; Hoffman, 2004; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; IRA Position Statements, 2003, 2004; IRA, 2007; Le Cornu, 2005; Lefever-Davis, 2002; Risko et al., 2008; Snow & Burns, 1998). Within the construct of teacher training, the concept of critical self-reflection has emerged as a legitimate strategy for improving and transforming one's practice (Brookfield, 1995; Dearman & Alber, 2005; Dufour, 2004; 2005; Lefever-Davis, 2002; Mezirow cited by Merriam, 2004; Parry, 2007; Welsh, Rosemary, & Grogan, 2006; Servage, 2008; Wood, 2007). Dufour (2004) affirmed that the most effective professional development occurs in

the workplace; structured opportunities for colleagues to engage in collaboration yield increased teacher knowledge and improved pedagogical practice.

Darling-Hammond (2006) confirmed the effectiveness of a comprehensive model from a 5 year study in which literacy coursework aligned with clinical experience that systematically built upon the candidates' expanding repertoire of instructional teaching strategies. Strategic placement within a cohort system empowered the teacher candidates to become reflective practitioners supported as both learners and leaders in linking theory with practical experience. Additionally, the experience involved strong preparation through structured apprenticeships that sought to align university coursework with classroom curriculum in an academic partnership between university faculty and expert classroom teacher-mentors.

Problem Statement

Teacher preparation programs have been remiss in providing preservice teachers with the requisite knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in literacy to teach children from diverse populations to read (Barone & Morrell, 2007; Carlson, Dinkmeyer, & Johnson, 2008; Cochran-Smith, 2006; Hess et al., 2005; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; IRA, 2003, 2007; Snow & Burns, 1998; Walsh et al., 2006). Contributing to the problem are persistent instructional and political challenges including dueling opinions about the pedagogy of reading instruction (Hoffman & Pearson, 2001; National Reading Panel, 2000), stagnant national reading scores, and the perception that teacher quality is becoming increasingly linked to student achievement (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Ding & Sherman, 2006; Hoffman & Pearson, 2001; Liaw & En-Chong, 2008).

Similarly, teacher candidates from a small university in Southern New England are likewise underprepared to teach reading in today's elementary classroom, a problem recognized and substantiated by the State Board of Education in a recent proposal to revise existing teacher certification regulations in the State (CT Reading Summit, 2007). Grim state statistics reaffirm the need to prepare preservice professionals with the requisite skills to address the challenges inherent within today's diverse classrooms: only 54.6% of third graders have reached literacy benchmarks as determined by the state assessment, with only 24% of third grade students from high poverty urban districts scoring at high levels of reading proficiency (Connecticut Mastery Test, 2007, 2010). Clearly, preservice teachers need to acquire pedagogical proficiency in teaching all children to read.

In direct response to the Higher Education Act (HEA; 2002), measures to professionalize teacher education have included the identification of poor quality programs, mandated licensure testing, and voluntary university participation in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE; 2009). Similarly, Connecticut educational legislation has mandated initial certification candidates to take and pass the Connecticut Foundations of Reading Exam, a criterion-referenced assessment that measures a candidate's content knowledge of literacy (CT Foundations of Literacy, 2010). However, revised legislation has not led to systemic change (Barrone & Morrell, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006). This study contributes to the research on reading teacher preparation to gain an understanding about the experiences of teacher

candidates who have completed a clinical practicum experience that is grounded in research-based literacy practices.

Nature of the Study

Narrative inquiry (Hatch, 2002) within a qualitative tradition explored the tutoring experiences of a group of seven teacher candidates from a small private university in Southern New England. A qualitative paradigm as "a legitimate mode of inquiry" (Creswell, 2007, p. 2) was selected because the challenge of preparing preservice teachers for classroom literacy instruction is a phenomenon that is neither easily explained nor understood (Creswell, 2007). Indeed, teacher preparation is a complex issue that warrants rich descriptive detail that is antithetic to the rigorous statistical procedures inherent in quantitative research (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008). Therefore, a narrative inquiry approach was used to chronicle the stories of teacher candidates following their participation in clinical training (Hatch, 2002, p. 28). Additionally, the generative nature of qualitative tradition considered and anticipated emerging themes as participants worked through a self-reflective process in advancing and deepening their pedagogical knowledge of literacy instruction.

Research Questions

Acknowledging that the sinuous nature of qualitative tradition is not impervious to emerging themes and additional questions, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?

2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore teacher candidates' experiences of research-based literacy practices within a university clinical practicum to gain an understanding about how their unique experiences in a structured apprenticeship contribute to their pedagogical understandings of literacy instruction. A narrative design was selected as a means by which teacher candidates' pedagogical practices are articulated within the context of the university clinical practicum.

Conceptual Framework

Per the rubric, the conceptual framework will immediately follow the purpose of the study (which should come after the nature of the study, research questions, and research objectives). The conceptual framework will show which ideas from the local setting support/justify the research being conducted.

Bounds of the Study

Merriam (2007) defined the concept to be studied as "a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (p. 178), having definitive parameters, and bounded by time, space, and number of participants. The unit of analysis (Merriam, 2007) under study was used the phenomenon of the clinical experiences of preservice teachers as a lens to explore graduate students' content and pedagogical knowledge of literacy on a continuum

of acquisition in the context of the university-based reading clinic. The duration of the study, which commenced following approval from both Walden's IRB and the IRB at the institution that provided the context for the study, was 4 months. The site of the study was the reading clinic at a private university in Southern New England, whose mission of outreach extended to the surrounding towns. This narrative design within a constructivist paradigm included seven participants, whose stories were revealed in literary style, which permitted rich description through a story grammar format. Thus, a "bounded system" (Creswell, 2007, p. 244), observing the limitations of time, space, and number of participants, within which the entity of clinical experience was assured and contextualized within evidence-based curricular methodologies that unite the study.

The goal of this study was to explore teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction prior to, during, and upon completion of a clinical practicum following my former students' participation in the course.

My recursive role as researcher included data collector, instructor, and advocate for the methodologies used in the study. As personal biases were relinquished, I strove to maintain objectivity to emerging themes in order to describe the experiences of the participants. I am a 35-year veteran educator with an advanced degree in literacy who has been employed for nearly 4 years as a full-time clinical assistant professor at the university at which the study occurred.

Data were analyzed, categorized, and coded from transcriptions of semistructured interviews and my own reflective field notes. Semistructured interviews with teacher candidates, occurring at the beginning, midway, and at the conclusion of the study, were

digitally recorded, transcribed, coded, summarized, and themed to permit a coconstruction of literacy knowledge and a voice in the change process (Creswell, 2003, p. 219).

Inductive analysis (Hatch, 2002) initially sought to capture project participants' insights and perceptions in a recursive process that encouraged verification, confirmation, extension, or modification of teacher candidates' statements in the process of data transformation (Hatch, 2002). Subsequently, interpretive analysis was integrated with a typological framework consisting of the a priori categories of *content and pedagogy of literacy*, the *tutoring experience* and *struggling reader*, relating to the research question: How does participation in clinical practicum affect graduate candidates' pedagogical and content knowledge of reading instruction? Hatch (2002) affirmed the suitability of typological analysis used in conjunction with interpretive analysis for substantiating conclusions (p. 181). Transcriptions of interviews provided raw data to support typological analysis and emerging themes (Hatch, 2002).

The selection and number of participants was based on a purposeful, nonrandom sampling that is specific to the enrollment in the elective clinical practicum course that I taught. All teacher candidates had taken at least one previous course in literacy, including the prerequisite foundations course taken just prior to enrollment in clinical practicum. All participants were former students who had completed the course prior to the beginning of the study.

Definition of Terms

Clinical Experience

The clinical experience refers to the clinical practicum course taken as part of planned program for initial certification, which includes the assessment of struggling readers with a variety of reliable and valid instruments and data-based instruction in developing customized intervention plans to address the diverse needs of each child. The benefits of clinical preparation for teacher candidates is aligned with Standard 3 of NCATE (2010) for required field experience, and is substantiated by Sivakumaran et al. (2009). A second component of the clinical experience includes Clinical Seminar, which was defined in section 1. Eleven of the 12 classes of clinic consist of a formatted 90 minute tutoring session and one hour of seminar. The first 3 hour session has been designated exclusively for orientation.

Clinical practicum: Currently in its fourth semester of implementation, the Clinical Practicum course is an elective class within a planned program for initial certification, and includes the assessment of struggling readers with a variety of reliable and valid instruments and data-based instruction in developing customized intervention plans to address the diverse needs of each child enrolled in the program. Each of the 12 sessions of clinic consists of a 90-minute tutoring session of one child, followed by 60 minutes of Clinical Seminar. Both features of Clinical Practicum, the tutoring format and Clinical Seminar, have been determined to be essential components of the project, and warrant further explanation within this section.

Clinical seminar: Clinical Seminar is one component of clinical practicum, and a framework for effective professional development that ensures reflective inquiry, links

teachers' work with student learning, facilitates intercollegial collaboration in problem solving issues of practice, and promotes reflection of teaching and learning—all of which heighten teachers' awareness as practitioners (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). The phenomenon of "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, p. 59), in which knowledge is demonstrated through performance, provides the theoretical anchor for the institution of reflective practice, whose rationale is substantiated with opportunities for teacher candidates to link theory with instruction as they acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions of professional educators.

The study team approach maintained integrity to the core of features inherent in high-quality professional development including instructional dialogue and continual self-examination of one's practice. Clinical seminar followed the 90-minute tutoring session.

Cueing system: The cueing system considers the types of errors that a child makes as he or she is learning to read, and categorizes erroneous utterances as semantic (meaning cues), syntactic (structure, word order or part of speech), or graphophonic (phonic cues; Temple, Ogle, Crawford & Freppon, 2011). The cueing system is part of a total language system in which students' oral reading errors are analyzed to the extent that a child demonstrate the processes he or she uses when reading aloud.

Diverse struggling reader: A diverse reader is a child whose racial, ethnic, cultural, language, or socioeconomic background contribute to his or her inability to read on grade level. Additionally, the concept of diverse reader considers the academic or physical challenges that may affect a child's ability to read (Vacca & Vacca, 1999). For

purposes of this study, the term *diverse reader* is used interchangeably with *struggling reader*.

Fluency: Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and with automaticity, appropriate phrasing, and comprehension (Graves, Juel, & Graves, 2007).

Onset-rime: Onset-rime refers to one-syllable words, which are divided into two parts. The onset is the first part of the word [s-at, t-ack, st-ick], and the second part of the word is the rime, which includes the vowel and the rest of the word family (Graves et al., 2007).

Pedagogical knowledge: Pedagogical knowledge refers to the series of actions that a teacher candidate employs in response to the problematic situations that arise during the tutoring session, resulting in optimum learning for the child (Reutzel et al., 2007). It presumes individual mastery of content knowledge in literacy and proceeds from the science of teaching with the assumption that a knowledgeable teacher is able to intuit a resolution from a deep knowledge of best practices (Reutzel et al., 2007).

Principles of literacy instruction: Instructional methodology includes the seven principles of literacy instruction (Clay, 1993) as the core curriculum within the study. Borrowed from Reading Recovery (1993), a philosophy that has been documented to be an effective method for increasing reading achievement in diverse readers for over 30 years (Cox & Hopkins, 2006), the principles are discussed in further detail in section 2.

The rationale for identification of the principles is twofold: first, the research-based methodology presents a foundation for beginning reading instruction that is philosophically and pedagogically aligned with the prerequisite early literacy course

taken prior to enrolling in clinical practicum. Second, the principles of reading recovery are included within the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (2003), recommendations from the National Reading Panel (2000), and *Put Reading First* (2003), a national publication outlining the essential elements of literacy instruction. Instructional pedagogy is included within the larger context of *Teaching Reading Well* (2007), a document that synthesizes the criteria for effective university teacher preparation programs.

Students: Students refer to the children in Kindergarten through Grade 6 who are enrolled in the site-based university reading clinic and are tutored by the teacher candidates taking the clinical practicum course elective.

Teacher candidates: For purposes of this paper, the term teacher candidate is used interchangeably with the terms preservice teacher and tutor. Additionally, graduate candidates are referred to as classroom teachers-in-training, apprentices, and preservice teachers. No single title implies a hierarchical relationship over the other.

Tutoring format: Teacher candidates follow a 60-minute format encompassing the principles outlined in the previously mentioned curricular methodologies including the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (2003), *Teaching Reading Well* (IRA, 2007) and the principles of reading recovery (Clay, 1993), all of which are aligned with research-based literacy practices. The 60-minute procedure consists of specific time designations for instructing the child at his/her instructional and independent levels in the various aspects of the literacy process, including guided reading, word study and vocabulary building, expressive writing, and comprehension. The remaining 30 minutes

of tutoring consist of instructor modeling of research-based instructional strategies for the systematic delivery of particular aspects of the literacy process, followed by collaborative opportunities for teacher candidates to replicate observed methodologies in similar fashion.

Assumptions

This narrative discourse design within a constructivist paradigm used the qualitative tradition to examine the phenomenon of teacher candidates' clinical experiences within the on-site university clinical practicum to determine if teacher candidates' knowledge of the reading process gradually increases over time (Kibby & Barr, 1999). Purposeful sampling of preservice teachers who had taken a prerequisite course in the foundations of literacy assumed that the candidates possessed a certain level of background knowledge about the teaching and the assessing of literacy. However, the variability of content and pedagogical knowledge was unique for each participant and was also considered as graduate students charted their own course in developing and honing their practice. Aligned with the principles of constructivism, the course considered the background knowledge and previous experience of each teacher candidate; thus each participant's experience of clinical practicum varied.

Limitations

A potential weakness could be attributed to the on-site university reading clinic as the site for the study. The complexities of clinical operation at a public school setting dissuaded me from making such arrangements at this time, especially at the embryonic stages of the course. However, public notification of the clinical practicum experience

prompted enrollment of preservice teachers, and assured community access to tutoring services for diverse needs of struggling readers, thus ensuring a symbiotic and sociocultural experience for both student and tutor.

In an effort to balance threats to quality with the intent of the design, I used ongoing member-checking of interview and reflective field note data to synthesize interpretations for consistency and to verify the accuracy of the findings. Comprehensive and rich descriptions provided an explanation of terminology, a timeline of activities, and conclusions. Additionally, I engaged a colleague to peer review revised interview protocols to reduce the effect of personal bias.

Scope

Purposive sampling included seven teacher candidates at a small university in Southern New England who enrolled and completed the 12-session clinical practicum course.

The study occurred during the fall semester of 2010, following the completion of the summer clinical practicum, during which participants tutored struggling readers and engaged self-reflective practice through written journals, the development of lesson plans, and seminar. Personal reflective field notes were obtained from candidates' interview data that captured insights gleaned from candidates' own statements about their interactions with the children, with their peers, and with me.

I conducted and digitally recorded interviews of the teacher candidates 3 times during the course of the study, and analyzed reflective field notes to obtain themes inherent within the data (Creswell, 2007; Janesick, 2005), which emanated from the

burgeoning typologies (Hatch, 2002) in addition to topics that were identified at the outset of the study.

Delimitations

The parameters of the study were restricted to teacher candidates at a private, small university in Southern New England currently enrolled within a Master of Arts program for initial certification in teaching, inclusive of an internship and student teaching, which is completed within an elementary school in a town within a 25-mile radius of the university. The candidates enrolled in the redesigned clinical practicum course as an elective following the completion of a literacy methods class because they desired an authentic field experience that allowed them to work with a child and to have an opportunity to advance their content and pedagogical knowledge in literacy. Additionally, teacher candidates had previously accrued no more than six credits of courses in literacy.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore teacher candidates' experiences in an innovative university clinical practicum through adherence to a research-based framework for literacy instruction. Specific strategies for intervention were employed through the component of clinical seminar within clinical practicum in order to accommodate the participant in the navigation of a specific learning course while building a conceptual framework of the reading process. This study used teacher candidates' experiences as a lens to obtain an increased understanding about how preservice teachers acquire and access their pedagogical knowledge of literacy in their

practice. The study used data from multiple interviews to render conclusions about how participation in clinical practicum influences teacher candidates' perceptions of literacy curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

As a context for developing the skills of the professional educator, the clinical practicum not only offered preservice teachers the opportunity to self-reflect on their levels of proficiency within the discipline of literacy but also provided an authentic format for reexamination of one's personal worldview. As a forum for participation in professional conversations through collegial interaction and an opportunity for personal transformation of practice and perspective, a university-based clinic was a microcosm of today's heterogeneous classroom. Thus, the implications of a nontraditional apprenticeship within a teacher preparation program as a forum for cultural assimilation, self-directed learning, and professional growth was an opportunity to impact the literate life of a child.

Summary and Transition

The university clinical practicum is both a sanctuary for critical examination of one's practices and a forum for situated learning. This study considered the university Clinical Practicum course as a context for imbuing the teacher candidate with the knowledge and skills of classroom teacher with authentic opportunities to link theory with practice. In doing so, the theory that clinical practicum is a promising practice for broadening the learning of preservice teachers and for advancing student reading achievement was confirmed.

The results from this study hold implications for restructuring teacher preparation programs that not only prepare teacher candidates with pedagogical skills, but also offer rich field experiences in working with groups of children in settings that reflect the tapestry of today's diverse classroom. Authentic apprenticeships that provide graduate students with the opportunity to conduct pre and postassessments, render intervention plans that meet the diverse needs of struggling readers, and deliver targeted instruction under the supervision of a trained reading professional, will ensure the transition of the teacher candidate to professional educator. Trained to meet the needs of all children, the novice teacher will have had opportunities to develop pedagogical expertise in advancing the reading achievement of all children, from the diverse struggling reader to the English language learner before assuming the position of classroom teacher.

Section 2 will expound upon the supporting research for the institution of clinical experience as a separate entity from student teaching, the learning theories that will influence the study, and the rationale for the proposed curricular methodology for the research design and the curriculum, including the presentation of contrasting theories.

Section 3 will delineate the methodology for the qualitative design of narrative discourse within a constructivist paradigm. Section 4 delineates the results of the study and outlines themes, and section 5 concludes with a practical application of the findings, implications for social change, and recommendations for action.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Teacher preparation programs have been criticized for not preparing preservice teachers with the instructional knowledge and pedagogy to deliver high-quality reading instruction that will result in increased student achievement (Barone & Morrell, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2006; Hess et al., 2005; IRA, 2007; NCATE, 2009; Snow & Burns, 1998; Walsh et al., 2006). Consequently, evolving teachers' roles and the complexities of teaching reading to an ethnically diverse population have created a difficult transition for novice teachers entering the field (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2010; Garcia, Arias, Murri, & Serna, 2010; IRA, 2007; Milner, 2010; Risko et al., 2008; Scott & Teale, 2010/2011). Studies have concluded that strong teacher preparation programs that bridge coursework to clinical practice can broaden teacher candidates' acquisition of content and pedagogical knowledge in literacy when the components of professional collaboration, critical self-reflection, and discourse are present (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Hoffman et al., 2005).

The following core question guided the study: How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?

This section presents a review of the literature, which was conducted primarily through the Proquest and Academic Premier online databases at Walden University Library. Additionally, textbooks and research articles were obtained through the interlibrary loan service at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut. Several

categories framing the study included the topics of teacher preparation, critical self-reflection and communities of practice, and transformative learning, and a rationale and articulation of curricular methodology anchors the study for principles of effective reading instruction. Relevant terminology associated with the above-mentioned topics also includes National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) statistics, reading crisis, ethnic and racial diversity, interventions, history of reading instruction, education policies, educational legislation, and the Higher Educational Act (2002).

Risko et al.'s (2008) peer-reviewed meta-analysis, titled *A Critical Analysis of Research on Reading Teacher Education* was frequently cited throughout the review of research as a mentor document for the identification of the grand learning theories and the components inherent within teacher preparation programs. Beginning with a paradigmatic discussion of grand learning theories inherent within university classrooms and their general application to the elementary classroom, Risko et al.'s (2008) empirical study presents in-depth conclusions and interpretive commentary about topics that are consistent with the typologies that framed my own study. Some of the categories included self-reflection, the collaborative process, diversity, and teacher candidates' enhanced pedagogical awareness of literacy through structured opportunities to participate in clinical practicum. Risko et al. (2008) concluded with a recommendation that future research build on current empirical conclusions asserting the benefits of coursework that is deliberately linked to clinical experience, and controlling for quality through a comprehensive description of data collection and data analysis.

The first section provides an overview of the grand learning theories, its relevance to the study, and a discussion of teacher preparation related to recent proposals for research-based interventions to ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills of the profession. The components of critical self-reflection and collaborative practice are substantiated within the review of literature. The review of related research follows with a comparison of different perspectives on the topic of teacher preparation, and the third section delineates theoretical and research-based support for the selected research-design and curricular methodologies included within the study. A framework for organization for this section begins with theoretical perspectives, and continues to different points of view, relationship of study to previous research, dissenting perspectives on teacher preparation, concise summaries of literature, most important aspects of the theory examined, conceptual framework, potential themes and perceptions, justification for using older sources, and, finally, literature related to the use of differing methodologies.

Theoretical Perspectives

The conceptual framework from which the principles of constructivism emanate, governed the study, whether the emphasis was on pedagogical assumptions, instructional practices, or data collection. Constructivist learning theory encompasses a set of beliefs that places the learner at the apex of experience and understanding (Lambert et al., 2002). A constructivist paradigm implies the presence of well-designed activities that facilitate learning, which is influenced by cultural, ethnic, and economic factors.

Constructivist tenets state that social experience is affected by interactions with others, and that students come to understand about themselves as learners when they deliberately employ metacognitive strategies and self-reflection (Lambert et al., 2002). Therefore, whether discussion topics focused on my role as researcher or course instructor in a pedagogical interaction with teacher candidates, or teacher candidates' instructional pedagogy with student enrollees at the university reading clinic, the constructivist philosophy was acknowledged and upheld throughout the study.

The learning theories of Dewey (1933), Freire (1997), Vygotsky (1978), and Schön (1983), as forerunners of discourse and reflexive practice anchored the ideals of introspection, self-reflection, scaffolding, and collaborative problem solving respectively as the core of my study. DuFour (2004), Neufeld and Roper (2003), and Lieberman and Miller (2002) have more recently been credited with the concept of professional learning communities that ascribe to the principles of collaboration and communities of practice from which my study emanated.

Rooted in epistemology and associated with constructivist theory, reflective practice is a rudimentary and necessary foundational element for research-based models of collegial interactions. Proponents of dialogue, both Habermas (as cited in Coulter, 2001) and Freire (1997), urged reciprocity between the leader and participants, and inferred that the coconstruction of knowledge is as much in evidence for the tutoring partnership as for the teacher candidates in consortium with one another and with the instructor. Habermas (2001) affirmed that "self-understanding can come only in dialogue with others" (p. 93) and that participants in discourse construct knowledge together.

Dewey (1933), a pioneer of reflexive inquiry, delineated stages in which the learner "demanded a solution to a problem" (p. 14) and journeyed through "perplexity" (p. 15) until the situation is resolved. Resolution is achieved through systematic inquiry that involved initial stages of uncertainty, deliberation, confusion, frustration, followed by investigation and pursuit until the dilemma was settled.

Freire (1997) emphasized the notion of collaboration in building new knowledge. Through dialogue and community, both teacher and student engage in problem-based scenarios that result in a synthesis of new ideas that consider multiple perspectives. The unity between teacher and student as they construct knowledge together evolves into a relationship of reciprocity and mutual respect.

Perhaps Freire's (1997) laborer can be compared to Olson's (2009) pilgrim: a traditional educator who assumes that his role is to help those who are less fortunate in assimilating to a defined and organized society is no better than the teacher who dispenses learning through transmission (Brookfield & Preskill as cited by Olson, 2009). Freire's humanistic worldview encompassed the belief that humility was a necessary condition for education, and that the imposition of one's ideas on another does nothing to lead to social change (Freire, 1997). Thus Olson (2008) urged the creation of a responsive culture that safeguards and teaches to students' diverse identities.

Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development refers to the "distance between the actual developmental level [of the learner] and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Thus, in constructivist mode, the essential principles that guided

my work with teacher candidates influenced the ways in which they interacted with the children. Subsequently, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development provided the pedagogical anchor for the institution of a developmental continuum that scaffolded and supported the learning of the populations of teacher apprentices and the children with whom they worked. Through my assistance and intentional probing, teacher candidates acquired the skills and knowledge needed to teach a child to read.

Through the maturation process the child attains a level of proficiency that enables him or her to perform a task or problem-solve independently, without the benefit of imitation or modeling (Vygotsky, 1978). In developing autonomy for the execution of a skill, the cycle of scaffolding is further exemplified through the concept of differentiating instruction, which presumes that "teachers become partners with their students" (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 2) to mold the environment to the learner, and will be further explored later in this section.

The partnership between teacher and student is elevated through the process of "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, p. 59), in which knowledge is demonstrated through performance, and provides the sanction for the institution of reflective practice. Thinking about a situation in a new way has the potential to "[lead] to a partnership of research and practice" (Schon, 1983, p. 345). Schön's theories allowed the teacher candidate to use his or her tutoring sessions as the context for self-examination in evaluating the child's learning in a variety of ways. The teacher candidate analyzed the ways in which the child integrated new learning with previous learning, discovered impediments to the child's understanding, and learned how the child used new knowledge to make sense of his

world. Participation in the process enabled the practitioner to customize next steps that maximized his or her learning through meaningful integration of curricular activities.

Thus, a confluence of ideals and purpose is realized: from the influence of Habermas and Freire (1997) as advocates for the coconstruction of knowledge in a reciprocal relationship that regards both teacher and student as learners in the process, followed by Dewey (1933), as a forerunner of constructivism and reflective practice in which the learner proceeds to dismantle an initial state of confusion. Next, Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development sanctions the teacher as coach, while Schön's (1983) egalitarian is one who empowers the student to become independent through revisiting the event in self-reflection.

A Closer Look at the Grand Learning Theories

At the core of the study was a nested set of evidence-based learning theories inherent within constructivism that provided form, function, and process to the learner's active construction of pedagogical and content knowledge, which encompassed the phenomenon of self-reflection, the principles of reading instruction, and the tenets of teacher preparation. Constructivist theory emphasized the learner's integration of "new knowledge with existing knowledge" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006, p. 47) as the backbone of the study and the form by which participants assimilated new learning. An ontological commitment to the principles of constructivism implied the presence of the elements of discourse, apprenticeship, the advancement of pedagogical learning, and the "prompt[ing of] learners toward greater consciousness" (Davis & Sumara, 2002, p. 415), and allowed a culture of community to flourish and function in paradigmatic consistency. The process

by which participants advanced their knowledge of reading theory included a nonlinear cycle whose elements of self-reflection, social collaboration, and deliberate teacher guidance (Tracey & Morrow, 2006) were reprised through participants' interactions with the children.

Self-Reflection

Dewey (1933) posed a complex explanation of self-reflection when he referred to the "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends constitutes reflective thought " (p. 9). Subsequently, a deceptively simplistic phenomenon, rooted in the fundamental axioms of sociolinguistics, psychology, philosophy, and education was the cornerstone for this qualitative study in which preservice teachers participated in a coconstruction of a course of action in a gradual transition from apprentice to competent education professional. In reflective mode, I guided my preservice teachers through the clinical practicum course on a trajectory of expertise as they gained proficiency in delivering literacy instruction.

Self-Reflection and Dewey

Dewey (1933), a constructivist before his time, implied the presence of self-reflection when he defined "open-mindedness" as an "active desire to listen to more sides than one" [so that] "full attention [can be given] to alternative possibilities" [and to consider] the potential for error even in the beliefs that are dearest to us" (p. 30). Through "reflective thought" (Dewey, 1933, p. 17), one can envision opportunities for personal growth through actions that are executed with intentionality and purpose; "Reflection

implies an inherent belief [from the] evidence" (Dewey, 1933, p. 11). Dewey went on say that the search for a solution to an impasse implies a set of procedural steps that may ultimately yield the learner's concession to a lesser ideal if the decision-making process is truncated by an unwillingness "to endure suspense" (p. 16). This thinking represents a tenuous, but a clear distinction between the thinking of Dewey and Schön (1983).

Self-Reflection and Schön

In mild contrast, Schön (1983) elevated and elaborated the idea of self-reflection when he stated that when posed with a dilemma, the reflective practitioner thinks about the underlying conditions that precipitate the reworking of the problem so that it can be understood. Schon described the process of reframing the issue through the initiation of an alternate `plan when the first action fails, which is followed with validation testing, a critique of the results, and the formation of a new theory (p. 155). In working with a student, the teacher listens to the student's description of the problem or scenario, and reframes the situation in a way that allows the learner to reflect on the construct in its entirety. Then the teacher repositions or invokes a "shift in stance" (Schon, 1983, p. 100) allowing the student to "step into the problem freely" (p. 101) to acknowledge the options that arise as a result of the solution choices that have been employed to address the problem.

The teacher helps the student to see how each procedural action has the potential to interface or interfere with aspects of the conceptual framework in its entirety (Schön, 1983). In the quest for a viable solution to the problem, the student participates in a sinuous process that alternates between confusion and commitment. The student's

understanding becomes concretized as a result of personal inquiry and a series of complex actions in a recursive process on a continuum of self-reflection that either validate or discredit the student's response on the way to autonomy.

Schön's (1983) reflection-in-action theory influenced Olson's (2008, p. 9) formal protocol for stages of driven succeeding theory. Here, the learner begins with a stage of "embarking" (Schon, 1983, p. 9), and proceeds along a continuum of proficiencies in the assimilation of newly acquired skills. These psychosocial phases include "envisioning," or looking at the problem in a new way, "investing" or developing commitment to the learning involved, "clicking," the stage at which the learner has assimilated new knowledge, and "ripening," the stage at which the participant has sufficiently developed the requisite skills to self-direct the course of learning (Schon, 1983, p. 9). Implicit within the process is the idea that the teacher's redirection is contingent upon the student's actions.

Although Olson's (2008) nomenclature was neither applied nor referenced again within the study; its ideology provided inspiration for project participants to engage in reflexive practices in self-directing a course for the acquisition of pedagogical content of the reading process that placed them on a trajectory of learning. Thus, the stage was set for a psychosocial context that affords the participants structured opportunities to examine their instructional practices and to think about the stage that describes their proficiency level for delivering instruction. In this study, interviews with candidates were analyzed and coded for themes related to personal revelations on a continuum of learning, and comprised one critically important aspect of the data collection. Secondly, my own

self-reflective journals likewise provided additional data by which themes were identified—and justified.

Self-Reflection and Freire

Freire (1997) wrote about the "narration model" (p. 53) of teaching, in which the classroom is considered to be a restrictive environment for critical thinking and transformational learning where the acts of recitation and regurgitation prevail. The teacher is regarded as the sole repository of facts and the evaluator of the responses in a hierarchical relationship that considers the students to be malleable entities to be appropriately conditioned with knowledge and skills. Like Schön, (1983), who referred to educational organizations as hierarchies where the teacher is constrained by an arbitrary set of standards in which students are "[fed] portions of knowledge in measured doses," (p. 329), Freire rejected the idea of a "banking model" (1997, p. 52), and the assumption that the teacher is the guardian of knowledge and the student the dutiful recipient.

In an ideological alternative, Freire (1997) portrayed the teacher as a reflective practitioner who communicates thoughts and insights to students, demystifies knowledge through encouragement and exploration, nudges them toward independence, and guides them to create their own personal worldviews. Therefore, the classroom, a format for shared understanding, mediated interpretation of text, purposeful talk, and diversity is one that supports the ideology of democracy and social justice, ideals espoused and emulated by Chubbuck (2010) and Choules (2007), but influenced by Freire, and the very essence of student-centered professional development and collaborative problem solving.

Vygotsky

The zone of proximal development (ZPD; Vygotsky, 1978) initially included as one aspect of the conceptual framework and introduced in section 1, warrants corroboration and elaboration in this section. As previously stated, the ZPD is the province between what a learner can do independently and the level of proficiency that can be attained level through coaching by a more capable other. However, essential to the understanding of the ergonomics of the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978) is an often-neglected tenet of the process: Successful completion of one task does not imply immediate generalization of the developmental processes required for the execution of the entire set of skills associated with lower-level competencies. Simply stated, proficiency in one area is not necessarily indicative of mastery learning. Consequently, Vygotsky (1978) posited the idea that "developmental processes do not coincide with learning processes" (p. 91); and that the process of learning presumes internalization of the developmental process, which accounts for many "zones of proximal development" (p. 91).

Perhaps, Vygotsky's multizones of proximal development can better be understood if compared to Dewey's ideal of designing instruction to meet the needs of the child (Dewey, 1933). Ever the pioneer and forerunner of differentiated instruction, Dewey (1902) wrote about providing legitimacy to the process of customizing instruction when he advocated for "transform[ing] the material [by] tak[ing] it and develop[ing] it within the range and scope of the child's life" (Dewey, 1902, p. 13). Sociocultural theory pertains to the child's social interactions with others as a critically important piece of the learning process (Risko et al., 2008). Thus, the unique developmental, cognitive, and

social aspects of a child's life are considered in the creation of a viable plan that will advance his learning.

Vygotsky's theory was concretized within the study through the acknowledgment that a child's demonstration of skill proficiency in one aspect of literacy does not presume a complex understanding of the reading process. Thus, teacher candidates were required to consider the child's various "zones" in their interactions with the children as part of the tutoring experience. In constructivist mode, an embedded support system allowed teacher candidates to assimilate new learning through expert instructor guidance, which was extended through a transactional relationship between teacher candidate and child in a tutoring partnership (Risko et al., 2008). In a nested community of learners that supported teacher candidates' growing assumptions about reading instruction, children's own perceptions about learning to read were likewise reinforced and sustained by the tutor.

Principles of Andragogy

At the same time the principles of andragogy were considered as teacher candidates were guided on a continuum of conceptual understanding about literacy that proceeded from the emergent stage until the participant was proficient in delivering reading instruction.

Andragogy, associated with adult learning, identifies the adult learner as capable of self-directing his own course of learning. The adult's level of maturity allows the processing of previous experience and the alignment of new tasks with perceived levels of competence. In this way the adult is able to immediately apply new learning and sustain a level of motivation to pursue his or her learning (Knowles, cited by Yoshimoto,

Inenaga & Yamada, 2007); however, the issue of time is identified as an inhibitor of adult learning within an explanation for andragogy. Andragogical principles are critically important to consider in teaching young adults who are at the crossroads of independence, embarking upon the professional responsibilities of teaching as a career.

A symbiosis of learning and cognitive development is necessary for the occurrence of transformative learning (Mezirow as cited by Merriam, 2004). According to Mezirow (2001). As the learner grows and matures, his capacity for learning expands; therefore the potential for change is enhanced. As the learner's social experiences are integrated with learning tasks in critical self-reflection, the learner gradually assumes autonomy in navigating his course. Through inquiry, self-examination, and an inherent openness to change, the learner becomes a dialectical thinker (Mezirow, 2001, p. 64), capable of attaining solutions to problematic situations; more importantly, a mature learner perceives conflict as an opportunity to create (Mezirow, 2001).

Different Points of View

In a qualitative study examining reading candidates' instructional practices in tutoring partnerships, Kibby and Barr (1999) found that reflection on clinical procedures is not an easy task because a candidate's knowledge of the content and pedagogy of literacy changes as a result of participation in the clinical practicum (Kibby & Barr, 1999). Written as a position paper, the recommendation that self-reflection should be instituted as common practice within the clinical practicum implied that the component is currently addressed on a superficial level—or not at all.

Clinicians acquired a greater understanding of their own pedagogical practices after participating in shared-reflective practice , which held broad implications for transfer to the classroom (Blachowicz et al., 1999, p. 109; Schussler, Stooksberry & Beraw, 2010) Using a template for self-reflection, clinicians' insights were characterized as technical, practical, or critical, and correlated with a specific pedagogical phase on a trajectory of skills (Blachowicz et al., 1999).

Wood (2007) practiced Schön's (1983) concept of "partnership of research and practice" (Schön, p. 345) in a study of professional learning communities in a clinical literacy practicum where teachers engaged in shared reflection as they collaborated in their practice to identify solutions to the professional problems associated with their teaching, and the challenges of the diverse classroom (Pollock, Deckman, Mira, & Shalaby, 2010). Collective inquiry and ongoing collaboration not only yielded new insights, but ultimately succeeded in the creation of a network of concerned and caring professionals who bore the aggregate responsibility for learning together, realizing that increased student achievement was a result of their own learning (Atkinson & Colby, 2007; Wood, 2007; Pollock et al., 2010).

Self-reflection yields increased teacher knowledge and improved pedagogical practice within educational settings (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Moore & Whitfield, 2010; 2008; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Walker-Dalhouse, Risko, Lathrop & Porter, 2010, Whitfield & Moore, 2007). In their seminal plan for the possibilities of coaching, Neufeld and Roper (2003) developed a framework for effective professional development that emphasized reflective inquiry, linked teachers' work with student learning, facilitated

inter-collegial collaboration in problem solving issues of practice, and promoted reflection of teaching and learning—all of which heighten teachers' awareness as practitioners. They conceded that the traditional definition of professional development did little to drive a district's agenda to produce better test scores; instead, they proffered the idea that reflection on their methodology directly linked to their work with students, which resulted in an overall increase in teacher knowledge and improved instructional practices that is sustained over time (Roper, 2003).

Participation in a 2 hour seminar following by a 1 hour tutoring session empowered clinicians to engage in shared reflection about the students they tutored, the methodologies and assessments used, and the critical conversations that occurred as a result of their conversations with students about the books they read (Gioia & Johnson, 1999).

Foci for seminar included three tiers of reflection that was categorized as practical, conceptual, and philosophical. Practical reflection referred to the observable effects of the candidate's instruction. Conceptual reflection was characterized by the candidate's ability to make decisions that were grounded in pedagogy. Philosophical and critical reflection implied that the candidates developed an innate sense of theory and could instinctively modify established practices and procedures that maximized students' achievement (Gioia & Johnson, 1999). Thus, the candidate worked through the phases on a continuum of reflection that presumed ownership over the previous stage in developing a deep understanding of the content of literacy. On this trajectory of skill acquisition, the

goal of the teacher was to be able to intuit a successful action that would result in the learner's increased achievement.

Evensen and Donahue (1999) described a model of self-reflection in a 6 week problem-based model of clinical practicum two weeks prior to the start of the clinic, followed by one week of Seminar after the conclusion of clinic. Candidates described the Seminar experience as "being able to pool their resources," (Evensen & Donahue, 1999, p.64), in the context of "inquiry for decision-making" (p.62) that summoned a thorough understanding of the content and the pedagogy of literacy as part-and-parcel of instructional decision-making. The reading specialists-in-training were expected to have a deep knowledge of their content, which presumed an ability to articulate the underlying theoretical rationale and manipulate an instructional procedure in accordance with the learner's needs.

An example of the limitations of a contextualized study for self-reflection when the researcher was also the participant (Hatch, 2002) can be found in Hinchman's own conclusions (1999) about her role as a teacher-researcher in the very clinic that she directed. By her own admission, her dual role as the course instructor and study participant in facilitating inquiry-based discussions sometimes precluded her general availability to her graduate candidates (Hinchman, 1999). Hinchman confessed that her preoccupation with her own learning limited students' access to her, which diminished her capacity to help them critique their instructional decisions, crystallize emerging theories about their work with students, and clarify their questions and concerns about their practices.

On the other hand, Olson (2006) admitted that his coparticipation in the process of grounded theory facilitated personal transformation as he allowed himself to "co-journey with the [students]" (p. 3). As a learner himself, he struggled with the conundrums and quandaries of practice and pedagogy. However, both Olson and Hinchman (1999) asserted that the benefits of self-reflection on instructional practices outweighed the possible obstacles that are encountered when a researcher tries "to capture what insiders take for granted" (Hatch, 2002, p. 47). They concluded that enhanced self-awareness permitted the emergence of a powerful union between teacher and student, a construct for helping the student succeed, and a justification for the continuation of the practice of researcher as participant.

Whereas Hinchman's goal (1999) was to deepen reading candidates' pedagogical knowledge, Olson (2008) began with an open-ended question that was designed to uncover adults' perceptions about their literacy skills. As a psychologist, however, Olson's goal was to validate the merit of the Theory of Driven Succeeding (2006) by helping adults self-direct a course of action designed to increase their acquisition of literacy skills. Thus, his belief that adults had the capacity to construct and govern a course of self-improvement based on a protocol for change was paramount to ascription to the principles of reading theory to increase reading achievement. Consequently, a steadfast conviction to the philosophical assumption that perseverance prevails is generally consistent with andragogical theory rather than with evidence-based literacy pedagogy.

Self-reflection and structured collaborative problem solving implemented through established protocols for looking at student work resulted in significant increases in teacher knowledge and student achievement. A systems approach for changing classroom and district literacy prioritized the components of time, collaboration, and shared critical self-reflection in outlining a triangulated plan for creating sustained change (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Drysdale, Goode, & Gurr, 2009). The concept of communities-of-practice and strong teacher collaboration established itself as a compelling internal culture for professional development (Hoog, Johansson, & Olofsson, 2009). Faculties at each school site talked about issues of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Administration provided staff with time and a forum to discuss new strategies, share concerns, work with peers in trying out new strategies, support one another's attempts to revise instructional methods, and gather the data for analysis in identifying next steps for intervention (Dearman & Alber, 2005). Thus, participation in collaborative partnerships dispelled the traditional perception that teachers who do not have opportunities to engage in collegial interactions rarely change their methods.

Kibby and Barr's (1999) argument for the institution of shared reflection as a common practice in clinical supervision emanated from informal interviews with clinicians and published as a position paper as opposed to a scientific study; however, the recommendation was stated as a hypothesis rather than a foregone conclusion. Likewise, Evensen and Donahue (1999) acknowledged that future studies should "systematically address the effectiveness of [reflection]" (p. 65) as an efficient strategy to employ before, during, and after clinical training. Additionally, they called for continued observation of

clinicians' practices in the field, following their exit from the university reading certification program. Although qualitative data, consisting of interviews, field notes, and reflective journals, suggested that the model for problem-based learning may be effective, Evensen and Donahue recognized the need to ground the theory in scientific inquiry. None of the studies cited gains in student reading achievement as a measure of teacher knowledge. Nearly 10 years later Risko et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis found a paucity of studies that linked student achievement to teacher knowledge.

Shared reflection within graduate students' clinical seminar not only increased participants' content knowledge of pedagogy, instruction, and assessment, but also strengthened participants' interpersonal and collaborative skills and multicultural awareness (Darling-Hammond, 2006; LeCornu, 2005; MacPherson, 2010; Rogers et al., 2006; Wynn, Carbone, & Patall, 2007). When preservice teachers teamed with peers in professional collaborations to talk about issues of practice, a supportive and mutually responsive community was created to provide support for one another in their desire to change instructional routines (Le Cornu, 2005; MacPherson, 2010). The reciprocal nature of the relationship engendered an interdependent learning community of critical friends who engaged in questioning, inquiry, and shared decision-making (Le Cornu, 2005). Dialogic seminars and inquiry into their practice allowed teachers-in-training to acquire a deeper understanding about issues of social justice, diversity and the reading process (Rogers, Marshall, & Tyson, 2006; Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, Showalter, 2010; MacPherson, 2010; Spalding, Klecka, Lin, Odell & Wang, 2010). Admittedly discomfited by sensitive topics, graduate students were gently jostled into participating in rigorous discussions in

which they had opportunities to grapple with the substantive curricular, social, and diversity issues of the classroom.

Relationship of Study to Previous Research

Candidates' written journal entries indicated gains in the content and pedagogy of literacy in the weekly Seminars following tutoring sessions (Blachowicz et al., 1999; Goia & Johnston, 1999). Blachowicz's model (1999) for written self-reflection in the practicum presented the most compelling and cogent context for examining practice and pedagogy. A formal template provided the candidates a format to think and write about their methods in ways that transcended the clinical practicum into the real classroom. The clinic directors then reviewed the reflection sheets following tutoring sessions as evidence of the gradual increases in candidates' perceptions about the reading process. Forty out of 44 candidates stated that the knowledge gained in clinic would have specific application to their own classrooms.

Teacher candidates taking the clinical practicum course were likewise required to submit weekly written self-reflections that emanated from three response questions: What have you learned about the reading process? How will you integrate new learning with old? What are your next steps? However, themes pertaining to the candidates' pedagogical learning were gleaned through interviews and my own self-reflective journal, which was coded and themed in a typological framework, and further detailed later in this section under the sub-heading of potential themes and again in section three.

Habermas (2001) conceded that although discussion among the various participants may not always yield consensus, a greater understanding of the issues by the

constituents is attainable through negotiation and agreement about the norms that govern a dialogic and democratic process. A thorough review of the literature has confirmed the positive effects of a theoretical framework that has established the concept of self-reflection within a study team as a legitimate strategy for improving professional practice within the educational setting. Specifically, student-centered dialogic reflection within a collegial and collaborative community is a potentially powerful model for advancing teacher knowledge, interpersonal relationships, and professional competence (Arthaud, Aram, Breck, Doeling, & Bushrow, 2007; Blachowicz et al., 1999; Evensen & Donahue, 1999; Kibby & Barr, 1999; Hasbrouck & Denton, 2007; Lieberman & Miller as cited in Rollie et al., 2007; Whitfield & Moore, 2007). Employed within a context of mutual respect and a cooperative spirit, self-reflection generates critical thought, a willingness to consider alternative viewpoints, and refinement of practice (Dewey, 1933; Freire cited by Bartlett, 2005; Goia & Johnson, 1999; Hasbrouck & Denton, 2007).

The component of Seminar, defined in section one as the framework for effective professional development ensuring reflective inquiry, linking teachers' work with student learning, and promoting reflection of teaching and learning, comprised one aspect of the clinical practicum experience in my study. The concept of discourse, substantiated by Dressman (2007), Merkley, Duffelmeyer, Beed, Jensen, and Bobys (2007) provided teacher candidates with structured opportunities to interact with peers and with me in designing an action plan that advanced their pedagogical learning. Additionally, (Snow-Geronimo, 2009) found that strong mentoring relationships form between veteran and preservice teachers when they have opportunities to discuss their practice. This

collaborative approach to enhance teacher candidates' learning provided a forum for instructional dialogue and continual self-examination of one's practice. Kennedy (2010) found that a collaborative approach is critically important to enhancing student achievement. Additionally, clinical seminar provided a forum for candidates to disclose concerns and discuss problems of practice.

Experienced in facilitating classroom discussion, I was able to assist teacher candidates' performance through deliberate questioning that helped them assimilate the lexicon of literacy as they problem-solved issues of practice to identify solutions. Interestingly, the implementation of Seminar is similar to protocols governing classroom discourse, "as a format for focused and mediated dialogue that might elicit full participation within a discourse community" (Waters, 2010a, p. 235) in "raising the level of student involvement in linking one student's ideas with another" (Waters, 2010b, p. 270). The Seminar "as a context for shared understanding, negotiated interpretation of text, purposeful talk and alternate opinions" (Waters, 2010a, p. 235) exceeded mundane or traditional classroom discussion in that participants were "challenged to seek truth through questions" (Waters, 2010a, p. 235), "encouraged to articulate [multiple] perspectives" (Waters, 2010a, p. 240) and substantiate opinion within the corpus of literacy research.

Finally, Seminar enabled me to establish a partnership conceived in collaboration where reflective study is sustained because participants had a voice (Dressman, 2007; Hasbrouck & Denton, 2007; Lieberman & Miller as cited in Hawley & Rollie, 2002; Whitfield & Moore, 2007; Wood, 2007). Ultimately, Clinical Seminar generated a culture

of trust that allowed prospective teachers to talk about their work and to consider the ideas of others in a collegial, respectful, and responsive environment.

The efficacy of collegial interaction and shared reflection as legitimate strategies for increasing teacher knowledge and student achievement undergird district-wide improvement plans. Studies documenting systemic improvements related to teaching and learning have underscored the concept as a viable, research-based intervention for whole school, leading to district-wide improvement (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Kibbey & Barr, 1999; Langer, 2002; Lieberman & Miller as cited in Hawley & Rollie, 2002; Strahan, 2003; Wood, 2007).

Studies have linked teacher effectiveness to student achievement (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Heck, 2009; Risko et al., 2008). If this premise is true, then the additional component of pre and posttest data would strengthen the researchers' assertions that teachers' knowledge of reading pedagogy deepens as a result of their experiences in clinical practicum. Documentation of student progress would affirm the self-reflection model as described by Blachowicz et al. (1999) as an efficacious strategy in clinical practicum, not only resulting in enhanced teacher knowledge, but also increased student achievement. Consequently, Blachowicz's (1999) qualitative study ultimately lacked the support of pre and post student data that could have revealed the extent to which the candidates had indeed acquired a depth of knowledge of the discipline. Documentation of student achievement data notwithstanding, however, Ding and Sherman (2006) asserted that teacher knowledge is less critical to student achievement than is teacher effectiveness.

Teacher candidates administered, scored, and analyzed a combination of informal assessments from the Consortium on Reading Excellence (Honig & Diamond, 1999) including the Phonological Awareness Screening test, Core Phonics Survey, the San Diego Quick Assessment of Reading Ability, the Fry Oral Reading Test, the Core Assessment of Reading Comprehension, and the Critchlow Verbal Language Scales Assessment. Data from these assessments informed an intervention plan created by the teacher candidate to meet the instructional needs of the students in the program. However, for purposes of maintaining fidelity to the purpose of the study, student data was not considered in the analysis of data. Future studies might consider the integration of student assessment data in the overall effect of clinical experience on teacher candidates' pedagogical knowledge, and is discussed further in section 5.

Finally, Lieberman and Mace (2010) advocated for an online communities-of-practice model to reduce effects of isolationism on the classroom teacher. She lamented that while new teachers may integrate technology into their teaching, whether by twittering, blogging with students, or emailing parents, the "interconnectedness [of collaboration] has yet to reach into the realm of teacher professional learning" (p. 78).

My study utilized technology as a medium for bridging communication between project participants and me through electronic submissions of transcripts and story summaries that were emailed back and forth as part of the process of co-construction. Additionally, I used a digital recorder in the audiotaping process of all interviews, which I subsequently downloaded and saved onto a file on my home computer.

Dissenting Perspectives on Teacher Preparation

Nearly a decade ago, in a critical examination of the status of teacher preparation, Hoffman and Pearson (2000) warned the reading community to assume positions of leadership in establishing research agendas that would evaluate teacher effectiveness, teacher preparation, and best practices in the teaching of literacy. They cautioned teacher educators that if they "[didn't] take initiative and responsibility for setting a research agenda, someone else [would]" (Hoffman & Pearson, 2001, p. 41). With the introduction of standards-based education and the demands of an evolving political, historical, and technological world (Barone & Morrell, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2010), the traditional methodology for teaching reading in the elementary school could no longer support a context of ethnic and pedagogical diversity within today's classrooms.

Less than a year after the publication of their seminal article arguing for the need for teacher educators to become involved in teacher preparation reform, Hoffman and Pearson's (2000) prophetic pronouncement would soon be realized with the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2002). Now, almost 10 years later, the lingering perception is that university teacher preparation programs are ineffective, and that isolated student teaching experiences "perpetuate mediocrity in practice" (Hoffman, 2004, p. 125). Further, a growing amount of disappointing student data linking teacher quality to student learning underscores the need for government intervention (Hoffman, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006a; Walsh et al., 2006).

Teacher education has been on a quest for public acceptance since the mid-19th century with the inception of the 2 year "Normal" School, which was probably the first

institution of higher education to be criticized for "not providing high-quality classroom teachers for the nation's public elementary schools" (Lucas, 1999, p. 54). By the 1930s, the reputation for maintaining low admission criteria and even lower teaching standards caused most of the 50 American Normal Schools to either close its doors or undergo the conversion to a 4-year Teachers' College (Lucas, 1999).

Progressivism was clearly in evidence with the "look-say" method (Walsh et al., 2006, p. 7) of the 30s and the 40s, whose guardians included Horace Mann and John Dewey, and an emphasis in reading for meaning with student internalization of a core set of common words. However, the seeds of 50s behaviorism would prevail with the controversial publication of *Why Johnny Can't Read* (Flesch, 1955), which was followed by a resurgence in phonics instruction in which students learned how to decode using a sound-by-sound approach. This "bottom-up" (Gunning, 2006, p. 8) and synthetic model of reading instruction ultimately led to the public perception that children were the recipients of fragmented instruction: they could read the words in the *Dick and Jane* (Gray & Elson, 1930) series, but the storyline was generally carried by overt illustrations and accompanied with oversimplified, literal, and controlled vocabulary.

The beginnings of state influence on teacher preparation were realized in the 50s with the establishment of criteria for teacher candidates to fulfill a specific number of hours in the classroom as a prerequisite for state certification. At the same time academic debate considered a proliferation of philosophies that would vie for control in governing curriculum within institutions of higher learning (Lucas, 1999). When *A Nation At Risk* (1983) surfaced as one of the first government-published documents reaffirming the

dismal truth that there were many children who still could not read, higher education was once again placed at blame (Barone & Morrell, 2007).

The metaphor of the swinging pendulum has never been so true as in the area of reading instruction. During the era of the "reading wars" (Pearson, 2004; Walsh et al., 2006) in the early 90s, reading teacher preparation paralleled classroom reading instruction that once again became the political object of opposing theories. Whole language, with its sociolinguistic origins, emerged as a natural process by which children explored their environment (Alexander & Fox, 2004). The public perception of whole language, that it disallowed the teaching of phonics, marked a clear division between the camps of constructivism and behaviorism, which was reflected in the emergent literacy lessons whose effectiveness had been previously documented (Alexander & Fox, 2004). Critics of the doomed philosophy accused both classrooms and institutions of higher learning for abandoning an integral component of reading as part of a balanced approach to reading instruction (Alexander & Fox, 2004).

Prompted by poor national literacy test scores and an apparent philosophical division between phonics-first and meaning-first approaches to reading instruction, Congress created the National Reading Panel in the late 90s, whose charge was to identify, once and for all, the necessary skills for inclusion into comprehensive reading instruction (Walsh et al., 2006). The emergence of five components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary have since been referred to as the "pillars of literacy" (Walsh et al., 2006, p. 8) for inclusion

within an instructional system for the delivery of comprehensive and scientifically based reading research.

Yet, the pendulum within the paradigm continues to shift nearly 10 years later: Instruction in the five pillars has often resulted in the promulgation of decontextualized skills once again, leading to teaching and assessing of discrete skills (Damico, 2005; Pacheco, 2010). Furthermore, reading statistics have not significantly improved within in recent years. Approximately 25% percent of first graders do not have the requisite preliteracy skills in phonemic awareness to increase the likelihood that they will be successful readers by third grade (Walsh et al., 2006), and 70% of students in grades 4 and 8 are still reading at basic and below basic levels of comprehension (NAEP, 2007).

Most recently, attempts to professionalize teacher education have only succeeded in politicizing schools of education and polarized schools of thought as to how best to prepare teacher candidates to teach. As previously stated, some states have implemented a system for licensure that requires a) initial certification candidates to pass a rigorous examination in literacy instruction (Barone & Morrell, 2007; CT Foundations of Reading Test, 2009), and b) schools of education to report candidate assessment data to State Boards of Education and the federal government. Finally, the federal government distributes Title II funding to universities in accordance with the rates of state licensure for its teacher candidates (HEA, 2002).

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2006), however, argued that tests of teacher knowledge are not necessarily related to teacher effectiveness, and that measures to ensure teacher efficacy take a narrow and oversimplified view of the educational process that has

allowed an antiquated view of education to prevail. They further asserted that "teacher quality" cannot be compared to teacher knowledge and have accused policy makers of submitting to a defunct transmission model of education that requires teachers to impart knowledge to students instead of using scientifically-based research ascribing to constructivist approaches in their teaching (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2006).

Additionally, voluntary participation in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is another course of action taken by schools of education to control for program quality through a complex assessment system aligning specific course assignments to the corresponding standards of the discipline of the Specialty Professional Associations (SPA; NCATE, 2007). Of concern to teacher educators participating in the NCATE process is the perception that the university is now bound by rigorous assessments that may or may not be aligned with the realities of the classroom (Barone & Morrell, 2007).

Literacy professionals and teacher educators have advocated for robust and extensive field experiences and coursework to provide teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills of the profession (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Dearman & Alber, 2005; Hoffman, 2004; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; IRA Position Statements, 2003, 2004; IRA, 2007, Le Cornu, 2005; Lefever-Davis, 2002; Scott & Teale, 2010/2011; Snow & Burns, 1998). However, former U.S. Secretary of Education and others have recommended the "dismantling" of teacher preparation programs altogether, citing that student teaching should be optional (Paige as cited by Hoffman, 2004; Paige as cited by Cochran-Smith, 2006). Additionally, Paige asserted that student achievement data has been linked to the

poor preparation of new teachers (as cited by Hoffman, 2004). Hoffman (2004) argued, however, that an analysis of 57 studies over the past 20 years concluded that student achievement is linked to novice teachers, teacher quality and university preparation programs. Affirmation of Hoffman's assertion is revealed in the work of Darling-Hammond (as cited by Hoffman, 2004), whose quantitative study concluded that an increase in student achievement was directly related to teacher effectiveness (Hoffman, 2004).

Public perception about poor teacher quality has allowed alternative teacher preparation organizations including Teach for America (TFA) to gain momentum for generating entire cadres of college graduates who acquired certification after participating in a brief teacher-training period (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005). However, two recent studies have shown that TFA recruits are less effective than those who have attended multiyear teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Hoffman, 2004). Despite research conclusions asserting that teachers who have attended full-scale teacher preparation programs are more effective than those who have participated in emergency certification programs, the public perception is that college graduates with high academic rankings can be adequately trained to teach with only a few weeks of training (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Hoffman, 2004). Finally, Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) posited that TFA recruits were selected from a group of the highest performing college graduates who perhaps required less rigorous training in the art of pedagogy and instructional methods than their counterparts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005).

Darling-Hammond (2010) advocated for government support to ensure equitable access to superior quality teacher preparation by teacher candidates by providing salaries commensurate with those in other professions, mentorships for new teachers, sustained, ongoing professional development, and an efficient hiring process. At the same time, Darling-Hammond has not exonerated university professors from fulfilling their professional responsibilities in creating and sustaining high quality teacher preparation programs. Darling-Hammond admonished teacher educators for tacitly abdicating "professional accountability" (p. 45) in the training of teachers by remaining impervious to sociopolitical changes, evolving accreditation issues, and standardized education.

Further, Darling-Hammond (2010) recommended that they, too, must seek to establish partnerships with the community in creating professional liaisons with schools to provide future teachers with clinically rich and authentic field experiences that mirror the realities of today's classrooms. A recent review of a meta-analysis of 82 theoretical frameworks within university teacher preparation programs concluded that of the many time-honored learning theories (Risko et al., 2008; Spooner, Flowers, Lambert, & Algozzine, 2008) that undergird literacy instruction in teacher preparation programs, the behaviorist philosophy persists. In a critique of Risko et al.'s (2008) work, Cochran-Smith (2006) demanded to know how teacher preparation programs can reconcile the presence of the two diametrically opposing theories of constructivism and behaviorism, and that issues of teacher preparation should emphasize teacher learning rather than teacher testing.

Criticism notwithstanding, behaviorist theory is generally accompanied with the paradigmatic models of constructivism, socioculturalism, and critical theory. Here, the question is not whether theoretical perspectives are in contention with one another; rather, how are the varying perspectives reconciled in the delivery of a discipline in which social change is at its core? Thus, the teaching of literacy is less a curricular issue than it is an issue of social justice.

Within the meta-analysis (Risko et al., 2008), the phenomenon of self-reflection was examined to the extent that it enhanced teacher candidates' content and pedagogical knowledge of literacy. Surprisingly, though the concept has been documented to be an effective tool to deepen teacher knowledge about literacy instruction, Risko et al. (2008) concluded that teacher candidates' pedagogical perceptions revealed a cursory understanding of the reading process, and that a mechanical implementation of reading instruction translated into discretionary perspectives "in the absence of models or demonstrations" (2008, p. 266). However, teacher candidates who received explicit instruction and guided practice in the procedural implementation of reflective reasoning were more apt to transform their thinking when they taught how to employ self-reflection. Specifically, direct modeling included journal writing that focused on authentic field experiences and required them to think about the learning of their child and what they would do differently next time.

Thus is the evolution of the reading approaches and political criticism from the last millennium: from its humble beginnings within Normal School preparation, to a generation of synthetic instruction whose truncated vision did not include full-scale skill

integration of basic reading skills. Next, the context of an era of depressed assessment data has allowed the emergence of a precarious but practical movement that continues to undermine university teacher preparation by threatening to dismantle entire schools of education. A current vision places teacher preparation as a forum for reflective practice for teacher candidates to deepen conceptual understanding, leading to social change (Blachowicz et al., 1999; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Dunston, 2007; Gimbert, Desai, & Kerka, 2010; Gioia & Johnson, 1999; Hinchman, 1999; IRA, 2007; Kibby & Barr, 1999; Risko et al., 2008).

Perhaps it is time for theory and practice to converge with politics and public perception in a reconciliation of reading pedagogy with teacher preparation through the creation of a realistic agenda focusing on the problem of how best to teach tomorrow's teachers how to teach reading, an age-old dilemma that still prevails after all these years (Hoffman & Pearson, 2000).

Concise Summaries of the Literature

Authentic apprenticeships that allow teacher candidates to discuss their literacy practices through collaborative problem solving are powerful opportunities to enhance one's learning (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Dearman & Alber, 2005; Hoffman, 2004; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; IRA Position Statements, 2003, 2004; IRA, 2007; Le Cornu, 2005; Lefever-Davis, 2002; Risko et al., 2008; Snow & Burns, 1998). Dufour (2004) affirmed that the most effective professional development occurs in the workplace; structured opportunities for colleagues to engage in collaboration yield increased teacher knowledge and improved pedagogical practice.

Preservice teachers develop interpersonal skills, advance pedagogical understandings, and enhance multicultural awareness when they engage in critical reflection and reflexive practice that accompanies structured field experiences in mentoring or tutoring a struggling diverse reader (Choules, 2007; Cochran et al., 2009; Cornu, 2005). Autonomy over learning through strategic intervention empowers participants and breeds a trusting culture of collaboration within a nested community of learners (Cornu, 2005). Thus, a redesign of clinical practicum inclusive of Seminar examined the phenomenon of self-reflection as a legitimate strategy for increasing teacher knowledge, improving professional practice, and considering a multicultural perspective in the teaching of diverse learners.

Most Important Aspects of the Theory

As a reflective practitioner for over 30 years, I have continually sought to refine my instructional repertoire through effective lesson design, differentiation of instruction, and extensive professional development and in reading the professional literature. Now at the college level, I wondered if my graduate students might advance practice and pedagogy as they worked in legitimate teaching contexts that provided them with appropriate guidance while summoning their knowledge and skills in teaching a child to read.

For the past four semesters I have been the instructor for the clinical practicum course, a redesign of an existing course that warranted revision because of a lack of enrollment. My study focused on teacher candidates' experiences to determine if teacher candidates' knowledge of the content and pedagogy of literacy gradually increases during

their participation in a clinical practicum course. The most important aspects of the theory that were examined included the topics of pedagogical knowledge, teacher candidates' dispositions, self-reflective practice, misconceptions about literacy, and the tutoring experience itself. Listening to my candidates engage in discourse about their tutoring experiences enabled me to determine its effect on learning, and to explore the theory that participation in clinical practicum, which included the component of shared self-reflection, complicated and deepened candidates' understandings of the reading process over time.

Operational Definitions

Clinical Experience

The clinical experience refers to the clinical practicum course taken as part of planned program for initial certification, which includes the assessment of struggling readers with a variety of reliable and valid instruments and data-based instruction in developing customized intervention plans to address the diverse needs of each child. The benefits of clinical preparation for teacher candidates is aligned with Standard 3 of NCATE (2010) for required field experience, and is substantiated by Sivakumaran, Holland, Clark, Heyning, Wishart & Gibson (2009). A second component of the clinical experience includes Clinical Seminar, which was defined in Section 1. Eleven of the 12 classes of clinic consist of a formatted 90 minute tutoring session and one hour of seminar. The first three-hour session has been designated exclusively for orientation.

Dispositions

Dispositions refers to the values, attitudes and an ethical sense of professionalism that influences patterns of behavior in teaching, learning, collegial interactions, and decision-making, and is directed towards student learning, and relationships with colleagues, administrators, and the community.

Pedagogical Knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge refers to the series of actions that a classroom teacher employs in response to the problematic situations that arise during the tutoring session, resulting in optimum learning for the child. It presumes individual mastery of content knowledge in literacy and proceeds from the science of teaching with the assumption that a knowledgeable teacher is able to intuit a resolution from a deep knowledge of best practices (Reutzel et al., 2007). The study explored the theory that teacher candidates' pedagogical knowledge increases with prolonged engagement in the field (Risko et al., 2008).

Self-Reflective Practice

Borrowed from Schön (1983) self-reflective practice encompasses two components: the process of analyzing of one's teaching and to make explicit the ways in which problems are solved. First, the process of self-reflection allows the learner to examine the procedural steps to identify the problem, in the solution to a problem, and to justify the selection of one strategy over another and revise his practice. A second component of self-reflection is to use introspection in order to view a situation from another perspective. In doing so, the learner perceives more than one solution to a

problem. In the study teacher candidates were asked to consider how they used self-reflection in making instructional decisions.

Conceptual Framework

Research Design

A narrative inquiry design within a constructivist paradigm explored teacher candidates' experiences of Clinical Practicum, and focused on the acquisition of pedagogical and content knowledge in literacy. This particular qualitative tradition permitted a rich description of the preservice teacher's "life story research" (Hatch, 2002, p. 28). Acknowledging that the human condition cannot be ignored, an underlying goal of research was to acquire a depth of understanding about a particular phenomenon (Merriam, 2002, p. 5), an inherent characteristic of narrative design. Thus, the generative nature of a qualitative approach also aligned with the exploration of the phenomenon of self-reflective practices within the context of the clinical practicum course taken upon completion of a foundations course in literacy.

A constructivist paradigm was selected because the philosophy aligned with the paradigmatic boundaries of narrative design (Hatch, 2002), and the revolving role of the researcher permitted reconciliation between active participant and college instructor in a sinuous transition from outsider to insider (Hatch, 2002). The constructivist stance implied a coconstruction of knowledge between participant and researcher and a fusion of function among the chameleon-like attributes of the researcher. Further, a reciprocal relationship between researcher and participant enabled a co-construction of the data and thematic possibilities (Hatch, 2002). Lastly, a constructivist stance presupposed a

paradigmatic assumption and a philosophical congruence of the researcher's actions and dispositions throughout the study, which required ingratiation of oneself to project participants (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002).

Hatch (2002) affirmed that flexibility and constructivism are symbiotic components of the semistructured interview; a data tool that was used extensively and for data collection, one that seemingly commanded the assumption of constructivist thinking. An additional data tool included my own reflective field notes gleaned from observations and analysis of interview data related to topics including instructional interactions between candidates and children, candidates' weekly written self-reflections, about their assumptions of clinical practicum.

Data collection methods, aligned with the selection of narrative design and the constructivist paradigm, included semistructured interviews inclusive of broad interview questions that clearly reflected the research problem. Correlating follow-up and probing questions were developed in response to the data, themes, and significant details that were identified by the interviewee (Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interview questions were formatted to generate rich and detailed information; however, when the initial query did not yield a depth of information (Rubin & Rubin, 2005), I immediately revised a question to elicit a depth of information from the interviewee. Interpretive analysis was integrated with typological analysis to determine categories and generate themes (Merriam & Associates, 2002) that pertained to candidates' assumptions about their tutoring and instructional practices.

Instructional Methodology

The curricular methodology selected for the study consisted of the general principles of Reading Recovery (Clay, 1993), an intervention philosophy with more than 30 years of history that has been documented to be effective in accelerating the literacy learning of primary children who have been identified as at-risk for learning how to read (Cox & Hopkins, 2007). Aligned with IRA's Standards for Reading Professionals (IRA, 2003), and embedded within the IRA's (2007) *Teaching Reading Well*, the three methodologies provided an inclusive pedagogical framework and are described below.

Teaching Reading Well

Teaching Reading Well (IRA, 2007) is the commissioned study and collaborative effort between the IRA and the Teacher Education Task Force (TETF), resulting in a document that identifies six core features that are necessary for creating sustainable university teacher preparation programs. Six critical components are identified for inclusion within effective university teacher preparation programs including "a) content of literacy, b) faculty and teaching b) apprenticeships, c) diversity, d) candidate and program assessment, and the e) resources, governance, and vision for reading education" (2007, p. 1). Positioned at both ends of this methodological fulcrum were the Standards for Reading Professionals (IRA, 2003), and Clay's (as cited by Cox & Hopkins, 2006) seven principles for literacy development as the curricular methodology, nested within a curricular conceptual framework. Each component is described below:

Feature 1: content. The content refers to the core curriculum within university teacher preparation that addresses (a) foundational research and the importance of

teaching the grand theories of literacy instruction that grounds teachers' practice. Additionally, core curriculum content includes (b) strategies for word recognition, including phonemic awareness and phonics, and the cueing systems, context clues that are accessed by the reader in decoding unfamiliar text. Specifically, a reader uses semantic cueing when he uses meaning to infer the pronunciation of a word as he asks himself, "does [this word] make sense?" (Fitzharris, Jones, & Crawford, 2008, p. 388). Syntactic cueing is accessed when the reader uses the structure of a word when he asks, "Does [this word] sound right?." (p. 388). Finally, graphophonic cueing or the rules of phonics are employed when the reader asks, "Does [this word] look right?" (388). Good readers must integrate the three cueing systems for efficient decoding. The component of (c) text comprehension follows, and is accompanied with the parallel skills of vocabulary, fluency, and strategies for content area reading (source?, 2007).

The (d) integration of reading and writing in response to literary and informational text is the last component of the first group of skills that is aligned with standard one of the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (IRA, 2003), which states that "candidates have knowledge of the foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction" (Ruddell, 2006, p. 528).

The topic of (e) assessment, including the need for preservice teachers to acquire knowledge in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of multiple assessments is addressed as the final component for inclusion into the core curriculum for the content of literacy pedagogy, and is aligned with standard three, which states that "candidates use a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading

instruction" (IRA, 2007; Ruddell, 2006, p. 532). As stated previously, however, student assessment data was not considered in the analysis of data in order to maintain integrity to the purpose of the study, which was explore the candidates' tutoring experiences within an innovative apprenticeship of clinical practicum.

Feature 2: faculty and teaching. This feature refers to the need for university faculty to provide excellent instructional models of research-based practices and to continually exhibit commitment to the discipline of literacy and ongoing professional development, and aligns with standard five, in which "candidates view professional development as a career-long effort and responsibility" (IRA, 2007; Ruddell, 2006, p. 536). Within this feature is the methodology used for imparting knowledge to teacher candidates, which includes the gradual release of responsibility in a teaching model that provides for explicit modeling and instruction, guided practice, immediate feedback, and independent practice (IRA, 2007). Within this model teacher candidates are encouraged to collaborate with their peers, participate actively in lesson development, and engage in reflective practice (IRA, 2007). By providing exemplary models, teacher candidates acquire first-hand experience from "mentors who model" (IRA, 2007, p. 9), university faculty "nurture the next generation of educators (IRA, 2007, p. 9).

Feature 3: apprenticeships, field experiences, and practice. This feature refers to the rich clinical apprenticeships in the field that appropriate connect university coursework with the practical fieldwork of the classroom. High-quality university teacher preparation provides structured opportunities for teacher candidates to teach literacy in authentic contexts to develop and hone their practice. Additionally, a supportive

relationship that provides for regular, ongoing debriefing with a knowledgeable and nurturing mentor allows the teacher candidate to develop a resource of content and pedagogical knowledge under the competent tutelage of university faculty (Taylor, 2008).

Here again, the teacher candidate is encouraged to reflect upon his practice under the watchful eye of a seasoned professional (IRA, 2007, Taylor, 2008). Encouraged to refine his practice, the preservice teacher receives immediate feedback on the quality of his lessons, which is accomplished through dialogue journals with the professor and written response to field notes. In this way, the teacher candidate is guided through a reflective process in the refinement of his instruction, as he acquires multiple strategies to address the needs of diverse learners (IRA, 2007). As in the case of Feature 2, this feature is also aligned with the IRA standard five that addresses professional development.

Feature 4: diversity. This component refers to the myriad ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse students in today's schools. High-quality teacher preparation programs are sensitive to issues of diversity, and acknowledge that preservice teachers are not always aware of their cultural insensitivity (MCClam, Diambra, Burton, Fuss, & Fudge, 2008; Risko et al., 2008). Further, they recognize that it is their professional responsibility to provide structured opportunities for teacher candidates to discuss their concerns, questions, and feelings as they acquire new understandings about the people they are going to teach (IRA, 2007). Embracing diversity implies a commitment to teach all children (Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, & Mitescu, 2008; Wong et al., 2007). Inherent within diverse classroom are at-risk students who require differentiated instruction to advance their reading achievement. Risko et al. (2008) concluded the

benefits of tutoring for both teacher candidates and diverse struggling readers in a nested community of learners where preservice teachers are supported as they, in turn, support struggling readers.

This feature appears to be aligned with both IRA standard two and standard four. Standard two states that candidates will "use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction" (Ruddell, 2006, p. 530) and includes the use of "instructional grouping options" (p. 530) to meet the needs of diverse students. Likewise, Standard 4 states that the candidate will "create a literate environment that fosters reading and writing by integrating foundational knowledge, use of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, [and] curriculum materials" (Ruddell, 2006, p. 534) where the candidate "selects materials . . . that match their reading levels, interests, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds" (Ruddell, 2006, p. 534). Here, the implicit reference to social change is perceived through the directive to render an instructional match between the diverse needs of students to sociocultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Feature 5: candidate and program assessment. High quality teacher preparation programs use multiple assessment measures for diagnostic purposes and teacher candidates learn a variety of ways to refine their pedagogical practice (IRA, 2007). A component for progress monitoring of the teacher candidate ensures the development of the skills and knowledge of the profession. This feature refers to the assessment of teacher candidates; therefore, this component aligns with the NCATE

(2010), the national organization for university accreditation for teacher preparation programs.

Feature 6: governance, resources, and vision. This last feature addresses a core of dispositions for the university professor associated with the mentoring, teaching, and assessing of the teacher candidate. The mission for the school of education should be the sustainability of a high-quality teacher preparation program that encourages its students to become active participants in literacy leadership, and instills a sense of community that promotes collaboration even before graduation (IRA, 2007). In a high-quality teacher preparation program, the university faculty works together to provide innovative programming, rich clinical experiences, and productive connections to the community in which the teacher candidates will serve (IRA, 2007).

Additionally, these programs accommodate second-career teacher candidates by aligning classes with work schedules and solicit candidates' input in identifying schools that will serve as sites for internships. A constructive approach to curriculum allows teacher candidates to participate in inquiry-based learning, and solicits their input for the continuation of interactive courses that provide professional development that commences upon the teacher candidate's enrollment within the institution.

Aligned with standard 5 for professional development of the reading professional, this last feature focuses on the need to provide the preservice teacher with opportunities to participate in simulated and natural experiences designed to help teacher candidate in making the gradual transition from apprentice to competent educator.

Standards for Reading Professionals

The Standards for Reading Professions (2003) is a framework delineating the essential competency areas for teacher candidates in meeting the diverse needs of all populations, and is the determinant criteria for evaluating the teacher candidate's instructional performance. Content standards encompass the areas of foundational knowledge, instructional and assessment practices in which specific performance objectives are delineated with and correlated to criteria that measures the candidate's performance for accomplishing each of the goals. At the core of the framework is the essential component of professional development, an element that begins at the onset of teacher preparation and continues as a "commitment to life-long career learning" (Ruddell, 2006, p. 527).

Clay's Seven Principles of Literacy Development

Clay's Seven Principles of Literacy Development (as cited by Cox & Hopkins, 2006) will provide the instructional framework for intervention, aligned with the IRA's Standards for Reading Professionals (2003), and IRA's position paper for teacher preparation for reading instruction (IRA, 2007), inclusive of a high-quality teacher preparation program. Although Reading Recovery in its purest form is not the method by which children are tutored within the clinical practicum at the site of the study, a modified procedure has been established that incorporates the principles of reading recovery and the methodology by which it is implemented. Thus, the rationale for identification of the principles is two-fold: firstly, the research-based methodology presents a foundation for beginning reading instruction that is philosophically and

pedagogically aligned with the pre-requisite early literacy course taken prior to enrolling in clinical practicum. Secondly, the principles of reading recovery are included within the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (2008), recommendations from the National Reading Panel (2000), and *Put Reading First* (2003), a national publication outlining the essential elements of literacy instruction.

Principle 1. Reading involves problem solving at multiple levels. Students must be taught how to problem-solve in decoding. This necessitates the internalization of a complex cueing system in which the learner uses one or more strategies: semantic [meaning], syntactic [structure], and graphophonics [visual] to decode unfamiliar text, and has been previously explained as first feature under *Teaching Reading Well* (IRA,2007). In order for a child to read fluently and accurately, all three cueing systems must be working simultaneously.

Principle 2. Children construct their own knowledge of decoding and comprehension that bridges or merges new knowledge with existing knowledge. The process of reading draws upon the principles of constructivism from Vygotsky (1978). With the help of a knowledgeable adult or teacher, the child is guided along a continuum of proficiency in which he is ultimately weaned to independence that takes him from watching a model to approximating the actions of the teacher, to performing the task on his own.

Principle 3. Children approach their literacy learning with varying levels of schema. Their oral and receptive vocabularies belie inherent differences within. Reading and writing are symbiotic elements in the literacy process that will be affected by these

differences, and it is the teacher's responsibilities to plan for wide and varied literacy activities that will accommodate apparent differences that exist within diverse populations. This principle is specifically linked to principle two in that literacy is viewed as a social process that is contextualized within the practices that are generated at school and in the home.

Principle 4. Reading and writing are symbiotic elements, that is to say that reading and writing are mutually supportive, and attempts to write emergently impact a child's ability to use semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cueing to make sense of text. Sound or phonemic awareness is supported through attempts to write down known sounds that represent words. Attempting to write down the words that are already part of the child's receptive vocabulary increases the child's metacognitive awareness.

Principle 5. Children need to practice reading in texts that support them as problem-solvers, but are not frustrating to them as they attempt to put their strategies into practice. Children must also be given a variety of genres from which to practice the physical act of reading. This principle underscores the need for differentiation of instruction by the tutor, who will provide the child with a text gradient consistent with the child's reading level.

Principle 6. The teacher needs to have an in-depth knowledge of reading to be able to customize instruction to fit the child's needs. Not only must the teacher be able to scaffold's the child's learning, but she must be able to provide a balance of supports and challenges that will move the child along the trajectory of learning. This principle extends principle 5.

Principle 7. Teachers must be reflective practitioners to be able to employ intervention when the need arises. Children's diverse needs make it impossible to identify an exclusive course of action or product line that will accommodate all children. Therefore, the teacher must have sufficient expertise to distinguish among the learners, and identify the most appropriate measures to attend to the unique learning needs of each child. This implies that the teacher candidate will need to acquire a variety of strategies to employ to accommodate the diverse needs of struggling readers.

In sum, the curricular methodology selected for the study consists of the general principles of Reading Recovery (Clay, 1993), which aligns with the Standards for Reading Professionals (IRA, 2003), and considers the underlying precepts for quality teacher preparation programs in *Teaching Reading Well* (IRA, 2007). Together, the three methodologies provide an inclusive pedagogical framework for the implementation of the study.

Themes and Perceptions

Rubin and Rubin (2005) referred to *data units* (p. 202) as extracted pieces of information, specific textual language or questions pertaining to the phenomenon under scrutiny. Data transformation enabled these *data units* to be converted into typologies, whose themes included but were not limited to the content and pedagogy of literacy, teacher candidates' dispositions, evidence of reflective practice, misconceptions about literacy, and the tutoring experience itself. Semistructured interviews and conferences with teacher candidates encouraged opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in

critical self-reflection and shared discussion that provided additional data to code and theme.

Hatch (2002) recommended that the researcher review the transcribed interview several times, looking for phrases related to topics that could eventually be merged with similar concepts across several interviews (Merriam, 2002). The process of data collection yielded many interviews from which information was gathered; therefore, the eventual revision or addition of categories in extracting several relevant data units within one paragraph (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 202) necessitated an analysis of varying perspectives. While looking for language that pertained to my research question, I had to be mindful for additional themes that might surface (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Hatch cautioned the novice researcher that the limitation of using typological analysis is that the researcher "can be blinded" to other important dimensions in the data (p. 161).

The apparent, yet tentative connections between and among the categories within the typological framework were explored as the study commenced and matured (Hatch, 2002). Subsequently, the causal relationship between the component of the teacher candidate's participation in the tutoring experience and the depth of the candidate's content and pedagogical literacy knowledge, inclusive of the participant's reflective practices, rendered patterns of thinking and practice that became intertwined with themes.

Justification for Using Older Sources

Preference was given to literature dated 2005 and beyond; however, older primary sources, seminal texts, and groundbreaking documents were used in the review of literature to present a chronology of reading instruction consisting of: *An Observational*

Survey of Early Literacy Reading Achievement (Clay, 1993), *A Nation at Risk: A Report to the Nation and the Secretary of Education*. United States Department of Education (1983), *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow & Burns, 1998), *The National Reading Panel: The National Commission on Excellence in Education*, the *Higher Education Act* (2002), and others were used because the content of these documents was considered to be germane to the central issues of the study. Additionally, the out-of-print seminal text, *Advances in Reading Language research: Reconsidering the Role of Reading Clinic in a New Age of Literacy* (1999) was used to document evidence-based practices in tutoring and within clinical practicum; an updated edition of this text has not been published since that time.

Hoffman and Pearson's (2000) seminal, politically charged essay was cited. Well-respected experts in reading research, Hoffman and Pearson (2000) made an impassioned plea for literacy professionals to take charge of the destiny of reading instruction, lest it become politicized and regulated by federal legislation. Their prophetic warning to the reading community to provide leadership, scholarship, and a strong research agenda for teacher preparation has attained groundbreaking status as a corroborating document that has been cited by many other reading experts in their own recent reviews of literature.

As of the writing, the revised International Reading Association Standards for Reading Professionals (2010, in press), a document that anchors the conceptual framework for instructional methodology, is currently in the process of publication. Therefore, the existing IRA Standards for Reading Professionals (2003) was selected as one methodology to frame the study. Finally, texts written by theorists of the 20th

century, including John Dewey, Donald Schön, Paulo Freire, and Lev Vygotsky, require little justification as primary sources.

Literature Related to the Use of Differing Methodologies to Investigate the Outcomes of Interest

Although the concept of reflective practice has long been recommended by researchers as a viable strategy to advance the instructional skills of teachers in general, its effectiveness has only recently begun to be correlated with documented increases in student reading achievement (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Langer, 2002; Lieberman & Miller as cited in Hawley & Rollie, 2002; Strahan, 2003; Wood, 2007). A paucity of research documenting the effects of student achievement in field-based suggests that practices have only begun to take hold within the parameters of clinical supervision. However, Cochran-Smith (2006) argued that neither teacher knowledge nor student achievement should be linked to teacher effectiveness or teacher quality, and that assessment models that reflect a transmission approach for measuring student learning oversimplify the processes of learning and teaching altogether. Here again, in order to affirm fidelity to the purpose of the study, student assessment data was not used in the portrayal of the tutoring experiences of the preservice teachers. However, this is not to say that an assessment system did not encompass the tutoring experience; rather, student assessment data was not used to evaluate the tutoring experiences of the teacher candidates.

Risko et al. (2008) found a number of disturbing and conflicting issues within the meta-analysis on teacher preparation. First, results of several studies concluded that

prospective teachers allowed their perceptions about teaching to override their pedagogical and philosophical approaches to teaching and that "tacit beliefs may go unrecognized and intrude on learning in ways that are difficult to identify" (p. 263). They affirmed that the presence of these attitudes oftentimes precluded acceptance of current constructivist constructs for teaching and learning, which suggests that preservice teachers are already resistant to change even before they step into the classroom.

Additionally, they posited that the most troubling conclusion is the issue that prospective teachers are slow to revise their pre-existing beliefs. They asserted, however, that researchers should not uphold such conclusions; instead they should seek to distinguish candidates' erroneous perceptions from "deeply rooted beliefs" (Risko et al., 2008, p. 263), and search for ways to understand the complexity of issues that may contribute to the candidates' negative perceptions. They proffered that in 36 out of 82 studies "prolonged engagement in the field" (p. 267) was the most important factor in helping prospective candidates transform their beliefs.

Researchers have not come to consensus as to what constitutes effective teaching. Here again, Risko et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis criticized researchers for making the assumption that teacher knowledge is tantamount to teacher effectiveness, which is exemplified through coursework that over-emphasizes literacy terminology including phonology, phonemic awareness, and morphology. Risko et al. argued that researchers have erroneously concluded that an increase in pedagogical knowledge in a variety of topics covering the spectrum of literacy yields improved teacher effectiveness that is automatically generalized to the classroom. Risko et al. disagreed that a perfunctory

knowledge of the lexicon of literacy cannot be equated to effective teacher performance. Conversely, they stated "disparate findings that are not linked to one another or to any indicators verifying importance of this knowledge" (Risko et al., 2008, p. 264) are not generalizable.

Finally, there is little empirical data to substantiate the benefits of shared reflection in specific connection to a university clinical practicum course in the preparation of teachers, although its effectiveness as a strategy for enhancing teacher knowledge and student achievement within educational settings has long been established within the corpus of research. Additionally, strides have been made for objectifying the concept of collaborative self-reflection as a promising practice for deepening the clinical practicum experience of both candidates and clinical directors.

Criticism and a dearth of research notwithstanding, however, there is a sense of urgency to fortify preservice teacher with a reservoir of tools that will ultimately transfer to the classroom in meeting the needs of diverse learners (IRA position papers, 2000, 2004) as measured by student data. A university teacher preparation program that connects coursework to the school setting, encourages collaboration among cohorts of teacher candidates, and considers student data will ensure the gradual development of literacy expertise from apprentice to competent professional that maintains a wide-angle focus on student reading achievement.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

"For teacher education, this is perhaps the best of times and the worst of times" (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 35). Darling-Hammond (2010) referred to the implications of the political, economical, and educational policies that have rendered current university teacher preparation programs inadequate in fortifying tomorrow's teachers with the necessary pedagogical skills and content knowledge of the profession. Although teacher education has been at the forefront of professional development for the past 2 decades, a wide-angle focus on the continuous improvement of teaching and learning has been overshadowed by myriad socio-economic and political challenges associated with strengthening educational programs (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Although political and socioeconomic influences are naturally considered in the evaluation of teacher preparation programs, the impact of evolving legislation, state licensure, national accreditation, and alternative routes to teacher certification will not be explored within this study. These are challenges that are beyond the scope of the study, to recount the stories of preservice teachers in tutoring struggling readers within a research-based clinical practicum course.

Darling-Hammond's (2010) assertion that teacher preparation programs are potentially powerful entities for "transforming teaching and learning" is justified through the delineation of a core of features that characterizes sustainable university teacher preparation programs. Inclusive of school and university partnerships, mentorships for teacher candidates, time for collaboration, and strong clinical training (Darling-

Hammond, 2010), the clinical component alone has provided the context for a qualitative design that focuses on reflective practice as a lens to capture teacher candidates' tutoring experiences through personal narrative (Hatch, 2002). Subsequently, the reinstatement of a resurrected clinical practicum elective course provided the teacher candidate with an in-depth field experience connecting theory to practice.

Many factors may have contributed to the current perception that higher education is remiss in preparing prospective educators for the challenges of today's diverse classrooms. However, this study focused exclusively on teacher candidates' pedagogical insights about literacy instruction obtained in a clinical practicum course at a small private university in Southern New England.

Rationale for a Qualitative Research Design

The challenge of preparing preservice teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge in advancing the reading achievement of diverse populations was the premise for a qualitative research design within a constructivist paradigm that utilized narrative inquiry to chronicle the stories of teacher candidates during their participation in a clinical experience (Hatch, 2002, p. 28). The site of the study was a small private university in Southern New England where teacher candidates tutored diverse struggling readers using research-based practices in literacy.

Narrative Design

The principles of constructivism provide the substance for the integrative processes of teaching and learning that consider the learner as an active constructor of knowledge within an inquiry-based community that preserves and promotes the ideals of

shared self-reflection and collaboration (Lambert et al., 2002, p. 205). Negotiation of the elements of background experience, prior knowledge, and a sense of ethics helps to generate new learning linking to existing knowledge and a transition to an authentic application of theory (Lambert et al., 2002). In a cyclical and threaded process, graduate students pondered and refine pedagogy through reflective practice in a nested partnership that encouraged a struggling learner to take a risk. Subsequently, candidates' foundational knowledge in literacy was deepened as research-based strategies were confirmed through carefully designed lessons that advanced student reading achievement.

Within the paradigmatic boundaries of the constructivist ideal, a narrative design captured the "storied knowledge" (Hatch, 2002, p. 28) of the teacher candidate. The essence of the teacher candidate's tutoring experience was represented through the candidate's articulation of the grand learning theories, the lexicon of literacy instruction, and a rich description of the candidate's conversation about his clinical activities.

Although the term narrative may refer to either the topic selected for study or the method by which a phenomenon is studied (Creswell, 2007), this study assumed the narrative stance as the methodology by which participants' personal narratives or transient biographies were revealed within the parameters of the clinical practicum experience.

The concept of self-reflection was used as the perspective by which the narratives are generated (Creswell, 2007) through an intentional coconstruction of experiences within the timeframe of an academic semester that delineates a beginning, middle, and end to the story (Merriam and Associates, 2002). In literary fashion using the framework for story grammar, the study delineates themes and lessons learned, and presents a

coherent epilogue that is generated from the data. A tentative macrostructure for the narrative includes a problem, one or more pivotal events causing the participant to evolve or change, and possible themes or resolutions inherent within the story (Merriam, 2007), permitting a co-construction of truths by the participants and me (Hatch, 2002, p. 49).

Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis (1997) attributed artistic qualities to the researcher as one who metaphorically paints a picture of her subject while capturing the essence of the aesthetic experience. As with the artist who seeks to describe the illusions and details through "line, shadow, color, texture, delineation and placement of forms on canvas, (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 29), the researcher likewise explicates the literary equivalent in an erudite and veracious exploration of the elements of narrative story structure in depicting the clinical experience. Whether the "producer" or "perceiver," (p. 29) the conversation is "a co-construction of meaning [between the researcher and the researched] in which both parties play pivotal roles." (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, p. 29). In similar fashion, anticipating the development of a collaborative relationship between course participants and course instructor, negotiation between the teacher candidates and me for rendering meaning to the stories sanctioned a coconstruction of knowledge based on basic assumptions of the reading process.

Course requirements in clinical practicum required teacher candidates to submit weekly written journal self-reflections that focused on their candid and unedited perceptions about their teaching practices. Study participants had access to these "field texts" (Creswell, 2007, p. 55) or natural artifacts during interviews, which provided additional raw data for identifying inherent themes and perceiving semantic connections

related to the emerging and anticipated typologies within the data. Categories included the content and pedagogy of literacy, general dispositions and attitudes of teacher candidates, tutoring experiences and struggling readers, reflective practice, and perceptions and misconceptions, in the context of clinical training.

Thus, in qualitative tradition, the narrative research design considered both the stories and the themes that emerged from the data, consisting of transcriptions of digitally recorded interviews and my own self-reflective field notes (Creswell, 2007). Member-checking of the interview transcriptions and the story drafts was continually employed throughout the study.

Acknowledging the tradition of a hierarchical relationship and uneven distribution of power between the teacher and student (Hatch, 2002), I endeavored to provide an egalitarian context by encouraging study participants to enter into a collaborative partnership with me, which would result in a coconstruction of their professional stories. Ongoing member-checking of transcript and story drafts continually solicited their feedback while listening to their voices, which resulted in systematic revisions that were incorporated into each iteration of the narrative. Therefore, each draft underwent refinement and revision so that an authentic portrayal of teacher candidates' experiences could be generated and an accurate story might be told.

Lightfoot-Lawrence and Davis (1997) referred to the historical, personal, and internal context for the accurate depiction of the storied knowledge in which the participant brings background experiences and aesthetic experiences to the current set of circumstances. Within these contexts, the components of mutual respect, empathy for the

graduate student's status as an apprentice, and my commitment to elevate the candidate's pedagogical understandings on the trajectory of learning was juxtaposed against the backdrop of the clinical experience. Thus, a unification of all of these elements was achieved through deliberate integration of the interrelationships and connections that define the parameters of the story or composition.

A Discussion of Other Qualitative Research Designs

The rationale for selecting the narrative design warrants brief discussion of the other qualitative approaches not selected, especially because the subtleties that distinguish one approach from another can result in an indeterminate comparison. For example, while the phenomenological study is similar to the narrative in that it examines the ways in which one or several people experience a concept or phenomenon of a lived experience (Creswell, 2007, p. 57), its discernible feature is that it "describes how one orients [his behavior] to a lived experience" (Hatch, 2002, p. 30).

A phenomenological study seeks to capture the culture of a people who have experienced unintended consequences of a universal phenomenon including grief, survival of a naturally occurring phenomenon or disaster (Hatch, 2002). On the other hand, a narrative study that examines teacher candidates' experience of the phenomenon of preservice teachers' tutoring experiences within an innovative apprenticeship involves one's intentional and deliberate immersion into a context by which self-reflection and a structured format for instruction become the conduit to advance one's own pedagogical knowledge. Thus, the experience of a people who share a particular set of unforeseen or difficult circumstances is the commonality for unity within the population, as opposed to

a select population that has willingly opted to participate in a shared experience in which pedagogical outcomes have been objectified at the outset (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002). Such is the difference between a phenomenological and narrative study.

The case study was not selected as the methodology for this qualitative research design. The commonalities between case study and narrative study consist of barely perceptible distinctions within blurred parameters: Parallels between the two designs included the purposeful selection of the participants, the intent to "search for meaning and understanding" (Creswell, 2007, p. 179) and the researcher's role "as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, (p. 179). A tenet of case study is the presence of a "unit of analysis" (Hatch, 2002, p. 30) within "a bounded system" (Creswell, 2007, p. 179) as the intended outcome for the study, and appears to be a feature reserved for the case study design. Thus, the assumption that the researcher is the co-creator and collaborator in recounting the participants' shared experiences through rich linguistic description was the prevailing characteristic that held special appeal for the selection of the narrative design.

The ethnographic study was not considered for several reasons: the intent of the study is not to explore "shared patterns of learned behavior" within a cultural group over time, and the selection of seven participants was much fewer than the requisite number of 20 (Creswell, 2007, p. 69). Moreover, the study did not seek to represent the anthropological features of a shared culture as evidenced through common behaviors, beliefs, and the language associated with the inhabitants of a micro-society (Creswell, 2007). Rather, the study explored teacher candidates' perceptions and pedagogical

practices within the context of the shared experiences in choosing to take a university clinical practicum course. Although my role as researcher permitted my active participation in the process, I did not anticipate "day-to-day" (Creswell, 2007, p. 68) involvement in the "experiences of a culture-sharing group" (p. 68). Rather, as a cocollaborator in the construction of graduate students' knowledge of the reading process, I facilitated the acquisition of the language of literacy in restorying their ephemeral slice-of-life experiences within a finite period of time as tutors.

Finally, the rationale for not choosing the grounded study design must be contextualized within the decision to use a specific instructional methodology for project implementation, which circumvents the requisite post-positivist approach that compels the researcher to relinquish personal bias and preconceived assumptions during project implementation (Hatch, 2002). As a reflective practitioner of reading instruction for well over 30 years, adherence to rigorous protocols that require the researcher to repudiate foundational principles contrasted sharply with personal foundational beliefs about how children should be taught to read. Here, a philosophical predilection, grounded in the time-honored constructivist principles of reading instruction, influenced project implementation and is further explicated.

The pedagogy of reading education implies the presence of certain evidence-based assumptions inherent within the conceptual framework for the study, which comprise a core of non-negotiable principles for the teaching, learning, and assessment of literacy. Guiding documents for the study included Clay's (cited by Cox & Hopkins, 2006) *Seven Principles of Literacy Development*, the IRA's Standards for Reading

Professionals (2003), and the IRA's (2007) position paper for teacher preparation for reading instruction; they provided an instructional framework inclusive of best practices in the reading process and have been explained in section 2.

Secondly, the method of data analysis for grounded theory mandated the utilization of the constant comparison approach, a rigorous method of data analysis that required continuous scrutiny of the data to generate a theory or theories (Creswell, 2007), and would have disallowed the identification of a priori categories at the outset. Having already planned for a typological framework to begin the process of data analysis (Hatch, 2002), this study sought to examine teacher candidates' knowledge of literacy instruction during their participation in clinical training, and explored the theory that rich field experiences inclusive of tutoring, assessing, and self-reflection, deepen candidates' knowledge about literacy instruction.

However, although the grounded theory approach was rejected at the outset, the study nevertheless utilized coding in the analysis of a typological framework, inclusive of the tentative categories including content and pedagogy of literacy, the tutoring experience, the struggling reader, and reflexive practice. Ultimately, a hybrid of interpretive and typological analyses used (Hatch, 2002) to confirm the presence of themes relating to the research question. In the quest for "supportive data for [a priori] for the typologies" (Hatch, 2002, p. 153), the discovery of impressions and revelations from the data was eventually reinforced through "concepts, themes, events, and topical markers" (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 208) pertaining to and influenced by the central idea (Creswell, 2007): the content and pedagogy of literacy.

Typological analysis permitted tentative connections between and among the categories explored as the study commenced and matured (Hatch, 2002), as did the potential causal and symbiotic relationships and recurring themes between and among the categories. Thus, a review of the data yielded "supportive data" for a tentative typological framework (Hatch, 2002, p. 153). At the same time, I acknowledged the critical importance of allowing the data to speak for itself, rather than "looking for confirmation of my ideas" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 202). Additionally, the frequent revision of categories in extracting several relevant data units within the data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 202) necessitated the revised of some interview questions to reflect the data that was generated.

Hatch (2002) cautioned the novice researcher that the limitation of using typological analysis is that the researcher "can be blinded" to another important dimension in the data (p. 161). Thus, I looked for language within the data pertaining to my research questions, and was mindful for other themes that surfaced (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). This warning is corroborated by Wolcott (2009) when making the distinction between data analysis and data interpretation: Data analysis is the process by which data is examined using statistical procedures for "measuring, observing, and communicating with others about the nature" (Wolcott, 2002, p. 29) of the condition. In sharp contrast to the concept of data analysis, interpretation, while not subjected to standardized procedures, commands the best "effort at sense-making" (Wolcott, 2002, p. 30) and an accurate reporting of the experience.

Research Questions

Both Creswell (2007) and Hatch (2002) affirmed the importance of designing an essential question, followed by several sub-questions. Hatch also acknowledged the iterative nature of questions during the research process, stating that questions should emanate from the researcher's "theoretical orientation and substantive interests" (p. 42). Creswell affirmed that qualitative questions include a central question that relates to the problem, restate the purpose of the study, and consist of several subquestions and that sub-questions should flow accordingly from the essential question (p. 132).

Therefore, central and subquestions were designed with the recommendations of Hatch (2002) and Creswell (2007) in mind. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?
2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Context for the Study

As the researcher and instructor, I, too brought a certain perspective to the study, which was considered as part of the historical context (Light-Lawrence & Davis, 1997), and has been substantiated in the review of literature focusing on the effective components for a clinical experience within a teacher preparation program. Therefore, the

critical components of a well-structured apprenticeship were integrated into a redesign of clinical practicum offering preservice teachers the opportunity to diagnose, instruct, and design an intervention that yielded positive increases in a struggling reader's reading achievement.

The site of the study was the university-based reading clinic at a small private university in Southern Connecticut, where teacher candidates opted to participate in Clinical Practicum, a three-credit elective course within a planned program leading to initial certification that was specifically designed to link coursework with field experience. I have chosen not to reveal either the setting or the specific name of the institution because I have pledged confidentiality through informed consent documents to project participants during the recruitment process. Currently a course elective within the school of education, enrollment within clinical practicum is limited to an enrollment of ten teacher candidates per semester, of which seven were project participants. Identification of course participants and study recruits might easily be discovered with the disclosure of the institution. Therefore, neither the candidates' identities nor the name of the university was disclosed.

All course participants had completed a foundations course in literacy instruction as the prerequisite prior to enrolling in Clinical Practicum, which was specifically designed to extend and build on teacher candidates' content and pedagogical knowledge from previous coursework. Powerful teacher education programs "integrate theory and practice" in "[re]designing courses to build on one another [adding] up to a coherent whole" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 122).

The historical context for the inclusion of the clinical practicum into a teacher preparation program considered several years of stagnating state student achievement data, the achievement gap among sub-groups, and the resounding voices of literacy educators and child advocates within the State of Connecticut, and is further explained.

Historical Context of Clinical Practicum

Three years ago I attended a literacy summit meeting whose purpose was to discuss the status of literacy achievement in my state of Connecticut, because our state ranks among the lowest in the nation for raising literacy achievement among linguistically, ethnically, and academically diverse populations (CSDE, 2007). Six years of stagnant data, indicating that only 52% of grade 3 students had reached the benchmark for reading on the state assessment (CSDE, 2007), prompted the state education commissioner to bring together local leaders from literacy organizations and advocacy groups to identify possible solutions to the achievement gap. Now, 2 years later, only 54.6% of third grade students statewide have reached established reading benchmarks as measured by the state assessment, with only 24% of the third grade students from high poverty urban districts in the same state scoring high levels of reading proficiency (CMT, 2010).

The purpose of the Reading Summit was to coordinate state efforts to improve childhood literacy with literacy representatives from public and private universities, and local and state child advocates. One of the outcomes of the summit was the recommendation to institute a state-mandated literacy exam as a certification requirement for prospective teachers in the teaching of reading. As of July 1, 2009, initial certification

candidates in Connecticut have been required to take and pass the Connecticut Foundations of Reading test, a criterion-referenced assessment that measures a candidate's content and theoretical knowledge of literacy. The content of the exam includes the five components of comprehensive literacy as identified by the National Reading Panel (2000) phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, diversity, and assessment (CT Foundations of Literacy, 2010).

The CT Foundations of Literacy Exam is the second assessment required for teacher licensure in the State of Connecticut, which has placed higher education in the unenviable position of preparing teacher candidates to take and pass two state exams. This, in turn, has necessitated revisions to course syllabi and curriculum in accordance with the content of the exams. The Praxis II, an exam of content and pedagogy developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS, 2009), is the first measure required for teacher certification, and is already a formidable assessment within a rigorous national system for teacher licensure.

Compounding the problem is a proposal within the State Legislature to revise major state certification regulations that will be effective as of 2014, which will require teachers to obtain nine credits of coursework in reading and language arts as part of state licensure (CSDE DRAFT, 2014). Thus, an emphasis on test-taking has diminished the opportunity for candidates at the site of the study to have authentic literacy teaching experiences with diverse groups of children because state mandated coursework consists of test preparation rather than the authentic pedagogy praxis.

My position as a university professor, entrenched in the professional development of preservice teachers, has enabled me to witness the evolution of university teacher preparation: from theoretical coursework to limited practical application, to inevitable test-taking. A composite of the typical teacher candidate juxtaposes the preservice teacher, fortified with the theories and content standards of literacy, yet deprived of structured opportunities to practice his or her craft, with the field-based challenges demanding teacher competency in the teaching of reading. Thus, the main goal of the study was to provide the apprentice teacher with a clinical experience that would give the candidate the opportunity to work with a diverse struggling reader, administer assessments, develop instructional plans, receive instant and corrective feedback on the quality of the instruction, and engage in shared self-reflection and collaboration on issues of practice.

Consistent with the recommendations of the experts to “teach for social change,” a “Clinical Curriculum” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 122) within Clinical Practicum required teacher candidates to assess struggling readers with a variety of instruments, and use data-based instruction to develop personalized intervention plans that build on the children's strengths while addressing areas of need in phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary (NICCHD, 2000) and writing. The class met for 12 sessions during the summer semester, and consisted of 90 minutes of tutoring, followed by 60 minutes of Seminar to allow time for candidates to talk about their practice. The inclusion of Seminar into the redesign of Clinical Practicum provided structured opportunities for teacher candidates to discuss their work and engage in shared reflection

as they collaborated to identify solutions to the professional problems associated with their teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Dearman & Alber, 2005; Wood, 2007).

Prior to the commencement of clinical practicum, teacher candidates attended a rigorous three-hour mandatory orientation session that prepared them for working with a struggling reader. A curriculum, consisting of research-based intervention strategies and standards-based lesson plans covering the spectrum of skills in phonological awareness, phonics, comprehension, fluency, vocabulary (NICHD, 2000), and writing was distributed to all course participants at orientation. They learned how to administer, score, and analyze a combination of informal assessments from the Consortium on Reading Excellence (Honig & Diamond, 1999) including the following pertaining to phonological awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and oral reading fluency. For purposes of the study, however, student assessment results were not considered in the analysis of data.

However, for purposes of explanation of clinical activities, student assessment data informed an intervention plan created by the teacher candidate to meet the instructional needs of the students. A curriculum resource packet provided an instructional format for the tutoring session modified from Clay (1993), lists of sight-words and high frequency words, activities for teaching phonemic awareness and phonics. A correlation chart for gradient text allowed for flexibility in the selection of reading materials that corresponded to students' instructional levels. A syllabus explained course goals, objectives, and the required course assignments, including weekly written self-reflections that were submitted electronically following each tutoring session.

Additional technological curricular resources included a web-based link to a university-produced instructional streaming video depicting a typical clinical tutoring session, enabling teacher candidates to observe an authentic demonstration of each component of the tutoring format. Additionally, participants learned how to navigate reading websites offering a trajectory of leveled text in fiction and nonfiction, so that at-home access to materials would be possible when preparing for tutoring sessions. Course participants also received a case study for returning children from the previous semester.

There is oftentimes a disconnection between "teacher education and some conception of practice" (Lampert, 2010, p. 21) in which the concepts of theory and practice are dichotomized. Although student teaching experiences are designed to offer the preservice teachers an authentic opportunity to practice pedagogy under a seasoned teacher, traditional apprenticeships cannot assure that the preservice teacher will acquire the skills needed to effect student productivity. Compounding the problem is that university coursework is driven by theoretical frameworks rather than practical application, and that teacher education programs emphasize pedagogical theory rather than pedagogical practice. Lampert (2010) referred to the concept of "learning teaching" (p. 24) as a bilateral theme in which the opposing influences of epistemology and authentic teaching practices are not automatically mediated or negotiated by the novice teacher. She asserted that the theory-laden coursework at the university is incompatible with the long-held tradition that an apprentice learns his craft from an established artisan, and that "the learning of teaching practice is something one does by oneself while learning the work" (p. 24).

Therefore, the goal of Clinical Practicum was to interface theoretical principles of literacy coursework with clinical training to ensure a rich preparation for an authentic teaching experience.

Measures for Ethical Protection of Participants

Following an application to Walden's Internal Review Board (IRB), I made a formal proposal to the local IRB at the university at which I am currently employed. For privacy purposes, I have not disclosed either the setting or the name of the university at which I conducted the study. Anticipating that my study posed "little or no risk" (Hatch, 2002, p. 61), I pursued an "expedited review procedure" (p. 61) so that the study could commence immediately upon IRB approval from Walden. Finally, a review of my application to the IRB at my university yielded an exemption, which meant that IRB members perceived that my study posed minimal risk to project participants, especially because my intent was to study former students who had completed the clinical practicum prior to the commencement of the study. After receiving approval from both Walden IRB (IRB #: 08-20-2010-67827) and my university, I formally recruited my former students and scheduled the first round of interviews. Thus, study activities did not impede or interfere with other course components, assignments, or teacher candidates within the course who did not participate in the study. An explanation of the access procedure follows:

The IRB Chair at my university reviewed the proposal and consent forms to ensure that all appropriate measures of informed consent were followed. Within 5 days after submitting the application, the local IRB evaluated the project to pose minimal risk

to participants, and therefore determined that the proposal qualified as an exemption from the formal application to the IRB process (Appendix C). Thus, I received access or permission to conduct the study at the university at which I teach.

Following IRB approval from both Walden and my own university, I then recruited seven volunteers for participation in the study. A description of the intended procedures guiding the study was distributed to the participants, including an explanation of the focus of study: to explore the tutoring experiences of teacher candidates using the phenomenon of reflexive practice as a lens (Hatch, 2002) within the clinical practicum course. As the university instructor and researcher, my intention was to study my former students for whom I no longer held an evaluative position. I provided recruits with a statement of informed consent in advance of their participation (Hatch, 2002). Precautions to diminish the risk of participation (Hatch, 2002) included advance written documentation to recruits that their participation in the study was strictly voluntary and that withdrawal from the study would not compromise either their grades in the course or their academic status as teacher candidates at the university.

Thus, affirmation of the rights of the recruits was guaranteed through legal documentation that assures protection and legal confidentiality of the participants throughout the study, inclusive of data collection activities: interviews, observations and written field-notes (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Justification for nondisclosure of the name of the institution included the need to preserve the anonymity of project participants. All data was stored, managed, and encrypted on the hard drive of

my home computer and protected from unauthorized access through anti-theft, tamper-resistant hardware.

I acknowledge the tenuous nature of the investigator and participant relationship, and the potential vulnerability of a partnership subjected to procedures associated with formalized data collection and the informal collaborations that occur within the scope of a study (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Hatch (2002) wrote about "inviting the involvement of participants" (p. 53) by building a rapport because "teachers have relatively little power or status and often perceive themselves to be in a subordinate position in relation to the educational researcher" (p. 67). A hierarchical relationship between the researcher and project participant(s) can compromise the success of the study, especially when the researcher does not ingratiate herself to project participants. Creswell (2007) confirmed this last statement in his assertion that the interview, as a method of data collection, has the potential to be an "asymmetrical power distribution between interviewer and interviewee" (p. 140).

Legal documentation notwithstanding, the inherent disparate relationship between the researcher and the participant may be sufficient reason for a reticent recruit to withhold the truth (Merriam and Associates, 2002). Therefore, an ideal interview is that in which participants willingly share their experiences without being prodded (Creswell, 2007). Acknowledging the apparent precipices pertaining to qualitative inquiry, I upheld established protocols for conducting semi-structured interviews, The inclusion of a comprehensive context, rich literary description of the activities, triangulation of data

sources, and ongoing member-checking should have prevailed as sufficient conditions to counter the potential for the participant's dissuasion.

Role of the Researcher

As a 31-year veteran of public education and certified as a state reading consultant and former administrator, I have served in the positions of classroom teacher, reading specialist, and principal, before assuming my current responsibilities as a clinical assistant professor at a local university. Teaching introductory reading methods courses to initial certification teacher candidates, my purpose was to examine my students' knowledge of literacy instruction following their participation in a clinical practicum course to determine its effect on learning, and to explore the theory that rich field experiences inclusive of tutoring, assessing, and self-reflection, deepens teacher candidates' knowledge about literacy instruction. A summary of the research question follows: How does participation in formalized apprenticeships that provide preservice teachers the opportunity to tutor a diverse struggling reader, inclusive of written journal entries and Clinical Seminar advance the practice and the knowledge of preservice teachers? As the researcher and instructor I fulfilled a variety of roles that spiraled within the study.

Hatch's (2002) description of an "insider" may be construed to epitomize my current position as an investigator conducting a study in her own "backyard" (p. 47). From investigator to college instructor, to data collector and analyzer, and facilitator of Seminar to the co-structor of knowledge, I was well aware that the role of an insider is already fraught with the inevitable impediments and obvious biases related to my role

as a university instructor (Hatch, 2002, p. 47). Although Hatch (2002) admonished doctoral students who opted to "study their own context" (p. 47), my study examined the phenomenon of tutoring experiences of preservice teachers for whom I no longer held the power of evaluation, and was, therefore irrelevant to the study of a situational context.

Subsequently, the natural pitfalls inherent within the student/instructor relationship were no longer a consideration for the study because of my intent to study former students whose grades were submitted long before the study commenced. Additionally, I reconciled potential conflict through my deliberate actions to maintain objectivity to the participants, to the data, and to the study so that its integrity could be preserved. Allowing the data to speak for itself (Rubin & Rubin, 2006), I took procedural steps to revoice data obtained through interviews, and to employ frequent and ongoing member-checking to triangulate conclusions in verifying the accuracy of the data "at multiple levels" (Janesick, 2005, p. 143). Finally, I shared my insider concerns with participants in advance of the study, to whom I will have already pledged immunity through the provision of informed consent.

Criteria for the Selection of Participants

The selection of participants was based on purposeful sampling of a homogeneous population of initial teacher candidates at a small private university in Southern New England. All had earned bachelor degrees prior to enrolling in the fifth year teacher certification program, which consisted of a yearlong internship within a public school setting inclusive of ten weeks of student teaching. All candidates had taken the course prerequisite in foundations of literacy instruction as part of a state-approved planned

program before enrolling in the Clinical Practicum elective course. All were somewhat familiar with the phenomenon [of self-reflection] under study, having taken at least one course in educational psychology and/or human growth and development (Creswell, 2007).

Teacher candidates enrolling in Clinical Practicum were recruited for participation by telephone approximately 2 weeks before the study began. Familiarity with the candidates was established prior to the beginning of the study because project participants were candidates in the clinical practicum course. In this way purposeful sampling of a homogeneous population was assured (Creswell, 2007). This recruitment process enabled me to solicit the names of seven volunteers and alternate participants if someone could not fulfill the commitment. Participants had the opportunity to ask any questions in advance of the study (Merriam & Associates, 2002). At the time of recruitment I explained the nature and the purpose of the project (Hatch, 2002; Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2005), including the content of the informed consent documents that articulated the minimal risks of participation, and the right to withdraw from the study without fear of academic repercussions.

Thus, affirmation of the rights of the recruits was assured through informed consent documentation that explained the purpose, the goals, the context, and the duration of their participation in the study (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). At the time of recruitment, I asked participants to sign documentation indicating their agreement to be audiotaped during their participation in the study.

Data Collection Procedures

Extensive data tools from two sources included semistructured interviews and my own self-reflective field notes obtained from face-to-face interviews. An explanation of the way the procedure follows:

Semistructured Interviews

The interview is an appropriate data collection method (Creswell, 2007) that allows access to potentially good informants willing to discuss the phenomenon of the tutoring experience (Hatch, 2002). Prior to each interview, I reviewed the purpose of the study with each participant, explained that the interview would be audiotaped, and that I would take notes during the interview so that a record of the exchange could be documented. I conducted a total of three, audiotaped, one-on-one interviews at the clinic with the consent of each of the participating teacher-candidates, which occurred at the beginning, midway through the course, and once again at the end of the study.

Follow-up interviews were conducted as needed. Conducting the interview on familiar territory enabled project participants to feel relaxed and unencumbered so that "getting at the core of the research" (Hatch, 2002, p. 103), was possible. Conclusions derived from ongoing data analysis were used to accommodate participants' needs (Hatch, 2002). Although the structure of interview revolved around essential questions that were related to the research questions (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002), I attempted to be open and flexible to my informants' responses to engender a trusting and synergistic relationship (Hatch, 2002).

Interviews took place in my office at the university at which I am employed after the formal recruitment of participants following the completion of the summer clinical practicum course. In narrative tradition, interviews focused on the experiences of the researched (Wolcott, 2009). In advance of the interview, I established the interview as voluntary, reaffirmed the right of the interviewee to terminate the interview at any time, and guaranteed the interviewee's confidentiality through informed consent documentation (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Before the start of the interview, I asked the interviewee if he/she had any questions. Following the interview, I transcribed and revoiced the audiotapes, and sent the transcript to the project participants for member-checking to verify the accuracy of their statements (Creswell, 2007). This procedure is affirmed by Merriam and Associates (2002) as a viable way for project participants to corroborate the researcher's "tentative findings" (p. 26) during the study.

Researcher's Observations and Field Notes

As the instructor/researcher, I coded my own written field notes taken from the interviews. Additionally, candidates' written self-reflections were available to the candidates during interviews and was referenced by me where appropriate.

Data Analysis

Interpretive Analysis initially emanated from inductive analysis involving a typological framework, and proceeded to an in-depth level of interpretation and data transformation. General impressions were obtained from the reading of the entire set of data, which, in turn, lead to the discovery of themes that were recorded in my journal. The process of systematic review and summarizing enabled me to "piece together"

(Hatch, 2002, p. 181) the parts of the teacher candidates' experiences in meaningful ways that were told through a story grammar. Typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) was used to analyze the majority of the data, including transcriptions of interview data, candidates' perceptions, and my own field notes that were maintained throughout the study.

Audiotapes of interviews were coded and analyzed to obtain themes inherent within the data; ongoing member-checking was employed to substantiate stories. A typological framework initially considered potential categories including the content and pedagogy of literacy, the tutoring experience, the struggling reader, and reflexive practice that framed my analysis, and I looked for "supportive data for these tentative categories while searching for connections between and among the categories, and being open to the burgeoning of additional ones (Hatch, 2002). Data was grouped by theme and related text within color-coded boxes so that concepts could be perceived as entities on the continuum of integration of potential themes (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this way I was able to perceive possible nuances and subtle connections, between and among the categories, while being mindful of the lone statement that warranted its own theme.

The maintenance of an ongoing journal necessitated absolute neutrality, and a repudiation of personal feelings and assumptions about the foundational principles of reading was achieved through bracketing, defined as "holding a phenomenon up for inspection while suspending presuppositions and avoiding interpretations" (Hatch, 2002, p. 86). At this phase in which I recorded initial impressions, I needed to "emotionally separate" from the data to acquire a pure and authentic story (Hatch, 2002), and

acknowledge the presence of perceptions that may or may not eventually merge with the findings.

Interviews were conducted at the beginning, midway through the study, and at the conclusion of the study at the site of the university reading clinic. Follow-up interviews, telephone conversations, and email correspondence assured ongoing communication as the study warranted (Hatch, 2002). Candidates' written self-reflections, electronically submitted for my written feedback during their participation in the clinical practicum course, were available to the candidates during the interview process in helping them recollect details of their interactions with their tutees, which provided insights that were added to the content in my reflective field notes. Additionally, candidates' written self-reflections proved to be a rich resource of data that was not impervious to additional themes.

Systematic ongoing review of memos and self-reflective notes also yielded tentative interpretations that provided the content for the summaries that were submitted to project participants for verification, elaboration, and modifications during the process of member-checking (Hatch, 2002). The recursive process of writing memos, forming impressions, developing insights, drawing conclusions, writing summaries, and checking for accuracy of content and dispositions through frequent access to project participants is one that ultimately captured the essence of the teacher candidates' tutoring experiences.

An erroneous and simplistic assumption is that project participants' experiences could be distilled through the process of data interpretation. Here, Wolcott (2009) cautioned the novice researcher that "there is no such thing as a pure description" (p. 32),

and that "good qualitative research ought to confound issues" (p. 32). Thus, an additional issue was the searching for counterevidence for established typologies (Hatch, 2002). As I searched for appropriate typologies to anchor extractions from transcriptions, I tried to be mindful of my tendency to equate an impression with an interpretation (Hatch, 2002), and was therefore prepared for the process of data analysis to be iterative and nonlinear, as complex and/or contrary perspectives were illuminated through a transformation of the data.

Validity and Trustworthiness

Although the focus of the study was the tutoring experiences of preservice teachers in the implementation of research-based literacy curriculum, a constructivist approach permitted, even commanded, the coconstruction of learning between the participants and me, a goal that was contingent upon a symbiotic and trusting partnership (Freire, 1997; Schön, 1983). In this way, teacher candidates were sanctioned as legitimate partners in crafting the storied knowledge and in delving into changes experienced during their participation in the study (Creswell, 2007). Semistructured interviews, as the primary method of data collection, served as the basis for constructing the stories of the participants in a recursive member-checking process to establish validity, which, stipulated continual scrutiny and corroboration by teacher candidates (Merriam & Associates, 2002). An ongoing collaborative process assured participants a voice in the process of interpretation so that their experiences could be restoried in an authentic and realistic portrayal (Creswell 2007; Wolcott, 2009). Thus, triangulation of written

narratives was achieved through multiple member-checking throughout the study (Merriam & Associates, 2002).

Validity and trustworthiness were attained through a peer review of the interview protocol. Two esteemed colleagues of doctoral status with over twenty years of university experience provided specific feedback on the quality of the interviewing protocol, which was then incorporated into revisions that were ultimately used for three interview protocols. As recommended by Creswell, (2007), the streamlined interview protocols, consisting of open-ended questions were then pilot tested in focus groups and individual interviews throughout the spring semester of 2010 to streamline the process of inquiry. Participants included teacher candidates for whom I no longer supervised or evaluated, former students who had previously taken the clinical practicum course and whose grades had been submitted one semester prior to pilot testing. Thus, teacher candidates' status in the teacher preparation program at the university was not compromised by their tentative involvement in the rehearsal of this study.

I would like to think that my personal style as a university instructor is courteous, and that I was able to engender trust reflected through an open and honest relationship with the project participants. I realized the importance of being sensitive to the teacher candidates during the recounting of personal narratives, and that the role of empathy in a conversational partner's unique circumstances implies a respect for the researched (Merriam & Associates, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Creswell (2007) asserted that the interview has the potential to be an "asymmetrical power distribution between interviewer and interviewee (p. 140). As the professor, I endeavored not use my position

to intimidate or to quiz the interviewee on specific literacy content that is objectified on the syllabus for the clinical practicum course (Hatch, 2002; Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Although the nature of my affiliation with the teacher candidates is not quite reciprocal, I was quite mindful of the hierarchical tendencies embedded within the tenuous relationship between the researcher/instructor and the project participants (Hatch, 2002).

I realized that awareness alone is not a sufficient condition to assure ethics and equity. Thus, I countered the subordinate perception with "full disclosure" (p. 67) of my research activities by reminding teacher candidates' of their right to withdraw if they felt compromised, and was fully cognizant that the participants' rights were protected through the National Institute of Health (NIH). The Bell Report specifically stated that "participants can refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time . . . they decide whether or not to cooperate" (Bell as cited in Frankfort & Nachmias, 1992, p. 1).

I acknowledged the advantages of having a protocol designed to get at the heart of the research (Hatch, 2002). Following the data collection of interviews I submitted electronic copies of transcripts to provide teacher candidates the opportunity to indicate the statements that they wanted stricken from the record or modifications they wanted to make to the transcript without penalty or compromise.

During the process I endeavored to mitigate the revolving role of the researcher with the incessant instructor in a sinuous transition from outsider to insider. In the quest to create openness with discretion and to obtain rich and necessary data with deliverance, I was mindful of the perils of a biased and unsubstantiated investigation. Personal

negotiation focused on a fusion of function among the chameleon-like attributes of the researcher in a reciprocal relationship with the participant reflected through a co-construction of the data. Lastly, in constructivist mode, a paradigmatic assumption required a philosophical congruence of actions and dispositions throughout the study. Therefore, an accurate interpretation of the participant's issues commanded the highest proficiencies in listening, questioning, and interpreting, so that an authentic story could be generated.

Section 4: Results

Introduction

The context for the study was the colorful, 3-year-old, university-based reading clinic, replete with individual wooden cubbies, bookcases, book bins, and several pint-sized, leather-like chairs and couches in the primary colors of red, yellow, and blue, which are positioned around the crescent-shaped rug at the far left corner of the room. The multicolored rug, approximately 12 feet in diameter, upon which the children's furniture sits, lends a certain coziness, which is somewhat antithetical to the stark austerity of a traditional university classroom. A not-quite-full-size electronic keyboard, approximately 4' x 18", has what amounts to an almost-place-of-honor on a somewhat rusty red metal stand about 4' high to the left of the rug. A cumbersome and spindly easel on wheels is pivoted toward the rug area on the right, displaying an afternoon message on crisp white chart paper, which will be read to the children just prior to the interactive read-aloud lesson on Babushka's Doll (Pollacco, 1995). On the bottom of the easel is a grill-like metal shelf that is expected to accommodate an infinite number of big books, which have, once again, spilled onto the floor. Finally, a fully stocked country basket of seminutritious snacks, including Cheez-Its, pretzels, chocolate chip granola bars, rice krispie treats, and juice boxes, sits on a table at the opposite end of the room patiently waiting for the children to dismantle its contents before settling down to read with their tutors. This child-friendly space was intentionally created so that its weekly residents would be receptive to learning while taking comfort for granted.

It is 3:55 p.m., and the tutors are first to arrive. These teacher candidates have opted to take the elective in clinical practicum because they wanted to increase their pedagogical knowledge about the literacy curriculum, its instruction, and assessments. They have already worked an entire day in the field as interns at nearby public schools; nevertheless, they come bounding through the heavy door into the classroom and hustle to prepare their work stations before the arrival of the children. There is playful conversation and an occasional lament about the daily grind in the life of an intern—"I can't believe I had cafeteria duty again today!"—is heard, as they work quickly to organize their tutoring materials for the 90-minute session, ranging from leveled texts and trade books to sentence strips, post-it notes, magnetic letters, dry-erase boards, glitter-glue sticks, stickers, and colored markers. To an inexperienced onlooker, the room is now a confusing combination of clutter, colors, and chaos; however, the seasoned educator wisely acknowledges a space that has been transformed into customized learning stations awaiting occupancy. At precisely 4:00 p.m., each tutor greets his or her first-, second-, or third-grade student at the door as if he or she had been impatiently waiting all day for the child to arrive.

This qualitative study delves into the teacher candidates' tutoring experiences within a university clinical practicum to acquire an understanding about how their unique interactions with struggling readers and research-based methodology contribute to their pedagogical understandings of literacy instruction. A typological framework initially provided the tentative common ground by which topics were pursued, probed, or discarded (Hatch, 2002), which was, then, followed with interpretive analysis as the

method for bringing meaning to the teacher candidates' experiences. This somewhat customized design is corroborated by Hatch (2002), who stated that "a typological analysis [might begin] at some level, [but] then move to the next level in order to add an interpretive dimension to their earlier analytic work" (p. 180). Additionally, Hatch stated that "most studies will be richer and findings more convincing when interpretive analytic processes are used along with or in addition to typological or inductive analysis" (p. 181). This method allowed the essence of the experiences to be distilled in a gentle extraction of subtleties that became the *themes*, or a conduit through which teacher candidates' voices were released, allowing the construction of a unique multilayered story grammar for each participant. The continual evolving status of the participants' narratives implied that the conclusion of study also marked the beginning of the next chapter in teachers' professional careers.

Process for Generating, Gathering, and Recording Data

Interviews

Two audiotaped one-on-one interviews for each of seven participants were conducted in my office at the university. Transcriptions for each interview are included in Appendix D. The first round of interviews took place 4–6 weeks following the completion of the clinical practicum course; the second round occurred 2 months later, during the fall 2010. A third follow-up interview was conducted as needed either by telephone or e-mail. Follow-up interviews, telephone conversations, and e-mail correspondence were conducted as the study warranted, as recommended by Hatch (2002). Candidates' written self-reflections, electronically submitted for my written

feedback during their participation in the clinical practicum course, were available to the candidates during the interview process to help them recall the details of their interactions and experiences with their tutees. The insights thus provided were added to the content of my reflective field notes. Additionally, candidates' written self-reflections proved to be a rich resource of data that were not devoid of additional themes.

The protocols for each of the interviews (Appendix A) remained virtually unchanged from the first to the third interview. Following the first interview, each subsequent interview may have included one or two additional questions to get at the core of the research questions or to extend or clarify a participant's response from the previous interview. Table 1 shows the relationship between the research questions and the interview protocol questions.

Restatement of the Research Questions

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?
2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perception as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Table 1

Relationship of Research Questions to Interview Protocol Questions

RQ	Interview Protocol Questions	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?	1, 2, 3,4, 9	1, 2, 6	3, 4, 5
2	How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perception as potential classroom teachers?	10	1, 2, 5, 6	1,3, 4 5
3	What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?	5	1	1, 2, 4, 5
4	How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?	6, 7, 8, 9	3, 4,	6, 7
extra open-ended question	This question was asked of all participants but was not numbered because it did not relate specifically to the research questions: Talk about your current position--whether you are employed as a classroom teacher or a reading tutor during or after school, or whether you are currently student teaching or interning..	Participant's current educational status since taking clinical practicum		

Note. RQ = research question.

The first two questions of the first interview were designed to obtain baseline data for the participants' stories, following the completion of clinical practicum, and were thus not repeated in subsequent interviews. Interview Protocols 2 and 3 were slightly revised to accommodate the participants' growing foundational and pedagogical knowledge following their participation in the clinical practicum course and immersion in other field-based experiences; however, the intent of the question remained unchanged. Therefore, the presentation of the findings in this section will adhere to the first interview protocol and reflect participants' growing fund of knowledge during the months following the completion of the clinical practicum course.

Hatch (2002) stated that an essential element of the interview is "two-way communication" (p. 106) between the informant and the interviewer. Wanting to remain open and flexible to my informants' responses, I carefully structured my interviews around the requisite main questions, follow-up questions, and probes (Rubin & Rubin, 2005), the purpose of which was to "elicit depth" (p. 130) and obtain rich and conspicuous detail. Rubin and Rubin (2005) asserted that, when answers are not forthcoming, the interviewer must revise his or her protocol or spend additional time building rapport. Therefore, in an attempt to remain open and flexible to my informants' responses, I encouraged participants to tell their stories as they interpreted the questions, even though participants' responses sometimes warranted a gentle redirection to a core question. Realizing the importance of developing a trusting and synergistic relationship (Hatch, 2002), I thought that discretion might engender a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere where participants might be more apt to share their experiences; I, therefore, continued to assume this stance during each round of interviews.

System for Gathering and Storing Data

Especially here, where we're jumping to a level 3 heading, you'll want to make use of this level 2 heading by including a few sentences that will introduce each of the subsections to follow.

Researcher's log. A researcher's log was used to maintain contact information, including participant's pseudonym, telephone number, e-mail address, dates for interviews, and dates that transcriptions and stories were sent to participants for member checking. Keeping a researcher's log was necessary because the number of participants

necessitated a framework for scheduling interviews and organizing e-mail communication.

Self-reflective journal. Following each interview, I recorded first impressions in my self-reflective journal, carefully bracketing my perceptions because I wanted to capture the essence of the interaction before embarking on the transcription process. For example, after one participant's interview, I wrote that I was surprised that the candidate did not perceive the physical act of reading to children as authentic literacy instruction. When asked to describe previous experiences in working with a child, the teacher candidate responded with "I just read to preschoolers." Had this statement been made prior to clinical practicum, I might have attributed this assertion to inexperience combined with pedagogical unawareness. The perception that the mere act of reading to children did not qualify as veritable instruction was somewhat disturbing because the comment was made following her participation in the course.

Naturally, I was disappointed to learn that the participant's retrospection lacked a depth of understanding about the purpose of a simple read-aloud, namely, as an opportunity to develop a sense of story, encourage the making of predictions or connections, enhance receptive and expressive vocabulary, and to increase a child's oral language (Calkins, 2002). Clearly, this evaluation of the candidate's statement required bracketing (Hatch, 2002) so that an objective account could be rendered. Could this be the nonexample to which Hatch (2002) referred and the counterevidence for the category of content and pedagogy of literacy in the typological framework? In a comprehensive

analysis of the data, I would later determine this participant's statements to be contradictory to the goal of the study.

Maintaining a separate self-reflective journal bearing the research questions enabled me to review, summarize, and "piece together" (Hatch, 2002, p. 181) the parts of the teacher candidates' experiences in meaningful ways. Thus, this self-reflective journal became the receptacle for bracketing, defined as "holding a phenomenon up for inspection while suspending presuppositions and avoiding interpretations" (Hatch, 2002, p. 86), and pertained to my perceptions of the candid disclosures of the teacher candidates' specific discussion points in relating their tutoring experiences. During this phase, I had to separate myself emotionally from the data to acquire a pure and authentic story (Hatch, 2002), while recording feelings and perceptions that may or may not eventually merge with the findings.

Transcription process. The process of transcription occurred next. Equipped with a built-in detachable USB compartment, the digital recorder connected to a port on my PC, thus enabling the audiodata to be downloaded, transmitted, stored, and retrieved in an efficient manner. Subsequently, this terminal feature allowed the conversion of audiotape to MP3 format on my computer, which enabled a simple retrieval of the audiofile for the transcription process. I alternated between the MP3 format and a word document in transcribing the audiotape. This two-screen method allowed me to pause, review, and advance the audiorecording as needed, simply by manipulating the buttons on the MP3 screen. All data will be stored on my password-protected personal computer for 5 years, and purged thereafter.

Transcriptions of the interviews were immediately sent to the research participants for member checking and verification. In this early phase, I urged participants to review their statements for accuracy of content and their intentions. Here, participants had an opportunity to revise, modify, or extend their statements if they thought that clarification might help me to understand what they meant to convey.

For example, when Olivia was asked to discuss her beliefs about reading instruction prior to taking the clinical practicum course, the transcript reflected this initial response: "Prior to clinical practicum, I believed, I didn't understand—we learned a lot about how reading interventions should be systematic and explicit—but I didn't understand how to apply that in a real-life setting."

After sending Olivia the transcript so that she might review her statements, she clarified what she meant by adding the following language to her initial statement: "I didn't understand fully how important it was for reading strategies and skills to be taught specifically to cater to the needs of each student."

After transcribing the interview, I used the research questions as a guide for constructing immediate responses that were generated by reading the data several times. Here again, I recorded subsequent impressions into my journal, which eventually became the essence of the story summary, as I considered the possibility that statement patterns might relate to themes. Therefore, interpretive analysis was initially used to obtain main ideas and a "sense of the whole" (Hatch, 2002, p. 180). Thus, during the embryonic phase of the data analysis, I relinquished a priori categories and bracketed first impressions so that I could immerse myself in the transcription of the interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

As I read and reread the transcripts, I not only identified places in the interviews where participants' statements easily related to the a priori categories established at the outset, but also noted points where I might have either interjected a clarifying question or refrained from pursuing an extraneous idea. Mollified by learning that novice interviewers "notice many places where [they] could have or should have followed up and failed to" (p. 136) during the rereading of an interview transcript, I knew that the second interview would provide another opportunity to obtain responses to unanswered questions.

Coding. The process for coding became more recursive than systematic in going back and forth between my self-reflective journal and the interview transcription to record discoveries of emerging patterns and semantic relationships between and among topics, lest I miss an important theme or anomaly. Knowing that I could discard ancillary material later (Hatch, 2002) I chose to claim all possibilities for the time being.

I coded participants' statements in two ways: First, I hand-coded hard copies of the interview transcriptions, which was followed by utilization of the text box feature of Microsoft to indicate teacher candidates' statements in the transcription that might be referenced in subsequent interviews. Therefore, color-coded text boxes were inserted alongside specific teacher candidates' statements to identify possible themes and to allow for easy retrieval of probes that would be included in a subsequent interview to clarify or extend participants' original statements. A sample coding of one transcript can be found in Appendix E. In this way I could review the data and construct a summary while planning for the next interview. Clarifying questions were immediately inserted into the

second interview protocol, allowing for customization of the subsequent interview while maintaining the integrity of the core research questions and purpose of the study.

Initially, a typological framework—consisting of a priori categories of content and pedagogy of literacy, general dispositions and attitudes of teacher candidates, their tutoring experiences in working with struggling readers, and evidence of reflexive practice—provided a construct for organizing the data. Here, I looked for "supportive data for these tentative categories" (Hatch, 2002, p. 153) while searching for connections between and among the categories, and being open to the burgeoning of additional ones. Data were grouped by theme and related text within color-coded text boxes so that concepts could be perceived as entities on the continuum of integration of potential themes (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this way, I was able to perceive possible nuances and subtle connections between and among the categories while being mindful of the lone statement that might warrant its own theme.

Subsequently, I proceeded to an in-depth level of interpretation and data transformation where I began to search for evidence related to the typologies relating to the research question: How does participation in clinical practicum affect graduate candidates' pedagogical and content knowledge of reading instruction? Thus, ascription to typological analysis (Hatch, 2002), which was initially used to analyze the majority of the data, ultimately gave way to interpretive analysis in data transformation, yielding additional sub or ancillary categories such as candidates' perceptions, theory to practice, and the effects of mentoring relationships on prospective teachers. My own self-reflective field notes, maintained throughout the study, provided a system by which nuances could

be recorded and themes might be perceived or substantiated. Results of this phase included a tentative first-draft story summary (Appendix D) of each of the teacher candidates, which was then submitted to the teacher candidate for member checking. To sum it up, audiotapes of interviews were coded and analyzed to obtain themes inherent in the data; ongoing member checking was employed to substantiate the stories.

Systematic ongoing review of memos and self-reflective notes also yielded tentative interpretations that provided the content for the summaries that were submitted to project participants for verification, elaboration, and modification during the process of member checking (Hatch, 2002). The recursive process of writing memos, forming impressions, developing insights, drawing conclusions, writing summaries, and checking for accuracy of content and dispositions through frequent access to project participants ultimately captured the essence of the teacher candidates' tutoring experiences.

An erroneous and simplistic assumption is that project participants' experiences can be distilled through the process of data interpretation. Here, Wolcott (2009) cautioned the novice researcher that "there is no such thing as a pure description" (p. 32), and that "good qualitative research ought to confound issues" (p. 32). Thus, an additional issue was searching for counterevidence to established typologies (Hatch, 2002). As I searched for appropriate typologies to anchor extractions from transcripts, I acknowledged the tendency to equate an impression with an interpretation (Hatch, 2002) and was prepared for the process of data analysis to be iterative and nonlinear, as complex or contrary perspectives were illuminated through data transformation.

Findings

A purposive sample of seven teacher candidates, who had opted to take the clinical practicum elective during the summer 2010, volunteered to participate in the study, which consisted of two audiotaped interviews and one follow-up interview by telephone or e-mail to provide the data. To protect their identities, each participant was asked to select a pseudonym. Thus, identification of persons, children, or the name of the university where the study was conducted would not be revealed. Reaching conclusions through triangulation was achieved through ongoing member checking and a systematic review of the data for emergent themes and semantic relationships, which initially substantiated the typological framework at a cursory level, but was eventually pursued to corroborate significant insights at the next level of interpretation.

An abbreviated version of the participants' stories follows. Direct quotations present the perceptions of teacher candidates about their tutoring experiences within the clinical practicum course. The participants' entire story has been inserted into Appendix D. Responses correspond to each of the questions in the interview protocol.

Debbie's story. Debbie had not yet begun her internship or student teaching when she began the clinical practicum course. Two very different tutoring experiences, taken prior to enrollment in clinical practicum, had yielded personal insights concerning the role of demographics and its impact on children's literacy learning. A service learning requirement at the undergraduate level gave her the opportunity to work with a struggling first-grade reader in a nearby urban setting, but a field experience at a preschool in a wealthy suburb provided an entirely different perspective. The natural inclination for

young children to assimilate literacy learning into their everyday lives did not go unnoticed by Debbie, who stated that "reading to them was not the same as teaching them how to read."

Debbie summed up the demographic differences between the two settings in her succinct observation that the preschool children in the suburb were able easily "to read the bulletin boards," whereas the first-grade child in the urban school struggled with the most common sight words. In comparing the two experiences, she noted that the children in the preschool were curious and excited about the act of reading, whereas the first grader in the urban school setting had already begun to see himself as a *struggling reader* because *he could not read at all*. These initial field experiences helped to congeal Debbie's perception about the contrasting characteristics of a struggling reader with a low socioeconomic background and a typically reading child whose positive early literacy experiences instilled a sense of confidence in his own ability to read.

In approaching the clinical practicum course, Debbie was concerned that the terminology encountered in the foundations course had yet to be clarified. She was resistant to the idea of administering multiple assessments to identify the children's areas of weakness. She made her feelings known in a simple confession:

I personally don't like assessments. I don't like taking tests myself. I feel like it doesn't dictate intelligence because I'm not a good test taker, so I feel like I'm disadvantaged because of that. So I don't like giving them to students.

Prior to taking the clinical practicum course, Debbie had taken the prerequisite foundations course in literacy, which she felt had not helped to mold her beliefs about

reading instruction. Debbie is a self-described voracious reader. Her disappointing experience in the literacy foundations course gave her the erroneous impression that the principles of literacy instruction did not align with her own perception that reading should be enjoyed and savored. She cited Gardner's multiple intelligences as an example of the many ways in which information is acquired. Disheartened by the delivery method of pedagogy of the literacy foundation course, Debbie stated, "It was just a lot of vocabulary, [and] I felt like it was just kind of thrown out there. It wasn't focused enough for me to grasp the concepts."

Her course instructor, while espousing the importance of designing engaging lessons, nevertheless resorted to behaviorist pedagogy, which was antithetical to the constructivist methods advocated in the course. Once immersed in the clinical practicum course however, Debbie had an opportunity to see how the language of literacy functioned in real-life instructional contexts as specific terminology was clarified through her tutoring work. She appeared to be happily surprised as evidenced by her exclamation, "Oh, so *that's* what it means," which seemed to indicate that she had acquired an understanding of the deceptive simplicity of the concept of onset/rime (orally segmenting a word into its component parts), when she had an opportunity to work one-on-one with a child. After facilitating a successful attempt by the child in performing the simple task related to phonemic awareness, she said, "Now it seems like it's so *simple* to me, like why didn't I pick that up right away?"

An example illustrating Debbie's successful attempt in helping her child decode unfamiliar text follows:

Well, we worked on a lot of word families. When he was able to tell me something right away that I didn't have to encourage as much as I would at the beginning—whether it was reading a story and I didn't have to encourage him as much . . . we started using the [strategies] . . . or when we were doing word families and he could think of one without being specifically asked to supply [an example of a word within the word family].

Interestingly, she stated that during the course of their tutoring partnership, her child developed the confidence to speak to her in an audible voice, which she attributed to her manner of readily praising his reading performance. Once he began to converse with her, Debbie was able to advance his oral reading through the different self-monitoring strategies used to help children develop as readers. Under her tutelage, the child began to employ rereading as one of the metacognitive strategies for processing text. Additionally, Debbie was gratified when the child simply articulated an appeal for help by stating, "I don't know," when he came to a word for which he had not yet acquired the resources to process it.

Ultimately, Debbie's participation in clinical practicum enabled her to acknowledge the running record as a critically important assessment practice for data-based instruction, although she still maintained that she saw little value in using other assessments to inform instruction. This perception was strengthened through her subsequent internship and an opportunity to collaborate with the reading specialist in the administration of running records and informal reading inventories to groups of children targeted for intervention. She wrote that she liked using the running record "because it is

straightforward and to the point. I can use the results immediately to base my next lesson upon." Thus, she was able to use the data obtained from the running record to plan for instruction and to modify her plans based on the child's reading performance. As of the writing of her story, Debbie was looking forward to student teaching during the next semester.

Ella's story. Ella smiled as she recalled her first experience as an undergraduate working with an English language learner (ELL) as part of a school-university partnership, titled Book Buddies, before taking her very first literacy methods course. Remembering this experience, she admitted, "I had never worked with an ELL child before, and we did a lot of flashcards. I didn't have a lot of background knowledge in reading instruction." Her recollection of this first experience was that she was not "clear as to what I was doing."

By the time Ella began the course in clinical practicum, she had nearly completed her student teaching experience and three additional reading methods courses other than the prerequisite, and she appeared to be quite comfortable in articulating the reading process and discussing her literacy assumptions and current practices. She compared the reading workshop approach used at her school with the tutoring format of the clinic through the assertion that the workshop method did not always meet the needs of students requiring additional instruction. Thus, the three-pronged format allowed little provision for one-on-one intervention or small group instruction. She said, "I could certainly see that it didn't work for all kids, and it was hard to get to each child every single day and

target their needs without pulling small groups, small leveled groups and working a guided-reading-type lesson."

In comparing the workshop model used in her student teaching with the guiding reading model used in the clinic, Ella stated that learner(s) work directly with the teacher who provides guidance and support to the child as he attempts to problem-solve unknown words through guided reading. She perceived that the workshop model did not necessarily provide for explicit instruction of specific skills for the needier child. Ella cited the benefits of the guided reading model and pointed out a provision for targeting leveled groups, especially if students exhibited specific difficulties related to decoding or comprehension. This, she thought, was a lack in the workshop model.

Ella admitted that she was initially uncertain about using the assessments in clinic. She stated, "I was concerned as to how I would find out the level of my child and how I would know where to go after finding out his level." However, as she became comfortable with the instructional and assessment routines of the clinic, Ella's perception of the instruments changed:

I was a little unsure—I could maybe, you know, collect the data, but then I might not know what to do with them. So I think this course really helped me figure out what to do with all those numbers and use those data to tell me what does this say about that child.

Ella especially liked a particular phonics assessment as her response illustrates:

In the beginning, you know [the child] clearly did not know any of his long vowel sounds. [The phonics assessment] really kind of zeroed in on the fact that he

didn't know any of his long vowel sounds, whereas in some of the other assessments you could tell that his reading score wasn't really on level, but you didn't know why.

Ella perceived that the most valuable part of the clinical practicum course was the knowledge she obtained from learning how to administer and use assessments, "because I had never used any of them before, and I think that gave me four more assessments that I can use in the classroom." She acknowledged that broad-based assessment is not necessary for every child, but appeared to feel confident that she now had a resource in these tools to utilize when the need arose. In being able to choose from a variety of assessments to identify areas of weakness related to phonological awareness, comprehension, decoding, vocabulary, or fluency, Ella felt confident that her new knowledge about test administration, scoring, and interpretation of the results would be useful to her as she took her place among the ranks of elementary teachers.

Since completing clinical practicum, Ella has taken a position as second-grade teacher in a suburban town and is currently using the district-mandated assessment system for evaluating her students' areas of strength and weakness for establishing groups for explicit and diverse instruction. When asked what she considered the most important piece of information garnered from her experience in clinical practicum, she responded, "Data, data, data," which has become the district mantra for progress monitoring and instructional planning.

Although she has not yet had an opportunity to use the very assessments used in clinical practicum, she stated that the knowledge gained from learning how to administer,

interpret, and analyze student assessments has deepened her pedagogical understanding of literacy instruction. Thus, her participation in clinical practicum gave her an opportunity to refine her knowledge about curriculum and instructional and assessment practices, which she felt has fortified her skills in making the transition from university classroom to the field.

Olivia's story. Olivia's internship in one of the largest urban school districts in the state had already fortified her with a rigorous field experience prior to taking the clinical practicum course. Working at a short-staffed magnet school in an impoverished town, Olivia quickly developed a friendly rapport with the literacy coach, who subsequently provided mentorship and direction while entrusting Olivia with the responsibility for advancing the reading achievement of third and fourth graders identified for inclusion in the school's internal system for Response to Intervention (RTI; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Vaughn, 2008). The RTI is a national three-tiered initiative whose goal is to "prevent long-term academic failure" (Casbarro, 2010, p. 1) through systematic, data-based instruction and continuous progress monitoring.

Consequently, Olivia's baptismal experience into urban education, a seemingly erstwhile process for embedding the requisite skills into a preservice teacher's repertoire, served only to strengthen her commitment and resolve—enthusiastic and capable apprentice that she was—to sign up for additional experiences in working with struggling readers through clinical practicum. She came to the clinical practicum course as a seasoned tutor. Nevertheless, Olivia discovered that the course afforded her the opportunity to learn how to scaffold her instruction so that her students might be

encouraged to assume an active role in advancing their own achievement. Paired with two students who had very different needs, Olivia learned to balance individual needs with the needs of the group.

The first child, Miguel (a pseudonym), was a third-grade ELL student who possessed an unusual facility for using structural analysis in decoding multisyllabic words, but exhibited comprehension difficulties due to limited background knowledge and vocabulary. Specifically, he did not readily comprehend content-specific concepts in science or the idiomatic expressions inherent in realistic fiction. For example, when he encountered the phrase "dark days lay ahead for the Jews in Denmark" in a story about the Holocaust and World War II, Miguel incorrectly assumed that the text referred to nighttime as the setting for the story. Erroneous and limited schemata precluded the knowledge that *dark days* connoted an ominous and bleak future for the Jews and that they were in imminent danger through the Nazi occupation of Denmark.

The second child, David (a pseudonym), was an articulate third grader with a receptive and expressive vocabulary well beyond his current grade placement; he, however, lacked foundational skills in structural analysis that prevented him from being an effective decoder. Olivia sought to teach to the strengths of each child by skillfully partnering the two boys, thus creating a symbiosis that allowed them to help one another in their work.

Olivia realized that, between them, David and Miguel possessed strengths that could be used to let the boys help one another navigate increasingly complicated text while addressing their individual areas of weakness in word identification or meaning,

respectively. Simply stated, while Miguel could decode the word or words in the text, David was able to provide a depth of understanding for the new vocabulary. Olivia noted that the peer interaction empowered both boys to draw upon their strengths in a workable partnership. Olivia summed up the experience of working with the two boys in this way:

I had two students with very different strengths and needs: an ELL student who did not have the background knowledge, but was able to read anything, and a student who had immense background knowledge and a ton of expressive and receptive vocabulary, but who had trouble decoding words, particularly multisyllabic words in anything we read. By working together, they were able to help each other.

The following statement illustrates Olivia's observation of the changes that occurred in her teaching as a result of her own learning:

Before clinic, I didn't know things like 'let him read to the end.' Let him struggle a little bit, ask him if it makes sense because many times he might be able to figure out [the word]. Before I started clinic, I thought you had to correct [a student] if a word was wrong. I thought that every person's name in a story should be said correctly.

When Olivia returned to her internship in the fall, she resumed her responsibilities in providing intervention to small groups of students. With the experience of clinical practicum behind her, Olivia was ready to shoulder the responsibility of providing explicit instruction to new groups of students targeted for intervention. Summing up her experiences in clinical practicum she said

The interactive experience gives future teachers an opportunity to put theory into practice. Prior to interning or student teaching, the majority of teacher preparation courses provide a vast library of knowledge about the teaching field and theories behind classroom practice. The clinical practicum allows for a real teaching environment, with real struggling readers, in real-life situations—and all the while having a professional, a mentor, in the room to guide and scaffold as we learn, experience, make mistakes and learn from those mistakes.

Thus, a combination of substantive and diverse clinical and field experiences, university coursework, and an opportunity to tutor a struggling reader in a real-life context allowed Olivia to increase her conceptual understanding of the discipline of literacy by connecting theory with practice. Her weekly self-reflections provided the basis for thoughtful lesson planning as she integrated assessment and observational data into a workable format that maintained fidelity to and flexibility in addressing the students' needs. She said, "The reflections gave me a chance to consider what I was doing—not necessarily incorrectly, but how I could best benefit my students, think about what the students' needs were, and then alter my delivery."

Empowered with a strong sense of literacy pedagogy, Olivia felt prepared to teach reading in the field. During our last conversation, Olivia shared that her principal has not only offered her a position as coteacher in a sixth-grade classroom upon the completion of her internship, but was willing to defer the hiring process until she would be certified.

Addison's story. Prior to clinical practicum, Addison had been an intern in a suburban school, working with small groups of children at different grade levels and with

various needs. Her first-grade group required foundational skills in decoding, build a sight-word vocabulary, and develop automaticity in oral reading because "they could only read text with three to four words at a time." Additionally, Addison reported that she was "familiar with the jargon of onsets and rimes," so she felt confident in having the skills to help these students.

On the other hand, her third-grade group required explicit instruction in comprehension strategies. Taking her cue from the reading consultant at the school, Addison sought to replicate a similar type of instruction. Interestingly, although the group of third graders could easily read the words in the text, they had difficulty constructing meaning as they read. She described their comprehension difficulties in this way, "They had no problem reading, but it was the comprehension. It was having to read [the text] and be able to understand it to answer the questions."

Addison pondered seemingly contrasting literacy pedagogies. The school in which she interned and performed her student teaching used a method of reading instruction that contrasted considerably with the philosophy of her foundations course, taken at the university. It was also quite different from the way she herself had learned to read. Thus, in a reconciliation of university coursework, clinical practicum, and authentic field experience, Addison was beginning to acquire a pedagogical framework for evaluating the merits of a commercial product that emphasized the research-based strategies of phonics instruction. Experience in utilizing the strategies to teach phonics elements enabled her to render important insights consistent with those of seasoned educators, namely, that the newly purchased districtwide program did not necessarily

benefit every child because not everyone requires this type of intensive phonics instruction.

Addison's growing pedagogical knowledge is exemplified in the following paragraphs, where she discussed her child's difficulties in oral reading:

The second-grade student I worked with tended to skip over words as she read, and for a while I thought that she's reading too fast or she's not paying attention to the words on the page. And she was. There were times that she would read a simple sentence such as "I would like to go out to play," and she would say, "I would like to play," It still makes sense; it still made sense to her, but she's still leaving out words in a sentence.

Realizing that the child's difficulties in oral reading precluded adequate progress, Addison recalled that she addressed this area of weakness by teaching the child the strategies of proficient readers. Here, Addison sought to utilize the research-based practices of effective literacy instruction by attempting to balance her instruction with abundant opportunities for the child to practice and internalize the skill before proceeding with more difficult objectives. Planning her instruction involved a systematic review of the phonics elements previously taught so this child, so that she would be able to integrate new learning into existing schemata.

Addison reported that self-reflection on a tutoring session helped her to write out a lesson plan for the following session and that thinking about the last session prior to composing a written self-reflection helped her to identify the areas that needed to be

addressed at the next tutoring session. She articulated the benefits of working directly with a struggling reader as follows

It was very hands-on, which I think is great. You can hear it [from someone else], someone can tell you, but I feel especially for this profession, you have to have the experience of doing it. You can't just listen or try it yourself or on a classmate because it's not really real. So . . . I love that. That's probably the best thing.

Addison reported that one component of the clinical seminar enabled her to engage in critical self-reflection in front of her peers who experienced similar difficulties in working with a struggling reader. Interacting with other preservice teachers helped her to improve and transform her own practice. Addison summarized her tutoring experiences with a simple statement that reflected Freire's (1997) coconstructivist philosophy: "I'm there to help the student and I'm your student and you're there to help me. So all in all—we're all there to help [each other]."

Since graduating from the master's program, Addison has taken a position as an assistant teacher in a Montessori preschool where she is currently using many of the phonemic-awareness and read-aloud strategies that she gleaned from her clinical experience.

Stephanie's story. Stephanie received her undergraduate degree from a small private institution in the North East whose sterling reputation for teacher preparation in early literacy has earned the respect of the higher education community throughout New England. Although she had already obtained certification in another state, she enrolled in the graduate program at the site of this study to obtain her master's degree after

graduation. With no job prospects, Stephanie thought that additional schooling might help her to obtain a teaching position. Prior to taking the clinical practicum course, Stephanie had acquired multiple experiences in working with young children in literacy that began with reading to her younger brother. She was 9-years-old when he was born; subsequently, he became her first student.

Additionally, two preclinical tutoring experiences at the undergraduate level provided her with a work-study experience within a local university-community partnership for America Reads®, a nationally recognized literacy organization whose mission it is to increase student reading achievement from kindergarten through Grade 3. Finally, as a student teacher, Stephanie recalled working with two of the lower-achieving groups in a first-grade classroom, where she used word-building activities to teach the common phonograms.

Stephanie's tutoring experience at the graduate level consisted of a part-time tutoring position in a school system near the university that had recently adopted the state's plan to use the RTI initiative to introduce a strong component of scientific, research-based instruction (SRBI) into its reading curriculum in order to meet the needs of low-achieving students. Stephanie's responsibilities included providing weekly instruction to first- and second-graders through read-alouds and guided reading using a well-known intervention program.

Varied as her previous tutoring experiences appeared to be, Stephanie was, nevertheless, dissatisfied and academically hungry for more—more experience, more instructional strategies, more pedagogical knowledge. She was uncertain about her ability

to be an effective teacher: "My biggest concern was that, maybe this whole time, I'd been doing it wrong or that there are other strategies that I could incorporate." Limited opportunities to attempt firsthand the research-based methods that had been modeled and espoused by her instructors left her wondering if she had teaching potential. Thus, Stephanie enrolled in the clinical practicum course to expand and deepen her conceptual understanding of instructional strategies and assessment practices in literacy as the following quote will demonstrate:

I think that taking the course was the perfect next step for me. I do have a lot of experience on paper. But at times I say, 'Looks like I have a lot, but I don't have a lot of experience with this.' [After taking clinical practicum], I was able to walk in on the first day to do the assessments. Being able to assess a kid—you can't do that in student teaching. You can't do that during your internship. You can't do it.

Stephanie said that the knowledge that she gained from taking clinical practicum has imbued her with great confidence that she will become a good teacher. Important insights about her instructional delivery are evidenced by the following illustration:

I learned a lot from [teaching] him. I never met a kid with the whole picture—he was a unique kid, a great kid, and I learned so much from just interacting with him on a weekly basis. I learned about how I, myself, verbalize with a child. I learned about changing [the way I explain things]—saying the same thing over and over again isn't going to work.

After completing the summer clinical practicum course, Stephanie had planned to begin her internship in the fall, while resuming her part-time position of the previous year

as an early literacy tutor in another school district. At a planning meeting with the school principal to discuss the details of her continuing role as a tutor, Stephanie freely articulated a plan to employ data-based instruction and progress monitoring to meet the needs of the students targeted for intervention.

The principal was clearly impressed with Stephanie's assessment plan and, subsequently, offered her a full-time position as a literacy tutor, accompanied with the promise that she would be offered the next available teaching position. Already certified in the state, Stephanie happily withdrew her participation in the internship program at the university, now no longer necessary, to begin the next chapter of her professional life.

Tatiana's story. Although Tatiana came to the United States in 1996 from the Ukraine, she had become fluent in English through formal schooling in her native country. After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts in Technology at the site of this study, she enrolled in the teacher certification program to obtain her master's degree because she simply "wanted to be a better mother."

With the exception of the required minimal field-based classroom observations, usually associated with courses in the foundations of education, Tatiana's only experience in working with children was in facilitating weekly read-alouds at the community center. As an ELL herself, she was naturally sensitive to struggling students and their difficulties and wanted to be successful in helping them negotiate the reading process.

Neither expecting nor asking for special consideration as an ELL, Tatiana registered for the requisite foundations class in literacy, oftentimes questioning the methods that appeared to be antithetical to the way she had learned to read as a child in

her native country. Eventually, she realized that literacy pedagogy was consistent with constructivist learning theory, as espoused by the professors in her other classes. "The only thing I knew was that any learning process is better when it's interactive. You need to make learning interesting and fun. It's not about drills."

Tatiana's participation in the clinical practicum course enhanced her pedagogical awareness of the many aspects of literacy: She discovered that phonological generalizations can serve as a reliable system for decoding unfamiliar text because of their immediate applicability to words with regular phonics patterns. Tatiana continued to compare current reading pedagogy to the way she had learned to read: "The way I was taught—I don't think we had word families, and I don't think I knew what a short vowel was or a long vowel sound, but—I knew *how* to read a word with a long or short vowel."

Tatiana thought that learning about a variety of assessments was especially empowering. Sensing the value of data-based instruction, Tatiana practiced and honed her assessment skills by practicing on her mother, also an ELL and a willing student, "I waited until after the course was over," she admitted. "I gave her every single assessment!" In this way, Tatiana was able to practice test administration, scoring, and analyzing the data with the assessment tools used in clinical practicum.

Tatiana recalled that learning the syllable types proved to be as enlightening for her as it was beneficial for the student with whom she worked. As a fluent reader, Tatiana intuited about how to *chunk* an unfamiliar word into its component parts without having specific knowledge of the terminology for the individual phonics elements. Although she could read words in which vowel digraphs, diphthongs, and consonant blends were

embedded, Tatiana had not been aware of the lexicon for the syllable types that comprise words or that learning the common patterns helped reader use structural analysis to decode multisyllabic words. She laughed as she referred to her newly acquired content information: "About diphthongs—I had no idea that they existed. I mean, I knew how to read them, but I had no idea [what they were called]." Thus, having to teach the specific phonics elements to the child she tutored, Tatiana realized that she was learning as much as her student.

In a recursive process between teaching and learning, Tatiana became metacognitively aware of herself as colearner with her student. Additionally, Tatiana realized that an effective teacher possesses both a conceptual and a discrete knowledge of the terminology that is communicated to the child with the less sophisticated phrase, "strategies used by good readers." Her discovery of the literacy labels used to refer to established practices in the pedagogy of literacy was also embraced by her through the concept of self-monitoring strategies, while remembering how she had learned to read.

Tatiana reflected on the importance of teaching a child how to employ self-monitoring, or fix-up strategies, during reading:

This comes with age, with experience: a sort of reflection. If I don't understand something, I naturally go back—it's a logical thing to do. For a child you still need to—not necessarily teach them, but show them the way, model for them how it's done. It's a developmental process—they're not ready yet to grasp the concept.

Tatiana experienced the benefits of participating in a structured apprenticeship, which was not limited to the tutoring experience. Through seminar, she was encouraged

to develop interpersonal skills in having an opportunity to interact with peers and openly discuss her literacy practices through collaborative problem solving, which she described as follows

There was respect and friendliness, and we felt that we were part of the family. We reflected in writing. We reflected after the lessons. We reflected with the group. And that helped because, especially in the first sessions, I felt like I'm not the only one who has trouble; I'm not the only one who's afraid; I'm not the only one who feels that way, and my child is not the only child who has difficulty with this. So, that was helpful—a lot of modeling, the group interaction, and the experience itself.

Tatiana's experiences in clinical practicum not only imbued her with the pedagogy of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, but empowered her through the knowledge that she could be an effective teacher employing research-based literacy practices. She explained, "I saw myself as a teacher. Yes, I can actually enjoy teaching." She summed up clinical practicum experience succinctly: "From the book you cannot learn . . . theoretically, yes; but here, you have practice. And you see theory and practice working together. To see that connection is incredible."

Gavin's story. Gavin's internship and subsequent student-teaching experience offered him a rich opportunity to work with struggling readers in from Kindergarten through Grade 6 in the implementation of his school's intervention program prior to taking the clinical practicum course. As an intern working in a collaborative partnership with the third-grade teacher at his school, Gavin quickly learned how to implement the

intervention program and administer the corresponding progress monitoring assessments. He was able to draw readily on the content knowledge he had acquired in his course on the foundations of literacy. Like his fellow-student Olivia, he was responsible for delivering daily instruction to students who had been identified for Tiers 2 and 3 intervention. He worked with the same group of third-graders each morning and, then, rotated instruction to small groups of children from all the grades in the afternoon.

Although Gavin's internship provided him with authentic classroom experience in working with struggling readers, he reported that, ultimately, "everything connected in clinic." The transition from the concrete, instructional, and familiar routine of the school-based intervention program to the less rigid clinical format forced Gavin to summon up and synthesize all that he had learned through previous coursework in literacy and his field experiences. Whereas Gavin had previously depended on the structure of the intervention program for instructional guidance, he was now confronted with the realization that he was in a quasi-autonomous situation that would require him to make lone instructional decisions for which he would be accountable.

Now, Gavin would be the designer of the intervention plan, as opposed to being the follower of the intervention program—initially, a rather unsettling thought. Candidates could no longer rely on a one-size-fits-all approach, a scripted routine, or full-scale assessments for procedural guidance. Course participants were expected to make appropriate decisions for the type, level, and genre of the text, the skill to be reinforced, the types of assessments to be administered, and the order in which everything would be carried out. Additionally, the clinical format consisted of a simple written procedure: (a)

the rereading of a familiar book, (b) word work, (c) guided reading, (d) writing in response to text, and (e) an interactive read-aloud—all of which would be developed and designed by Gavin, the tutor. Gavin recalled this as his teacher-as-decision-maker sink-or-swim experience:

I was nervous pretty much . . . you handing over the reins and saying: 'Here's a child. I want you to take the background data we already have [and] you choose [additional] screening-type assessments (which you did give us),' but straight from the start, we were in there working one-on-one with the student, and it was just me for the first time, and it was exciting!

Soon, Gavin's initial trepidations gave way to empowerment, as he realized that he would be supported as he went about the process of making important instructional decisions that would impact the literate life of a struggling reader. He was excited because he came to understand that he possessed a natural inclination for literacy pedagogy, curriculum, and instruction and that he had good instincts about how to proceed. He also realized that he was on the verge of developing expertise in the discipline of literacy that would transcend the university clinic and enrich an elementary classroom, and he felt fully prepared. He illustrated his excitement with these words:

Now I feel comfortable talking about and administering the specific tests and even just the pedagogy of teaching literacy, the Ekwall Shanker [informal reading inventory]; I feel comfortable; if I was in my own classroom and a student came in right then and there and I didn't have any background information, I feel like I could just sit down and have a good starting point with the San Diego Quick

Assessment and just take it from there with the different steps. I feel like I have those materials, too, at my disposal.

Gavin easily perceived the connection between his coursework in foundations of literacy and the practicum as he continued to describe how he was able to reconcile the grand learning theories with scientifically based reading research:

I felt like I did have a strong theoretical understanding, a conceptual understanding of the different components of teaching literacy, but I wasn't as comfortable putting theory into practice. But I really was able to understand it, once I got my hands on it in clinic.

Without hesitation, Gavin admitted that participation in the clinical practicum had enhanced both practice and pedagogy. Instead of referring to himself as a graduate student, preservice teacher, or teacher candidate, he referred to himself as an educator, as he spoke with the confidence and poise of a wise and seasoned professional:

The most valuable part of the course for me personally was . . . I'd say it was being able to make a connection with the student I was working with and helping him and motivate him. That was very powerful. And also for me, as an educator, [clinic] was an incredibly valuable experience in being able to take everything that I had learned and begin to put into practice and focus on the student I was working with and put into practice the different components of teaching a struggling reader.

After completing the clinical course, Gavin continued his year-long internship, providing intervention to at-risk students who were targeted for tiered instruction,

consistent with the principles of RTI. The increase in confidence and competence did not go unnoticed by the school administration, which immediately offered him a position as a long-term substitute, even before graduating from the teacher preparation program at the university. As he talked about the strategies he accessed, the techniques he used, and the lessons learned, Gavin's use of the lexicon revealed a deep conceptual understanding of the principles of the literacy process, which would have done justice to a veteran in the field. His passion was evident as he explained how he taught his third and fourth graders the comprehension strategies, including synthesizing, questioning, inferring, connecting, visualizing, and predicting, so that they would have the tools to navigate increasingly difficult and complex texts.

Regarding the clinical experience, Gavin concluded with the following statement: "I think clinical practicum should be a mandatory course. Personally . . . it goes along so well with everything we had learned throughout the coursework, and it really just brought literacy to life for me."

Gavin spoke about his various long-term substitute positions in different school districts since his graduation from the teacher preparation course, in May 2010. He reported that his pedagogical knowledge of literacy instruction has increased with each position because of the foundation that he obtained through rich and rigorous coursework at the university. In a recent e-mail, Gavin was excited to report that his dream has come true: One of his long-term substitute positions has led to an offer of a third-grade teaching position, and his next goal would be to pursue a state reading certification within the next

couple of years. A literacy professional-in-the-making, Gavin has the potential to change the literate lives of many children.

Responses to Interview Questions

Interview Question 1

Thinking of the time prior to clinical practicum, can you describe some of your field experiences in helping a child to read?

Six of the seven course participants had previously tutored a child or worked with small groups of children in tiered intervention through their internship affiliations or through service learning experiences prior to taking a clinical practicum.

Debbie. I started working in a preschool in the suburbs, and I wasn't trained to just teach reading to them. So I would go around and I would take students and we would just read together; so it wasn't like I was assessing them or giving them suggestions for slowing down; it was reading with them.

Ella. As an undergrad, I took children's lit, and we went to Fensmore Elementary School (a pseudonym), and I tutored a child there who was actually an ELL student. I used a lot of flashcards, and I didn't have a lot of background knowledge in literacy instruction.

Olivia. I worked in an intervention program with students who were not performing at grade level. I took a group of 4-6 students; they were grouped by their reading level and were put together to work on their reading skills during time outside the literacy block. I would be guided by the literacy coach as to what level text the children should be reading.

Addison. I was an intern in a suburban school. So, every day I had the opportunity of going in and out of a variety of classrooms from Kindergarten through Grade 5 and working with small groups. They had no problem reading, but it was the comprehension. It was having to read it and be able to understand it to answer the questions.

Stephanie. As an undergraduate, I went to [another university], and as part of the educational program we actually had two practicum experiences prior to student teaching. I got to work with a kindergartener and a first-grader, and I did some after-school homework help and worked off of whatever the teacher had done that day for reading and writing. So it would kind of be prescribed by the teacher. I didn't really have a say in what was going to happen next.

Tatiana. Tatiana, an ELL whose native country is the Ukraine, had learned English in the Ukrainian school system prior to coming to the United States over 15 years ago. She had no previous tutoring experience and recalled only her experience in working with her young son in teaching him the rudiments of reading.

Gavin. Before the clinical experience, I student-taught in third grade, and I also had interned for a year, and I had the opportunity to work with struggling readers through Response to Intervention (RTI)—and also in small group instruction in all the grades from Kindergarten to Grade 6.

With the exception of Tatiana, all participants contrasted their previous tutoring experiences to the recently completed clinical practicum course in terms of the instructional format, their responsibilities within the course, and the experience itself.

Whereas previous tutoring experiences had not provided for autonomy in the selection of assessments, instructional methods, and materials, the teacher candidates perceived clinical practicum to be a true rehearsal for becoming a teacher. Their previous tutoring experiences were grounded in a heavily supervised context by a teacher or reading specialist without any room for instructional decisions regarding curriculum or resources by the teacher candidates.

Interview Question 2

Talk about your beliefs about reading instruction prior to taking the clinical practicum course.

Ella. Ella discussed how her internship had provided her with direct experience in the workshop model, which, as she reported, consisted of a focused minilesson, followed by providing the children with the opportunity to apply the skill objective with a "just right" book, a book that the child could read almost independently, with very little teacher support. She recalled:

With my background in the workshop model, I thought it worked for some kids, but I could certainly see that it didn't work for all kids. It was hard to kind of get to each child every single day and target their needs without pulling small leveled groups and working a guided-reading-type of lesson.

Debbie. Debbie, clearly disappointed with the delivery system used in the prerequisite foundations in literacy course, had not yet student-taught and had only this course to draw upon when she make the following assertion

I don't think that [the literacy foundation] course helped me too much in molding my beliefs about reading. That course honestly didn't help me change my mind or expose me to more about reading instruction, I guess. . . it was just a lot of vocabulary, but I felt like it was just kind of thrown out there. It wasn't focused enough for me to grasp the concepts. I think because the course was a lecture style and I learn better when it is more discussion or hands-on .

Olivia. Olivia understood the theoretical underpinnings of literacy pedagogy, but had not reconciled strategy instruction within authentic contexts:

Prior to clinical practicum, I believed that I didn't understand fully how important it was for reading strategies and skills to be taught specifically to cater to the needs of each student. We learned a lot about how reading interventions should be systematic and explicit, but I didn't understand how to apply that in real-life settings. Before clinic, I didn't realize that you could literally assess a student, pinpoint his needs, and then gear your instruction to address those needs and see results in a very short time.

Gavin. Gavin adapted the content of the foundations course to the field and was able to perceive the connection between the context of a university classroom and clinical practicum:

I felt like I had a strong theoretical understanding, a conceptual understanding, of the different components of teaching literacy, but I wasn't as comfortable with putting it into practice. But I really was able to understand it once I got my hands on it in clinic, when I got to sit down one-on-one with a student and really apply

the theories and the strategies. The clinical practicum course brought the methods courses to life.

Stephanie. When asked about her perceptions of literacy instruction, Stephanie initially did not reference her previous coursework as the following quote illustrates:

I remember being taught to read—the way I remember it is: Here's the alphabet, here are the sounds that the letters make, and these are words that those sounds can be used with. And then I remember the stories coming. I remember my parents reading to me a lot at home and saying things like, "Oh, remember this? This is from your homework."

Tatiana. Tatiana, still striving to acquire mastery in speaking the English language, thought that literacy instruction should be interactive:

The only thing I knew is that any learning process is better when it's done with interest, fun, maybe more games, and interaction. I had two courses . . . from the book you cannot learn . . . theoretically, yes; but here, you have practice. And you see theory and practice. To see that connection is incredibly powerful.

Addison. Addison, like Ella, discussed the literacy program used at the school in which she interned and student-taught:

In the school that I was in, they used a commercial phonics program to teach decoding, which I actually thought was very interesting because I wasn't really familiar with the program before and during my internship. And at first, I was kind of like, 'This is totally different from the way I learned.' I do feel that it works, but I did see that for some students it wasn't very helpful. As time went on

and I was becoming more knowledgeable in teaching reading, the program was very similar to what we would talk about in other classes and definitely during practicum; so I thought that was helpful.

Interview Question 3

What concerns or questions did you have as you approached the course? Were your questions answered during your participation in the course?

Debbie. Appropriately, Debbie referred to the terminology she had previously encountered in taking the literacy foundations prerequisite, but had not yet reconciled the lexicon with her own perceptions about reading instruction:

Well, in [foundations] I was exposed to a lot of terminology; so, I guess I wanted to make sure I knew it all if that's the field I'm going into; then I want to know more about it. And I want to make sure that I understand it and it's not just that I know those terms, but I guess I was worried about giving the assessments because I personally don't like assessments. So I don't like giving [them] to students.

Ella. Ella was genuinely concerned about administering and interpreting the various assessments, for which she had gained limited experience during her internship and student teaching. Subsequently, she realized that knowledge of assessments empowered her with appropriate diagnostic tools, which might have utility in the classroom:

I had no idea how to do any of the assessments we were being asked to do. I was concerned as to how I would find out the level of my child and how I would know

where to go after finding out his level. I think that those questions were definitely answered because you clearly instructed us first in how to do each assessment.

Olivia. Olivia was concerned about how to help an ELL to acquire the skills to advance in reading achievement:

One question I had about reading: I don't have a lot of experience with ELL students; so, working with ELL students was definitely a challenge. I also didn't understand exactly how to apply phonics. I knew that it was important for students to have that knowledge, but I didn't know when was the best time to teach it.

Here, Olivia did not discuss the relevance of background knowledge and vocabulary as the bridge to comprehension; rather, she focused on the importance of phonics as the means for fluent, oral reading.

Addison. Addison appeared to be confident, having just completed her student teaching prior to enrolling in clinical practicum:

Going into the course, I didn't really have any concerns. I was just curious to see who I was going to work with in terms of the student. I felt relaxed knowing that I was going to be sitting with this student twice a week and we would be working on reading together. Maybe, I was a little nervous in thinking, "Oh, I hope—I hope there's improvement," but I have that confidence in myself that, if I had any questions, I know that I can ask you.

Stephanie. Interestingly, Stephanie was already a certified teacher who had enrolled in the Master's of Teaching program to acquire a master's degree and gain

additional experience before actively pursuing a teaching position. She still had not developed the confidence to make instructional decisions and was hoping to develop a repertoire of instructional and assessment strategies that would help her become more marketable:

My biggest concern was that, maybe, this whole time I'd been doing it wrong or that there are other strategies that I could incorporate. I just really wanted to get a handle on more specific strategies rather than just the ideology, which, I think, is what came from undergraduate [work].

Tatiana. As an ELL herself, Tatiana had trepidations about participating in clinical practicum. In her instructional partnership with a child whose dominant language was English, Tatiana wondered if she possessed the knowledge and skills that would allow her to be successful in helping the child advance her literacy learning: "First of all, can I pull it off? How will I—survive? And this course was sort of a cornerstone for me to decide whether I can become a teacher. I was afraid. I didn't know if the child would be able to communicate with me."

Gavin. Gavin was concerned about making appropriate instructional decisions on his own. The school administration and his cooperating teacher previously supervised his tutoring activities. The semiautonomous clinical experience would now require that he employ his pedagogical knowledge about curriculum and assessments in the selection of appropriate assessment tools to address the areas of deficiency of the child and confer with me about how to use the assessment data:

I was nervous pretty much . . . you handing over the reins and saying: “Here's a child. I want you to take the background data we already have [and] you choose the screeners (which you did give us).” Straight from the start, we were in there working one-on-one with the student, and it was just me for the first time, and it was exciting!

Interview Question 4

Talk about how your beliefs and knowledge may have changed over the course of your participation in this class? In other words, what specific knowledge do you now have that you did not have before taking the course?

Participants' responses to this question encompassed the continuum of pedagogical knowledge ranging from simplistic notions of reading instruction to a complex understanding garnered from a combination of clinical experience and coursework. In short, responses were as varied as the participants' previous experiences.

Debbie. Debbie summarized her streamlined view of the literacy process with the following statement:

Well, even with simple things like onset and rime, I was exposed to that in [the literacy foundations course], but now it seems like: Why didn't I pick that up right away? Now I realized how important it is for the children; so it's ingrained in my mind now.

Tatiana. Likewise, Tatiana's beliefs included content information related to the teaching of phonics through the concept of patterns and word families:

The way I was taught, I don't think we had word families, and I don't think I knew what a short vowel was or a long sound; I did not know specifically, you know, the rhyming like wig, big, zig, like dig.

Gavin. Gavin's new perceptions of reading instruction included the aspect of assessments:

Now I feel comfortable talking about and administering the specific tests and even just the pedagogy of literacy. If I was in my own classroom and a student came in right then and there and I didn't have any background information, I feel like I could just sit down and have a good starting point with the San Diego Quick Assessment and just take it from there with the different steps.

Addison. Addison echoed Gavin's perspective about assessments as the following quote will illustrate:

I did not know what the SORT was [Slosson Oral Reading Test] or the FORT [Fry Oral Reading Test]. All of those assessments I thought were very beneficial, and I loved how you spent that time with us before we ever met with our students to explain to us how we do it, what results, how we get our results, how we record them. And I think that it's important.

Ella. Ella's views of assessment focused on the importance of using data to inform instruction:

I think I have a better understanding of how to use data and how to use these data in guiding my instruction. I was a little unsure. I could collect the data but then I might not know what to do with them. So, I think, this course really helped me

figure out what to do with all those numbers and use those data to tell me what does this say about that child. The phonics assessment really kind of zeroed into the fact that the child with whom I worked didn't know any of his long vowel sounds, but he knew his short vowel sounds. Whereas in some of the other assessments, you could tell that his reading score wasn't really on level, but you didn't know why.

Olivia. Olivia referred to the strategies she had acquired in clinical practicum by describing how her knowledge of reading instruction changed during her participation in the course. She spoke about the strategies she had learned to work with ELL students, including the critical importance of teaching students to use graphic organizers as a basis for writing:

Something very important that I learned in clinic and in literacy is that the point of a graphic organizer is the product that comes from what the student creates as a result of what he or she developed in the graphic organizer. So the graphic organizer itself is not the goal; the goal is for that to be a support (a scaffold) so that the student can respond to any piece of literature in a meaningful way.

Stephanie. Stephanie became empowered through her participation in clinical practicum:

I think the biggest thing I took away from the course was the knowledge that I can do it! [teach] Last year, even after being there for 2 months, I was very hesitant. I was like, 'Oh, I'm not a teacher here. I'm just a tutor.' I laid low. I feel like I've

been elevated in some way. I feel like I have the confidence now, and I know that it's okay to have those stumbles.

Three of the seven participants emphasized the importance of using data analysis to target areas of weakness to shape an appropriate intervention plan that will increase a child's reading achievement. Three participants cited particular strategies to help children develop phonemic awareness, decode unfamiliar words, or process the text at deeper levels of comprehension. Finally, one participant spoke about the overall experience as fortifying her with the confidence to assume the position of classroom teacher beyond the tutoring experience.

Interview Question 5

What do you think is meant by the term *struggling reader*? Thinking about the child with whom you worked in clinic, can you tell a story that represents the challenges of working with a struggling reader and one that illustrates the rewards of working with a struggling reader?

Tatiana.

A child who reads below the grade level that he or she is in. The struggling reader might be a child whose English is a second language. He's an ELL student. The struggling reader might be a child who needs special education. So the struggling reader basically does not read on the level he or she should, depending on the child.

Gavin.

I would consider a reader who is struggling with one of the cueing systems,

Whether it's the graphophonic, the syntactic, or the semantic cueing system and overly relying on one of the three to compensate . . . or two of the three. The result of that is whether a child is having trouble comprehending . . . it also includes comprehension, not just decoding.

Gavin added, "So, a struggling reader would have difficulty reading a grade-level text, comprehend it, and be able to respond to questions about it."

Addison.

I wouldn't say it is necessarily a student who doesn't know how to read, but there are certain areas that he or she might need to have more practice in, whether it be comprehension, fluency, being able to retell or summarize.

Stephanie.

I think that anyone can be a struggling reader. I think that the strongest readers can be struggling readers in a certain situation. Maybe, they're not strong in a content area and they're reading something and they happen to be struggling—not with the content, but with the understanding of the terms.

Ella.

A struggling reader is probably someone who doesn't feel comfortable reading. Probably because they haven't been exposed to it. They don't have a good grasp of the language. English is a very tricky language; so, they probably find it difficult and they might not understand—you know, all the patterns in the English language and that makes it difficult. [whispering] I guess.

Olivia. "I think a struggling reader has not mastered the skills and strategies to be able to work through any piece of literature. So I don't think it's as simple as saying that a student has trouble reading."

Debbie.

Well, if you think about it, everyone's a struggling reader until they're 30 or something. I mean you can always advance your knowledge of reading . . .

There's always going to be a word you don't know . . . I mean there are so many words in the English language." Then Debbie added: "A struggling reader in today's society is someone who's not up to par with everyone else.

Interestingly, only one of the seven participants explicitly stated that a struggling reader did not read at his or her current grade placement. One participant immediately interpreted the term to reference an ELL, and two others inferred the term to mean anyone who has struggled unsuccessfully to acquire a skill. Two participants spoke about the importance of explicitly teaching comprehension strategies to help students negotiate the meaning, and one participant may have even referenced herself in her interpretation of a struggling reader. However, when pressed further, each of the participants articulated the challenges of working with the child to whom he or she was assigned, taking for granted the knowledge that the child's weaknesses provided the rationale for inclusion in the reading clinic.

For example, when asked to cite the challenges of working with a second-grader, Addison recalled that the student with whom she worked tended to "skip over words as she read." She attributed this behavior to the child's proclivity for reading too fast or not

paying attention to the words on the page. Addison reported further that "her fluency was there, but I did notice there were times that she would read a sentence as simple as "I would like to go out to play." She would say, "I would like to play." It still makes sense, and it made sense to her, but she's still leaving out words in a sentence."

It did not occur to Addison that the child was not a fluent reader or that the child was using compensatory strategies in proceeding through the text. Addison mistakenly attributed fast-paced reading as fluent reading without taking into consideration that fluent reading implies accuracy as well.

Interview Question 6

As a teacher candidate, have you had an opportunity to use self-reflection? If so, how?

In responding to this question, three of the participants generally referred to their student teaching or internship experiences as the following quotes will illustrate:

Debbie.

I think I'm always reflecting when I'm with a student. I'll get home and I'll be like, 'Oh, you know, may I should do it this way instead or . . . ' So, I think it helped to write it down and then refer back to it to see how far I've come, or maybe I realized what I forgot and need to go back to.

Addison.

I will never forget this after my first observation. As soon as I was done, I went to go meet with my supervisor. I was already self-reflecting. I said, I can tell you right now about the things that I would do differently.

Ella. In juggling the last few days of student teaching, while taking the clinical practicum course, Ella had this to say,

I would talk about [clinical practicum] with my cooperating teacher, about some of my reflections and kind of see what she thought about them, and I think that helped a lot because just to be able to get it out and say it out loud kind of cleared my head a little bit.

Gavin. Although Gavin acknowledged using self-reflection in his practice, his response indicated general use rather than specific application to his participation in clinical practicum : "I self-reflect constantly as a teacher candidate and in my teacher preparation; even just driving home after a day of student teaching, I would self-reflect continually. What went well? What didn't work? What might have worked better?"

Stephanie and Olivia. Both Stephanie and Olivia referenced the clinical practicum course as having provided them with specific opportunities to self-reflect on their practices when discussing instruction.

Stephanie. Stephanie, additionally, inferred that the dialogue journal she maintained forced her to confront gaps in her pedagogical understanding and subsequent recollection of her tutoring activities:

In this course, I have had opportunities to use self-reflection. I was able to reflect every week. As I was writing, I'd feel myself just saying, 'The child did this, the child did that.' And I wanted to stretch myself and be able to say: 'I did this, I did that. This is how I'm going to change next time.' I realized that this isn't about

what the kids did; it's about what I did and how I'll change and, maybe, my reaction to what the child did."

Olivia.

What I learned after reflecting was that what *I* thought was best for the students wasn't necessarily what was best for the students. So I think that the reflection gave me a chance to sort of see what I was doing—not necessarily incorrectly, but how I could better benefit the students, reflecting on what the student needs were and, then, altering my teaching so that I could give the students what they required or what their reading instruction needed.

Tatiana. Tatiana commented on the self-reflection journal that was required as part of the course assignments:

In clinic specifically, we would write a reflection paper where we would write what we did, what strategies we used, where were the difficulties the child might have, or our own difficulties as well in planning ahead, or, maybe how we can improve.

Interview Question 7

As part of the course, you were required to develop lesson plans for each tutoring session. Can you talk about how you knew which areas to focus on for each session?

The perspectives of Gavin, Ella, Olivia, and Addison were clarified through an integrated response of Questions 7 and 8, as the participants fused lesson planning and self-reflection in outlining next steps for their students:

Gavin.

The response journals helped to focus me every week. Seeing it on paper and actually writing it down on paper helped me sort of map out what we had done, helped me reflect on what had worked, what would work better next time, and also sort of sparked me into getting a game plan for next week and figure out where I was going to progress with my instruction.

Ella.

For the first couple sessions, we had the assessments; so, we used what we found in the assessments to help plan, and after that, I think, the self-reflections helped a lot. I thought about what it was that I worked on in the previous session. What worked, what didn't, what did he struggle with, and I would kind of think of something that he seemed to struggle with or what he needed more work on and try to design a lesson on that.

When asked for an example, Ella could not cite a specific instance in which self reflection had propelled her to revise her strategy, which would result in increased learning for the child she tutored during the next session.

Olivia.

Using my reflections as a guide, I decided that there were certain things that we were not going to get to, and that was okay, and other things are extremely important. I had two students: So the lesson plans were just helpful as a guide, but I used them with the intention that there were parts of them that were crucial that I needed to get to, and other parts that were more expendable.

Addison.

After meeting with my student, I would self-reflect and think about what I could do differently. If she didn't understand something, then I would tweak what I did that night and change it and do it again with her the next time because, if she didn't get that, I couldn't move on. So if she didn't understand something, we'd change it. But still, we would be going after the same skill or concept—just in a different manner.

Tatiana.

The biggest help was the pretesting, especially the phonics test. Looking at the results, I was able to see what areas in phonics she had difficulty with—like she needed long vowels. She needed vowel teams. She needed diphthongs.

Stephanie.

I didn't. [laughs] I mean I had an idea of what I wanted to do, but it mostly focused on whatever we had left off on the last time. I wanted to pick up on it and almost do a review.

Debbie. Debbie, the only participant who had openly decried the value of assessments in the cycle of curriculum and instruction, acknowledged the value of the running record for determining the teaching points for developing her instructional plan: "I had it [the running record] written in my hands so I didn't have to think back. I had it right in front of me."

Thus, although most of the participants regarded lesson plan development as having some value, most of them also responded to the child's reading behaviors at the point of miscues. They were less apt to follow their written plan if the child demonstrated

a need for reinforcement of skills other than those outlined. While Debbie still maintained the limited utility of reading assessments, she specifically referenced the running record for identifying areas of need in proceeding with her instructional plan. Stephanie allowed the child's behavior to dictate the format of the lesson, even though she had developed an instructional routine for the day. Ella, on the other hand, referenced the usefulness of the data obtained from prior assessments for the first few tutoring sessions. As the child demonstrated proficiency and attaining mastery of certain skills during the course of their work together, Ella was able to employ progress monitoring through systematic running records in her teaching, which provided potential teaching points for the next tutoring session.

Although the lesson plan requirement was fulfilled within the clinical practicum course, the extent to which participants adhered to their written plans was more or less guided by the child's demeanor of the day, whether the child's actions related to reading performance or classroom behavior.

Interview Question 8

As part of the course, you were required to maintain and submit an electronic reflective journal of your experiences. Can you talk about how these weekly assignments may have affected your weekly practice?

Olivia.

I would not create a new lesson plan until I wrote my reflections because I needed that time to think about what the students had done and what I had done with

them so that I could sort of create a lesson plan based on what we had missed, what we needed, what the students were demonstrating they needed.

Gavin.

The response journals helped focus me every week. Seeing it on paper and actually writing it down on paper helped me sort of map out what we had done, helped me reflect on what had worked . . . what would work better next time.

Addison.

I think they [self-reflective journals] made me more aware. For me, having to sit down and just write it out before I typed it was really good because it didn't feel like it was a real formal type of paper—it was like these are my thoughts—this is what I'm thinking, how I'm feeling, and you gave great feedback.

Stephanie.

Having to keep them short helped me pinpoint the important parts of the week. It helped me really think about what's important. So, being able to pinpoint those important pieces, allowed me . . . helped me make my plan for the following week.

Ella.

At first, it seemed a little overwhelming, maybe because there was so much information and so much you were thinking about. But then it almost made you prioritize. Because as I sat down to write, I was trying to think of [my student's] successes and also some of his weaknesses that we were going to work on next

time. Those reflections really helped me to figure out where it was that he was struggling most, in what he needed the most help with in the next session."

Debbie. Debbie's casual perspective on the weekly journal assignments may have been due to premature confidence about outlining the next instructional steps:

It's always good to have something to refer back to and just remind yourself what you already went over and compare that to what he knows now. Did it work or do I need to go back and do that again?"

Or perhaps Debbie did not yet think deeply about her practice and the importance of scaffolding instruction to elevate the child's literacy learning. Only time would tell.

Interview Question 9

What was the most valuable part of the course for you personally?

Olivia.

Working with an ELL student [and focusing on] comprehension strategies, including responses to literature and graphic organizers and how to use them. If the students respond to literature in thoughtful, meaningful ways, then they're demonstrating that they actually do comprehend the text above a literal understanding.

Gavin.

I'd say it was a tie between being able to make a connection with the student I was working with and help him and motivate him . That was very powerful. And also for me as an educator, it was an incredibly valuable experience being able to take

everything that I had learned and start to put into practice the different components of teaching a struggling reader.

Tatiana.

[Not only] teacher modeling but also the way you conducted our classroom. I think going back to the reflections we talked about. We did that after the lessons with children. We did our reflections in the group. And that was helping because especially in the first sessions, I felt like I'm not the only one who has trouble, I'm not the only one who's afraid, I'm not the only one who feels that way, and my child is not the only child who has difficulty with this. I saw myself; yes, I can become a teacher.

Addison. Addison referred to the one-on-one experience of working with one child and the seminar in discussing the most valuable parts of the course:

The experience to work with a student. It was very hands-on, which I think is great because otherwise you can hear it, someone can tell you, but I feel especially for this profession, you have to have that experience doing it. You can't just listen or try it for yourself or on a classmate because it's not really real. It was even great when we would meet for an hour after [tutoring] because myself and my other classmates would bounce ideas off of each other; that was another way of self-reflecting because we would share with each other and then we would get feedback not only from you but also from each other, which was also very helpful.

Stephanie.

I think it's my confidence in working with kids one-on-one. I think standing up in front of a whole class is so much easier than working one-on-one. Even now, I get nervous and flustered. But I think being able to sit with one child and work through something had a lot more meaning to me because even when I did tutoring in the past, it's always been in small groups. I learned a lot from [the child I tutored]. I learned so much from just interacting with him on a weekly basis.

Ella.

The most valuable part would be the assessments because I had never used any of them before. So it gave me some tools that I can definitely use, and this course kind of helped me figure out how to use that data, because it's one thing to collect all these data, but it's another thing to know how to use them. And, what was the second part?

Ella now recalled that the opportunity to observe my lessons provided cogent formats for lesson design: "The way you designed it, how you included all the kids, you know, some of the strategies that you used, like you would ask them to tell you a sentence, any sentence that they remembered from the story and you would write it on the white board with their name next to it for the [language experience portion of the] shared reading. I had never seen it done that way."

Debbie. Debbie's simple comment revealed her perceived connection between coursework and clinical experience: "Having a student and having those terms in my head and actually doing them." Debbie, then, recalled the literacy terms used in

phonological awareness consisting of onset and rime, word families, phonograms, and phonemic awareness as part of an increasingly growing repertoire of skills as well as terminology.

Interview Question 10

Can you describe how you may have used what you have learned since participating in clinic?

Question 10 was asked during the first interview in late August, approximately 6 weeks after the completion of the summer clinical practicum course. A limited response to this question can be attributed to the hiatus in internships, student teaching assignments, or classroom teaching positions due to summer vacation. Thus, the question was asked again at the second interview when it generated a more comprehensive response, simply because participants' internships, student teaching, and classroom teaching had resumed in the fall. Responses to this last question were as varied as the individual experiences of clinical practicum.

Gavin. "Assessments, assessments, assessments. Formative, consistent assessments, anecdotal data, everything to guide instruction. Guide your instruction based on prior assessment."

Olivia.

I reinforce the strategies I learned in clinical practicum with my students. I am always prompting them to make predictions, elicit the use of background knowledge encouraging them to use their prior experiences to help in connecting to a text . . . I have

not used the assessments per se, but I have used the knowledge of what the assessments taught me about readers to guide my instruction.

Debbie. Debbie had this to say after observing the reading specialist scaffold the instruction of a struggling reader in teaching him how to problem solve with unfamiliar words at the school in which her internship took place: "Absolutely, just seeing it happen over and over again always helps, just to solidify what I was learning."

Ella.

The most valuable part would be the assessments because I had never used any of them before, and I think that this gave me four more assessments that I can use in the classroom. Maybe not with every single kid, but maybe with those struggling readers.

Addison.

I'm working with younger students and some of them are at a level where they can read or they are learning to read. I've worked with isolating letters, isolating words, word families, having to focus on one sound, and come up with other words that start with that sound to get them more familiar with it.

Stephanie.

I was able to utilize shared reading, and I knew what I was doing! I wasn't doing it right in the past. I've seen it done a couple of times with you. I've done it one-on-one. I've done it in a small group with other tutors who are also learning. So now I can sit in front of a group of children in the library, go through the story.

Tatiana. "So I did some pretesting on my mother . . . for practice. She's an ELL, too."

These experiences beg the question: Did the benefits of clinical practicum stay with the participants long after their participation in the course had ended?

While Gavin's resounding mantra "assessments, assessments, assessments" resembled a sound bite lauding to the merits of data-driven decision making, Olivia discussed the importance of strategic instruction for comprehension , which begins with effective teacher modeling. Stephanie felt empowered by the shared-reading experience, a strategy to teach fluency and accuracy in oral reading and to reinforce sight-word vocabulary whenever she substituted at the media center at her school. Debbie's immediate response "I used less worksheets" was devoid of the context that would substantiate the appropriateness of such an instructional decision, but it hinted at the fact that she now had better strategies at her disposal. Ella and Addison agreed that summer vacation had represented limited opportunities to use what they had learned. Finally, Tatiana used the postclinical-practicum time as an opportunity to practice test administration of the assessment tools on her mother, also an ELL, who resided with her.

Interview Question 11

Did you have an opportunity to talk about everything you wanted? Is there anything else that I might not have asked that you would like to say?

Gavin. "I just think clinic was an outstanding experience, and I think it should be a mandatory course. Personally, it goes along so well with everything we had learned throughout the coursework and it really just brought it to life for me."

Tatiana. Tatiana summarized her learning in one statement: "My fears [about teaching] have almost disappeared."

Addison. "I liked the last class where we all had the chance to do a Reader's Theater or read a poem or something for the parents so the parents can actually see their child reading and have the chance to talk to them afterwards as well." Additionally, Addison stated that parents should share the responsibility of helping their child to read by working with them at home.

Stephanie. "I think that taking the course was like the perfect next step for me. I was able to walk in on the first day and feel able to assess a kid. You can't do that in student teaching. You can't do that during your internship."

Ella. "The very last night when all the parents came in. I liked the experience of talking to the parents and explaining the assessments to them. Parent communication is huge and parents want to know that you know what you are talking about. So to be able to sit there and explain exactly what I did with her child and explain that I would recommend that you do this . . . when you are reading with your child at home. I think that was really powerful because it gave me a little more confidence going into my own classroom. I kind of do know what I am talking about."

Debbie. "It [the clinical practicum course] was interactive and was more helpful to me instead of sitting in a class that was lecture style. I think this even tops discussion style."

Olivia. "I think it would be beneficial for all students to participate in clinic because being able to get an A on a test or write a paper about how to teach a student versus having an experience with the student is very different."

Responses to this question implied a theme of confidence as a result of having participated in a course that gave teacher preparation candidates the opportunity to work with a child in a tutoring partnership; conduct pre - and posttests; and develop a data-based intervention plan, which will be explored more deeply in the section on themes. Although Debbie's truncated response suggested a trivialized experience, the implication was that she was finally able to perceive the connection between coursework and clinical practicum.

Olivia aptly summed up her experience when she inferred that writing about how to teach a student does not compare with the experience of working with a student directly. Stephanie and Tatiana stated that the clinical experience alleviated their uncertainties about being successful in the field, while Gavin perceived theories brought to life in clinical opportunities to practice what others preached. Ella perceived the value of maintaining her status in the presence of parents, while Addison asserted that teachers should not be the only ones expected to assume responsibility for advancing the reading achievement of a child; parents also need to play their part. Implicit in the participants' responses was the recurrent idea that confidence comes with experience.

Discrepant Data

Typological analysis initially provided a framework by which the data were categorized. Some of the data could either not be readily coded or had to be earmarked

for review because they contained misconceptions related to the content and pedagogy of literacy (Hatch, 2002). Upon further analysis, I saw the potential for an emerging theme within these homeless pieces of data that encompassed some erroneous assumptions about the pedagogy of literacy (Hatch, 2002). Here again, immersion in the data confirmed, indeed, the presence of conflicting data not limited to one transcript, one study participant, or one issue. Interestingly, even an articulate study participant made statements worthy of the discrepant status. Wolcott (2009) asserted that human behavior is unexplainable with a simple generalization and that high-caliber qualitative research obscures the complexities that have been unearthed within the data. Heartened to learn that description need not be pure, I proceeded to grapple with "unwanted data" (Wolcott, 2009, p. 32).

Three participants' assumptions about literacy instruction paralleled their experiences in the schools in which they interned or student-taught, rather than issued from courses in literacy taken prior to clinical practicum. For them, authentic field experiences prevailed over pedagogy, supposedly acquired through previous coursework, in shaping their perceptions about research-based literacy practices. This was especially true with Addison, whose literacy assumptions emanated from the commercial phonics program implemented in each grade at every school in the district. However, as her pedagogical views became more sophisticated, she came to understand the disadvantages of a one-size-fits-all approach to reading instruction, which her comment that the program did not necessarily benefit all children demonstrated.

Ella's erroneous and simplified perception of literacy instruction focused on the reading workshop (RW) model (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000), a three-part concept that begins with a focused minilesson and the introduction of a daily comprehension skill (e.g., summarizing, questioning, connecting), followed with an opportunity for the student to read a self-selected text independently. In the last part of the workshop model, the student is required to apply the skill-related task to a text written at his independent reading level. Ella commented that, although the three-pronged format used in student teaching was appropriate for many children, the method did not always meet the needs of students requiring additional instruction because there was little provision made for one-on-one intervention or small-group instruction. She said, "I could certainly see that it didn't work for all kids, and it was hard to get to each child every single day and target their needs without pulling small groups, small leveled groups, and working a guided-reading-type of lesson."

Ella's generalizations about the components of the RW betrayed her limited understanding of this concept as both a protocol for literacy instruction and a process for helping children advance in their literacy learning. The RW format has, in fact, built-in supports for helping children select books that are commensurate with their independent as well as their instructional reading levels. Procedural implementation of the RW does not imply the exclusion of small-group instruction, often referred to as guided reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 2000). Ella had yet to come to this conclusion and correct her assumptions about literacy instruction, notably through the RW model.

Perhaps Ella's incorrect assumptions about the RW as a model that does not encompass all the research-based components that, in actuality, it does contain was based on limited exposure to this model, or perhaps this novice teacher had not yet acquired a deep understanding of the breadth of the discipline. Either way, Ella is currently teaching second grade in a district that has propelled the RW to the forefront of professional development, and Ella will have many opportunities to build and expand her fund of literacy pedagogy.

Finally, several project participants made statements about their literacy assumptions that betrayed misconceptions of the literacy process, which I have attributed to their status as novices who are still in the process of amassing a great body of pedagogical knowledge. For example, in a discussion about the reading performance of her second-grade ELL student, the participant stated, "Her fluency was there, but I did notice there were times that she would read a simple sentence like 'I would like to go out to play,' as 'I would like to play.' It still made sense to her, but she was still leaving out words in a sentence." The candidate's statement about *fluency* was incorrect. Fluency means reading the words on a page accurately and automatically. Rather than being fluent, this child was using compensatory strategies to negotiate unfamiliar text. Inaccuracies such as the ones committed by this young reader could, eventually, compromise her comprehension.

Still another example of this teacher candidate's limited assumptive knowledge concerned a specific tutoring session where she emphasized the importance of scrutinizing illustrations for helping the reader understand the events of the story.

Although this strategy is commonplace for helping beginning readers, the child in question had progressed to a level where she would have profited from explicit instruction in decoding to increase her understanding of the story.

The last piece of nonconforming data related to the project participants' perceptions of the struggling reader. Surprisingly, only two of the participants actually stated that a struggling reader is one who does not read at grade level. One participant attempted to articulate an operational definition as the following excerpt illustrates: "A struggling reader has not mastered the skills and strategies to be able to work through any piece of literature." Two other participants understood the term *struggling reader* as referring to ELLs, as the following combination statement illustrates: "A struggling reader is probably someone who doesn't feel comfortable reading. Probably because they haven't been exposed to it. They don't have a good grasp of the language because English is a very tricky language. All the patterns in the English language makes it difficult to learn."

All participants were working with struggling readers during their participation in practicum. All had opportunities to teach all aspects of the reading process, with particular emphasis on one or more components of literacy. Yet, in spite of the fact that each of the children functioned well below their current grade placement, most of the teacher candidates were hard-pressed to provide this obvious definition of the term *struggling reader*.

Emergent Themes

Continual immersion in the data resulted in expanding, revising, and creating subtle connections among the domains (Hatch, 2002) and identifying "regularities within the data" (Hatch, 2002, p. 155) that emerged as themes. Salient themes included (a) enhanced perceptions of content and pedagogical knowledge in literacy, (b) connecting theory to practice and bridging coursework to clinical experience, (c) interaction between tutor and child influenced instructional decisions, and (d) an enhanced sense of confidence facilitates increased levels of competence. These themes are further explained in this section.

To analyze the participants' responses in view of the first theme of my typological framework—content and pedagogical knowledge—I started by layering the seven principles of literacy development (Clay, 1993) and *Teaching Reading Well* (IRA, 2007), which yielded several curricular methodologies. These methodologies were, then, used for analyzing and coding the participants' answers. Thus, interpretive analysis proceeded from an initial typological framework in order to get a sense of "what [was] included and not included in the data" (Hatch, 2002, p. 181). Here, I turned to my reflective journal and bracketed impressions to obtain the salient patterns and semantic relationships for commonalities and possible contradictions. I revisited and extended original memos about my impressions in "tentative, hypothetical language" (p. 182) to heighten my understanding and make sense of what happened, as suggested by Hatch (2002). The burgeoning of themes occurred as I searched for commonalities among participants' quotes that supported initial interpretations of their responses to the interview questions.

Theme 1: Enhanced Perceptions of Content and Pedagogical Knowledge in Literacy

Participation in clinical practicum provided teacher candidates with substantive and rich opportunities to increase their perceptions about their content and pedagogical knowledge of literacy. As a context for imbuing the teacher candidate with evidence-based practices in literacy, the structure and design of the clinical practicum allowed teacher candidates to develop multiple perspectives and refine their conceptual understanding of the reading process. They identified how specific features of the course contributed to the advancement of their pedagogical understanding in literacy, including instructor modeling, instructor feedback on the content of written self-reflections and the quality of their lessons, instruction in the administration and interpretation of assessments, and participation in clinical seminar.

In comparing her knowledge before and after the clinical practicum experience, Olivia stated that she did not realize that "you could literally assess a student, pinpoint his needs, and then gear your instruction" accordingly. She was relieved to know that she did not need to correct every miscue when helping a child figure out unfamiliar words: "He could take some of the skills that we had worked on during clinic and actually apply them on his own without having me prompt him." Tatiana stated that she learned how to give "wait time" to allow the child to employ self-monitoring in a context that emphasized semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cueing used by the reader in learning to decode new words (IRA, 2007). Both participants learned to adjust their methods to the needs of their students. The transition to a coaching style in helping their students attain mastery

of discrete skills gradually replaced their erroneous perceptions that teaching to mastery necessitates unconstrained pedantic instruction.

Stephanie referred to the research-based strategy of shared-reading experience (Holdaway, 1979) and stated that she had "never done it before," but had only seen the strategy modeled in a course. The practicum gave her multiple opportunities to use the strategy with her student prior to "using it in front of a class." Subsequently, procedural implementation became automatic when she took a position as a long-term substitute teacher in the primary grades. Several months after completing the course, Olivia's articulation of pedagogy revealed her internal assimilation of the lexicon of literacy when discussing her implementation of tiered instruction at her school, "I don't just listen for fluency, I ask them to tell me what they're thinking. I have them stop and do think-alouds to monitor that they are using strategies in their own reading."

Gavin acknowledged that his pedagogical knowledge was elevated through his participation in the course, as was his comfort level for administering, scoring, and interpreting assessments. He summarized his evaluation with this statement: "I feel like [clinical practicum] just took my knowledge to the next level."

Initially intimidated by the concept of assessments prior to taking the course, Ella, too, felt that she had acquired an invaluable experience in learning about the various methods that could be used to evaluate students' literacy learning: "It's one thing to collect all these data, but it's another thing to know how to use them." Additionally, Ella articulated the benefits of teacher modeling: "I learned so much from watching you teach

the kids. The way you designed [the lesson], how you included all the kids, the [discrete] management techniques to address behavioral issues."

Addison spoke about how participation in clinical seminar, the component following the 90-minute tutoring sessions, helped her to grow professionally through collegial interaction with trusted and trusting peers she could "bounce ideas off of" in shared collaboration. Tatiana echoed this sentiment, saying that it was "nice to know that other people shared the same [tutoring] troubles." Likewise, Debbie cited the benefits derived from obtaining helpful feedback from her peers. Subsequently, the knowledge gained from working one-on-one with a child finally facilitated her understanding of the literacy terminology, which was "merely thrown out there" in previous coursework.

Thus, study participants began to assimilate the language of literacy and cultivate professional teaching styles as they refined their instructional and assessment practices. They discussed the importance of designing and delivering explicit and systematic instruction to enable their students to acquire self-monitoring strategies and develop into accurate, fluent readers. Clinical supervision and seminar provided dialogic reinforcement for embedding strategic instruction into lesson design, including progress monitoring to ensure mastery of skills by their students. Finally, increases in student achievement were contingent upon and directly related to the candidate's own learning.

Theme 2: Connecting Theory to Practice and Bridging Coursework to Clinical Experience

Participants' voices resounded throughout the interview process with the discovery that previous coursework finally aligned with the clinical curriculum for

linking pedagogy to practice. Their perceptions covered the spectrum of insights, ranging from an indictment about passive learning as the least preferred mode of instruction in the foundations course to a complex understanding derived from additional coursework in literacy.

Debbie reported that the "vocabulary was sort of thrown out there" in lecture style in the foundations course. Clarification of specific terminology occurred only when she had the opportunity to teach phonemic awareness to a struggling reader in clinical practicum: "Even with simple things like onset and rime, I was exposed to that in the foundations course, but now it seems like it's so simple, like: why didn't I get that before?" Addison stated that her clinical experience clarified her understanding of the language of literacy and that she now can "really understand the jargon."

Tatiana simply said, "From the book you cannot learn [how to teach]," and that a theoretical understanding alone is insufficient to an in-depth conceptual understanding of literacy pedagogy. "[In clinic] you see theory and practice. To see that connection is incredibly powerful." Gavin voiced a similar experience regarding the connection between coursework and clinical practicum: "I felt like I had a strong theoretical understanding of the different components of literacy, but I wasn't as comfortable with putting it into practice. But I really was able to understand it once I got my hands on it in clinic, when I got to sit down one-on-one with a student and really apply the theories and the strategies. For me, clinic brought theory to life."

Ella, who had just completed her internship and student teaching, stated that, although she had learned about the concept of guided reading in her coursework, the

clinical practicum provided her with the steps for procedural implementation. Olivia, who had amassed additional content knowledge through the completion of two additional courses in literacy, reported, "I didn't understand fully how important it was for reading strategies and skills to be taught specifically to cater to the needs of each student. We learned a lot about how reading interventions should be systematic and explicit, but I didn't understand how to apply that in real-life settings."

Stephanie made a personal connection through the example of looking at an outline of something and being handed worksheets and going over PowerPoint presentations that give directions on how to implement a strategy and finding out that it doesn't work. However, being able to sit with a child and make mistakes along the way and knowing that he's not worse off for those mistakes, that he still learned even though I may have had stumbles, [that made sense and it worked]. Maybe we can stumble together and we'll have success."

Thus, the clinical practicum experience encouraged study participants to integrate theoretical underpinnings with authentic opportunities to employ principles-in-action. In doing so, these teacher candidates discovered a coherent connection between pedagogical principles and practical application, which further enabled them to hone their skills in becoming teachers of reading. Furthermore, a deepened sense of the theories that guide successful implementation of literacy instruction allowed for exploration of erroneous or misguided assumptions and a confrontation with learning gaps, from which imminent change was possible.

Theme 3: Interactions Between Tutor and Child Influenced Instructional Decisions

Although the participants initially assumed that existing assessment data for their students were sufficient for developing effective intervention plans consistent with varying instructional needs of their students, they soon demonstrated sensitivity in their personal and professional interactions with the child. Thus, a close interpersonal relationship between tutor and tutee became of paramount concern to the tutors as a precondition for helping a child advance his literacy learning. Here, self-reflection, whether deliberate or implicit, was an integral component in the navigation, negotiation, and nurturing of a complex relationship between tutor and tutee. Although progress monitoring of student learning through weekly running records may have revealed areas of weakness, teacher candidates' instructional plans were contingent upon their keen observations of the child's day-to-day emotional state, which were frequently revised in accordance with the child's actions.

Debbie said: "Well, I guess [his] confidence was what I was struggling with in the beginning. He was talking so quietly, and I wanted him to speak louder. So just encouraging him to speak up, and when he did so, I would get really excited." She then congratulated him on what he could do, instead of "focusing on what he couldn't do." In discussing her lesson plans, Debbie added, "It's nice to have a guide just in case I get lost or realize that something's not working. But, I find myself constantly changing what I've written down."

Ella's scenario was similar: "For the first few sessions I used the assessments to guide my instruction. One day, I was doing a lesson, but my student wasn't using some of

the strategies that I had shown him before; so we just kind of dropped what we were doing. I thought it was more important for him to understand what he was reading and to have it make sense." Thus, Ella proceeded to model the strategies for figuring out unknown words before continuing with her lesson. Addison corroborated other participants' statements: "After meeting with my student, I would self-reflect, think about what areas did I think she understood or that she didn't. Then I would do it again with her the next time because if she didn't get that, I couldn't move on." Addison added, "I never kept a lesson plan the same; so, if she didn't understand something I didn't just say, 'OK, we'll do this exact one next time.' Obviously, we'd change it."

Like Debbie and Ella, Olivia used running records to plan her lessons, but frequently resorted to intuition when she perceived that her student needed an alternative plan: "At one session, one of the students came in, and he was having a bad day. He was mad about something. So everything I had planned in the lesson went out the window!" Olivia realized that she needed to find a way to motivate her child before implementing her intended lesson.

Stephanie confronted a similar issue when her reluctant child told her that he would rather be playing ball: "At 6 years old, you're not going to want to come back to [work] from an entire day. Seeing him struggle would break my heart every time. And it stressed me out because it was for this course! He didn't necessarily understand why he couldn't do what he wanted to do because it was very obvious that he wanted to be able to read. I could see at times him really wanting, really interested in reading something and not being able to . . . and he wanted to know why." However, self-reflection on her

practice prevailed: "As I was writing, I'd feel myself just saying, "Kevin did this, Kevin did that." And I wanted to stretch myself and be able to say "I did this. I did that." This is how I'm going to change next time."

Tatiana considered both assessments and the child's daily reading performance as directing her instruction: "The biggest help was the pretesting. When you make yourself stop and think, it would make you reflect. What was done, what should be done and what can we do to make some adjustments? It's a little bit trial and error. You try and you see maybe [the text] is a little too high, or a little too low, and this way you sort of adjust your instruction depending again."

Gavin stated that the self-reflective journals helped him to focus on the lesson for the following week: "Seeing it on paper and actually writing it down helped me sort of map out what we had done, helped me reflect on what had worked . . . what would work better next time . . . and also sort of sparked me into getting a game plan for next week and figure out where I was going to progress with my instruction."

Although participants considered student assessment data as the starting point for lesson plan development, they did not rely on that information exclusively when planning for each tutoring session. As they developed interpersonal relationships with the children they tutored, they attempted to respond to the children's day-to-day emotional and instructional needs by revising their written plans when appropriate. Children frequently greeted their tutors with hugs and stories of some big achievement in sports or other activities or family events, which eventually became the prelude to the daily instructional routine. Teacher candidates' observations of the children's demeanor frequently resulted

in on-the-spot modifications of lesson plans to stimulate the child's waning interest or address another aspect of learning. Thus, running records, observations of the students' literacy behavior and disposition, and continual self-reflection contributed to the teacher candidates' instructional decisions.

Theme 4: An Enhanced Sense of Confidence Facilitates Increased Levels of Competence

The recurrent theme of confidence threaded its way through the interviews. During their participation in clinical practicum, teacher candidates began to perceive themselves as educated professionals about to embark on a lifelong career as teachers. Some of the participants made explicit mention of this change in their self-perception, others spoke with developing expertise about how their tutoring experiences contributed to their overall pedagogical knowledge of literacy instruction. Their ease and automaticity in using the language of the discipline underscored the discernible process of assimilation as initial fears subsided and competence grew.

Gavin, specifically, used the word *confidence* in his assertion that the experience helped him to meld content learning with knowledge derived from previous coursework: "Clinical practicum helped me build my confidence and my comfort with the various components of teaching reading." Tatiana corroborated Gavin's perception: "I just basically confirmed through your modeling that "Yes, I see myself. Yes, I can become a teacher. Yes, I don't need [merely] to survive, I can actually enjoy it. I learned a lot. My fears have almost disappeared!"

Stephanie, who had enrolled in the master's program to advance her literacy learning after attaining her certification at another university, stated without hesitation that the most important learning she acquired from the course was "the confidence in knowing that I can do it. And being able to see that I did make some sort of a difference and having my student teach me a lot. I learned a lot from him."

Participation in clinical practicum provided an opportunity for teacher candidates to communicate with parents in a discussion about the child's reading progress. Ella found this aspect to be especially beneficial: "To sit there and explain exactly what I did with her child and explain what I would recommend that [she] do when [she is] reading with [her] child at home. I think that was really powerful because it gave me a little more confidence going into my own classroom because I kind of do know what I am talking about."

Olivia stated: "I think it would be beneficial for all [teacher candidates] to participate in [clinical practicum] because writing a paper about how to teach a student versus having an experience with the student is very different." Debbie's self-perception was enhanced as a result of her participation in the course, as the following comment illustrates: "If I hadn't taken this course, I would still feel comfortable [student] teaching in the fall, but because I was exposed to the terminology and the instructional practices at the same time, I will be more comfortable in my position as a student teacher."

At the end of our last interview, Addison gushed, "I love teaching. I love it. It's where I should be."

The teacher candidates' command of the language of literacy increased during their participation in clinical practicum. They articulated the discernible characteristics of the reading pillars as they learned how to determine students' performance levels in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. They became proficient in differentiating instruction for a wide array of diverse learners. Their confidence was bolstered by real-life opportunities to evaluate, tutor, and develop an intervention plan for a child. They discovered that a lesson in decoding multisyllabic words for an English-dominant child might also function as an ELL student's vocabulary lesson. Ultimately, they became competent facilitators in scaffolding instruction, contextualizing evidence-based strategies, and helping a child monitor oral reading or employing specific comprehension strategies in advancing his reading achievement.

Theme 5: Mentorship can Provide Beginning Teachers With Strong Learning Models

Six of the seven interviewees identified a cooperating teacher, reading specialist, university professor, or administrator as supporting the candidates' efforts in advancing their practice. Olivia's mentorship with the literacy coach at her school provided direction for working with the lower-functioning students in third and fourth grade. In a similar fashion, Gavin worked closely with the reading specialist and the principal at his school in learning how to use the district-mandated intervention program to work with the most struggling readers in second grade. When a long-term position became available a year later, they called upon Gavin to fill the position. Stephanie was hired as an after-school early literacy tutor following her enrollment in the master's program at the site of this

study, and she immediately developed a positive rapport with the school principal. At a planning meeting with the school principal following summer vacation and the completion of the clinical practicum course, Stephanie was offered a full-time position as a literacy tutor, with a promise that she would be offered the next teaching position that became available. Both Addison and Ella had developed close working relationships with their cooperating teachers, who wanted to hear about their experiences in clinical practicum while they were completing their student teaching assignments. Lastly, when asked what was the most valuable part of the clinical course for you personally, Tatiana simply asked me: "You mean besides yourself?"

Evidence of Quality

Creswell (2003, 2007) highlighted eight procedures to assure accurate interpretation and reporting of the data, but emphasized the power of a qualitative study utilizing triangulation, thick description, and member checking to anchor support. Therefore, I selected the aforementioned strategies to provide strength through quality and accuracy of data transmission.

Following interviews with project participants, I e-mailed transcripts to the research participants for member checking and verification (to be completed within 5 days). Each transcript was accompanied by a letter encouraging the participants to review their statements for accuracy of content and intention. All of them responded with written statements of corroboration, revision, or clarifications of their intent, which I incorporated into the summary drafts.

Using the Lightfoot and Davis (1997) model, I used rich description to craft each participant's story. Here again, I sent the drafts to the participants for their input and validation. Additionally, I invited my participants to comment on the accuracy of their storied information and encouraged them to provide me with any insights that might provide clarification to the narrative. I assured project participants that they were free to strike any statements that they perceived as inaccurate or as not telling the story in the way they had intended it. The use of rich, thick descriptions to communicate the teacher candidates' professional narratives will allow readers to determine the feasibility of replicating this study in other settings by comparing common study traits.

Creswell (2003) defined triangulation as the multipronged examination of "evidence from sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes" (p. 196). Coherence was established through two audiotaped interviews, which were transcribed and sent to project participants for corroboration and verification of content accuracy. An additional purpose was to get at the core of the research questions to determine if participants' responses changed over time. A third follow-up interview by e-mail or telephone sought to verify the accuracy of the data that were reflected in the participants' evolving stories. Therefore, triangulation from three data sources verified the accuracy of intent of the participants' statements.

Summary

Results of the study indicated that the clinical practicum experience enabled teacher candidates' to broaden their content and pedagogical knowledge of literacy, refine their teaching and assessment practices through appropriate planning and self-reflection,

and explore positive interpersonal relationships with their tutees. As these teachers-in-training became proficient in research-based instruction and assessment practices, they developed a sense of confidence, which they could transfer from university clinic to elementary classroom , as they made the transition from teacher candidate to competent professional educator, ready to teach all their students to read. Section 5 provides a discussion of conclusions, implications for social change, and recommendations for additional action and further study.

Section 5: Discussion, Recommendations, Conclusion

Overview

For the past several years, teacher candidates at a small private university in Southern New England have completed the teacher preparation program without mastering the requisite skills to teach reading in today's elementary classrooms. This is reflective of a greater national concern in which scholars, literacy professionals, and politicians have criticized universities for not preparing teacher candidates to deliver effective reading instruction to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Contributing to the local problem are persistent sobering state scores in reading, affirming the need to revise current teacher preparation practices to include rich clinical experiences that will fortify the teacher candidate with the pedagogical skills of a professional educator.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore seven teacher candidates' tutoring experiences while working with struggling readers at a university-based reading clinic. A narrative design sought to arrive at an understanding about how the participants' activities in a structured apprenticeship contributed to their overall pedagogical understanding of literacy instruction. With a vision toward enhancing teacher candidates' knowledge of reading instruction, which would positively affect the literate lives of diverse struggling readers, a resurrected and redesigned clinical practicum course combined practicality and pedagogy in an innovative apprenticeship inclusive of one-on-one instruction, research-based practices, and strong mentorship.

Data were collected through two semistructured, digitally recorded interviews with teacher candidates, following their participation in the clinical practicum course, and a third communication was established through telephone or e-mail correspondence. Participants candidly discussed their pedagogical assumptions about reading, tutoring experiences with struggling readers, methods for making instructional decisions, and self-reflective practices. In-depth conversations with the teacher candidates resulted in the discovery of several themes including the connection from theory to practice, self-confidence, the positive effects of a strong mentoring relationship on teacher candidates, and misconceptions about literacy instruction. The results of this study were used to acquire an enhanced understanding of the ways in which prospective teachers develop the requisite skills of a professional in making the transition from teacher candidate to skilled practitioner who will teach all of his or her pupils to read.

Summary of the Findings

Four core questions guided the study. Participants' responses are presented in this section as findings and interpretations and reflect the results discussed in section 4. Data transformation yielded the findings that emanated from face-to-face interviews; a synthesis of the data linked subtle and explicit commonalities from participants' statements to interpretations and references to the literature.

Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 1

How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?

Findings. All of the participants agreed that the hands-on experience of working one-on-one with a struggling reader was a unique opportunity for them to make the connection from theory to practice. However, while some referred to the content knowledge of literacy as *jargon* or *terminology*, others discussed the complexities of the reading process with the sophistication and conceptual understanding of a seasoned professional. For one, the language of literacy was no longer a vocabulary list that required memorization. She referenced specific literacy terminology pertaining to phonemic awareness and phonics as part of an expanding repertoire, which she could now connect to previous literacy coursework. Others had already effectively integrated the lexicon of literacy into their professional vocabulary and appeared to be casual, confident, and fluid in discussing literacy instruction.

Several participants compared the authentic context of the clinical practicum course to previous literacy coursework in which lecture was the preferred mode of delivery of the content. They now understood that the teaching and learning process required the coconstruction of knowledge between tutor and child through the reading process. Helping a child to develop the resources to grapple with the pronunciation of a word before appealing to the teacher represented a departure from participants' original perceptions about reading instruction, namely, the erroneous assumptions acquired and reinforced through previous coursework, but dispelled through clinical practicum.

Study participants referred to a number of course features that contributed to their revised or enhanced perceptions about literacy instruction. All mentioned that instructor modeling helped them link theory with practice in teaching and assessing the components

of literacy. Most of the participants discussed the benefits of using data to inform instruction and to design quality interventions that meet the needs of diverse children. Even the skeptic who disavowed the value of assessments because she herself "was not a good test-taker," came to understand the value of the running record as an effective tool for planning lessons commensurate with students' needs.

All the participants acknowledged the critical importance of teaching a child how to employ self-monitoring strategies when encountering unfamiliar text; previously, they had thought that the role of the tutor or teacher was to identify and immediately correct a student's incorrect responses. Participants referenced the lessons modeled in clinical practicum, which enabled them to help the emergent reader make the transition from phonemic awareness to phonics through phoneme deletion or help an ELL to acquire a meaningful vocabulary or coax the reticent comprehender to understand a narrative through an interactive read-aloud. They discussed the differences between formative and summative assessments and the symbiotic relationship of assessment and instruction, revealing an overall broadened perspective of literacy.

Thus, participation in clinical practicum enabled study participants to link coursework with an authentic practicum. They acquired the language of literacy through authentic opportunities to observe pedagogy in action, which enhanced their fund of literacy instruction through the core of features encompassed in a rigorous and comprehensive clinical experience. Opportunities for learning how to administer a variety of assessments, analyze the data, and design and implement effective intervention plans to meet the needs of a diverse population contributed to pedagogical and content

knowledge of literacy. Seminar provided a forum for ongoing discussions, collaborative interaction with peers, ongoing self-reflection, and formative feedback.

Interpretations and references to the literature. The broad responses of the participants related to specific features of the study's philosophical and curricular conceptual frameworks. As discussed in the literature review section, a coherent teacher preparation program espouses the grand theories of constructivism and provides explicit connections from the broad principles to the classroom by merging "new knowledge with existing knowledge" (Tracey & Morrow, 2006, p. 47), in a reciprocal relationship between the teacher candidates and their students and between teacher candidates and the course instructor.

Tutors assumed a constructivist stance in helping their students "develop new strategic behaviors that merged old knowledge with newly constructed ways of problem solving" (Cox & Hopkins, 2006, p. 259). Reminiscent of Freire (1997), tutors collaborated with their students as coconstructors of knowledge in an endeavor to help them acquire the resources needed to negotiate unfamiliar text. Additionally, the curricular methods of reading recovery by Clay (1993)—whose philosophical approach is consistent with the principles of constructivism (Cox & Hopkins, 2007), as discussed in the literature review section—includes processes by which students can acquire strategies for word-level identification (i.e., vocabulary) and comprehension. The implementation of the principles of reading recovery required teacher candidates to provide explicit instruction in the semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cueing systems to help students learn effective ways to self-monitor their reading (Cox & Hopkins, 2007). Thus, tutors

helped the students to develop an efficient system for decoding and comprehending that required the student to participate in self-help strategies for accessing text.

Similarly, a transactional relationship was reprised between teacher candidates and instructor in an integrated format combining supervised tutoring, instructor modeling, data-based instruction, and opportunities for discussion and self-reflection (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hoffman et al., 2005; IRA, 2007). The IRA (2007) described it as follows: Within authentic contexts in which teacher candidates are "exposed to real students" (p. 11), the university instructors not only model best practices, but also function as "mentors who model" (p. 9) by providing substantive feedback and helping teacher candidates to differentiate instruction, make data-based decisions, and engage in peer interaction and collaborative problem solving.

Development of pedagogical and professional expertise requires expert observation, critical and formative feedback, and multiple opportunities for the apprentice to practice a wide variety of approaches in responding to the needs of a struggling reader (Darling-Hammond, 2006, Hoffman et al., 2005; IRA, 2007). Thus, as with the child coached to proficiency in literacy through the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), the teacher candidate's knowledge is elevated through alignment of new information with internalized skills within the principles of andragogy (Knowles as cited in Yoshimoto, Inenaga, & Yamada, 2007). Ultimately, the teacher candidate navigates his or her own learning path in a supportive environment, which generates a similar scaffold for the children in advancing their reading achievement.

Finally, while current reading theory espouses the constructivist stance, the strategies of behaviorism still govern many university classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2006; IRA, 2007; Risko et al., 2008). Several of the study participants referenced the lecture mode of their previous coursework in literacy as antithetical to the constructivist approach of the clinic, which permitted a reciprocal and collaborative partnership between the teacher candidates and me and between tutor and child (Freire, 1997; IRA, 2007; Risko et al., 2008). Thus, while I strove to support teacher candidates' growing knowledge about reading instruction, they, in turn, reinforced and sustained the children's perceptions about learning to read by helping them access the complex cueing system for processing new and unfamiliar text.

Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 2

How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?

Findings. Imbued with a sense of confidence, all of the study participants began to see themselves as teachers. They discussed how the components of clinical practicum contributed to their enhanced understanding of the literacy process. They referenced the weekly seminar, which provided a venue for discussion, collaboration, self-reflection, and peer interaction. Dialogue journals offered another means of acquiring insight through a self-analysis of one's practice and obtaining written feedback. Finally, instructor modeling of lessons enabled them to acquire a procedural approach for the research-based strategies in teaching the elements of literacy.

Both Stephanie and Tatiana, initially unsure about their potential for being classroom teachers, reaffirmed their decision to become teachers through their participation in the course. Stephanie and Addison remarked that the self-reflective journals and [my] constant feedback helped them to focus on the needs of the child. Gavin no longer referred to his status as a teacher candidate when discussing his career choice; he now regarded himself as an educator prepared to assume his position among the ranks of classroom teachers. Both Gavin and Ella felt empowered by their newly acquired knowledge of assessments, which would allow them to evaluate their students' strengths and weaknesses systematically, design effective intervention literacy plans, and communicate the results of the data to parents. Olivia used every interaction with her tutees as a venue for enhancing her skills and knowledge. Already a reflective practitioner, she realized that she does not yet have all the answers. However, working with two children enabled her to intuit appropriate and effective classroom management practices in differentiating instruction to meet each child's unique needs. Debbie stated that her participation gave her the confidence to proceed with student teaching. All of them stated that the instructor 's modeling of the various instructional strategies helped them to bridge the gap between theory and praxis.

Interpretations and references to the literature. According to Hoffman et al. (2005), "teacher education that is field based and emphasizes practicum experiences seems to have the most positive effects" (p. 269). As discussed in the literature review, the intent for the clinical experience was to "make pedagogical theory come alive by [teacher candidates'] being exposed to real students" (IRA, 2007, p. 11). Participants had

the benefit of having multiple opportunities to practice their craft with real struggling readers under my supervision, while I provided modeling, instructional oversight, and immediate feedback. Pedagogical awareness develops when teacher candidates have opportunities to talk about their practices (IRA, 2007). Participation in seminar encouraged peer interaction through collaborative discussion and provided a format for examining one another's practices and helping one another attain a workable solution to a dilemma.

Finally, also discussed in the literature review, as learners grow and mature, their capacity for learning expands because, gradually, they assume autonomy in navigating their course (Olsen, 2008). This assertion was substantiated by Kibby and Barr (1999), who found that a candidate's knowledge of the content and pedagogy of literacy changes and expands through participation in clinical practicum. Indeed, a greater understanding of one's practice holds broad implications for transfer to the classroom.

Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 3

What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?

Findings. Prior to enrolling in clinical practicum, six of the seven participants had acquired tutoring experience through a year-long internship, an undergraduate service learning requirement, or student teaching. Tatiana, a stay-at-home mom, worked with her 4-year-old son in helping him to acquire the skills of an emergent reader. Interestingly, not one participant equated his or her previous tutoring experience with the structure of a clinical practicum, neither did any of them reference research-based strategies when they discussed their tutoring activities during the initial interview. Working under the

supervision of teachers, reading specialists, or school administrators, previous tutoring activities consisted of heavily supervised intervention in small-group settings, using commercial programs or district-developed formats, which left little flexibility or room for teacher candidates to make instructional decisions.

Stephanie affirmed that her previous literacy tutoring experience "would kind of be prescribed by the teacher. I didn't really have a say in what was going to happen next." Like Stephanie, Ella admitted that she used flashcards in working with an ELL student because she did not yet possess the background in literacy instruction to work effectively with a struggling reader. Similarly, both Gavin and Olivia were required to follow a scripted literacy intervention program that included a built-in assessment system for progress monitoring. Subsequently, the scripted program, coupled with the supervised experience, maintained their status as underlings. Stephanie simply stated, "Even after tutoring at the same school for 2 months, I was very hesitant. I was like, 'Oh, I'm not a teacher here—I'm just a tutor.'" Thus, they distinguished between tutoring and teaching: Tutoring was not on the level of teaching.

However, the clinical practicum empowered them with the skills they needed to adapt their instruction to meet the needs of their diverse struggling readers while endeavoring to teach responsively. Trepidations at the prospect of autonomy seemed overwhelming at first, but they soon gave way to feelings of competence when the participants realized that they possessed the tools and resources to collaborate with one another and with me in making appropriate instructional decisions.

No longer bound by a commercial program, district-based intervention plan, or administrative personnel, study participants planned instruction with their diverse learners in mind. Whether scaffolding an emergent reader's oral reading through appropriate cueing, or teaching a poor decoder the strategy of looking for the word families in a multisyllabic word, most of the study participants discussed the needs of their tutees not only with ease, but also with authority. Whether helping an ELL child to understand an idiomatic expression or providing a graphic organizer for comprehending a simple narrative, they considered their students' interests in developing a viable plan. They probed students' interests and hobbies through daily discussions, and then pursued and provided books and materials on related topics.

Participation in clinical practicum helped study participants to understand that diversity transcended ethnicity, cultural background, or specific disability. They acknowledged the importance of differentiating instruction for all readers; they perceived all of the children in the program as diverse learners with unique strengths and differences that required responsive teaching, aligned with customized intervention plans. In short, their personal connection with their student prevailed over the lesson of the day if the teacher candidate perceived that the child's emotional state warranted spontaneous modification.

Interpretations and references to the literature. "In schools today, diversity is the norm, not the exception" (IRA, 2007, p. 13). Quality teacher preparation programs "sensitize their students to all forms of diversity" (p. 13). Peer and instructor support throughout the clinical experience allowed study participants to develop an appreciation

for all children who struggle to learn. Additionally, the teacher candidates themselves dispelled the deficit theory that teacher bias is responsible for the persistent plight of the struggling reader and that teacher dispositions can impede a struggling student's progress (IRA, 2007). They demonstrated sensitivity, commitment, and fondness for the children they tutored. Their actions substantiated earlier research findings that stated, "Beginning teachers make connections to their students by engaging in discussions" (IRA, 2007, p. 14).

The university reading clinic was the context for a variety of diverse learners, including a range of students whose classroom performance placed them at-risk for not being able to learn how to read or whose ethnicity and cultural background posed particular academic challenges. Additionally, Risko et al. (2008) concluded that preservice teachers learned to differentiate instruction firsthand when they tutored struggling readers.

Rogers et al. (2006) found that the tenets of sociocultural theory were well in evidence as teachers-in-training acquired a deeper understanding of the issues of social justice, diversity, and the reading process through seminar. Through shared collaboration, they realized how their perceptions of curriculum and issues of diversity influenced their practices. Finally, Risko et al. (2008) explained how the nature of sociocultural theory is inherent within the complex teaching and learning relationships that evolve from working with diverse populations. Preservice teachers acquired a sociocultural perspective in developing an appreciation for culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, which enabled them to adapt instructional practices to the learners. Here again, the experience

of working with diverse struggling readers enabled study participants to understand better how their actions as tutors governed their interactions with the students they tutored.

Findings and Interpretations for Research Question 4

How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Findings. As reported in section 4, participants stated that, initially, they used existing assessments of their students for designing lesson plans, which they believed would effectively meet the needs of their students. However, the participants learned quickly that the complex art of making instructional decisions goes beyond data analysis obtained through the administration of formative and norm-referenced assessments. They discussed the importance of having a lesson plan to guide their instruction and to keep them on task; however, all of them realized that, in order to advance the literacy learning of their tutees, they first needed to establish a positive rapport with them.

Balancing their tentative roles of tutor and knowledgeable friend posed a particular challenge for the participants as they attempted to reconcile their need to be liked with their professional obligation to teach the child to read. Therefore, the instructional plan was prone to instant modification if the tutor saw that the child was either not receptive to the lesson at hand or had difficulty with foundational concepts. Working closely with their tutees enabled them to develop an instinct for the type of instruction that the child required to advance his reading achievement. When Ella realized that her student did not use the metacognitive strategies of proficient readers from earlier lessons about decoding, she stopped and reviewed the procedural steps for self-monitoring. Similarly, when Addison's student demonstrated difficulty in decoding a

multisyllabic word, she, too, revised her instruction to ensure that the child understood how to *chunk* the word (i.e., dissecting it into its component parts) before moving on.

Additionally, participants stated that their written self-reflective journals provided an anchor for decision making. All of them stated that they looked forward to communicating with me through the dialogue journal, which gave them a reference for planning next steps. Gavin perceived the dialogue-journal activity as confirmation that his instructional decisions were appropriate for his student. Stephanie, Tatiana, and Debbie stated that journaling forced them to focus on the child's needs. Olivia reported that she wrote her lesson plans only after completing the writing in her journal because it provided her with an objective account of her interaction with her students and enabled her to approach lesson planning from an objective perspective. About the process itself, she stated, "I needed that time to think about what the students had done."

The seminar as a forum for shared self-reflection through collaborative peer interaction provided another venue for thinking and talking about their practice. Most participants felt that this feature of the clinical practicum helped them to garner peer support as they struggled with next steps for instruction, strategies for targeting specific skills, and behavior issues. Tatiana confessed, "It was good to know that others had troubles too," inferring that seminar enabled her to talk about the problems of practice.

In sum, teacher candidates discussed a number of aspects that comprised their decision making, including an analysis of the data, collaborative and shared reflection through peer interaction in seminar, and self-reflection through dialogue journals.

Interpretations and references to the literature. A number of factors influenced the teacher candidates in their instructional decision making. Although they used assessment data to inform their lesson plans, their need to have a positive interpersonal relationship with their tutee took precedence over a lesson plan. Similarly, Atkinson and Colby (2006) found that "all study participants prioritized the importance of fostering personal relationships with their tutees" (p. 235).

Additionally, teacher candidates must be proficient in interpreting the data and in using multiple assessments to target areas of need while teaching to a child's strengths (Atkinson & Colby, 2006; IRA, 2007). A cyclical process of evaluation begins with familiarity with a variety of criteria and norm-referenced assessment tools to pinpoint areas of need. Assessment proceeds with an analysis of data, targeted instruction, and progress monitoring to determine the success of a strategy for a particular skill (IRA, 2007). High-quality preparation programs help candidates to perceive the connection between assessment and instruction and to discern the most effective strategies to address a skill deficiency by employing consistent evaluation of the instructional strategy through the administration of targeted assessments (IRA, 2007). Study participants learned how to administer a variety of assessments during orientation and had multiple opportunities to analyze the data throughout the course.

Study participants discussed how participation in seminar helped to clarify their understanding as they supported one another as apprentices on the trajectory of literacy instruction. As discussed in the literature review, participation in seminar enhanced participants' content knowledge of pedagogy, instruction, and assessment, and it

strengthened participants' interpersonal and collaborative skills (Darling-Hammond, 2006; LeCornu, 2005; Rogers et al., 2006; Wynn et al., 2007). Additionally, study participants confirmed the value of the journal, originally substantiated as a legitimate tool for self-reflection by Blachowicz et al. (1999) and Goia and Johnston (1999), which gave teachers-in-training opportunities to examine their practices, deepen their thinking, and extend their perceptions about reading instruction.

Thus, data-based instruction is only one component of a comprehensive system of evaluation. A well-rounded teacher preparation program encompasses responsive teaching and self-reflective and collaborative practices that encourage a rigorous self-examination of one's practice in making instructional decisions (IRA, 2007; Risko et al., 2008).

Practical Application of the Findings

For many years, the pervasive nature of the national reading crisis has led to discussions among reading scholars, teacher educators, and critics of teacher preparation programs about how best to prepare prospective teachers to teach a diverse population to read. A cooperative effort by the IRA (2007) and Risko et al. (2008) resulted in the publication of *Teaching Reading Well* (IRA, 2007), which provided the conceptual anchor for this qualitative study in order to probe teacher candidates' perceptions and assumptions about reading instruction. The core features delineated for inclusion in a high-quality teacher preparation program also served as the inspiration for a redesigned clinical practicum course, which provided the context for this study.

This study added to the corpus of research presented in section 2, affirming the benefits of an authentic clinical practicum experience with respect to teacher candidates' content and pedagogical assumptions of reading instruction. Additionally, the results of the research indicated that rich and rigorous clinical experiences provided the teacher candidate with a depth of understanding about the reading process and with the technical skills and resources to address the needs of diverse struggling readers. Anticipating their subsequent roles as student teachers, interns, or classroom teachers, all the participants reported that the clinical experience helped them greatly in preparing themselves for their next position. Ultimately, they perceived that the learning derived from working with a young reader had immediate and specific application to the classroom because it had grown out of multiple opportunities for using a wide variety of instructional approaches, materials, and assessment tools as they practiced their craft.

The site of this study was the university-based reading clinic at a small private university in Southern New England, where study participants enrolled in the Clinical Practicum course, a redesigned elective course whose purpose was to link coursework with field experience. They opted to take the course because they wanted an opportunity to work one-on-one with a child following the completion of the prerequisite in the foundations course. Strong teacher education programs "integrate theory and practice [by] designing courses to build on one another [, thus adding] up to a coherent whole" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 122).

The seven participants in the study were grateful for the opportunity to work one-on-one with a young struggling reader, yet all of their stories were different. Evaluation

of the individual experience is difficult to quantify, simply because the learning trajectory for each participant varied according to the candidate's background and number of literacy courses taken prior to enrolling in clinical practicum. At the beginning of the study, three of the participants had not yet had a student-teaching experience; three had completed a year-long internship, inclusive of student teaching; and one participant had recently graduated from another university and was seeking additional coursework in literacy. All held a bachelor's degree, and all wanted to enhance their content and pedagogical knowledge of the discipline of literacy.

Interestingly, as the study matured, the participants' responses evolved likewise in quality, consistent with their changing professional status—an observation corroborated by Kibby and Barr (1999), who ascertained that teacher candidates' knowledge grows and changes with their participation in clinical practicum. Gavin, Ella, and Addison were no longer teacher candidates, but practitioners who discussed with ease and authority how they differentiated instruction for their struggling diverse readers in their own classrooms. Both Ella and Gavin, now teaching second and third grade, respectively, attributed their new positions to their ability to articulate literacy pedagogy and their growing expertise to prospective employers.

At the conclusion of a planning meeting with her principal, prior to the start of the new school year, Stephanie reported that her administrator told her, "Something is different about you. You seem so confident," whereupon Stephanie explained that she had taken a practicum course during the summer in which she learned the rudiments of data-based instruction. Already state certified, Stephanie happily withdrew from the

university's intern program when the principal offered her the position of early literacy tutor. Stephanie is currently awaiting the next available position as classroom teacher at her school.

Olivia, who had recently completed student teaching during her second semester as an intern in one of the largest urban districts in the state, is awaiting confirmation as the new co-teacher in the third-grade class in which she had student taught. At our last interview, Olivia explained how she had failed the state literacy exam the first time she had taken it prior to enrolling in clinical practicum, but how she attained near-perfect scores the second time around, following her completion of clinical practicum where "everything came together."

All attributed their growing expertise in reading instruction to their recent participation in supervised practicum. The authentic experience of teaching and assessing a struggling reader, developing an intervention program consistent with the child's strengths and weaknesses, writing up the results of assessment data, and using progress monitoring to test the validity of an instructional approach gave them practical tools for the classroom.

Implications for Social Change

Teacher education has long been criticized for not preparing preservice teachers to deliver effective reading instruction to a diverse population (Barone & Morrell, 2007; Carlson et al., 2008; Cochran-Smith, 2006; Hess et al., 2005; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; IRA, 2003, 2007; Snow & Burns, 1998; Walsh et al., 2006). Additionally, critics have asserted that novice teachers are untrained to manage the obstacles of the classroom

equitably (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Sleeter, 2008), inferring that recent graduates are challenged effectively to meet the demands imposed by the heterogeneity of the classroom in underserved or poor communities.

At the same time, a proliferation of research called for the creation of rigorous apprenticeships that will not only provide teacher candidates with the skills and knowledge of the profession, but also encourage them to revise misconceptions and confront and explore personal bias (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Tomlinson, 1999). Additionally, Cochran-Smith et al. (1999, 2009) recommended that teacher educators and teacher candidates "work for social change" (1999, p. 230). Further, teacher educators should seek to revise traditional modes of teacher preparation and collaborate with their teacher candidates to challenge long-standing conservative programs. Thus, the redesigning of a rich clinical practicum experience considered criticism and recommendations for a logical solution to an enduring problem.

An enrollment that was ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse within the university reading clinic required the teacher candidates to differentiate or reinvent instruction, explore multiple approaches to the solution of a problem, and work through paradigmatic barriers and personal bias (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999). Hence, the organic experience of working with diverse struggling learners was contextualized within an authentic apprenticeship, rather than infused with ancillary measures to "integrate social justice into the fabric of the preservice curriculum" (Cochran-Smith et al., 1999, p. 233). Working with the curricular methodology, established at the outset of the study, participants became proficient in

identifying the students' areas of strength and weakness and designed instruction consistent with the results of their data. At the same time, teacher candidates had multiple opportunities in seminar "to enhance their multicultural understandings" (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p. 9) through peer interaction and rigorous discussion.

The university clinical practicum offered preservice teachers the opportunity to acquire a deep understanding of literacy pedagogy, while providing a medium for creating a partnership between the university and the parent community. Conferences at the end of each tutoring session enabled teacher candidates to establish and build a rapport with parents, while communicating their tutoring activities and reporting on student progress. Cochran-Smith et al. (1999) urged a university-community partnership to ensure collaboration, consider the interests of local stakeholders, and develop a common vision about what "teaching for social change" (p. 243) looks like. Conferences with parents permitted a partnership to flourish between the university and the community, which continued during the following tutoring cycle with a new crop of teacher candidates.

As stated in section 4, teacher candidates perceived the critical importance of a close interpersonal relationship between tutor and tutee as an integral part of the process of helping a child advance his or her reading. This allowed their students' demeanor to influence the activities of a tutoring session. Although the clinical practicum experience may have contributed to teacher candidates' transformation of their social perspectives and praxis, their innate desire to develop an interpersonal relationship with their students suggested that they had come to the clinical experience already imbued with a

commitment to social justice. The struggle to reconcile the dueling positions of teacher versus collaborator was apparent; it appears to be common with novice teachers and requires time and experience to fall comfortably into place.

Inasmuch as this College of Education has recently undergone the process of national accreditation through the NCATE, it is not surprising that the teacher candidates intuitively prioritized their relationship with their students. Within the teacher preparation program, the concept of diversity is not a term reserved for a course in multicultural education. An assessment competency linked to the program's conceptual framework with the issue of diversity, it is a standard aligned with the NCATE and addressed across the 12 courses of relevant coursework leading to initial certification. Diversity not only refers to the tapestry of the classroom, but also implies an inherent culture of sensitivity and a mission to promote understanding as demonstrated through teacher candidates' interactions with students and their parents. Cochran-Smith et al. (1999) substantiated this perception when they stated that social change "should [come from] a fundamentally different way of doing the daily work of teacher education (p. 232).

Finally, Cochran-Smith (2003) urged teacher educators to challenge existing paradigms through research designed to explore multitudinous perspectives in the preparation of tomorrow's teachers. Prior to the implementation of the study, I redesigned the existing clinical practicum and pilot-tested the new course for two semesters, which gave me an opportunity to make an instructional video, streamline a process for tutoring, develop curriculum, adopt a structure for the seminar, institute a framework for teacher candidates' self-reflective journals, and build a comprehensive assessment system. My

goal was to prepare teacher candidates to teach all kinds of children to read by providing a rich and authentic clinical experience that was transferrable to a diverse classroom.

Consistent with the recommendations of experts in the field, the clinical practicum course not only considered the importance of extending teacher candidates' repertoire of skills and strategies advancing the reading achievement of all children, but also provided a rich context for working with diverse groups of children in settings that reflect the current classroom. With a focus on differentiated and responsive reading instruction—which emanated from the theme of the school of education's implementation of high standards in an evolving world—the results of this study hold implications for the continuation and expansion of the promising practices that undergird high-quality teacher preparation programs. The results of this study indicate that, perhaps, the university where this study took place has already made inroads for social change.

Recommendations for Action

I will disseminate my findings to faculty and administration at the school of education at the university where this study took place through a presentation highlighting the effects of working one-on-one with diverse and struggling readers. The faculty and administration have already established themselves as a collaboratively working body whose shared vision, professionalism, and sense of moral purpose have resulted in curricular changes consistent with research for the purpose of program enhancement. Supportive, scholarly, and committed to high-quality teacher preparation, these critical friends are involved in similar research missions and will embrace an

opportunity to reevaluate and reexamine pedagogy and practice and participate in a reciprocal process of self-reflection with our teacher candidates.

Similarly, results of the study will be shared through a presentation at the annual state conference of the local affiliate of the IRA, a nonprofit organization whose mission it is to promote worldwide equity and access to reading. The conference is a 2-day forum where classroom teachers, administrators, state literacy consultants, university faculty, reading specialists, and national and international literacy experts can come together to talk about reading instruction and share their insights and expertise with peers. As a long-standing member of both the IRA and the state affiliate, I have presented my work at both state and national levels for many years. The format of clinical practicum is easily replicated for an after-school tutoring program, and would, therefore, hold interest for teachers and administrators seeking practical interventions.

Finally, I will share the results of the study through the publication of articles that focus on the features of high-quality teacher preparation using the data obtained through this study. The essence of the study, the research-based course in clinical practicum—inclusive of a constructivist paradigm for teaching candidates and students, curricular methodology, process for instruction, assessment, report writing, collaboration, and self-reflection—was designed with the features of high-quality programs in mind.

Recommendation for Further Study

This qualitative study explored teacher candidates' perceptions of reading instruction through their tutoring experiences with struggling readers. Results of the study pertained to themes related to (a) enhanced perceptions of content and pedagogical

knowledge in literacy; (b) a connection from theory to practice, bridging coursework to clinical experience; (c) interactions between tutor and child influencing instructional decisions; and (d) an enhanced sense of confidence facilitating increased levels of competence. Narrative inquiry, as a forum for presenting the unique stories of the participants, precluded the inclusion of assessment data for measuring the learning outcomes in both teacher candidates and students.

Risko et al. (2008) affirmed a paucity of research documenting the effects of student achievement in clinical practicum. Teacher knowledge is critical to student achievement (Dearman & Alber, 2005; Hoffman, 2004; IRA, 2007). Therefore, future studies might consider how the component of student assessment data relates to teacher knowledge in exploring the question: Is student learning contingent upon teacher knowledge? The results of pre and postassessments, collected and reported as unobtrusive data, could have broader implications for replication and generalization in substantiating the efficacy of the experience of clinical practicum when used in conjunction with qualitative data. Furthermore, if the axiom is true that teacher learning is contingent upon student achievement, then an additional component of broad-based evaluation would strengthen the assertion that the teachers' knowledge of reading pedagogy deepened as a result of their experiences in clinical practicum.

Unobtrusive data will often reveal a different story, quite "independent of the interpretations of participants [and] without disturbing the natural flow of human activity" (Hatch, 2002, p. 119). Using unobtrusive data to triangulate conclusions would provide a confluence of purpose from multiple data sources (Creswell, 2007) and

encourage the emergence of additional perspectives beyond the perceptions of the teacher candidates. Additionally, the collection of unobtrusive data would not present an encumbrance to the research protocol, nor would it affect the process of obtaining the teacher candidates' stories (Hatch, 2002).

Future studies might also include the teacher candidates' scores on the state licensure exam for measuring a candidate's content knowledge of literacy (Connecticut Foundations, 2010) as an additional quantifiable measure of teacher candidates' content knowledge. Although the concept of licensure testing is controversial, the exigent requirements for state certification are governed by state mandates, which require teacher candidates to take and pass an exam of content knowledge in literacy. During this study, Olivia stated that she enrolled in clinical practicum after failing the state exam. Further, she reported that her comprehensive clinical experience in the course enabled her to attain a high score when she took the exam the second time.

The narrative inquiry design of the study disallowed the inclusion of candidate assessment data; however, data analysis can offer critical insights about the profile of the teacher candidate, which could be used to make potential programmatic revisions to university course syllabi. State reports indicate that many teacher candidates have taken the exam several times before attaining a passing score (Connecticut Foundations, 2010). Assessment data could identify teacher candidates whose scores have confirmed that they are at-risk for failing to attain state certification, and appropriate interventions might be implemented to help such preservice teachers acquire the content knowledge required to pass the exam.

Ultimately, a qualitative study, buttressed with the added components of unobtrusive student and teacher-candidate assessment data, would evaluate the learning of both populations. An analysis of pre and postassessment data would indicate student gains in reading achievement, while the state exam would indicate the extent which teacher candidates had indeed acquired a depth of knowledge of the discipline and become prepared to assume their respective position in the classroom.

Self-Reflection

My multifaceted role as researcher, reporter, inquisitor, and instructor permitted a restorying of the individual accounts of the participants by probing their perceptions of the teacher candidates following their tutoring experiences with struggling readers. An easy rapport with my conversational partners (Rubin, 2005) allowed me to traverse roles and realms to pursue salient and implicit themes, elaborate on topics, perceive nuances, and distill conclusions. Such was my sinuous journey from insider to outsider (Hatch, 2002) in recursive mode in "crossing boundaries" (Lawrence-Lightwood & Davis, p. 21) from one domain to the other.

Reflecting on teacher candidates. I have discovered that the portrait of the preservice teacher begins with a series of attempts at approximation. Just like the pointillist dots applied by an artist form a picture when viewed at a distance, so are the apprentice's actions and additive perceptions about working with a struggling reader gradually becoming a deliberate tableau, while accruing a fund of knowledge related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. As with an impressionistic painting viewed from afar, so the profile of the novice teacher is a story-in-the-making, requiring the elements

of time and perspective, which transcend the scope of this study. Refinement of practice is an iterative and imprecise process in an uneven combination of struggle, experience, and occasional success. Competence, a necessary condition for confidence, presumes the internalization of the set of pedagogical skills in literacy and a demonstration of a complex series of acquired behaviors in teaching a child how to read that ultimately result in more successes and fewer struggles. A supportive environment is as necessary for the apprentice who is learning to teach as it is for the student who is learning to read—both require sustained commitment, experience, and time.

Self-reflections and the teacher candidates. This feature of my study parallels one of the broad anchors of the study, frequently referred to throughout the literature review and justified with the components of seminar and journal writing. Ironically, my own self-reflection poses a dichotomous perspective: Clearly, the participants considered the ideal of self-reflection as a process to advance their learning; yet, discussions about their practice remained at the surface level. In parallel to this dichotomy, my knowing that my study accomplished its mission to advance the learning of teacher candidates, I can only be heartened to learn that "good qualitative research ought to confound issues, revealing them in their complexity rather than reducing them to simple explanation" (Wolcott, 2009, p. 32). Although the apprentices paid homage to the concept of self-reflection as a necessary element for instructional decision making, I was disappointed when they did not cite robust examples of the ways in which they employed reflective reasoning. While citing seminar as a forum for shared self-reflection through collaborative peer interaction, they tended to talk about their practice in terms of the

lesson in its entirety, rather than to isolate and determine a cause for the elements of a lesson that did not go well.

Subsequently, study participants paused long enough to confirm moment-to-moment feelings of competence or inadequacy following the implementation of a lesson, but they tended to dismiss the deeper aspects of self-reflection in favor of a series of actions for becoming better practitioners. As novices, working to perfect their craft, theirs is a skill-in-process that will take years to be honed to a fine point, a conclusion confirmed by Schussler, Stooksberry, and Bercaw (2010) in their assertion their teaching will become more deliberate with practice.

My perception of the teacher candidates' surface-level practice of self-reflection is corroborated by Risko et al. (2008), who concluded that teacher candidates do not automatically possess the ability to use reflective reasoning, and that they require expert guidance for its effective use. Explicit instruction in reflective reasoning helped teacher candidates think deeply about their practice when accompanied by instructor modeling and expert demonstration lessons over the course of at least one semester.

As an insider, I know that I provided demonstration models for thinking about my practice in the lessons that I conducted for their observation. However, as an observer, I realize that the apprentices needed more time to participate in a procedural analysis of their own instruction to isolate components that needed improvement. A built-in feature for explicit instruction in the process of reflective reasoning would help teacher candidates analyze how the execution of each phase of a lesson contributes to its entirety. At the same time, they need structured opportunities to develop the essential

understanding that student mastery of the lesson objective, not the level of student engagement, is the criterion for effectiveness.

Limited self-reflection notwithstanding, the clinical practicum experience is an authentic and rich apprenticeship that affords teacher candidates the opportunity to deepen their pedagogical understanding of literacy. Immersed in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, they are guided through the processes of shared decision making, collaboration, and peer interaction in which they learn to make good instructional decisions that ultimately increase the reading achievement of a child.

Conclusion

This qualitative study considered the parameters of an authentic apprenticeship (Darling-Hammond, 2006), the elements for effective professional development (Dufour, 2004), research-based curricular methodologies in literacy, and grand learning theories in the exploration of teacher candidates' clinical tutoring experiences. A microcosm of the classroom, the university clinical practicum proved to be a context for praxis and shared conceptual understanding between the teacher candidates and their tutees and between the teacher candidates and university faculty.

This study contributed to the corpus of research that affirms that the clinical practicum experience transcends the university classroom: It is a rehearsal for the instructional realities of the classroom and differs from the casual tutoring partnerships inherent in service learning and informal field-based opportunities. As a smaller learning community, designed to equip teacher candidates with the skills and knowledge of the professional educator, the university clinical practicum is a sanctuary for teacher

candidates and instructors to examine their practices and allow a symbiotic partnership to evolve among the stakeholders. The clinical practicum is not only a safe environment to practice the skills of a teacher, but an authentic context for learning about pedagogy and prejudice, cultural diversity and the wider educational community, whereby it promotes social change.

References

- A Nation at risk: A report to the nation and the secretary of education.* (1983). United States Department of Education, The National Commission on Excellence in Education.
- Alexander, P. A., & Fox, E. (2004). A historical perspective on reading research and practice. In R.B. Ruddell & Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (p. 33-68) Newark, DE: IRA.
- America Reads.* (2010). Retrieved September 18, 2010, from http://www2.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/fws_bro.html
- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Anders, P., Hoffman, J., & Duffy, G. (2000). Teaching teachers to teach reading: nbParadigm shifts, persistent problems, and challenges. In M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.). *Handbook of Reading Research, Volume 3* (pp. 721-744). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Arthaud, T.I., Aram, R., Breck, S.E., doelling, J.E., & Bushrow, K.M. (2007). Developing collaboration skills in preservice teachers: A partnership between general and special education. *Teacher Education and & Special Education*, 30 (1), p. 1-12.
- Atkinson, T.S. (2007). Who's teaching, who's learning? Analyzing the professional growth of graduate student tutors. *Mentoring & Tutoring*, 14(2), p. 227-245.

Barone, D., & Morrell, E. (2007). Multiple perspectives on preparing teachers to teach reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42(1), 167-180.

Bell Report. (1993). Adapted from *Source*: Adapted from Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias. (1992). *Right of participant to withdraw from the study*. Retrieved from <http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&source=hp&q=Bell+Report+and+right+of+participant+to+withdraw+from+the+study&btnG=Google+Search&aq=f&aqi=&oq>

Blachowicz, C. L. Z., Fisher, P., McAvoy, E., Owens, E., Anderson, S., Ivy, C., Harper, K. (1999). Reading specialists reflect: The value of one-to-one experiences in clinical training. In D. H. Evensen & P. B. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Advances in reading language research: Reconsidering the role of reading clinic in a new age of literacy* (pp. 101-132). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Brookfield, S. (1995). *Adult learning: An overview*. In A. Tuinjmans (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of education*. Oxford: Pergamon. Retrieved from <http://www.fsu.edu/~elps/ae/download/ade5385/Brookfield.pdf>.

Casabarro, J. (2010). *RTI: Response to intervention*. Port Chester, NY: National Professional Resources, Inc.

Carlson, J., Dinkmeyer, J., & Johnson, J. (2008). Adlerian teacher consultation: Change teachers, change students! *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 64(4), 480-493.

Clay, M. (1993). *An observation survey of early literacy achievement*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Chubbuck, S.M. (2010). Individual and structural orientations in socially just teaching: conceptualization, implementation, and collaborative effort. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(3), 197-210.
- Choules, K. (2007). Social change education: Context Matters. *Adult Education Quarterly, 57*(2), 159-176.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (1995). Color blindness and basketmaking are not the answers: Confronting the dilemmas of race, culture, and language diversity in teacher education. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 493-522.
- Note that the last few entries are indicated to have been accessed in the hard copy. That is, you had the actual journal in your hands. Without a doi, or database name, you are indicating that you accessed the hard copy article. Is this true?
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2003). Standing at the crossroads: Multicultural teacher education at the beginning of the 21st century. *Multicultural Perspectives, 5*(3), 3-11.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). Studying teacher education: What we know and need to know. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(301) doi:10.1177/0022487105280116.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2006). Improving teacher education: Learning, not training. [online supplement to Rogers, T., Marshall, E., & Tyson, C.A. (2006). Dialogic narratives of literacy, teaching, and schooling: Preparing literacy teachers for diverse settings. *Reading Research Quarterly, 41*(2), 202-224. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.41.2.3>]
- Cochran-Smith, M., et al. (1999). Seeking social justice: A teacher education faculty's self-study. *Leadership in Education, 2*(3), 229-253.

- Cochran-Smith, M., Shakman, K., Jong, C., Terrell, D., Barnatt, J., McQuillan, P. (2009). Good and just teaching: The case for social justice in teacher education. *American Journal of Education*. 115 (3), p. 347-377.
- Connecticut Foundations of Literacy Exam. (2010). Retrieved from Connecticut Foundations of Reading Test http://www.ct.nesinc.com/CT_overview.asp
- Connecticut State Board of Education. (2007). *A summit on reading/literacy achievement in Connecticut schools*. Grand Hotel, Waterbury, CT: November 29, 2007.
- Connecticut State Board of Education. (2008). *A draft of the major certification regulation proposals to be effective July 1, 2014*.
- Connecticut State Board of Education. (2010). cmtreports Retrieved from <http://solutions1.emetric.net/cmtpublic/CMTCode/Report.aspx>
- Coulter, D. (2001). Teaching as communicative action: Habermas and education. In V. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (4th ed.; pp. 90-98). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Cox, B. E., & Hopkins, C. J. (2006). Building on theoretical principles gleaned from reading recovery to inform classroom practice. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(2), 254-267.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Damico, J. S. (2005). Multiple dimensions of literacy and conceptions of readers: Toward a more expansive view of accountability. *Reading Teacher*, 58, 644-652.

- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006a). Assessing teacher education: The usefulness of multiple measures for assessing program outcomes. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 57(120), 120-138.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006b). Improving teacher education: Learning, not training, Online supplement to Rogers, T., Marshall, E., & Tyson, C. S. (2006). Dialogic narratives of literacy, teaching and schooling: Preparing literacy teachers for diverse settings. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(2), 202-224.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Teacher education and the American future. *Journal of teacher education*, 61(1/2), 35-47.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D. J., Gatlin, S. J., & Heilig, J. V. (2005). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, teach for America, and teacher effectiveness. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 13(42), 1-32.
- Dearman, C. C., & Alber, S. R. (2005). The changing face of education: Teachers cope with challenges through collaboration and reflective study. *Reading Teacher*, 58(7), 634-640.
- De Regniers, B. (1964). *May I bring a friend?* New York: NY. Aladdin Books.
- Dewey, J. (1902). *The child and the curriculum*. Retrieved from http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1291998&pageno=12_The Child and the Curriculum_
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think*. Chicago, IL: Gateway.
- Ding, C., & Sherman, H. (2006). Teaching effectiveness and student achievement: Examining the relationship. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 29(4), 39-49.

- DuFour, R. (2004). Leading edge: The best staff development is in the workplace, not in a workshop. *Journal of Staff Development*, 25(2). Retrieved from <http://www.nsd.org/library/publications/jsd/dufour>.
- Dunston, P. M. (2007). Instructional practices, struggling readers, and a university-based reading clinic. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 50(5), 328-336.
- Dressman, M. (2007). Theoretically framed: Argument and desire in the production of general knowledge about literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly* 42(3), p. 332-363.
- Drysdale, L., Goode, H. & Gurr, D. (2009). "An Australian model of successful school leadership; Moving from success to sustainability," *Journal of Educational Administration* 47(6), p. 697-708.
- Educational Testing Service. (2009). ETS Retrieved from http://www.testprepreview.com/praxisii_test.htm
- Enterline, S., Cochran-Smith, M., Ludlow, L.L. & Mitescu, E. (2008). Learning to teach for social justice: Measuring change in the beliefs of teacher candidates. *The New Educator* 4, p. 267-290.
- Fitzharris, L., Blake Jones, M., & Crawford, A. (2008). Teacher knowledge matters In supporting young readers. *Reading Teacher*, 61(5), p. 384-394.
- Flesch, R. (1955). *Why Johnny can't read*. New York: Harper.
- Freire, P. (1997). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (Trans. Bergman Ramos, M.). New York: Continuum.
- Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L.S. & Vaughn, S. (Eds.; 2008) *Response to intervention: a framework for reading educators*. Newark, DE: IRA.

- Garcia, E., Arias, M. B., Murri, N. J., & Serna, C. (2010). Developing responsive teachers: A challenge for a demographic reality. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(1/2), 132-142.
- Gimbert, G. Desai, S., & Kerka, S. (2010). The big picture. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92 (2), p. 36-39.
- Goia, B., & Johnston, P. (1999). University reading club. In D. H. Evensen & P. B. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Advances in reading language research: Reconsidering the role of reading clinic in a new age of literacy* (pp. 177-196). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.
- Graves, M. F., Juel, C., & Graves, B. B. (2007). *Teaching reading in the 21st century* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Gravetter, F. J., & Wallnau, L. B. (2008). *Essentials of statistics for the behavioral sciences*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- Gray, W. S., & Elson. (1930). *Dick and Jane basic readers*. New York: Scott Foresman.
- Gunning, T. G. (2006). *Assessing and correcting reading and writing difficulties* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2000). *Strategies that work*. Ontario, Canada: Stenhouse.
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Heck, R.H. (2009). Teacher effectiveness and student achievement; Investigating a multilevel cross-classified model. *Journal of Educational Administration* 47(2), p. 227-249.

- Hess, F. Rotherham, A., & Walsh, K. (2005). Finding the teachers we need. San Francisco: WestEd. Retrieved from <http://wested.org/cs/we/view/rs/770>
- Higher Education Act. (HEA, 2002). Retrieved from http://www.policyalmanac.org/education/archive/crs_higher_education.shtml
- Hinchman, K. (1999). Querying reflective pedagogy in reading specialists' tutorial practica. In D. H. Evensen & P. B. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Advances in reading language research: Reconsidering the role of reading clinic in a new age of literacy* (pp. 133-148). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.
- Hoffman, J. (2004). Achieving the goal of a quality teacher of reading for every classroom: Divest, test, or invest? *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(1), 119-128.
- Hoffman, J. V., Roller, C., Maloch, B., Sailors, M., Duffy, G., & Beretvas, S. N. (2005). Teachers' preparation to teach reading and their experiences and practices in the first 3 years of teaching. *Elementary School Journal*, 105(3), 268-287.
- Hoffman, J., & Pearson, P. D. (2000). Reading teacher education in the next millennium: What your grandmother's teacher didn't know that your granddaughter's teacher should. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35(1), 28-44.
- Holdaway, D. (1979). *The foundation of literacy*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Honig, B., & Diamond, L. (1999). *Assessing reading multiple measures for kindergarten through eighth grade*. Consortium of reading excellence (CORE), Inc. Novato, CA: Arena.
- Hoog, J., Johansson, O., & Olofsson, A. (2009). "Swedish successful schools revisited," *Journal of Educational Administration*, 47 (6), p. 742-752.

- International Reading Association. (IRA, 2003). *Investment in teacher preparation in the United States: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Position_Statements_and_Resolutions/ps1060_teacher_preparation_2.sflb.ashx
- International Reading Association. (IRA, 2004). *The role and qualifications of the reading coach in the United States: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org/resources/issues/positions_Specialist.html
- International Reading Association. (IRA, 2007). *Teaching reading well: A synthesis of the International Reading Association's research on teacher preparation for reading instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org/Libraries/SRII/teaching_reading_well.sflb.ashx
- Kennedy, E. (2010). Improving literacy achievement in a high-poverty school: Empowering classroom teachers through professional development. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 45 (4), p. 384-387.
- Kibby, M. W., & Barr, R. (1999). The education of reading clinicians. In D. H. Evenen & P. B. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Advances in reading language research: Reconsidering the role of reading clinic in a new age of literacy* (pp. 3-40). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.
- Lambert, L., Walker, D., Zimmerman, D. P., Cooper, J. E., Lambert, M. D., Gardner, M. E., et al. (2002). *The constructivist leader* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Columbia University Press.

- Lampert, M. (2010). Learning teaching in, from, and for practice: What do we mean? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(1/2), 21-34.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- LeCornu, R. L. (2005). Peer mentoring: Engaging preservice teachers in mentoring one another. *Mentoring and Tutoring*, 13(3), 355-366.
- Lee, R.E., Eckrich, L.L.T., Lackey, C., Showalter, B.D. (2010). Preservice teacher pathways to urban teaching: A partnership model for nurturing community-based urban teacher preparation. *Teacher Education Quarterly*. 37 (3), p. 101-122.
- LeFever-Davis, S. (2002). Trends in teacher certification and literacy. *Reading Teacher*, 56(2), 196-197.
- Liaw, En-Chong. (2008). Teacher efficacy of preservice teachers in Taiwan: The influence of classroom teaching and group discussions. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 176-180.
- Lieberman, A., & Mace, D. P. (2010). Making practice public: Teacher learning in the 21st century. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(2), 77-88.
- Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (2002). Transforming professional development: Understanding and organizing learning communities. In W. D. Hawley with D. L. Rollie (Eds.), *The keys to effective schools: Educational reform as continuous improvement* (pp. 74-85). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Lucas, C. J. (1999). *Teacher education in America: Reform agendas for the twenty-first century*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

- Marsick, V., & Watkins, K. (2001). Informal and incidental learning. Retrieved from <http://www.fsu.edu/~elaps/ae/download/ade5080/Marsick.pdf>
- MClam, T., Diambra, J. F., Burton, B., Fuss, A., & Fudge, D. L. (2008). An analysis of a service-learning project: Students' expectations, concerns, and reflections. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 30(3), 236-249.
- MacPherson, S. (2010). Teachers' collaborative conversations about culture: negotiating decision making in intercultural teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61(3), p. 271-286.
- Merkley, D., Duffelmeyer, F., Beed, P., Jensen, S. & Bobys, A. (2007). Using the R2D2 model for creating collaboration among practicing teachers and preservice teachers during reading assessment preparation at four universities. *Journal of Technology & teacher Education*, 15 (4), p. 463-482.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B. (2004). The role of cognitive development in Mezirow's transformational learning theory. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 55(1), 60-68.
- Merriam-Webster. (2010). *Reflection*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reflection>
- Milner, R. H. (2010). What does teacher education have to do with teaching? Implications for diversity studies. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 61(1/2), 118-131.
- Moore, J. & Whitfield, V.F. (2008). Musing: A way to inform and inspire pedagogy through self-reflection. *Reading Teacher*, 61(7), p. 586-588.

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (NAEP, 2009). *Proficiency statistics*.

Retrieved from http://www.kidscount.org/datacenter/compare_results.jsp

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (NAEP, 2009). *Proficiency statistics*.

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2007/2007496.pdf>

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (NAEP, 2009). *Proficiency statistics*.

Retrieved from http://www.kidscount.org/datacenter/compare_results.jsp

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (NAEP, 2009). *Proficiency statistics*.

Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2007/2007496.pdf>

National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education. (NCATE, 2009). *NCATE*.

Retrieved from

<http://www.ncate.org/documents/news/White%20paper%20final%206-1509.pdf>

National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education. (NCATE, 2009). *NCATE*

Retrieved from http://www.ncate.org/documents/NCATEImpacts_web.pdf

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the*

National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based

assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for

reading instruction. (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U.S.

Government Printing Office.

Neufeld, B., & Roper, D. (2003). *Coaching: A strategy for developing instructional*

capacity. Aspen Institute Program on Education: Annenberg Institute for School

Reform.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L.No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002).

- Olson, M. (2008). *Using grounded action methodology for student intervention: Driven succeeding: A Grounded action study in adult education*. Retrieved from [http://www. Qualitative-research.net/fqs/](http://www.Qualitative-research.net/fqs/)
- Olson, M. (2009). *Addressing the post-modern pilgrim: How to apply learning style theory and the EPIC model in a grounded learning classroom to promote enriched student learning*. Paper presented at the ethnographic and qualitative research conference, Cedarville, OH.
- Olson, M., & Raffanti, M. (2006). Leverage points, paradigms, and grounded action: Intervening in educational systems. *World Futures*, 62, 533-541.
- Pacheco, M. (2010). English-language learners' reading achievement: Dialectical relationships between policy and practices in meaning-making opportunities. *Reading Research Quarterly*. 45 (3) p. 292-317.
- Parry, G. (2007). Improving teacher effectiveness through structured collaboration: A case study of a professional learning community. *Research in Middle Level Education Online*, 10848959, 31(1), 16 pages.
- Pearson, P. D., & Barr, R. (Eds.; 2000) *Handbook of reading research* (vol. 3, pp. 719-742). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Pearson, P. D. (2004). The reading wars. *Educational Policy*, 18(1), 216-252. DOI: 10.1177/0895904803260041
- Pollock, M., Deckman, S., Mira, M., & Shalaby, C. (2010). "But what can I do?": Three necessary tensions in teaching teachers about race. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61(3), p. 211-224.

- Reading A-Z*. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.readinga-z.com/>
- Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Retrieved September 4, 2009, from http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/reauthorization_pg3.html
- Reutzel, D.R., Dole, J., Sudweeks, R., Fawson, P., Read, S., Smith, J.A., Donaldson, B. Jones, C.D. et al. (2007). Developing the literacy instructional knowledge scales (LIKS): A comprehensive assessment of primary grade teachers' knowledge of reading and writing instruction, LIKS retrieved on January 31, 2011 from http://cehs.usu.edu/ecc/images/pdf/presentations/aera_final.pdf
- Reutzel, D. R., & Mitchell, J. (2005). High-stakes accountability themed issue: How did we get here from there? *Reading Teacher*, 58(7), 606-608.
- Risko, V. J., Roller, C. M., Cummins, C., Bean, R., Block, C. C., Anders, P. L., et al. (2008). A critical analysis of research on reading teacher education. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(3), 252-288.
- Rogers, T., Marshall, E., & Tyson, C. A. (2006). Dialogic narratives of literacy, teaching, and schooling: Preparing literacy teachers for diverse settings. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(2), 202-224.
- Ruddell, R. B. (2006). *Teaching children to read and write: Becoming an effective literacy teacher* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson.
- Sacred Heart Univeristy. (2010). *NCATE conceptual framework*. Author.
- Scott, J. L. & Teale, W.H. (2010/2011). Redesigning Teacher Education Programs: How high can we fly? *Reading Teacher*. 64(4) 291-293.

- Schussler, D.L., Stooksberry, L.M., & Bercaw, L.A. (2010). Understanding teacher candidate dispositions: Reflecting to build self-awareness. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61(4), p. 350-363.
- Servage, L. (2008). Critical and transformative practices in professional learning communities. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(1), 63-77.
- Shön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York: NY Basic Books.
- Sivakumaran, T., Holland, G., Clark, L. Heyning, K. Wishart, W., & Flowers-Gibson, B.F. (2009). University-school partnerships for clinical experiences: design, implementation, assessment, and data-collection. *Journal of Case Studies in Education*. 1, p. 1-7.
- Sleeter, C. (2008). Equity, democracy, and neoliberal assaults on teacher education. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 24(8), 1947-1957.
- Snow, C. E., Burns, S., & Griff, P. (Eds.; 1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Snow-Geronimo (2009). Voices less silenced: What do veteran teachers value in school-university partnerships and initial teacher preparation? *Teacher Educator*. 44 (4), p. 248-267 DOI: 10.1080/08878730903186348.
- Spalding, E., Klecka, C.L., Lin, E., Odell, S.J., & Wang, J. (2010). Social justice and teacher education: A hammer, a bell, and a song. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 61(3), 191-196.
- Spooner, M., Flowers, D., Lambert, R., Algozzine, B. (2008). Is more really better?

Examining perceived benefits of an extended student teaching experience.

Clearing House. 81 (6), p. 263-270.

Taylor, A. (2008). Developing understanding about learning to teach in university-schools partnership in England. *British Educational Research Journal* 34 (1), p. 63-90.

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Peterson, D. S., & Rodriguez, M. C. (2005). The CIERA school change framework: An evidence-based approach to professional development and school reading improvement. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40(1), 40-69.

Temple, C., Ogle, D., Crawford, A., & Freppon, P. (2011). *All children read: Teaching for literacy in today's diverse classrooms* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Tomlinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Tompkins, G. (2010). *Literacy in the 21st century: A balanced approach* (5th ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Tracey, D. H., & Morrow, L. M. (2006). *Lenses on reading: An introduction to theories and models*. New York: Guilford.

Vacca & Vacca. (1999). *Content area reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum* (6th ed.). New York: Longman.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Walsh, Glaser, & Wilcox. (2006). *What education schools aren't teaching about reading and what elementary teachers aren't learning*. National Council on Teacher Quality. Retrieved from http://www.nctq.org/p/docs/nctq_reading_study_app.pdf
- Walker-Dalhouse, D., Risko, V., Lathrop, K., & Porter, S. (2010). Helping diverse struggling readers through reflective teaching and coaching. *Reading Teacher*, 64(1), p. 70-72.
- Whitfield, V., & Moore, J. (2010). Making it happen: Sustaining a commitment for reading success. *Reading Teacher*, 61(3), p. 272-274.
- Waters, K. (2010a). Strategy instruction and lessons learned in teaching higher level thinking skills in an urban middle school classroom. In T. Gunning & J. Collins (Eds.), *Building struggling students' higher level literacy: Practical ideas, powerful solutions* (pp. 231-262), Newark, DE: IRA.
- Waters, K. (2010b). Literacy Initiatives in the urban setting that promote higher level thinking. In T. Gunning & J. Collins (Eds.), *Building struggling students' higher level literacy: Practical ideas, powerful solutions*, (pp. 263-284). Newark, DE: IRA.
- Welsh, K. L., Rosemary, C.A., & Grogan, P. R. (2006). Accountability by design in literacy professional development. *Reading Teacher*, 59(5), 426-435.
- Wolcott, H. E. (2009). *Writing up qualitative research* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: Sage.
- Wong, P.L., Murai, H., Berta-Avila., M., William-White, L., Baker, S., Arellano, A. & Echandia, A. (2007). The M/M center: Meeting the demand for multicultural, multilingual teacher preparation. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 34 (4), p. 9-25.

- Wood, D. (2007). Professional learning communities: Teachers, knowledge, and knowing. *Theory into Practice, 46*(4), 281-290.
- Wynn, S. R., Carbone, L. C., & Patall, E. A. (2007). Beginning teachers' perceptions of mentoring, climate, and leadership: Promoting retention through a learning communities perspective. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 6*, 2209-229.
- Yoshimoto, K., Inenaga, Y., & Yamada, H. (2007). Pedagogy and andragogy in higher education: A comparison between Germany, the UK and Japan. *European Journal of Education, 42*(1), 75-98.

Appendix: A Interview Guide

Interview #1**Interview Protocol Project**

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates
for Classroom Literacy Instruction

Description of the Project: This qualitative study will use narrative inquiry within a constructivist paradigm to explore teacher candidates' experiences in an innovative university clinical practicum whose curriculum focuses on research-based literacy instruction and assessment practices. Data collection from multiple interviews will include a) the researcher's reflective field notes from observations of student/tutor interactions, and b) transcriptions from interviews.

Research Questions:

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?
2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewee: _____

Position of interviewee: _____

Interview Guide: “The purpose of my study is to explore candidates’ understandings about literacy before the clinical practicum course, during the course, and upon completion of the course. Keeping that in mind, I would like to ask you a few questions about what you knew about literacy instruction prior to taking the course in clinical practicum and how your knowledge may have changed during your participation in the course.”

1. Prior to clinical practicum, can you describe some of your field experiences in helping a child to read? **RQ 1**
2. Can you talk about your beliefs about reading instruction prior to taking the clinical practicum course? **RQ1**
3. What concerns or questions did you have as you approached the course? Were your questions answered during your participation in the course? **RQ 1**
4. Talk about how your beliefs and knowledge may have changed over the course of your participation in the class? In other words, what specific knowledge do you now have that you didn’t have before [taking the course]? **RQ1, RQ4**
5. What do you think is meant by the term “struggling reader?” **RQ 3**

Thinking about the child with whom you worked in clinic, can you tell a story that represents the challenges of working with a struggling reader and one that illustrates the rewards of working with a struggling reader? **RQ 3**

6. As a teacher candidate, have you had an opportunity to use self-reflection? If so, how? **RQ 4**
7. As part of the course you were required to develop lesson plans for each tutoring session. Can you talk about how you knew which areas to focus on for each session? **RQ4**
8. As part of the course, you were required to maintain and submit an electronic reflective journal of your experiences. Can you talk about how these weekly assignments may have affected your weekly practice? **RQ4**
9. What was the most valuable part of the course for you personally? **RQ1 RQ4**
10. Since participating in clinic, can you describe how you may have used what you have learned? **RQ3**
11. Did you have an opportunity to talk about everything you wanted? Is there anything else that I might not have mentioned that you would like to say?

Thank you for participating in this interview. Please understand that all your statements will be confidential on this and other interviews.

Interview Protocol format modified from Creswell, 2007, p. 136.

Interview #2

Interview Protocol Project

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates
for Classroom Literacy Instruction

Description of the Project: This qualitative study will use narrative inquiry within a constructivist paradigm to explore teacher candidates' experiences in an innovative university clinical practicum whose curriculum focuses on research-based literacy instruction and assessment practices. Data collection from multiple interviews will include a) the researcher's reflective field notes from observations of student/tutor interactions, and b) transcriptions from interviews.

Research Questions:

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?
2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewee: _____

Position of interviewee: _____

Interview Guide: “The focus of this interview is to describe your experiences in working with a struggling reader, how you developed your instructional plan for each tutoring session, and to describe what you have learned through the clinical practicum experience?”

1. Talk about literacy instruction. **RQ 1**
2. Talk about what you learned about literacy instruction in working with a struggling reader. **RQ3**
3. How do you make instructional decisions? Can you give an example? **RQ 4**
4. Do you use self-reflection in your literacy practice? If so, how? **RQ 4**
5. How has your clinical practicum experience prepared you [or not] for your role in the classroom? **RQ3**
6. Can you talk about how your course expectations compared with your actual clinical experience? **RQ 1, 2.**
7. Is there anything else that I might not have mentioned that you would like to say?

Thank you for participating in this interview. Please understand that all your statements will be confidential on this and other interviews.

Interview Protocol format modified from Creswell, 2007, p. 136.

Interview #3

Interview Protocol Project

A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates
for Classroom Literacy Instruction

Description of the Project: This qualitative study will use narrative inquiry within a constructivist paradigm to explore teacher candidates' experiences in an innovative university clinical practicum whose curriculum focuses on research-based literacy instruction and assessment practices. Data collection from multiple interviews will include a) the researcher's reflective field notes from observations of student/tutor interactions, and b) transcriptions from interviews.

Research Questions:

1. How does the experience of participation in a clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' assumptions about literacy instruction?
2. How does participation in clinical practicum affect teacher candidates' self-perceptions as potential classroom teachers?
3. What are teacher candidates' experiences in working with a struggling reader?
4. How do teacher candidates make instructional decisions?

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewee: _____

Position of interviewee: _____

Interview Guide: "The focus on our discussion today is to find out what you have learned through the clinical practicum experience?"

1. How did participation in clinical practicum affect your assumptions about literacy instruction? **RQ: 1 & 2**
2. How did working with a diverse struggling reader affect your perspective about your role as a future teacher? **RQ 3**
3. How was your knowledge of literacy [curriculum, instruction, and assessment] changed through your participation in clinical practicum? **RQ 1, 2**
4. What was the most helpful information that you took away from this experience? **RQ: 1 & 2**
5. What was the least helpful piece of information that you garnered from this experience? **RQ: 1 & 2**
6. How do you make instructional decisions? Can you give an example? **RQ: 4**
7. How has your use of self-reflection affected your literacy practice? **RQ: 4**
8. Is there anything else that I might not have mentioned that you would like to say?

Thank you for participating in this interview. Please understand that all your statements will be confidential on this and other interviews.

Interview Protocol format modified from Creswell, 2007, p. 136.

Appendix B: Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM WALDEN

Dear Teacher Candidate:

You are invited to take part in a research study in which you will be asked to reflect on your instructional practices in **Clinical Practicum**. You will be asked to participate in several interviews over the next 8-12 weeks to determine if knowledge of the content and pedagogy of literacy gradually increases over time.

You were chosen for the study because you are a teacher candidate at the university setting of the study and you have completed EDR 552 – Clinical Practicum in working with a struggling diverse reader.

Please read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named **Karen C. Waters**, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of the study is to explore teacher candidates' experiences of research-based literacy practices within a university clinical practicum to gain an understanding about how their unique experiences in a structured apprenticeship contribute to their pedagogical understandings of literacy instruction.

Description of the Project: This qualitative study will explore teacher candidates' experiences in a university clinical practicum whose curriculum focuses on research-based literacy instruction and assessment practices. Data collection from multiple interviews will include a) the researcher's reflective field notes from observations of student/tutor interactions, and b) transcriptions from interviews.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to reflect on your instructional practices when you participated in **Clinical Practicum** in describing your experiences in the tutoring of young children. You may also be asked to describe how this experience has impacted how you currently work with students if you are interning or student teaching. You may find it helpful to reflect upon your previously submitted written self-reflections

and your case study that you developed as part of your clinical work when you were enrolled in the class.

You will be asked to participate in 3 audio-taped interviews; the first two interviews will be not exceed than 60 minutes each in length, and the last interview may be completed via telephone in follow-up as a confirmation or clarification of your statements.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one at ██████████ University will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. If you feel stressed during the study you may withdraw from the study at any time. Neither your grade nor your academic status in the educational program at ██████ will be jeopardized if you choose to withdraw from the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

There are no risks to being in the study. The results may be used to revise current practices in the Reading Certification Program at ██████████ University.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for this study.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The researcher will remove the signatures to assure confidentiality. You will be asked to create an “alias” for yourself for interviewing purposes.

The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher’s name is Karen C. Waters. The researcher’s faculty advisor is Dr. Edith Jorgensen. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 203-881-3555/203-231-4026 or the advisor at Edith.Jorgensen@walden.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a

participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Director of the Research Center at Walden University. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have received answers to any questions I have at this time. I am 18 years of age or older, and I consent to participate in the study.

Printed Name of

Participant

Participant's Written or

Electronic* Signature

Researcher's Written or

Electronic* Signature

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

Consent Form:

Partnering Institution

Dear Teacher Candidate:

You are invited to take part in a research study in which you will be asked to reflect on your instructional practices in **Clinical Practicum**. You will be asked to participate in two to three interviews over the next 8-12 weeks to determine if knowledge of the content and pedagogy of literacy gradually increases over time. Two of the three interviews will be audiotaped. The third interview may occur on the telephone.

You were selected for recruitment for the study because you are a teacher candidate at the [REDACTED] School of Education at [REDACTED] University, and you have completed Clinical Practicum in working with a struggling diverse reader, including the prerequisite for the Clinical Practicum.

There will be approximately from 5-8 participants in the study. All participants have earned bachelor degrees prior to enrolling in the fifth year teacher certification program, which consists of a yearlong internship within a public school setting inclusive of ten weeks of student teaching. All participants have taken the course prerequisite in foundations of literacy instruction.

Please read this form and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

Background Information:

Description of the Project: This qualitative study will explore teacher candidates' experiences in a university clinical practicum whose curriculum focuses on research-based literacy instruction and assessment practices. Data collection from multiple interviews will include a) the researcher's reflective field notes from observations of student/tutor interactions, and b) transcriptions from interviews.

The purpose of the study is to explore teacher candidates' experiences of research-based literacy practices within a university clinical practicum to gain an understanding about how their unique experiences in a structured apprenticeship contribute to their pedagogical understandings of literacy instruction.

The ultimate goal of the study is to explore teacher candidates' experiences in an innovative university clinical practicum through adherence to a research-based framework for literacy instruction to determine if teacher candidates' unique tutoring experiences have deepened your knowledge of the reading process. This study will use teacher candidates' experiences as a lens to obtain increased understanding about how preservice teachers acquire and access their pedagogical knowledge of literacy in their practice.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to reflect on your instructional practices when you participated in [REDACTED] – **Clinical Practicum** in describing your experiences in the tutoring of young children. You may also be asked to describe how this experience has impacted how you currently work with students if you are interning or student teaching. You may find it helpful to reflect upon your previously submitted written self-reflections and your case study that you developed as part of your clinical work when you were enrolled in the class.

You will be asked to participate in 3 audio-taped interviews; the first two interviews will be not exceed than 60 minutes each in length, and the last interview may be completed via telephone in follow-up as a confirmation or clarification of your statements. During your participation in the study I will transcribe your interview and send it to you so that you can verify the accuracy of my summary statements and modify the content of the statements so that I can accurately reflect your intentions. All interviews will be conducted in the Clinic or in my office if the clinic is being used by another party.

Additionally, I may refer to your written self-reflections for additional information that may be incorporated into the summary transcriptions that I send to you. Here again, you will have opportunity to modify, extend, or revise your statements through frequent dialogue with me, either electronically or through the telephone.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. No one at [REDACTED] University will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. If you are uncomfortable participating in the study you may withdraw from the study at any time. Neither your grade nor your academic status in the educational program at [REDACTED] will be jeopardized if you choose to withdraw from the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

There are no known risks to being in the study, either psychological or physical. However, if you exhibit discomfort at any time during the study, please understand that you have the option of withdrawing your participation at any time.

Reported benefits from teacher candidates who have previously completed [REDACTED] Clinical Practicum include an increase in their pedagogical knowledge about literacy curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Your participation in this study will contribute to my own understanding about how prospective teachers develop the requisite skills of the professional in making the transition from teacher candidate to skilled practitioner in teaching all children how to read. The results of the study may be used to revise current practices in the Reading Certification Program at [REDACTED] University.

Compensation:

There is no compensation for this study.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I will remove the signatures to assure confidentiality. You will be asked to create an “alias” for yourself for interviewing purposes.

I will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research project without your permission. Also, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in any reports of the study without your permission.

All of your interview data will be stored, managed, and encrypted on the hard drive of my home computer and protected from unauthorized access through anti-theft, tamper-resistant hardware. A password is required to log on and the files in which the data itself will be stored will not be easily accessible.

Transcriptions of interviews will likewise be stored in similar fashion. Audio tapings will be stored on my personal digital recorder, which I will carry back and forth to the site of the study. Interviews will be digitally recorded on my personal digital recorder that will travel back and forth to the university.

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Statement of Consent:

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have decided to participate, having read the information provided above. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

I have read the above information. I have received answers to any questions I have at this time. I am 18 years of age or older, and I consent to participate in the study.

Signature of Subject

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

Researcher's Written or Electronic* Signature / Date

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an "electronic signature" can be the person's typed name, their email address, or any other identifying marker. An electronic signature is just as valid as a written signature as long as both parties have agreed to conduct the transaction electronically.

Contacts and Questions:

This study is being conducted by a researcher named **Karen C. Waters**, B.A., M.S., 6th Year Certificate in Educational Leadership, a doctoral student at Walden University. Her email address is XXXXXXXXXXXXXX and her cell phone number is: XXXXXXXX

Her faculty advisor is Dr. Edith Jorgensen. You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 203-881-3555/203-231-4026 or the researcher's advisor at Edith.Jorgensen@walden.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Director of the Research Center at Walden University. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. You may also call Dr. Virginia Harris at _____ or Dr. _____ at _____ University.

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

UNIVERSITY Approval
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
for Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: August 4, 2010

TO: Name Karen C. Waters
Address Education Department
Telephone [REDACTED]

FR: Name/Title Department Chair
Address Sociology Department
Telephone [REDACTED]

RE: Proposal A Clinical Practicum Experience to Prepare Teacher Candidates for Classroom Literacy Instruction

 X The University IRB has reviewed and approved the above-referenced proposed project. Please honor the following requirements when conducting your study:

- At all times, minimize risks to subjects.
- Any significant change in procedure that may impact subjects must first be approved by the IRB.
- Insure adequate safeguarding of sensitive data during the study, and destroy sensitive material when the study is completed.
- If the study continues beyond one year of the initial date of approval, an annual review form must be filed with the IRB.
- If results are disclosed to subjects, agencies, etc., make sure that the findings are disclosed in such a manner that confidentiality is protected. Obtain informed consent from subjects to participate in the study and to use their information.

cc: University IRB Secretary

Appendix D: Participants' Stories

Debbie's Story

Debbie, currently an intern in the Master of Arts in Teaching program, had not yet student taught when she began the clinical practicum course. Two very different tutoring experiences had yielded personal insights concerning the role of demographics and its impact on children's literacy learning. A service learning requirement at the undergraduate level gave her the opportunity to work with a struggling first grade reader in a nearby urban town, while a field experience at a pre-school in a wealthy suburb provided an entirely different perspective. The natural inclination for young children to assimilate literacy learning into their everyday lives did not go unnoticed by Debbie, who stated that "reading to them was not the same as teaching them how to read."

Debbie perceived the demographic differences between the two settings and observed that the preschool children in the suburb were able to easily "read the bulletin boards," while the first grade child in the urban school struggled with the most common sight words. In comparing the two experiences, Debbie noted that the children in the preschool were curious and excited about the act of reading, which she attributed to their observations of older siblings interacting with books. This insight was in sharp contrast to Debbie's recollection of the first grader in the urban school setting who may have already begun to see himself as a "struggling reader" because "he could not read at all." These initial field experiences enabled Debbie to perceive the apparent distinctions between a

diverse struggling reader and one whose positive early literacy experiences instilled a sense of confidence in his own ability to read.

In approaching the clinical practicum course, Debbie was concerned that the vocabulary terminology encountered in the foundations course had yet to be clarified. Additionally, she appeared resistant to the idea of administering multiple assessments to identify the children's areas of weaknesses. She made her feelings known in a simple confession: "I personally don't like assessments. I don't like taking tests myself. I feel like it doesn't dictate intelligence because I'm not a good test taker so I feel like I'm disadvantaged because of that. So I don't like giving them to students . . ."

Prior to taking the clinical practicum course Debbie had taken the prerequisite foundations course in literacy, which she felt had not helped to "mold" her beliefs about reading instruction. As an avid reader, she was surprised to realize that the principles of literacy instruction did not align with her own perception that reading instruction should be enjoyed and savored. She stated that the pedagogy of literacy in the foundations course was presented in lecture style, which was contrary to the way she believed she learned best, and she cited Gardner's multiple intelligences as an example of the many ways in which we learn information. Further, Debbie appeared to be disheartened by the delivery method used in the literacy foundation course. Her course instructor, while espousing the importance of designing engaging lessons, nevertheless resorted to behaviorist pedagogy antithetic to the constructivist methods that were advocated in the course.

Further, Debbie admitted that although it might be necessary to learn the terminology associated with the reading process, she learned best when information is presented in a “hands-on” style that invited the learner to participate in his own learning. By her own admission, Debbie stated, “it was just a lot of vocabulary, [and] I felt like it was just kind of thrown out there. It wasn’t focused enough for me to grasp the concepts.” Thus, she felt that clinical practicum afforded her the opportunity to acquire a deeper conceptual understanding about literacy terminology, initially presented in previous coursework as a list of terms with which she needed to become familiar, but which ultimately became clarified through the interactive literacy lessons of a clinical experience. She reported that the format of clinical practicum was “more helpful to me instead of sitting in a class that was lecture style, I think this even tops discussion style, which I like discussions but it’s even nicer to be there with a student and then have the discussion.” She felt that the most valuable part of the course was the immediate feedback she received from the instructor both during her instructional time with her student and with the dialogue journal afforded by the class format. In this way she could immediately apply recommendations to her instruction.

Debbie stated the clinical experience clarified specific literacy terminology, especially when she used these activities in tutoring a child. She appeared to be happily surprised as evidenced by her exclamation, “oh, so *that’s* what it means,” which seemed to indicate that she had now understood the deceptive simplicity of the concept of onset/rime [orally segmenting a word into its component parts], when she had an opportunity to work one-on-one with a child. After facilitating a successful attempt by the

child in performing the simple task related to phonemic awareness, she said, “Now it seems like it’s so *simple* to me, like why didn’t I pick that up right away.”

In another instance Debbie gave an example in which she was successful in helping the child decode unfamiliar text: “Well, we worked on a lot of word families. When he was able to tell me something right away that I didn’t have to encourage as much as I would at the beginning - whether it was reading a story and I didn’t have to encourage him as much . . . we started using the [strategies] . . .or when we were doing word families and he could think of one without being specifically asked to supply [an example of a word within the word family.]”

Debbie referred to a *struggling reader* as one who is not able to function at the same grade level as his peers. She stated that her child struggled with the texts selected for instruction. While she tried to accommodate the child’s preferences by offering him texts on topics that held interest for him, the readability of the text was higher than the child’s instructional and independent levels. Thus, the child’s developmental interests were not consistent with genres of offerings written at the level at which the child performed. She countered this difficulty by reading the text to him several times until he was able to “partner-read” some of the text with her.

Using self-reflection.

Debbie stated that she used self-reflection in several ways throughout her practice. She stated, “When I’m with a student. I’ll get home and I’ll be like, oh, you know maybe I should do it this way instead.” She recalled that her weekly written self-reflections enabled her to return to a tutoring session for the purpose of targeting areas of weakness

that warranted review. Interestingly, she stated that during the course of their tutoring partnership, her child developed the confidence to speak to her in an audible voice, which she attributed to her manner for readily praising his reading performance. Once he began to converse with her, Debbie was able to advance his oral reading through the different self-monitoring strategies used to help children develop their self-awareness as readers. Under her tutelage, the child began to employ rereading as one of the metacognitive strategies for processing text. Additionally, Debbie was gratified when the child simply articulated an appeal for help by stating, “I don’t know,” when he came to a word for which he had not yet acquired the resources to process.

Additionally, Debbie discussed the importance of planning through written lesson plans as another way to self-reflect on her practice. She said, “I can always write things down and it’s nice to have a guide just in case I get lost. Or realize that something’s not working, but I find myself constantly changing what I’ve written down.” Here Debbie realized that the student’s performance is the standard by which even the most well-designed plan can change.

Finally, Debbie’s participation in clinical practicum ultimately enabled her to acknowledge the running record as a critically important assessment practice for data-based instruction. She wrote that she liked using the running record “because it is straight-forward and to the point. I can use the results immediately to base my next lesson off of.” Thus, she was able to use the data obtained from the running record to plan for instruction and to modify her plans based on the child’s reading performance.

When asked if Debbie had had an opportunity to apply the content learning from clinic to additional field experiences, she explained that for the past three summers she had participated in a program whose purpose was to mentor a group of 7th and 8th grade urban students whose goal to graduate college would distinguish them as being the first in their families to attain a college education. Upon completion of clinical practicum, Debbie then took her position as a mentor in working with the urban adolescents, “but this year I used fewer worksheets” than in previous years. In clinic she learned that she that worksheets have limited utility, that worksheets don’t teach — *teachers* teach.

Ella’s story

Ella smiled as she recalled her first experience as an undergraduate taking a course in children’s literature where she worked on a weekly basis with an English language learner as part of a school university partnership entitled “Book Buddies.” She had not yet taken any other courses in literacy, and was therefore, not familiar with the principles of literacy pedagogy. Remembering this experience, she admitted, “I had never worked with an ELL child before. . . and we did a lot of flashcards. I did a lot of reading to him and he followed along. But I didn’t have a lot of background knowledge in reading instruction” Looking back on her first experience she admitted that she was not “clear as to what I was doing.”

By the time Ella began the course in clinical practicum, she had nearly completed the student teaching experience. Additionally, she had completed two other reading methods courses, and was quite comfortable in articulating the reading process and

discussing her literacy assumptions and current practices. She mentioned that her school used the workshop approach as the primary mode of literacy instruction. Ella explained that the workshop model consisted of three main parts: (a) a focused mini-lesson that began with the introduction of a daily specific comprehension skill (e.g. summarizing, questioning, connecting), (b) an opportunity for the student to read a self-selected text independently, (c) and the completion of the skill-related task to the student's text.

In taking the clinical practicum course at the same time her student teaching experience was nearing its end, Ella drew from that experience in working with the child in clinic. During her last weeks of student teaching, she recalled that she was able to integrate or fuse the pedagogical learning acquired in clinic with information garnered from student teaching. Similarly, her student teaching experiences helped her to confront the new instructional context afforded by the tutoring partnership of clinical practicum. Nevertheless, she was relieved that her student teaching experience was coming to a close so that she could focus on her tutoring in clinical practicum.

Ella distinguished between the workshop model used in student teaching with the guiding reading model used in clinic. Ella inferred that although the workshop model used in student teaching was appropriate for many children, the method did not always meet the needs of students requiring additional instruction. Thus, the three-pronged format allowed little provision for one-on-one intervention or small group instruction. She said, "I could certainly see that it didn't work for all kids and it was hard to get to each child every single day and target their needs without pulling small groups, small leveled groups and working a guided reading type of lesson."

In contrast, in the Guided Reading model the learner(s) work directly with the teacher who provides guidance and support to the child as he attempts to problem-solve unknown words. Following the guided reading lesson, students are encouraged to practice the skills independently. Ella cited the benefit of the guided reading model as the ability to target leveled groups, especially if they exhibited difficulties in one or more areas.

Ella admitted that she was initially uncertain about using the assessments in clinic. She stated, “I was concerned as to how I would find out the level of my child and how I would know where to go after finding out his level.” However, as she became comfortable with the instructional and assessment routines of clinic, Ella’s perception of the instruments changed,

I was a little unsure - I could maybe you know, collect the data but then I might not know what to do with it. So I think this course really helped me figure out to do with all those numbers and use that data and tell me what does this say about that child.

Ella especially liked a particular phonics assessment because,

In the beginning, you know [the child] clearly did not know any of his long vowel sounds. [The phonics assessment] really kind of zeroed into the fact that he didn’t know any of his long vowel sounds, whereas in some of the other assessments you could tell that his reading score wasn’t really on level but you didn’t know why.

In being able to identify her child's area of weakness through the phonics assessment, Ella was able to determine her next steps for instruction. She defined a struggling reader as one who doesn't feel comfortable reading,

They don't have ah, a good grasp of the language. English is a very tricky language so they probably find it difficult and they might not understand - you know all the patterns in the English language and that makes it difficult. I guess.

She indicated that the child she tutored was a struggling reader because "he had a large sight word vocabulary, but he didn't have the long vowel sounds so that would have made it very difficult for him to move on in second grade." Thus, Ella's plans included helping the child to problem solve at multiple levels. She called working with her child on some strategies that he could use when he comes across a word he doesn't know:

For a couple of weeks we'd made lists of things of what you can do when you are stuck. . . you can keep reading, you can look for chunks in the larger word that you might know and that kind of thing but I always wanted to tell him "keep reading," "keep reading," and he wouldn't do that. He would skip over the word and wouldn't go back to it and wouldn't try to figure it out so a lot of times he lost a lot of meaning in what he was reading. One day while we were working with him he came across the word *across*. So I [said] "what are the strategies?" You know the word in there – put it together. And all of a sudden you could see the light bulb going off in his head, his eyes lit up and "I KNOW THAT WORD!"

That was huge for him because he did it all on his own and he didn't need me to keep reminding him [about the strategies.]”

Clearly, Ella used self-reflection in her practice – from reviewing her lesson plans and the written self-reflective pieces in thinking about the successes and struggles of the child she tutored, to employing data analysis in planning for future lessons.

The self-reflections helped a lot because I thought about what it was we did – what it was that I worked on in the previous session. What worked, what didn't, what did he struggle with, and I would kind of think of something that he seemed to struggle with or what he needed more work on and try to design a lesson on that.

Ella perceived the most valuable part of the clinical practicum course was the knowledge she obtained from learning how to administer and use assessments, “because I had never used any of them before and I think that that gave me four more assessments that I can use in the classroom.” She acknowledges that broad-based assessment is not necessary for every child, but appeared to feel confident that she now had a resource of tools to utilize when the need arose. She stated,

this course kind of helped me figure out how to use that data, because it's one thing to collect all this data but it's another thing to know how to use that. So I think that was huge. That was really helpful.

She recalled that the teacher modeling of lessons was helpful and would have preferred to see more of it:

I would have loved to see, to observe you do a few more lessons only because as you were up there I was constantly writing notes because I was getting all this information. I was learning so much from watching you teach the kids. The way you designed it, how you incorporated all the kids, you know, some of the strategies that you used, like you would ask them to tell you a sentence, any sentence that they remembered from the story and you would write it on the white board with their name next to it for the shared reading. I had never seen it done that way before.

Finally, Ella liked having the responsibility of communicating the results of the data and discussing the reports with the parents. This even appeared to have bolstered Ella's confidence in communicating assessments results with parents, especially because the parent of the child with whom she worked seemed to rely on her expertise in asking Ella questions about how to help her child at home.

Since taking clinical practicum Ella has taken a position as a second grade teacher in a suburban town and was looking forward to using the assessments to evaluate her students. She felt empowered through the acquisition of specific knowledge that added to her repertoire of instructional strategies in literacy, and in learning how to use data-based instruction to advance student reading achievement. Thus, her participation in clinical practicum gave her an opportunity to refine her knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices, which she felt would fortify her in making the transition from university classroom to the field.

Olivia's Story:

Olivia's internship in one of the largest urban school districts in the state had already fortified her with a rigorous field experience prior to taking the clinical practicum course. Working at a short-staffed magnet school in the inner-city, Olivia quickly developed a friendly rapport with the literacy coach, who subsequently provided mentorship and direction while entrusting Olivia with the responsibility for advancing the reading achievement of third and fourth graders identified for intervention through state assessments and in-program screenings. Under the literacy coach's supervision, Olivia implemented a well-known intervention program that the district used to address the needs of struggling readers as part of their internal system for Response to Intervention (RTI) (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Vaughn, 2008), a national three-tiered initiative whose focus is to "prevent long-term academic failure" (Casbarro, 2010, p. 1) through systematic, data-based instruction and continuous progress monitoring.

Specifically, Olivia worked with students on the cusp of proficiency as determined by state criteria. In her own words, Olivia stated that school administration intentionally did not give her the lowest-achieving group; the principal and the literacy coach wanted to utilize Olivia's natural talents without imposing lofty expectations on a teacher candidate. They realized that a productive student-intern collaboration needed to consider Olivia's status as a preservice teacher, and that increased reading achievement was certainly possible for this group on the verge of proficiency. She said:

They didn't want to give match me with the highest intervention kids because they didn't want me to feel the pressure to move them. I wasn't a certified teacher

[and] they didn't think it was right to give me kids and say, “now we expect you to move them up a level or get them on grade level.”

Thus, Olivia followed a partially-scripted program using the *teacher cards* that accompanied the intervention program in the implementation of her daily instruction. Subsequently, after providing initial supervision of the project, the evolving responsibilities of the literacy coach in an urban school oftentimes precluded her immediate availability to Olivia, who began to acquire the art of instructional decision-making even before she student taught! Additionally, as part of her internship Olivia worked with a child who had auditory processing difficulties, which seemed to round out her tutoring experiences even before the start of clinic.

Consequently, Olivia's baptismal experience into urban education, a seemingly erstwhile process for embedding the requisite skills into preservice teachers, served only to strengthen the commitment and resolve of an enthusiastic and capable apprentice who responded by signing up for additional experience in working with struggling readers through the clinical practicum course. She came to the clinical practicum course as a seasoned tutor. Nevertheless, Olivia discovered that the course afforded her the opportunity to learn how to scaffold her instruction so that her students might be encouraged to assume an active role in advancing their own achievement. Paired with two students having very different needs, Olivia learned to balance their individual's needs with the needs of the group.

The first child, Miguel, a third grade English Language Learner, possessed an unusual facility for employing structural analysis in decoding multisyllabic words, but exhibited comprehension difficulties related to limited background knowledge and vocabulary. Specifically, he did not readily comprehend content-specific concepts in science or the idiomatic expressions inherent within realistic fiction.

The second child, David, an articulate third grader with a receptive and expressive vocabulary beyond his current grade placement, lacked foundational skills in structural analysis to be an effective decoder. Olivia sought to teach to the strengths of each child as she skillfully partnered one child with the other, and the symbiosis allowed them to help one another in working on their areas of need.

Olivia recalled the challenges of working with David:

David had a great deal of trouble staying on task and maintaining engagement during lessons. He was easily distracted and after working together a few times I realized that the reason why he was so easily distracted was because he didn't like coming to terms with the fact that he was having a difficult time reading and that the reading itself posed a challenge to him and he didn't like that challenge.

Olivia realized that both boys possessed strengths that might be used to help one another navigate increasingly complicated text while grappling with word identification and meaning. Simply stated, while Miguel could decode the word or words in the text, David provided a depth of meaning for the new vocabulary words. Olivia noted that the

peer interaction empowered both boys to draw upon their strengths in a workable partnership. Olivia summed up the experience of working with the two boys in this way:

I had two students with very different strengths and needs—an ELL student that did not have the background knowledge but was able to read anything and a student that had immense background knowledge and a ton of expressive and receptive vocabulary but had trouble decoding words, particularly multisyllabic words within anything that we read. By working together . . . they were able to help each other.

In teaching David to employ the self-monitoring strategies of proficient readers, Olivia helped him to begin to acquire the skills of an independent reader. Giving him “wait time” before interceding with corrective instruction allowed the child to practice strategies for accessing problematic text. She recalled that in the early stages of tutoring, David’s most preferred strategy for processing unfamiliar words was to guess at the pronunciation of a word— and to keep reading even if the word did not make sense. The following statement illustrates Olivia’s observation of the changes that occurred in her teaching as a result of her own learning:

Before clinic I didn't know things like, “let him read to the end.” Let him struggle a little bit, ask him if it makes sense because many times he might be able to figure [the word] out. Before I started clinic I thought you had to correct [a student] if a word was wrong. I thought that every person’s name in a story should be said correctly.

Olivia attributed the change that occurred within David to an increase in her own learning:

By the end of clinic David had already started to master strategies that he was applying during his reading. He was doing think-alouds. He was stopping at the end of sentences and saying to himself out loud, “This doesn’t make sense. Let me reread it.” He was demonstrating that he could take some of the skills that we had worked on during clinic, and actually apply them on his own without having me prompt him. It was very rewarding to observe and experience.

Miguel required a different set of strategies for addressing gaps in his comprehension of text. Olivia used activities that would simultaneously build background knowledge and increase his acquisition of content-specific vocabulary. She taught Miguel to “code the text,” (Harvey & Goodvis, 2000) and to make his thinking public through the utilization of symbols and post-it notes to indicate confusion, clarification, connections, predictions, or questions about the passage. In tracking his thinking, Miguel was encouraged to articulate the passages that presented difficulty or clarified meaning for him. Olivia viewed this strategy as a format for viewing “consistencies where students are making notes about where they are confused. Those notes can show challenges students are having with vocabulary or shed light on where the student is missing valuable information within the text.

In self-reflecting on her clinical experience, Olivia acknowledged the critical importance of background knowledge in helping students to increase text comprehension:

I didn't realize how important background knowledge of students were in their reading instruction and how you can use different experiences children have – such as surveys and inventories of your students – to actually help them read and pick stories out that will empower them to be better readers.

Olivia was already demonstrating the characteristics of a reflective practitioner in preparing for her role as professional educator as the following statement illustrates:

Before writing up lesson plans I would not create a new lesson plan until I wrote my weekly reflection. I needed time to think about what the students had done and what I had done with them, so that I could create a lesson plan based off of what we were unable to work on during our session, what the students enjoyed and excelled in, and what they were demonstrating they needed most.

When Olivia returned to her internship in the fall, she resumed her responsibilities in providing intervention to small groups of students. With the experience of clinical practicum behind her, Olivia was ready to undertake the responsibility of providing explicit instruction to new groups of students targeted for intervention. Summing up her experiences in clinical practicum she said:

Clinic is an invaluable resource that every teacher candidate would benefit immensely. The interactive experience gives future teachers an opportunity to put theory into practice. Prior to internships or student teaching, the majority of teacher preparation courses provide a vast library of knowledge about the teaching field and theories behind classroom practice. However, having the ability

to excel on a test does not yield automatic success within a real classroom setting. The clinical practicum allows for a real teaching environment, with real struggling readers, in real-time situations – all the while having a professional and mentor in the room to guide and scaffold as we learn, experience, make mistakes and learn from those mistakes.

A combination of substantive and diverse clinical and field experiences, university coursework, and an opportunity to tutor a struggling reader in a real-life context allowed Olivia to increase her conceptual understanding of the discipline of literacy in connecting theory with practice. Her weekly self-reflections provided the basis for thoughtful lesson planning as she integrated assessment and observation data into a workable format that maintained fidelity to and flexibility in addressing the student's needs. She said:

. . . The reflections gave me a chance to consider what I was doing - not necessarily incorrectly but how I could best benefit my students, think about what the student needs were and then alter my deliveries. . . The reflections also made me understand that in education, teachers need to be very flexible and prepared because however you plan, you never actually know what's going to happen!

Empowered with a strong sense of literacy pedagogy, Olivia felt prepared to teach reading in the field. During our last conversation Olivia shared that her principal has not only offered her a position as a co-teacher in a 6th grade classroom upon the completion of her internship, but is willing to defer the hiring process until she is certified.

Addison's Story

Prior to clinical practicum Addison had been an intern in a suburban school working with small groups of children at different grade levels with various needs. Her first grade group required foundational skills in decoding and in building their sight word vocabulary to develop automaticity in oral reading because “they could only read text with three to four words at a time. Additionally, Addison reported that she was “familiar with the jargon of onsets and rimes,” so she felt that confident in having the skills to help them.

On the other hand, her third grade group required explicit instruction in the comprehension strategies. Taking her cue from the reading consultant at the school, Addison sought to replicate the similar type of instruction:

The reading consultant would come in, basically I was kind of doing what she did, which at first I felt kind of weird because you know, I'm the intern, but I mean I can't sit here and say it wasn't a great experience because it was.

Interestingly, although the group of third graders could easily read the words in the text, they had difficulty constructing meaning as they read. She described their comprehension difficulties in this way: “They had no problem reading—but it was the comprehension. It was having to read [the text], and be able to understand it to answer the questions.” She described the format that she used in her daily instruction with the third graders:

I would come prepared with packets of either non-fiction or fiction short stories or maybe a letter –Then they would go back and read it themselves and then we would talk about it. We would underline the main ideas; we would underline details. Obviously, they would ask me any questions that they had and some of them would be able to answer it for the child or I would have to help them. Every time they answered a question, though, they had to go back into the story, letter, text, and circle or highlight how they got that answer.

Addison pondered what she at first perceived to be seemingly contrasting literacy pedagogies. The school at which she interned and student taught used a method for reading instruction that varied significantly from the philosophy of the foundations course taken at the university, which was different from the way she herself learned to read. She described the differences in this way:

Well, in the school that I was in, they used [a new phonics program for every child]. I actually thought it was very interesting because I wasn't really familiar with the program before and during myinternship. And at first I was kind of like, "this is totally different from the way I learned." I do feel that – it works, but I did see that for some students it wasn't very helpful. Then again, maybe it's just that the student just really is struggling and they just need to have more opportunities to practice and have maybe more one on one or small group work, but I found that the [the program] actually was simple – as time went on and I was becoming

more knowledgeable about teaching reading and everything, and the program was very similar to what we would talk about in other classes and definitely during the practicum, so I thought that was helpful.

Thus, in a reconciliation of university coursework, clinical practicum and authentic field experiences, Addison was beginning to acquire a pedagogical framework for evaluating the merits of a commercial product that emphasized the research-based strategies of phonics instruction. Experience in utilizing the strategies to teach phonics elements enabled her to render a significant insight consistent with seasoned educators: that the newly-purchased district program did not necessarily benefit every child because not every child required this type of intensive phonics instruction.

An authentic application of increasing content knowledge to the real-life tutoring context came when Addison discussed her child's difficulties in oral reading:

The student I worked with tended to skip over words as she read and for a while I thought that she's reading too fast or she's not paying attention to the words on the page. And she was – she was a second grader. There were times that she would read a simple sentence as "I would like to go out to play," and she would say, "I would like to play," It still makes sense, it still made sense to her, but she's still leaving out words in a sentence.

Realizing that the child's difficulties in oral reading precluded significant progress, Addison recalled how she addressed this area of weakness:

I would stop her and I would go back and I would say, “let’s look at this word here,” and sometimes I would just flat out say, “do you know this word?” And she would say, “yes,” or “no.” If she knew the word she would say it, and then I would have her go back and read that sentence again. If she didn’t know it, I would try having her sound it out. And if that was hard we would talk about the beginning sounds – any beginning sounds that she would know, and then I would break it down – all the way to the end of the word.

In teaching her child the strategies of proficient readers, Addison attempted to apply the researched-based practices of effective literacy instruction. She learned to balance her instruction with abundant opportunities for the child to practice and internalize the skill before proceeding with more difficult objectives. Planning her instruction involved systematic review of the phonics elements previously taught so that the child would be able to integrate new learning into existing schema.

Addison reported that self-reflection on a tutoring session helped her to write out a lesson plan for the following session, and that thinking about the last session prior to composing a written self-reflection helped her to identify the areas that needed to be addressed at the next tutoring session. Of the process of self-reflection she stated:

I think the written self-reflections made me more aware. And they made me better at planning for my student because I had a day and a half until I met with her

again and I just wanted to improve. I just wanted to improve so that she improved. I thought the self-reflections for the practicum were great. . . For me having to sit down and just write it out before I typed it was really good because it didn't feel like it was a real formal type of paper - it was like these are my thoughts - this is what I'm thinking, how I'm feeling and then you gave great feedback . . .

Addison articulated the benefits of working directly with a struggling reader in this way:

It was very hands-on, which I think is great cuz otherwise you can hear it, someone can tell you, but I feel especially for this profession, you have to have that experience doing it. You can't just listen or try it yourself or a classmate because it's not really real. So . . . I love that. That's probably the best thing.

Additionally, she felt that the component of Seminar enabled her engage in critical self-reflection with her peers who experienced similar difficulties in working with a struggling reader: Interacting with other preservice teachers helped her to improve and transform her own practice:

It was even great when we would meet for an hour after because myself and my other classmates would bounce ideas off of each other. That was another way of self-reflecting because we would share with each other and then we would get feedback not only from you but also from each other, which was also very helpful.

Addison summarized her tutoring experiences with a simple statement that reflects Freire's co-constructivist philosophically: "I'm there to help the student and I'm your student and you're there to help me. So all in all – we're all there to help [each other]."

Stephanie's story

Stephanie received her undergraduate degree from a small private institution in the North East whose sterling reputation for teacher preparation in early literacy has earned the respect of the higher education community throughout New England. Although she had already obtained certification in another state, she enrolled in the graduate program at the site of this study to obtain her master's degree after graduation. With no job prospects, Stephanie thought that additional schooling might help her to realize her goal. Prior to taking the clinical practicum course Stephanie had acquired multiple experiences in working with young children in literacy that began with reading to her younger brother: She was nine years old when he was born; subsequently, he became her first student.

While in high school Stephanie volunteered her services in an after school program that emphasized homework help. Then at the undergraduate level, two pre-clinical tutoring experiences provided her with a work-study experience within a local university-community partnership for America Reads®, a nationally-recognized literacy organization whose mission was to increase student reading achievement in kindergarten through grade 3. Stephanie's responsibilities included following up on the instructional

routines in literacy related to phonological processing that had been established by the classroom teacher. Finally, as a student teacher, Stephanie recalled working with two of the lower-achieving groups in a first grade classroom where she used word-building activities to teach the common phonograms. Of that experience she recalled:

[My cooperating teacher] gave me my own reading group. It was the second lowest reading group out of four, so I wasn't with the low kids because I didn't have that much experience yet and I didn't want to do the high kids because I didn't want to feel like I was coasting through [the experience]. I wanted to feel challenged.

Stephanie's tutoring experience at the graduate level consisted of a part-time tutoring position in a school system near the university that had recently adopted the state's plan for the Response to Intervention initiative for inculcating scientifically research-based instruction (SRBI) in meeting the needs of lower-achieving students. Stephanie's responsibilities included providing weekly instruction to first and second graders through read-alouds and guided reading using a well-known intervention program.

Varied as her previous tutoring experiences appeared to be, Stephanie, nevertheless, was left unsatisfied and academically hungry for more—more experience, more instructional strategies, more knowledge. She was uncertain about her ability to be an effective teacher: “My biggest concern was that maybe this whole time I'd been doing it wrong or that there are other strategies that I could incorporate.” Limited opportunities

to attempt first-hand the research-based methods that had been modeled by her instructors left her wondering if she had teaching potential. She said:

I took this clinical practicum course because I was looking for additional experience because I think that, as a teacher, sometimes I think I've done so much, but [my previous] experiences were only one half day a week. I really wanted to keep immersing myself and trying to learn. . . I just really wanted to get a handle on more specific strategies rather than just the ideology, which is what came from [my] undergraduate [studies]. My hope in coming to this university was that — I would learn how to get to my goal. That's when I ended up taking the [clinical practicum] course.

Stephanie stated that although she prepared a written lesson plan for every tutoring session, she did not necessarily follow her written plan: "I was constantly changing it up. I thought like every time I had to overplan, which is also good because in the past I had underplanned." Sensitive to her young tutee's tendency to become easily frustrated by his struggles in literacy, Stephanie's goal was to engage and encourage his participation through motivational activities that would maintain his interest. Thus, although she used her written plan as an outline, she would ultimately be guided by the child's needs and wants:

I tried to let Kevin [pseudonym] kind of guide [the lesson]. If there was a story he really seemed interested in we would read it. It was a lot of "on my feet." I would always have an outline of what I wanted to do. [But] if he came in and he was miserable, I'd try to keep it fun. A couple of times he wrote a song — he wrote his

story about football. So I really tried to have him guide it because I knew that he needed a lot. And I think because of how quickly he gets bored, being able to have a lot planned and changing it up a lot and reading his mood was good for him.

Stephanie talked about the weekly written self-reflection course requirement. She admitted that having to self-reflect on her session not only helped her target the areas of need for the child tutored, but that adhering to the requisite one page helped her to isolate the most important skill areas on which to build.

It helped me really think about what's important is . . . that's what Karen needs to know about . . .that's what I need to talk about. That's what I need to remember. So being able to pinpoint those important pieces allowed me to make my plan for the following week. [I would say to myself], All right – this is exactly what I did and this is where he struggled. And this is the word that we spent 20 minutes on because he found difficulty and we put it in the text, took it out of the text, so maybe I should work with that [word] family.

Stephanie ruefully admitted that the written self-reflection assignments helped her to assimilate the language of literacy; instead of stating that the child “bombed,” she learned to use alternative phrases that would convey that the lesson might not have gone as expected because the child exhibited a great deal of difficulty or frustration in completing the task asked of him.

The clinical practicum course proved to be an authentic context for Stephanie to to complicate and deepen her conceptual understanding of instructional strategies and assessment practices in literacy as the following quote will demonstrate:

I think that taking the course was the perfect next step for me. I do have a lot of experience on paper. But at times I say, “Looks like I have a lot, but I don’t have a lot of experience with this.” And I think that this course showed me that. I was able to walk in on the first day to do the assessments and being able to assess a kid - you can’t do that in student teaching. You can’t do that during your internship. You can’t do it. Having the opportunity to do that—at least I now have that experience under my belt. I know what to do. I have a better feeling. [If] I’m thrown into a class of 20 kids, [I won’t] be freaking out [by saying] I’ve never done this before – what do I do, which was a huge fear. That’s a big deal. Keep the assessments coming!

Stephanie recalled the first time she used the Shared Reading Experience (SRE) (Holdaway, 1979) with the child she tutored following a modeling of the strategy that I conducted at one of our first tutoring sessions. Although mentioned by professors in previous courses, she had not seen the SRE modeled until she came to clinic.

Consisting of a five day plan for repeated readings using text that is characterized by rhythm, rhyme, and repetition, the procedure includes daily objectives for skillbuilding in word recognition and phonics that have been extracted and then

contextualized to ensure student automaticity in oral reading. The SRE, initially implemented as a read-aloud, gradually scaffolds instruction so that by the fifth day of implementation the reader is generally able to read the story with little teacher assistance.

Stephanie's tutee had demonstrated difficulty in remembering the word *king* whenever it appeared in his reading. She had reviewed it at every tutoring session, created a flash card on which the word was written, and encouraged Kevin to draw a picture on the card to help him remember the word. However, he stopped reading whenever he encountered the word in the text.

Undaunted, Stephanie utilized the shared reading experience for the text *May I Bring a Friend* (1964), in which the word *king* appeared many times. Through this procedure Kevin learned to recall, retain, and even spell the word. Having been successful in the implementation of this procedure, Stephanie recalled how she has been able to apply the SRE to the classroom in her current practice as an early literacy tutor:

I knew what I was doing! I wrote it out. I know what it looks like on paper. I wasn't doing it right in the past. And now I can see –I've seen it done a couple of times with you. I've done it one-on-one. I've done it in a small group with other tutors who are also learning. They're giving me feedback because they also know what to do. So now I can sit in front of a group of children in the library, go through the story, and yea, I did it!

Stephanie said that the knowledge that she gained from taking clinical practicum has imbued within her a sense of confidence that she will be able to be a good teacher:

I think it's my confidence in working with kids one-on-one. Even now I get nervous and flustered. But I think being able to sit with one child and work through something had a lot more meaning to me because even when I did tutoring in the past it's always been in small groups. It's never been one-on-one. I never had that experience.

Stephanie's significant insights about her instructional delivery continue with the following illustration:

I learned a lot from [teaching] him. I never met a kid with the whole picture – he was very unique kid, great kid and I learned so much from just interacting with him on a weekly basis. I learned about how I verbalize myself with a child. I learned about changing [the way I explain things] – saying the same thing over and over again isn't going to work. I think standing up in front of a whole class is so much easier than working one-on-one. I can be in front of an entire class and say something one time and have 80% of the class say, Yeah, I get it, and then I say, OK great, but this time the pressure was on – I didn't have 11 other children nod their heads in agreement. I had one [child] saying, “no. no, [I don't understand] So I really had to push myself.

After completing the summer clinical practicum course, Stephanie had planned to begin her internship in the fall, while resuming her part-time position from the previous year as an early literacy tutor in another school district. At a planning meeting with the school principal to discuss the details of her continuing role as a tutor, Stephanie freely articulated a plan to employ data based instruction and progress monitoring to meet the needs of the students targeted for intervention.

Subsequently, the principal, clearly impressed with Stephanie's assessment plan, offered Stephanie a full-time position as a literacy tutor, with a promise that Stephanie would be offered the next teaching position that became available. Already certified in the state, Stephanie happily withdrew her participation in the internship program at the university, now no longer necessary, to begin the next chapter of her professional life.

Tatiana's Story

Except for participating in the required minimal field-based classroom observations generally associated with education courses, Tatiana's only experience in working with children was in facilitating weekly read-alouds at the community center. "Except for teaching my four-year old son," she laughed. "Does that count?"

As an English Language Learner, she was naturally sensitive to struggling students' difficulties and wanted to be successful in helping them navigate the reading process. Although Tatiana came to the United States in 1996 from the Ukraine, she had become fluent in the English language through her formal schooling in her native country. After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts in technology at the site of the study, she

enrolled in the teacher preparation program because she simply “wanted to be a better mother.”

Neither expecting nor asking for special consideration as an English Language Learner, Tatiana registered for the requisite foundations class in literacy, oftentimes questioning the methods that appeared to be antithetic to the way she learned to read as a child in her native country. Eventually, she realized that literacy pedagogy was consistent with constructivist learning theory as espoused by the professors in her other classes. “The only thing I knew is that any learning process is better when it’s interactive. You need to make learning interesting—and fun. It’s not about drills.”

Tatiana’s participation in the clinical practicum course enhanced her pedagogical awareness of the many aspects of literacy: she discovered that phonological generalizations can serve as a reliable system for decoding unfamiliar text because of its immediate applicability to words having regular phonics patterns. Her perception of reading instruction had previously included helping her own child grapple with the lone word in a text that presented difficulty. She said: “The way I would teach my son would be one word at a time. Now I know that everything should connect.” Tatiana compared current reading pedagogy to the way she learned to read:

“The way I was taught – I don’t think we had word families and I don’t think I knew what a short vowel was or a long vowel sound, but – I knew *how* to read a word with a long or short vowel sound. I did not know how to teach it through the songs like [Apples and Bananas].”

Tatiana thought that learning about a variety of assessments was especially empowering.

Looking at the results of the test I was able to see what areas in phonics my student had difficulty with, like she needed long vowels. She needed vowel teams, diphthongs, and consonant blends, so assessing her helped me a lot.

She needed help with “aw” diphthong –I knew right away when she couldn’t read it on the assessment – I knew that we needed to do it again. So we made paw, saw, hawk, and law, and when we did the post testing - she flew through it. She knew exactly how to do it!

Sensing the value of data-based instruction, Tatiana practiced and honed her assessment skills on her mother, also an English Language Learner, and a willing student, “I waited until after the course was over,” she admitted. “I gave her every single assessment!” In this way Tatiana developed proficiency in test administration, scoring and analyzing the results of the data.

Tatiana recalled that learning the syllable types proved to be as enlightening for her as it was beneficial for the student with whom she worked. As a fluent reader, Tatiana intuited about how to “chunk” an unfamiliar word into its component parts without having specific knowledge of the terminology for the individual phonics elements. Although she could read words in which vowel digraphs, diphthongs, and consonant blends were embedded, Tatiana had not been aware of the lexicon for the syllable types that comprise words, and that learning the common patterns helped the reader use structural analysis to decode multisyllabic words. She laughed as she referred to her

newly-acquired content information: “about diphthongs – I had no idea they existed. I mean, I knew how to read them but I had no idea [what they were called].” Thus, having to teach the specific phonics elements to the child she tutored, Tatiana realized that she was learning as much her student.

In a recursive process between teaching and learning, Tatiana became metacognitively aware of herself as co-learner with her student. Additionally, Tatiana realized that an effective teacher possesses both a conceptual and discrete knowledge of the terminology that is communicated to the child with the less sophisticated phrase, “strategies of good readers.” Similarly, her revelation about the labels of literacy used to reference the established practices in the pedagogy of literacy were likewise encompassed through the concept of “self-monitoring strategies” in remembering how she learned to read:

“Teaching self-monitoring strategies . . . I would do them [myself], but I was not specifically taught them in school or told that those are the self-monitoring strategies that I need to use when I am stuck.”

Tatiana reflected on the importance of teaching a child how to employ self-monitoring or fix-up strategies during reading:

“This comes with age, with experience, sort of reflection. If I don’t understand something, I naturally go back – it’s a logical thing to do. For a child you still need to – not necessarily teach them, but show them the way, model for them how it’s done. It’s a developmental process – they’re not ready yet to grasp the concept.

You know, it's not yet time for him to understand certain concepts, And if they don't understand, a lot of times they just want to be done with it!"

Tatiana experienced the benefits of participating in a structured apprenticeship that were not limited to the tutoring experience itself. Through Seminar she was encouraged to develop interpersonal skills in having an opportunity to interact with peers and openly discuss her literacy practices through collaborative problem-solving:

First of all there was respect and friendliness, and we felt that we were part of the family. We reflected in writing. We reflected after the lessons. We reflected with the group. And that helped because especially in the first sessions, I felt like I'm not the only one who has troubles, I'm not the only one who's afraid, I'm not the only one who feels that way, and my child is not the only child who has difficulty with this. So that was helpful – a lot of modeling, the group interaction, and the experience itself.

Tatiana saw the administration and analysis of running records as another opportunity to reflect on her practice in making appropriate instructional decisions that would advance the child's reading achievement:

I had a live child who was reading right there and I knew that I didn't need a hearing aid to distinguish what she was reading. Almost every session I gave a running record. When you hear about the concept in theory, it's still not the reality. Being able to hear a child reading a passage helped me to practice my

skills in recording running records, and it became easier with practice. It's not as difficult as I thought, and actually that was another strategy to identify her areas of weakness. I would take information from the running records—the words that she had difficulty with I would go back to them –and I might apply phonics rules or other rules depending on the situation.

Tatiana's experiences in clinical practicum empowered her with the knowledge that she could be an effective teacher of research-based literacy practices in curriculum, assessment and instruction: "I saw myself as a teacher. Yes, I can actually enjoy teaching. When I was going into the course my main question was "can I survive?" and now it's not the survival part, it's the enjoyment part." She summed up clinical practicum experience succinctly: "from the book you cannot learn . . .theoretically, here you have practice. And you see theory and practice working together. To see that connection is incredible."

Gavin's Story

Gavin's internship and subsequent student teaching experience offered him a rich opportunity to work with struggling readers in grades Kindergarten through grade 6 in the implementation of his school's intervention program prior to taking the clinical practicum course. As an intern working in a collaborative partnership with the third grade teacher at his school, Gavin quickly learned how to implement the intervention program and administer the corresponding progress monitoring assessments, and was easily able to

draw on the content that he acquired from the course he had taken in the foundations of literacy. Like Olivia earlier, he was responsible for delivering daily instruction to students who had been identified for tiers two and three intervention in working with the same group of third graders each morning, and then rotating instruction to small groups of children from all the grades in the afternoon.

Gavin easily adapted to the general procedure for delivering instruction utilizing the school intervention program: the product was replete with leveled texts and in-program assessments that were administered every six weeks. He adjusted to the instructional routines established within the program and became familiar with administering, scoring, and analyzing the results of the progress monitoring instruments that aligned with the program. In fact, school administration was so pleased with his performance that they were hoping to offer him a classroom position following his internship.

However, although Gavin's internship provided him with authentic classroom experience in working with struggling readers, he reported that ultimately "everything connected in clinic." The transition from the concrete, instructional, and familiar routine of the school-based intervention program to the less rigid clinical format forced Gavin to summon and synthesize all that he learned from previous literacy coursework and field experiences. Whereas, Gavin had previously depended on the structure of the intervention program for instructional guidance, he was now confronted with the realization that he was in a quasi-autonomous situation that would require him to make lone instructional decisions.

Now Gavin would be the designer of the intervention plan, as opposed to the follower of the intervention program, a rather unsettling thought—initially. Although the context of clinical supervision implied that teacher candidates would have opportunities to discuss their instructional decisions and their intervention plans with me, candidates could no longer rely on a one-size-fits-all-approach, a scripted routine, or full-scale assessments for procedural guidance. Course participants were expected to make appropriate decisions for the type, level, genre of the text, the skill to be reinforced, the types of assessments to be administered, and the order in which everything would be conducted.

At clinical orientation Gavin learned how to administer a variety of criterion-referenced assessments, which occurred approximately one week before the children arrived. From the battery of assessments, Gavin was expected to select (with my input, of course) only those instruments that would yield specific information in designing appropriate instruction for the child to whom he was assigned. Additionally, the clinical format consisted of a simple written procedure: (a) the rereading of a familiar book, (b) word work, (c) guided reading, (d) writing in response to text, and (e) an interactive read-aloud—all of which would be developed and designed by Gavin, the tutor. Gavin recalled this teacher-as-decision-maker-sink-or-swim experience:

I was nervous pretty much . . . you handing over the reins and saying . . . Here's a child . . . I want you to take the background data we already have . . . you choose [additional] screening-type assessments which you did give us but straight

from the start we were in there working one-on-one with the student and it was just me for the first time and it was exciting, too.

Thus, Gavin was excited because he realized that he was developing good instincts about making important instructional decisions that would impact the literate life of the struggling reader with whom he worked. He was excited because he came to understand that he possessed a natural inclination for literacy pedagogy, curriculum, and assessments. He was also excited because he realized that he was on the verge of developing expertise in the discipline of literacy that would transcend the university clinic into the elementary classroom, for which he felt fully prepared, as illustrated with his own words:

Now I feel comfortable talking about and administering the specific tests and even just the pedagogy of teaching literacy, the Ekwall Shanker, I feel comfortable, if I was in my own classroom and a student came in right then and there and I didn't have any background information, I feel like I could just sit down and have a good starting point with the San Diego quick assessment and just take it from there with the different steps. I feel like I have also those materials, too, at my disposal.

Gavin easily perceived the connection between his coursework in foundations of literacy to the practicum as he continued to describe how he was able to reconcile the grand learning theories with scientifically-based reading research:

I felt like I did have a strong theoretical understanding, conceptual understanding of the different components of teaching literacy, but I wasn't as comfortable putting theory into practice. And I really was able to understand it once I got my hands on it in clinic. When I got to sit down one-on-one with a student and really apply the theories and the strategies. They meshed. They not only connected but [clinic] also expanded upon [previous knowledge], too, so I was able to go even deeper into literacy pedagogy and sort of explore new facets of it.

Gavin articulated with clarity and with confidence that a struggling reader is one who “has difficulty reading grade level text, comprehending it and being able to respond to questions about it.” Recalling the experience of working with Abraham, a fifth grade student who was functioning approximately four years below grade level, Gavin stated that one of the greatest challenges in working with the young man was that the student's interests were not developmentally consistent with the type of instructional materials that were available to him, given his first grade decodability or instructional level. Gavin described the experience in this way:

It was difficult especially with [Abraham] because he was understanding what he was reading without being able to decode it; being unable to decode [the text]

was affecting his reading overall. It was especially difficult because the text that was just right for him – was also a little too easy for him to comprehend. . .

Consequently, at a chronological age of 12, an instructional match between Abraham's interests and his performance level was difficult, if not impossible to achieve. Gavin affirmed his previous statements: "Even if it was a topic that he was interested in, it would almost seem, since the text was four grades below his reading level, it just wan't as interesting as it could be."

Nevertheless, Gavin reported that Abraham, well aware of his struggles with reading, persisted in trying his best to learn the skills that would help him become a better reader. Furthermore, Gavin was resolved to help Abraham increase his reading achievement, even if with limited resources, because Abraham himself refused to succumb:

It was especially rewarding for me seeing him progress and use those strategies that we were teaching him . . . we were working on the short vowel strategies . . . and he was decoding the word "led." I actually saw him . . . I actually *heard* him say the short ě sound before he went back and said, "l – ě – d" to figure out the word. It was especially rewarding for me . . . his attitude was so positive and he was so willing to try anything and to work hard and he was excited to be there and just that rapport was really something special.

Gavin viewed the weekly written self-reflections as the method by which he was able to target specific areas and plan for the next tutoring session.

The response journals helped focus me every week. Seeing it on paper and actually writing it down on paper helped me sort of map out what we had done, helped me reflect on what had worked . . . what would work better next time . . .and also sort of sparked me into getting a game plan for next week and figure out where I was going to progress with my instruction.

Without hesitation Gavin admitted that participation in the clinical practicum enhanced both practice and pedagogy. Instead of referring to himself as graduate student, preservice teacher, or teacher candidate, he referred to himself as an educator, speaking with confidence and the self-assuredness of a wise and seasoned professional:

The most valuable part of the course for me personally was . . . I'd say it was being able to make a connection with the student I was working with and helping him and motivate him. That was very powerful. And also for me as an educator, [clinic] was an incredibly valuable experience in being able to take everything that I had learned and begin to put into practice and focus on the student I was working with and put into practice the different components of teaching a struggling reader.

After completing the clinical course, Gavin subsequently continued his year-long internship, providing intervention to at-risk students who were targeted for tiered-instruction consistent with the principles of RTI. The increase in confidence and competence did not go unnoticed by the school administration, who immediately offered him a position as a long-term substitute, even before graduating from the teacher preparation program at the university:

I picked up a job as long-term sub as a reading assistant at the school. I was working with struggling readers in first and second grade – children who were having trouble decoding and I had third and fourth grade comprehension groups for students who were having trouble with comprehension. I was able to put into practice specifically what I had worked on with Abraham for the first and second graders who were having trouble decoding. I was also able to take some of the things I heard from other students in clinic and work with the third and fourth graders who were struggling with comprehension. . . so I was able to get some ideas from clinic and put it into practice there.

Gavin's passion was evident as he explained how he taught his third and fourth graders the comprehension strategies including synthesizing, questioning, inferring, connecting, visualizing, and predicting, so that they would have the tools to navigate increasingly difficult complex text. Similarly, he detailed his work with the first and second graders in peppering his conversation with the language of literacy including semantic and syntactic cueing, interactive read-alouds, shared reading experiences, and the metacognitive

strategies of proficient readers. As he talked about the strategies he accessed, the techniques he used, and the lessons learned, Gavin's use of the lexicon belied a deep conceptual understanding of the principles of the literacy process and would have done justice to a veteran in the field.

Of the clinical experience, Gavin concluded with the following statement:

I just think clinic was an outstanding experience and I think it should be a mandatory course. Personally—it goes along so well with everything we had learned throughout the coursework and it really just brought it to life for me.

This literacy professional in-the-making is going to set the world on fire.

Appendix E: Sample Coding of One Transcript

Interview #1
Interview Protocol Project
GAVIN

Time of Interview: 2:30

Date: 9/9/10

Place: My office

Interviewee: Gavin

Position of interviewee: MAT Graduate

Typological Framework	
Content and Pedagogy of Literacy	CPL
General dispositions and attitudes of teacher candidates	D
Tutoring Experiences and Struggling Readers	TE/SR
Reflective Practice	RP
Perceptions/Misconceptions	P/M

Possible Themes	
Theory to Practice	TP
Mentoring relationships	Men.
Positive interpersonal relationships between tutor and child	R
Confidence facilitates competence	C

1. *Prior to clinical practicum, can you describe some of your field experiences in*

helping a child to read? RQ 1

C =He is already thinking of himself as an educator!

Gavin: OK, **before the clinical experience, I student taught, third grade and I also had interned for a year in Naugatuck and I had the opportunity to work with struggling readers in RTI – morning group and also in small group instruction in all the grades K-6.**

I: Can you explain RTI?

C =Gavin is speaking with confidence – he knows he has acquired a certain amount of expertise already. Confident without being overly so.

Gavin: Response to Intervention – **It's an intervention strategy where th**
grouped based on need and and we used universal screeners such as the DRP and I
believe PSI was another universal screener used for the whole class – the Primary
Spelling Inventory and from there we were able to – we actually had a chart that color-coded – green, yellow, and red, **so children who came up on the universal screener we were able to use assessments like the DRA – DRA 2 actually, and I don't think we used**
 Rigby at that point, we used the DRA 2 to sort of take a running record and take a look at the exact areas of need the student had.

TE/SR.

I: And you did all of this before you took Clinical Practicum?

Gavin: Clinical started in January, right?

I: Yeah.

Gavin: And I student taught in the fall. **Yes, I did.** [smiling]

D

I: So you really had some experiences before you came to clinic.

Gavin: Yes.

I: So having those experiences must have made it easier for you.

Gavin: It – I did have those experiences. But at that point I was – not being supervised – I was doing it with a co-teacher, someone at my grade level, she cooperating teacher, she was on our grade level and we were collaboratively doing it -

Mentoring Relationships.

2. *Can you talk about your beliefs about reading instruction prior to taking the clinical practicum course? RQ1*

Gavin: Yes, I can. I was [laughs] fortunate enough to have you as an instructor for language arts, the methods class, and I felt like I did have a strong theoretical understanding, conceptual understanding of the different components of teaching literacy, but I wasn't as comfortable with it putting it into practice. And I really was able to understand it once I got my hands on it in clinic. When I got to sit down one-on-one with a student and really apply the theories and the strategies.

CPL

TP

I: So would you say that 413 gave you a theoretical underpinning – background you were able to see this sort of brought to life ?

Gavin: Absolutely. Those are the exact words I would use.

I: So would you say that your experiences in clinical practicum connected in some way to 413?

Gavin: Absolutely. I would say that they were connected perfectly. They meshed. They not only connected but also expanded upon it, too, so I was able to go even deeper into it and sort of explore new facets of it.

TP

3. *What concerns or questions did you have as you approached the course?*

Gavin: concerns or questions that I had . . . I was nervous pretty much . . . you handing over the reins and saying . . . Here's a child . . . I want you to take the background data

Dispositions

297

we already have . . . you choose the screeners which you did give us . . . or the screeners to choose from . . . but straight from the start we were in there working one-on-one with the student and it was just me for the first time and it was exciting, too.

4. *Were your questions answered during your participation in the course? RQ 1*

Gavin: Yes. Yes, they were.

I: Any other concerns or questions you had as you approached that course?

Gavin: questions or concerns going into the course? None that I can remember.

5. *Talk about how your beliefs and knowledge may have changed over the course of your participation in the class? In other words, what specific knowledge do you now have that you didn't have before [taking the course]? RQ1*

C = This is no longer a teacher candidate – he has made the transition to professional educator.

Gavin: **Now I feel comfortable talking about and administering the specific tests and even just the pedagogy of teaching literacy, the Ekwall Shanker, I feel comfortable, if I was in my own classroom and a student came in right then and there and I didn't have any background information and I feel like I could just sit down and have a good starting point with the San Diego quick assessment and just take it from there with the different steps.** I feel like I have also those materials, too, at my disposal . I can make copies of it. .

.I'm sorry, can we go back to the question . . . what was it?

I: Yuh, what specific knowledge do you now have . . .

Gavin: [interrupting] **oh, right . . . right, right . . . I feel comfortable with all the. . . as I said I feel comfortable with all the different assessments we used. I feel comfortable with**

CPL

TP

the pedagogy and talking about the different components of literacy . . . and I feel like it just took my knowledge to the next level. And I feel very comfortable and I feel like it's an asset, too.

I: So we prepared you? [smiling]

Gavin: Yes. Very well.

Me: and you would feel very prepared in the classroom?

Gavin: Yes.

Discrepant data? Getting bogged down in the pedagogy so that defining a struggling reader becomes hard to do.

6. What do you think is meant by the term "struggling reader?" RQ 2

Gavin: A struggling reader – a struggling reader is . . . I would consider a reader who , , , some of the signals would be someone not on grade level or who was having difficulty, but .. a struggling reader is composed of one who is struggling with one of the cueing systems - whether it's the graphophonic, the the syntactic, or the semantic cueing system and overrelying on one of the three to compensate . . . or two of the three.

TE/SR

Me: what is the result of that?

He knows pedagogy.

Gavin: The result of that is whether a child is having trouble comprehending . . . it also includes comprehension, not just decoding. . . so a struggling reader would have difficulty reading grade level text and also comprehending it and being able to respond to questions about it.

Ah – here is what I need.

Thinking about the child with whom you worked in clinic, can you tell a story that represents the challenges of working with a struggling reader and one that illustrates the rewards of working with a struggling reader? RQ 2

Gavin: OK. Give me a moment to think about that . . . A specific story from clinic?

I: Yeah. [smiling] or a story of working with that child. What you remember . . . I know it's been awhile

Gavin: to start off . . . just a vague sort of thought . . . **Working with struggling readers is difficult** because every **struggling reader is different and unique** in his or her own way and even if they're both having trouble decoding it could be two very different ways of decoding or if they're both having trouble with the . . . even if they're both having trouble with decoding . . . it's still . . . they could be processing information in different ways . . . every child's different.

It's been awhile since he has been in clinic -

I: Think back to the child you worked with. And think about some of the challenges he presented. Because I know you worked really hard with him.

Gavin: yes.

I: Feel free to . . . [use the reflection sheets]

Gavin: **It was difficult especially with the child I worked with for me because he was understanding what he was reading without being able to decode while he was . . . since he was unable to decode it was affecting his reading overall and it was, it was especially difficult because the text that was just right for him – it was also a little too easy for him to comprehend. . .**

P – this is a significant insight – the child is an older struggling reader and is appropriately not interested in the books that he can read and he is not able to read the books that he is interested in.
key insight

I: So, I'm gonna rephrase you what you said to see if I understand it.

Gavin: nodding

I: So what you're saying is the type of text that he could read didn't necessarily match his interests?

Gavin: Yes, yes. Even if it was a topic that he was interested in , it would almost seem, since it was four grades below his reading level was it, it just wasn't as interesting as it could be

I: So developmentally, he was actually beyond the type of text that he could actually decode?

Gavin: Yes.

I: That was very insightful – that you would make that assertion .

Gavin: But it was especially rewarding for me because not only seeing him progress and use those strategies that we were teaching him . . . I can't think of the specific one - it's got to be under [reflection] 7 or 8. Oh, we were working on the short vowel strategies . .

.and he was decoding a word and it must have been . . . oh, right, it was the word "led" and we were working on the short vowel strategies and I was giving him the short vowel strategies to figure it out and I actually saw him . . . I actually heard him say the short e sound before he went back and said, "l - e - d" to figure out the word. And it was especially rewarding for me . . . his . . . the student I was working with . . . his attitude

was so positive and he was so willing to try anything and to work hard and he was excited to be there and just that rapport was really something special .

I: And I know that he really enjoyed having you as a tutor.

D = Dispositions
Gavin enjoyed working with the child. Found experience rewarding.

CPL

THEME: Positive interpersonal relationships between tutor and child

7. *As a teacher candidate, have you had an opportunity to use self-reflection? If so, how?* **RQ 3**

Gavin: I self-reflect constantly as a teacher candidate and in my teacher preparation even just driving home after a day of student teaching I would self-reflect continually – What went well? What didn't work? What might have worked better? Even if something works well it might have it might not work the next time around. . . Teaching **is** self-reflecting continually.

Evidence of reflexive practice

8. *As part of the course you were required to develop lesson plans for each tutoring session. Can you talk about how you knew which areas to focus on for each session? RQ3*

Gavin: Yes . . . Which areas of reading instruction to focus on?

I: Yes.

Gavin: Well, As I progressed in the ten weeks . . . ten weeks right?

I: Twelve.

Gavin: The twelve weeks of clinic – so it was building upon the prior lesson so with the lesson plan I was able to see what we needed to work on and if he was gaining confidence in what we were working to take it to the next level and plan the next lesson.

Scaffolding well in evidence. Pedagogy.

9. *As part of the course, you were required to maintain and submit an electronic reflective journal of your experiences. Can you talk about how these weekly assignments may have affected your weekly practice? RQ3*

Gavin: Absolutely. The response journals helped focus me every week. Seeing it on paper and actually writing it down on paper helped me sort of map out what we had done, helped me reflect on what had worked . . . what would work better next time . . . and also sort of sparked me into getting a game plan for next week and figure out where I was going to progress with my instruction .

Self-reflection through response journals.

10. What was the most valuable part of the course for you personally? RQ1 RQ3

Gavin: That's tough. The most valuable part of the course for me per say it was a tie between being able to make a connection with the student with and help him and motivate him . That was very powerful. And as an educator , was an incredibly valuable experience being able to take everything that I had learned and start to put into practice and focus it onto the student I was working with and put into practice the different components of teaching a struggling reader .

Really enjoyed working the child. Grateful to have made a difference in the child's literate life.

I: Anything else?

Gavin: Ah, nothing.

TE/SR

Tutoring experiences/
Struggling readers

11. Since participating in clinic, can you describe how you may have used what you have learned? RQ1a

Gavin: Yes, I can. I actually. . . towards . . . I believe it was right after clinic . . . I picked up a job as long-term sub as a reading assistant at the school [I was interning] . I was working with struggling readers in first and second grade – children who were having trouble decoding and I had third and fourth grade comprehension groups for students who were having trouble with comprehension so we were working on some comprehension strategies and I was able to take . . . specifically what I had worked with . . . worked on with Moses I was able to put it into practice with the first and second graders because they were having trouble decoding and I was also able to take some of the things I heard from other students in clinic and work with the third and fourth graders who were

TP.

struggling with comprehension . . . since that wasn't an area I was focused on in clinic . . . so I was able to get some ideas from clinic and put it into practice there.

I: Can you go into a little detail about the types of decoding activities you did with the first and second graders . . . and then some of the strategies that you might have done with comprehension?

TE/SR.

Gavin: Yes, I can. Let me think back. With one of my groups we started off working

we worked on the short vowels and they were doing well with the short vowels and then.

Let me think back.

I: It's all right.

Gavin: One of the groups of the first graders were stronger at decoding than they were . . .

. one of the students in particular I can think of sort of embodies what we worked on with

the group just in my mind. He had the one-to-one correspondence when he was decoding

the words and I could see him doing that with every word as well as the two other

students that were in the group, but putting it into text he had difficulty - what's the word

I want to use?

I: Contextualizing?

Gavin: contextualizing .Perfect. Thank you. Contextualizing the words as he was going

and he was stuck with a one-to-one correspondence in the text for every single word even

if he could - with chunking - he was having difficulty chunking the words as well even

though he could do it . . .

CPL

CPL

I: [Trying to understand] So you're saying that the student could say the word if it were presented in a list or isolation, but when presented with an entire sentence, he had trouble using context to decode and to make meaning of what he read?

Gavin: Absolutely.

I: So he wasn't using the cueing systems?

Gavin: No, he wasn't using the cueing systems. He . . .

CPL



I: Interesting. What did you do about it?

Gavin: I actually dove into a lot of high-interest text that were just on their level and worked on chunking skills, and for that group half the time we actually read high-interest books for them and were visually appealing, too, and he was able to use the context clues from from the visual and also from the sentences , too, and with the extra practice they were improving quickly.

TE/SR



I: Now, did you progress monitor these children?

Gavin: Yes.

I: On a regular basis?

Gavin: Yes.

I: Using what?

Gavin: We were also practicing our sight words, too. So I progressed monitored using the sight words. Rigby was once every three weeks, I believe.

CPL



I: An assessment from Rigby?

Gavin: Yes, A rigby running record. I did informal running records, too. I want to say once a week, but it was a week and a half on average

C - Confidence
again.
Confidence
abounds

305

I: Did you become proficient at doing them?

Gavin: [smiling] **Yes, I have. And I picked those up, too, - clinic helped me because I was using those in clinic. With my other group they were having trouble decoding so we used I had the touch phonics blocks with the letters so we used those - I'm drawing a blank . . .**

TE/SR

I: Is that the group that you had for grade 3 and 4?

Gavin: No, it was the other first/second grade group.

I: Oh, ok

Gavin: Let me come back to that.

I: That's fine.

Gavin: I don't remember some of the specific activities I used and I used some good ones too.

Tutoring Experiences.
This is not just about tutoring.
This exemplifies gavin's content pedagogical

I: Ok, so what about the third and fourth graders –

Gavin: Third and fourth graders – we were working specifically on the – first we started off with non-fiction summarizing, those specific skills of summarizing non-fiction and I started off with a web – where they had – what they were looking for – the students to be proficient in summarizing non-fiction was being able to tell the main idea, the topic, the main idea, and three supporting details, so we started off with a web of the topic, the main idea and three supporting details – it was very visual and from there we practiced writing it out after that into a paragraph form. And that was actually, that didn't take too long. They became fairly proficient very quickly. They really started to soar once we

TE/SR

Thinking back on what worked – reflexive practice.

306

actually sat down and started to talk about it. And really what made – how to actually find each different part so that took probably about a month and after that

RP

I: You just used non-fiction?

Gavin: Yes, summarizing non-fiction. Yes. We didn't summarize fiction. We didn't have time. But after that we talked about – I had the students keep a journal and we talked about the different metacognitive strategies of comprehending our reading and I had posted the different components of comprehension – synthesizing, [laughs], yes, good readers predict when they read, they question, they infer, [it's been a long day you can tell], infer, prediction, synthesizing, what are we missing?

CPL

I: um – connecting?

Gavin: [trying to think of something . . .]

Me: So did you teach these strategies independently of one another?

Gavin: Yes, I did a mini-lesson with each one. We started off with – we didn't start off with inferring, that was second – we started off with questioning because that was, I

personally feel that was a very concrete one – in that situation I felt that it was concrete, it was a good place to start with the different strategies – so good readers ask questions

when they read – when do they ask questions - they ask questions before, during, and after and the questions help us think about what we read and the whole point of why we're reading – it's to think about what we're reading . So we would go through and read – it was a book with short fiction and non-fiction – articles and stories – I believe that it was an anthology called “think-alongs” I'm not sure – I can see the cover . . .

TE/SR

TE/SR

I: Is that Rasinski:

Gavin: I can't remember – So as we would read along, there's stopping points with specific questions and at this point I didn't use the questions that were in there – I wanted them to ask their own questions – what they were thinking at that point – The first mini-lesson I showed them – I modeled how to question as you read – I modeled questions before reading, questions I had during reading, how my questions may have changed, my thinking may have changed, because of the questions I had, and after that we went through and I had them verbally ask the questions in sort of a group setting and then we were able to get into it and have them put their questions down in the journal as they were reading some questions they had before, during, and after

I: You know, I don't know if we did all this clinic but it just sounds as if you're fusing all this knowledge . . .

Gavin: [interrupting slightly] Taking it from different spots and putting it together . . .

I: yuh.

Gavin: From there we went on to inferring . . . Actually 4th grade was a little different than 3rd grade when it came to inferring because they were working on inferring as a grade level and it was sort of more as an enrichment thing since they were having trouble with it in the classroom so I took the text *Love That Dog* by Sharon Creech, it's one of my favorite books and I actually – since – it was me and four students – I did an interactive read-aloud and as I was reading I had different stopping points and we were talking about the different ways we could infer . . .

I: Mm-mm

CPL

THEME: TP
[theory to practice]

TE/SR

CPL

Gavin: All the different ways of inferring – and it was sort of a conversation - the interactive read-aloud

I: When you did the interactive read-aloud, what did you do at the pauses or stopping points?

Gavin: What did I *do* at the stopping points?

I: Yeah. How did you facilitate their interaction?

Gavin: Well, depending on how the text – I picked specific areas that I wanted to stop in the text – and there were areas that were prime for inferring so at some points I had a question for them – at some points I had them turn and talk – and they were able to talk about their different thoughts – but also I wanted to let them talk about the different thoughts they had but I also had them talk about inferences about the character, about the character's emotion, even make predictions – part of inferring

I: Was that new for them? The interactive read-aloud?

Gavin: I don't know if it was new for them. I – hope not!

I: Oh-ok. So you were happy with the way it went?

Gavin: Yes.

12. *Did you have an opportunity to talk about everything you wanted? Is there anything else that I might not have mentioned that you would like to say?*

Gavin: I just think clinic was an outstanding experience and I think it should be a mandatory course. Personally - it goes along so well with everything we had learned throughout the coursework and it really just brought it to life for me.

I: Did you take any other classes besides ED 413?

CPL

TE/SR.

TP

Gavin: Was it grades 4-6?

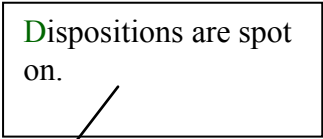
I: Yeah.

Gavin: Which course?

I: 507?

Gavin: It was a fantastic course – I loved that course. That’s actually where I was exposed to Sharon Greetch. I devoured her books over the summer.

Dispositions are spot on.



I : repeating: Did you have an opportunity to talk about everything you wanted?

Gavin: I believe so, yeah.

I: Is there anything else that you wanted to say?

Gavin: I’m still trying to think back on the different activities and strategies I worked on with the first graders – at one point I remember – this was before I was able to split them up into two smaller groups – we wrote on sentence strips – I had them dictate sentences about the text and I wrote them out for them . . .

TE/SR



I: As part of a shared reading?

Gavin: yes –

I: [interrupting] do you remember any of the books that you used for that? Not to put you on the spot. . .

Gavin: no, I don’t remember . . .

I: Anything else?

Gavin: None that I can think of.

I: I really want to thank you for doing this interview.

Thank you for participating in this interview. Please understand that all your statements will be confidential on this and other interviews.

Curriculum Vitae

. Karen C. Waters

• 25 Chauncey Drive • Oxford, CT. 203-881-3555 watersk@[REDACTED].edu

Objective: To pursue research areas related to teacher preparation and literacy education and to continue my work at a university setting in providing teacher and reading candidates with rigorous high quality coursework in a program of study that will lead to advanced degrees in literacy.

Professional Experience

7/06 –Present

Clinical Assistant Professor of Education

- Teaching Reading Courses in Reading and Writing in the Content Areas,
- Foundations of Early Literacy, Diagnosis and Remediation
- Director of CT Literacy Specialist Program
- Wrote Program for Advanced Literacy Certification for Reading Consultant

Director [REDACTED] University Reading Clinic “Book Ends”

8/02- 7/06

Director of Literacy – Bridgeport Public Schools, Bridgeport, CT

- Supervised and guided 55 literacy coaches in their positions at school-sites
- Conducted district-wide professional development in SBRR literacy practices
- Trained literacy coaches to implement the content of the literacy curriculum K-8
- Developed resource binder and pacing guides for curriculum K-8
- Developed Trainer of Trainers Module for “*Struggling Readers at the Middle School*”
- Implemented online quarterly literacy assessments
- Developed “*Connecting the Dots,*” a comprehension module of standards-based strategies and lessons to use in advancing reading achievement on state-wide assessments
- Conducted Family Literacy events 5 times a year whose topics ranged from Interactive Read Alouds, Fluency, DRA and Your Child, to Emergent Literacy and Strategies to Increase Reading Achievement at Home
- Created standards-based literacy curriculum and pacing guide for middle school
- Wrote and coordinated the *Reading First Grant* as part of NCLB
- Established district-wide supports to implement core adoption of anthology series in K-6
- Established department data team for analyzing assessments and for *Looking at Student Work*

- *Developed three-year department plan commensurate with district-wide literacy initiatives*
 - Served on CT STATE Committees for developing 4-9 document *Beyond the Blueprint* and *CT State Department Parent Curriculum*
- 8/01 – 8/02 **Principal**, Black Rock School, Bridgeport, CT
- Responsible for the supervision and evaluation of over 30 certified staff
 - Maintained site-based budget for textbooks and professional development
 - Developed and implemented School Improvement Plan
 - Implemented Junior Great Books
- 5/01 – 6/01 **Acting Principal**, Garfield School, Bridgeport, CT
1/00 – 2/01 Acting Principal, Barnum School, Bridgeport, CT
- Developed and implemented teacher support plan
 - Coordinated with Social Services and other outside agencies to stabilize student population
- 9/00 - 12/00 **Acting Principal**, Hall, Barnum, and Garfield Schools, Bridgeport, CT
1999 – 2000 **Coordinator of Migratory Program**,
Office of Federal and State Programs
Title I Coordinator of Special Projects in elementary schools
- Wrote Federal, State, and Local Grants
 - Awarded competitive grants for: *Interdistrict Cooperative Program*, *Minority Recruitment Program*, Goals 2000 Program, Migrant and Native American Education for Title I,
 - Serving as Co-Chair for Local Board of Directors for Firstbooks and receiving grant
 - Coordinated and implemented Multi-Lingual Conference including state and national speakers
- 1994 - 1999 Reading Specialist, McKinley School, Bridgeport, CT
- Developed and Implemented Dr. Edward Murray's *Essentials of Literacy Reading*
 - *Room – a concept based on the (James)Comer Project*, in Grades 1, 2, 3.
 - Title I Distinguished School Award – 1998, Orlando, Florida
- 2005 Adjunct Faculty, ██████████ University
1994 - 2001 Adjunct Faculty, ██████████ University
Teaching Graduate Reading and Language Methods Course,
Teaching Graduate Reading and Writing in the Content Areas,
Designed, implemented, and taught preparation course for teacher certification (Praxis II)
- 1994 - 1999 **Reading Specialist**, ██████████
1986 - 1994 **Reading Specialist**, ██████████
1979 - 1984 **Reading Specialist**, ██████████
1973 – 1979 **Classroom Teacher** - ██████████

Additional Professional Experience

- 2005** Served on State Interview Committee to select candidates for participation in Alternate Route to Literacy Certification Program at ██████████ College
- 2002 - 2005** **Presenter – Title I Parents’ Convention**
- 2000** Holistic Scorer for SDE Goals 2000 Grants, CT State Education Dept. Chairperson *Multilingual Conference*
- 1999** - Administrative Internship Program, Bridgeport Board of Education Member, Committee for SDE to select Title I Distinguished Schools Wrote manual of instructional strategies, *A Model for Critical Thinking* (plus instructional video) as part of instructional package for SCSU coursework and professional development seminars.

Awards and Presentations

- 2010** **Presenter CT Reading Association: Struggling Readers**
- 2010** Co-Presenter: International Reading Association Annual Conference [Chicago] Talking in Classroom: Facilitating Group Discussion Using Effective Teacher Talk Moves
- 2008 Presenter: CT Reading Association Annual Conference: Divine Intervention: From University Reading Clinic to Extended Day Program
- 2008 Staff Development Trainer: West Middle School, Waterbury, CT: Struggling Urban Adolescent Readers
- 2007 Presenter CT Reading Association Annual Conference: Hip Hop Literacy for Struggling Adolescent Readers
- 2007 Presenter International Reading Association 52nd Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada: “Higher Level Thinking Skills in an Urban Classroom”
- Presenter: “Motivating Struggling Adolescent Readers in an Urban Setting” Connecticut Reading Association Association Annual Conference, 56th Annual Conference
- 2006 Presenter Connecticut Reading Association 55th Annual Conference: Parent Involvement”
- 2005 Recipient of *Annual Literacy Award* from Bridgeport Parents Advisory Council
- 2004 Recipient of the *Nicholas Criscuolo Award for Literacy Administrator* – Presented by the 50th CRA Annual Conference
- 1999 Presenter at International Reading Association Annual Conference, San Diego, CA

Publications

- 2010** Published three chapters in literacy textbook entitled: *Building Struggling Students Higher Level Literacy: Practical Ideas, Powerful Solutions* [Chapters 9, 10, 11] Gunning, T. & Collins, J. Eds. IRA Publications

2003 – **Published** Article in Fall Issue of CASCD Journal of Educational Leadership entitled, “Chocolate Bunnies and Pork for Passover,” an article exploring the literacy partnership between school and family when intergenerational stories are made public.

1999- Present **Professional Development Trainer**

Conducting District-Wide Literacy Training in K-8
 Integrating Science with Reading: Graphic Organizers and Non-Fiction writing
 Critical Thinking and Strategies for CMT and Stanford 9 – Gr. 7-8
Metacognition in Motion - Connecticut Reading Association Conference,
 1992, 1993,
 1994
 Norwalk Board of Education, 1993, 1995, 1996, CREC Program,
 Wethersfield, CT 1993.
Aesthetics and Integration with Art, Music, and Reading
 Presented to Norwalk School District, Bridgeport Schools, and
 preservice teachers at Sacred Heart University 1993 – 2001.

Affiliations

International Reading Association
 Connecticut Reading Association
 2000 – Present - Member Board of Directors CASCD (Connecticut
 Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development

Education

2007 - Present Doctoral Student at Walden University
 1995 6th year Certificate in Supervision Educational Leadership (092),
 Southern Connecticut State University (QPR-3.85)
 1979 M.S. Reading (QPR-4.0), Connecticut Certificate Reading Consultant
 (096),
 University of Bridgeport
 1972 B.A. Elementary Education, Certified grades 1-8, University of
 Bridgeport, Cum Laude,

Outside Interests: Music and piano