READING FIRST READING COACHES' INTERPRETATIONS AND ENACTMENTS OF
THEIR ROLE AS READING COACH

By

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To my mom and dad

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As a way to establish job-embedded, ongoing professional development, specifically in the area of reading, recent policies and initiatives have required schools and districts to appoint school-based reading coaches. The Reading First Initiative, for example, created an immediate need for large numbers of reading coaches without a clear definition of coaches' role, responsibilities, and qualifications. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical knowledge about how reading coaches interpret and enact their coaching role. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate how Reading First reading coaches interpret and enact their role. The following four research questions framed the study: (a) How do Reading First reading coaches define their role? (b) How do Reading First reading coaches enact their role? (c) What are the influences on their definitions and practices? (d) What are the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role?

With a constructivist theoretical perspective framing this study, four Reading First reading coaches were selected to participate based on recommendations by county literacy directors. Data sources for each reading coach consisted of four formal interviews, three

observations with informal interviews, and coaches' logs. Data were analyzed using the four levels of Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and identification of cultural themes. Through data analysis, four case studies were formulated to describe how coaches defined and enacted their roles and to identify the influences on those definitions and enactments. A cross case analysis was completed to identify the similarities and differences in coaches' interpretations and enactments of their role.

Each coach interpreted her role as a support, but how she defined and enacted the support varied and was influenced by prior experiences and beliefs, Reading First, and school context. As Reading First reading coaches, a majority of the coaches' responsibilities were similar (e.g. administering assessments, assisting teachers in implementing core curriculum, and providing professional development) and due to the prescribed nature of some tasks, there was little variation in coaches' practice. The most noticeable difference in coaches' practice was in their approach to professional development, which ranged from expert-driven to collaborative. This investigation will add to the literature base on reading coaches and has implications for research, preparation of reading coaches, and school-based personnel.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Background

In the 1960s, educational researchers were becoming increasingly concerned with students' reading achievement because test scores indicated many students were not reading at proficient levels (Chall, 1967; Vogt & Shearer, 2007). This lack of proficiency was concentrated among various subgroups of students, primarily African Americans, Hispanics, the economically disadvantaged, and students with disabilities. To close the achievement gap among subgroups, federal initiatives – Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1966, Bilingual Education Act of 1968, and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 – were created. Decades after these policies were implemented, however, the gap remained. Dissatisfied with the progress resulting from earlier initiatives, Congress passed new legislation founded on accountability and evidence-based practices, starting with the Reading Excellence Act (1998) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Allington, 2006). The progression of these policies, as well as the report by the National Reading Panel (2000), led to the Reading First Initiative, which was the first federal policy to support the widespread use of reading coaches within elementary schools. Within this chapter, the abovementioned policies and the report by the National Reading Panel will be discussed. In addition, the use of coaching as a form of professional development will be explored and doing so will clarify the need for an investigation of how reading coaches interpret and enact their role.

The Reading Excellence Act of 1998 (REA) focused on professional development for teachers and the promotion of scientifically based reading research (Goodman, 1999). More specifically, the REA established criteria for what would be considered scientific and then funded only those programs that qualified; however, there was little federal monitoring or

regulation over what programs school districts actually adopted (Allington, 2006). Shortly after

passing the REA, Congress formed the National Reading Panel (NRP) to review research on how

"reading is acquired and how it should be taught" (Harrison, 2006, p. 128). Two years later the

NRP (2000) published a report with the following key findings: (a) students need to spend more

time reading and writing, (b) students need systematic instruction in phonemic awareness,

phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension strategies, (c) assessment and instruction are

inextricably linked, and (d) assessment should be viewed as a dynamic and ongoing process that

leads to instructional decision making. While some people embraced the findings of the report,

primarily legislators and the press, others were more critical (i.e. Allington, 2006; Cunningham,

2001; Garan, 2002). Critics questioned the methods the panel used for selecting research studies

and claimed that the analysis of a limited number of studies caused certain areas of reading

instruction (comprehension and vocabulary) to be neglected (Mitchell & Reutzel, 2003; Vogt &

Shearer, 2007).

No Child Left Behind and the Reading First Initiative

Although critics questioned aspects of the report by the NRP (2000), its findings

influenced the federal legislation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001). The goal of NCLB is

to close the achievement gap by raising the achievement levels for all students, especially those

students who belong to the subgroups that have traditionally struggled. To raise student

achievement, NCLB promotes the use of scientifically based instruction and materials, offers

parents more educational choices, and guarantees highly qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond,

2004). In addition, NCLB created an accountability model known as adequate yearly progress to

monitor, through standardized testing, the achievement levels of the 12 possible subgroups of

students. As opposed to the Reading Excellence Act (1998), which lacked federal monitoring

and regulation, NCLB includes "close federal review of state plans for monitoring the sorts of

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evidence that would be considered in approving plans from local education agencies" (Allington, 2006, p. 6).

From its conception, despite arguably well-intentioned goals, NCLB (2001) has been criticized. First, the term *scientific* is questionable. Harrison (2006) is critical of the overuse of the term *scientific* – appearing 111 times in the 670-page NCLB document – stating that "clearly this semantic overdosing is not about science; it is about rhetoric" (p. 127). Rhetoric or not, the phrase *scientifically based reading research* is now being applied to a number of basal and core reading programs, and when school districts do not choose to use these *scientific* reading programs, federal funds are withheld. *Highly qualified teachers* is another term that has been questioned. NCLB requires that all teachers have a bachelor's degree, acquire full certification (alternative routes are acceptable as are passing scores on state teacher-licensing tests), and demonstrate competence in the subject they teach (Cochran-Smith, 2005). Researchers, however, argue that these requirements are diluted to the point that becoming highly qualified requires passing a content knowledge test (Allington, 2006; Cochran-Smith 2002). A third term from NCLB that is questioned is *accountability*. The accountability model offered by NCLB provides little consistency from state to state and encourages states to lower their standards to meet adequate yearly progress targets (Allington, 2006; Ryan, 2004). Finally, NCLB is criticized for underfunding, creating unmeetable test score targets, over testing, narrowing the curriculum, and eliminating states' autonomy (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Kohn, 2004; McGill-Franzen, Zmach, Solic, & Zeig, 2006; Neill, 2004).

The Reading First Initiative, enacted in 2002, in Title I, Part B subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by NCLB (2001), promoted instructional

practices and materials validated by the same scientifically based reading research that was critiqued above. As stated in the 2008 Interim Report, Reading First funding could be used for:

- Reading curricula and materials that focus on the five essential components of reading instruction as defined in the Reading First legislation including: (a) phonemic awareness, (b) phonics, (c) vocabulary, (d) fluency, and (e) comprehension;

- Professional development and coaching for teachers on how to use scientifically based reading practices and how to work with struggling readers;

- Diagnosis and prevention of early reading difficulties through student screening, interventions for struggling readers, and monitoring of student progress (p. 2).

To be eligible for Reading First funding, schools had to serve K-3 students and be classified as poverty schools with a majority of students reading below grade level. As of April 2007, Reading First had awarded subgrants to 1,809 school districts, which in turn provided funds to 5,880 schools (Gasme, Bloom, Kemple, & Jacob, 2008). Once funded, Reading First schools designed and/or implemented research-based reading programs with the goal of increasing student achievement in reading, observable by: (a) an increase of students reading at or above grade level, (b) adequate mastery of five essential components of reading, and (c) all students reading at grade level by the end of third grade (Gasme, et al., p. 31).

Like NCLB (2001), Reading First underwent criticisms from a variety of sources. When a broad-based policy, such as Reading First, is enacted, criticisms and unintended consequences are to be expected (Elmore, 2004). First, Reading First offered 1 billion dollars annually to eligible schools, but the money came with stipulations (Harrison, 2006; Mitchell & Reutzel, 2003). All Reading First schools were required to use a mandated scientifically research based reading curriculum, and because of this requirement, a few states decided not to apply (McGill-Franzen, et al., 2006; Mitchell & Reutzel, 2003). In addition, the definition of grade level reading differed across the states. These different standards resulted from some states setting reading standards based on the federal standards as indicated by the National Assessment of Educational

Progress (NAEP) data, while other states set lower reading standards to meet the NCLB adequate yearly progress target. The consequence of differing standards was that the states that adhered to the NAEP standard had less than 20% of students reading on grade level, whereas the states that set a lower standard reported having approximately 90% of students reading on grade level (Allington, 2006). The lack of consistency in states' standards gives the false impression that certain states are out performing others, when in reality, the difference in reported progress is due to the way achievement is measured.

Despite criticism, Reading First did provide low-income and struggling schools with increased funding for reading programs and teacher professional development. An important component of Reading First teacher professional development was the job-embedded, ongoing professional development provided by reading coaches. Reading First was one of the first federal programs to fund large-scale coaching. Funding for reading coaches represented a sizeable public investment in teachers' professional development. Coaching, therefore, has the potential to have an important impact on the progress of struggling readers.

Coaching

Teacher professional development is a well-established method for improving or changing teachers' instructional practice (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Elmore, 2004). Research, however, has shown that one-time workshops, a common professional development approach, are often sporadic, disconnected, and provide little to no follow through at the school level. In the 1970s, less than 10% of the teachers participating in professional development implemented what they had learned due to the prevalence of the one-time workshop model (Showers & Joyce, 1996). This lack of implementation, as well as research that led to a better understanding of how teachers learn and enact new practices, prompted schools to look for more effective professional development options (Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Feiman-

Nemser, 2001; International Reading Association, 2004). Joyce and Showers (1980) were pioneers in exploring coaching as a way to provide professional development. They believed that "modeling, practice under simulated conditions, and practice in the classroom combined with feedback would be the most productive training design" (p. 384). Within the professional development literature, coaches are viewed as resources that can model new strategies within classrooms, discuss concerns, observe, provide feedback and foster reflection, and in general work side by side with classroom teachers (Darling-Hammond & Skyes, 1999; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001).

Currently, there are many professional development practices that can be categorized under the following areas of coaching: technical coaching, peer coaching, collegial coaching, and cognitive coaching (Gallacher, 1996; *Reading Teacher,* 2004; Showers & Joyce, 1996). Technical coaching is designed to assist teachers in incorporating new curriculum and instructional techniques into classroom practice (Showers & Joyce, 1996; Wong & Nicotera, 2003). Peer coaching focuses on the relationship between two or more colleagues who work together as they reflect on their practices, build and refine new skills, share ideas, and problem solve (Robbins, 1995). Collegial coaching is similar to peer coaching but with a greater focus on reflection. According to Dantonio (2001), "The primary emphasis in collegial coaching is on refining teaching talent through reflective inquiry and collaboration with other teachers" (p. 16). Finally, cognitive coaching is built upon the foundation of clinical supervision and is designed to enhance teachers' instructional perceptions, decisions, and cognitive processing (Costa & Garmston, 1994). Technical and peer coaching focus on supporting teachers' implementation of new strategies and skills, while collegial and cognitive coaching focus on supporting teachers' existing classroom practices.

Although defined separately, the four types of coaching often overlap. Coaching rarely focuses on any "one form of coaching to the exclusion of others" (Swafford, 1998, p. 55). For example, when teachers learn a new curriculum or technique, the use of technical coaching would be appropriate, as assistance from an "expert" colleague would be beneficial. Conversely, as teachers become more proficient with a particular curriculum or technique, cognitive coaching would be appropriate, as it allows for greater reflection and examination of student learning. Teacher needs will often dictate which form of coaching will be the most beneficial. As teachers' needs change, so too should the form of coaching (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 1995).

Research has focused primarily on peer coaching and its impact on teachers. Joyce and Showers (1995) found that when teachers received feedback and in-class coaching, activities and skills transferred into classroom practices. Swafford and colleagues (1997) examined the efficacy of peer coaching during the first year of implementation of an early literacy instructional framework. They found that peer coaching provided teachers with the three kinds of support (technical, emotional, and reflective) that are needed when implementing new instructional practices. That same year, Kohler and colleagues (1997) conducted a study on the effects of peer coaching on teacher outcomes. They found that teachers were more likely to make and sustain procedural refinements when they received coaching than when they enacted instructional innovations independently.

Coaching has been established as an effective form of professional development. Missing from the research, however, are specific studies on individual coaches, thus we know little about how reading coaches interpret and enact their role as coach (Bean, 2007; Dole, 2004). For policymakers and administrators to support reading coaches, they need evidence that reading coaches can increase teachers' skills and students' achievement. A first step to providing this

evidence is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of the reading coach, particularly how reading coaches interpret and enact this role.

Purpose of the Study

The reading coach is a person who is presumably skilled in the areas of reading assessment, instruction, and leadership. Therefore, with the increased emphasis on standards, the reading coach is thought to be a much-needed resource for teachers (Dole & Donaldson, 2006). The recent large-scale coaching movement led by the Reading First Initiative created an immediate need for large numbers of reading coaches without a clear definition of coaches' role, responsibilities, and qualifications. Research has provided little guidance, as the descriptions of reading coaches' responsibilities within the literature are broad. This lack of specificity is because the "quality and quantity of research on the role of the reading coach is almost nonexistent" (Dole & Donaldson, p. 486).

Increasingly, reading coaches are used to deliver professional development with the belief that strong coaching can increase the skill level of teachers; however, it should be noted that professional development and coaching are not synonymous. Professional development can include many of the components of coaching described above, but it can also include teachers' personal professional reading, college courses, teacher collaboration/networks, and subject matter associations, just to name a few (Allington & Cunningham, 2007). The immediacy of the need for reading coaches to deliver professional development has left many school districts adopting a "figure it out as we go" mentality. In addition, the lack of research in this area has created a need within the field for an investigation of how reading coaches interpret and enact their role. Perhaps a better understanding of this can help school districts to maximize coaches potential for improving teachers' reading instruction. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to

investigate how Reading First reading coaches interpret and enact the role of coaching. The

following questions guided my investigation:

- How do Reading First reading coaches define their role?
- How do Reading First reading coaches enact their role?
- What are the influences on their definition and practices?
- What are the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role?

Definition of Terms

As the purpose of this study is to investigate how Reading First reading coaches interpret

and enact the role of coaching, it is helpful to have a shared understanding of what the terms

interpret and enact mean. I use the term interpret to refer to the reading coaches' understandings

and beliefs about coaching and the term enact to refer to the reading coaches' practices. In

addition, various forms of coaching (technical, peer, collegial, and cognitive) have been

explained above and will be further explained in chapter two, however, I have chosen not to

define explicitly the term of coaching, because I want the definition to emerge from the coaches'

experiences and perspectives.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this study I investigated how Reading First reading coaches defined and enacted their role as coach. I also investigated the influences on coaches' definitions and practices as well as the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role. Currently, published guides and position papers provide guidelines for the role, responsibilities, and qualifications of reading coaches; yet, the extent to which these guidelines are followed is unknown. It is important, therefore, to examine the literature on the roles reading coaches play in schools.

To understand more about the role of coaching, the policies that have influenced the use of reading coaches, and the roles, responsibilities, and qualifications of reading coaches, a review of the literature was conducted. In the first section of this review, I examine effective professional development, teacher learning, and the role of coaching. Next, I review the definition of coaching, the roles of the reading coach, and the four models of coaching that are recurrent in the literature – technical, peer, cognitive, and collegial. The third section of this chapter provides a brief history of federal intrusion in reading instruction which leads to a review of the Reading First Initiative, the impact of Reading First on the use of reading coaches, and the role the state plays in defining Reading First reading coaches' role. The final section of this chapter reviews the sparse literature on elementary reading coaches. Included are two evaluation reports and two case studies focused on the role of the elementary reading coach.

Professional Development, Teacher Learning, and Coaching

The rationale for coaching has emerged from research on effective professional development. Professional development is a way to change or improve teachers' instructional

practice. For years, however, many viewed professional development as simply one-shot workshops where teachers went off site to learn new strategies and skills or experts were brought on-site to deliver school-wide workshops (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007; Fullan, 2001; Little, 1993). Concerns about this type of professional development are numerous and include the quality of the program, unavailability of necessary resources, a lack of transfer into classroom practice, and little to no feedback or follow through for classroom teachers (Bean & Morewood, 2007; Norton, 2001; Showers & Joyce, 2002). In place of these one-shot workshops, many educators and researchers have advocated for professional development that is job-embedded, ongoing, related to the work and challenges teachers face in their classrooms, systemic, and carried out by people who are familiar with the context of teachers' work (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Deussen, et al.; Guskey, 2000; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999). Within this more situated perspective of professional development, "how a person learns a particular set of knowledge and skills and the situation in which a person learns, become a fundamental part of what is learned" (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p. 4).

Professional development that is situated in the everyday responsibilities of teaching allows for the immediate implementation of recently learned strategies and skills. It also provides teachers the opportunity to reflect and receive feedback within their own classrooms (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Joyce and Showers, 1995; Smylie, 1989). This type of job embedded professional development connects learning to the real world problems teachers face and is based on the assumption that "the most powerful learning is that which occurs in response to challenges currently being faced by the learner, which allows for immediate application, experimentation, and adaptation on the job" (Sparks & Hirsh, 1997, p. 52). Professional development that allows

for reflection and is ongoing and embedded in teachers' classroom, therefore, provides a powerful context to support teachers' learning (Borko, 2004).

To establish more job-embedded, ongoing professional development, specifically in the area of reading, recent policies have required schools and districts to appoint school-based reading coaches. An example of such a policy is the Reading First Initiative, which aims to improve reading outcomes for students in low performing K-3 schools and is the largest federal initiative to implement coaching. The expectation is that coaches will offer authentic and individualized learning situations that provide different levels of job-embedded support for teacher learning (Knight, 2007). The immediate need for large numbers of reading coaches, created by policies such as Reading First, has led to high levels of variability in the roles and responsibilities of the reading coach, as well as inconsistencies in both the stated and actual qualifications for becoming a reading coach.

To address these concerns, the International Reading Association (IRA) (2004) published a position paper outlining what the reading coach's roles and qualifications should be. According to the IRA, the role of the reading coach is to model in classrooms, observe, provide feedback, and assist teachers in using their students' assessments to plan instruction. In addition, schools and districts are encouraged to hire reading coaches who were able to meet the following minimum qualifications: (a) be excellent teachers of reading, (b) have in depth knowledge of reading processes, acquisition, assessment, and instruction, (c) have expertise in working with teachers to improve their practices, (d) be excellent presenters and group leaders, and (e) have expertise/preparation that enables them to model, observe, and provide feedback to classroom teachers. To meet these minimum qualifications, the IRA foresees coaches needing several years

of teaching experience, graduate coursework in reading, and coursework related to presentation, facilitation, and adult learning.

Evolution of Coaching for Professional Development

Although utilizing reading coaches as a way to provide professional development is a popular trend in today's schools, the concept of coaching is not new (Bean & Morewood, 2007). The concept of coaching has been around since the 1930s. During the early 1980s, Joyce and Showers began to study coaching as a way to improve the quality of professional development. In a review of over 200 studies on in-service training, they examined the research on the ability of teachers to obtain strategies and skills as well as the effectiveness of various kinds of professional development methods (Joyce & Showers, 1980). From this analysis, they were able to identify the following professional development components that impacted teachers' instruction:

- Presentation of theory or description of skill or strategy

- Modeling or demonstration of skills or models of teaching

- Practice in simulated conditions

- Practice in classroom settings

- Structured and open-ended feedback

- Coaching for application – hands on, in-classroom assistance with the transfer of skills and strategies to the classroom (p. 380).

Many of the studies Joyce and Showers reviewed combined a number of the professional development components listed above, but no single study used all of the components together. It was the combination of all of the components together that Joyce and Showers believed would increase teachers' ability to transfer new skills and strategies into classroom practice. Joyce and Showers also believed that classroom teachers could be held responsible for delivering the

professional development components to their peers. The ability of peers to coach one another (peer coaching) was therefore viewed as both a powerful and practical professional development method that could be added to the effective components listed above.

Showers (1982; 1984) confirmed this hypothesis through her findings that peer coaching, after initial professional development, resulted in a greater increase of transfer than professional development alone. Her early studies were focused on individual and small groups of teachers, and results from these studies demonstrated that when teachers were involved in peer coaching, they practiced new strategies and skills more often and more appropriately than teachers who worked alone. One of the key findings from the 1984 study was that once teachers were introduced to the models of coaching, they could coach one another provided they kept current in their own professional development. Peer coaching has since been the focus of the majority of studies on coaching, but peer coaching is just one of several coaching models. The four types of coaching referred to most frequently in literature include technical coaching, peer coaching, collegial coaching, and cognitive coaching.

Coaching Models

Coaching can take on different forms depending on the purposes for coaching and the needs of the teacher (Swafford, 1998). Teachers' needs are not stagnate, and therefore, as teachers' needs change, so too should the form of coaching. In this section, I review the four forms of coaching – technical, peer, collegial, and cognitive – that are recurrent in the literature. It is important to note that there is overlap among the four forms of coaching in both definition and practical application. These similarities, as well as differences, will be explored. An overview of each coaching model is provided in Table 2-1.

Technical Coaching

Technical coaching is a strategy to transfer new teaching practices – often introduced in trainings, staff developments, and workshops – into teachers' regular instructional practices (Barkley, 2005; Poglinco, Bach, Hovde, Rosenblum, Saunders, & Supovitz, 2003; Swafford, 1998). For example, after providing staff development on whisper reading, a reading coach could provide follow-up support by scheduling a time to enter a teacher's classroom and observe her using this new instructional strategy. After the observation, the coach provides the teacher with feedback that relates *only* to the teacher's implementation of the whisper reading strategy. Targeted feedback is often used within technical coaching to improve classroom practices. In addition to helping teachers implement new programs or strategies, technical coaching focuses on the fidelity of implementation of core-instructional program elements (Deussen, et al., 2007).

Within this model, reading coaches often work with specific teachers because (a) these teachers have trouble implementing a skill or (b) a principal requests it. This model is also used with teachers who are new to the profession, school, or curriculum (Bean, 2003; Deussen, et al., 2007). Although technical coaching is supposed to be non-evaluative, a main criticism is that teachers find it too evaluative, and therefore, they are not prone to change their practices (Barkley, 2005; Poglinco, et al., 2003). Some teachers find technical coaching to be stifling; they believe it takes away their professional judgment. There are other teachers, however, who appreciate the explicitness of this coaching model (Deussen, et al., 2007). These teachers are often new to the profession.

Peer Coaching

Peer coaching is similar to technical coaching, because it is designed to be non-evaluative and to promote teachers' development and familiarization of new instructional skills (Kohler, McCullough-Crilley, Shearer, & Good, 1997; Showers & Joyce, 1996; Swafford, 1998). Peer

coaching is a collaborative and confidential process between two professionals of equal status. Teachers support each other by planning instruction, listening to concerns, developing instructional materials, and watching one another work with students (Dantonio, 2001; Joyce & Showers, 1995). The three steps to the peer coaching process are observation, feedback, and coaching. The process begins with one teacher (a peer coach) observing another teacher's instruction. After the observation is complete, the peer coach provides a description of the instruction. Once the feedback is provided, the peer coach and teacher will meet to talk about ways to improve instruction (Gottesman, 2000; Kohler, et al., 1997).

The basic steps to peer coaching described above are promoted by most researchers, with the exception of Joyce and Showers. Contrary to their earlier studies, Joyce and Showers (1995; 2002) now feel that the feedback component of peer coaching should be replaced with a collaborative conversation between the coach and teacher after the observation. According to Joyce and Showers, omitting feedback simplified peer coaching as "learning to provide feedback required extensive training and peer coaches told us they found themselves slipping into supervisor and evaluative comments despite their best intentions to avoid them" (Joyce & Showers, 1995, p. 121). Although the literature frequently cites insufficient training and lack of resources as problems with the feedback portion of the peer coaching model, and despite the claims by Joyce and Showers that peer coaching can be successful without it, feedback has remained a key component of peer coaching (Gottesman, 2000; Poglinco, et al., 2003; Wong & Nicotera, 2003). Overall, peer coaching is often credited with creating a culture of collaboration and professionalism among teachers (Deussen, et al., 2007; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Wong & Nicotera, 2003).

Cognitive Coaching

The aim of cognitive coaching is to improve teachers' existing instructional practice and repertoire of strategies and skills (Joyce & Showers, 1995; 1996; Wong & Nicotera, 2003). Developed by Costa and Garmston (1991), cognitive coaching is a set of non-evaluative practices constructed around a planning conference, lesson observation, and reflection conference. Cognitive coaching is designed to engage teachers in ongoing dialogue about the instructional decisions they make in their classrooms and how their perceptions affect their practice (Swafford, 1998). Costa and Garmston explained,

> A cognitive coach helps a teacher take action toward his/her goals while simultaneously helping the teacher to develop expertise in planning, reflecting, problem solving, and decision-making. These are invisible tools of being a professional, and they are the source of all teachers' choices and behaviors (Costa & Garmston, 2002, p. 13).

For cognitive coaching to foster this type of reflection and professional growth, coaches must have targeted professional development on cognitive coaching prior to entering the role.

The basic principle of cognitive coaching is that enhancing the intellectual capabilities of teachers will in turn produce greater intellectual achievement in students (Costa & Garmston 1994). The three major goals of cognitive coaching are (a) establishing and maintaining trust between participants, (b) facilitating mutual learning, and (c) moving teachers in the direction of autonomy in their practice (Costa & Garmston, 1994; 2002). The desired outcome of cognitive coaching is for teachers to acknowledge the connection between their instructional practices and student performance.

Collegial Coaching

Similar to cognitive coaching, the aim of collegial coaching is to improve teachers' existing practice and repertoire of strategies and skills (Joyce & Showers, 1995; Wong & Nicotera, 2003). Collegial coaching is based on the belief that teachers' growth and development

is dependent upon common values and goals, connectedness, trust, and a respectful inquiry into theory and practice among those within the education profession. This process includes planning, observation of instructional lessons, time for reflection, and debriefing (Dantonio, 2001). Within this model of coaching, a teacher selects an instructional practice to improve. After the teacher has a planning meeting with the coach, the coach conducts a classroom observation. After reflecting on the observation, the coach provides the teacher with specific feedback and guides the teacher in understanding how instructional decisions are affecting student learning (Barkley, 2005).

As with the other forms of coaching, collegial coaching is a form of on-site continual professional development that is collaborative and not evaluative. A common critique of collegial coaching is the large amount of time it takes to properly implement the process. This is problematic as collegial coaches are often practicing classroom teachers who need to be released from instructional duties to fulfill coaching responsibilities (Barkley, 2005; Dantonio, 2001). On the other hand, because classroom teachers are responsible for implementing this coaching model, it encourages teachers to support each other as they take on new leadership roles (Dantonio, 2001).

Summary of Coaching Models

The coaching models described in this section are intended to be non-evaluative and focused on improving classroom teachers' instruction. There are similarities and differences among the four coaching models. For example, technical and peer coaching share a "concern for learning and implementing innovations in curriculum and instruction, whereas collegial and cognitive coaching appear to aim more at the improving of existing practice and repertoire" (Joyce & Showers, 1995, p. 122). In addition, classroom teachers are often used as the coach in the peer and collegial coaching models, while a more knowledgeable peer or expert is used in the

technical and cognitive coaching models. Policies, specifically the Reading First Initiative, have

not recommended one type of coaching model over the others. Rather, the focus has been on

reading coaches providing teachers with professional development that is centered on the

effective use of scientifically research-based practices. Within NCLB (2001), scientifically based

reading research is defined as "research that applies rigorous, systematic and objective

procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and

reading difficulties." In the following section, I provide a brief history of federal intrusion in

reading instruction, which leads to the reading coach's role within the Reading First Initiative.

Federal Intrusion in Reading Instruction

For almost 25 years, the federal government has taken a keen interest in reading

instruction, and this interest has prompted several national syntheses of the reading literature.

Three of the most influential publications on recent reading policies are *Becoming a Nation of*

Readers (Anderson, 1985), *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print* (Adams,

1990), and *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Published at the beginning, middle, and end of the contemporary reading wars – the debate

between whole language versus skills based instruction – each of these reports supported a

balanced approach to reading, while also emphasizing the need for phonemic awareness and

phonics instruction during early reading stages. Shortly after the publication of *Preventing*

Reading Difficulties, the U.S. Congress formed the National Reading Panel (NRP) to review the

most "scientific" research on reading acquisition and instruction. No doubt influenced by the

earlier studies, the NRP (2000) published a report with the following key findings: (a) students

need to spend more time reading and writing, (b) students need systematic instruction in

phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension strategies, (c) assessment

and instruction are inextricably linked, and (d) assessment should be viewed as a dynamic and

ongoing process that leads to instructional decision making. The conclusions found within the report are consistent with the earlier syntheses of the reading literature which indicated a need for a strong emphasis on phonemic awareness and phonics, while also promoting a balanced approach to reading instruction (Pearson, 2004).

The findings within the NRP report were used to influence the federal legislation of No Child Left Behind (2001) and the Reading First Initiative, however, as Pearson (2004) cautioned, "research is often used in a selective, uneven, and opportunistic manner by policymakers" (p. 240). The NRP report, for example, stated that systematic phonics instruction was beneficial for K-1 students based on scientifically research-based evidence. Although this scientific evidence did not extend to students beyond first grade, policymakers chose to extend it to the upper elementary grades. Their rationale was that students must master phonics before further reading instruction can take place, however, there is no evidence to support the effectiveness of systematic phonics instruction with students past first grade.

In addition to criticizing how NCLB and Reading First used the results from the NRP report, critics questioned the panel's methods for selecting research studies. Critics claimed that the analysis of a limited number of studies caused certain areas of reading instruction (comprehension and vocabulary) to be neglected (Mitchell & Reutzel, 2003; Vogt & Shearer, 2007). The panel's attempt to include only meta-analyses, for example, meant all qualitative research was ignored, which ensured the exclusion of the research on whole language (i.e. literature-based reading, process writing, and integrated language-arts instruction). Although criticized, policymakers' interpretations of the NRP report have influenced the federal legislation of No Child Left Behind (2001) and the Reading First Initiative, which has now "assumed the role of conventional wisdom in reading instruction" (Pearson, 2004, p. 220).

The Reading First Initiative

Reading First is the largest early reading initiative, with over 1 billion dollars awarded annually to Reading First schools across the nation. To qualify for this funding, schools must serve K-3 students, be classified as high poverty (96% of Reading First schools are also Title I schools), have a majority of students reading below grade level, and agree to use scientifically research based assessments, materials, and professional development. *Scientifically research-based* has become a catchphrase within recent reading policies and is generally defined as research that "applies rigorous, systematic and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development instruction and difficulties" (Gasme, Bloom, Kemple, & Jacob, 2008). Once granted, the Reading First funding can be used for access to reading materials, reporting data, evaluation strategies, professional development, reading assessments, and core reading programs that focus on the five areas of reading. The five areas of reading as defined by the National Reading Panel (2000) are:

- Phonemic Awareness – ability to hear, manipulate and identify individual sounds in spoken words.

- Phonics – understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes and graphemes.

- Vocabulary – knowing the meaning and pronunciation of words necessary for communication: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- Fluency – ability to monitor rate and prosody while reading text accurately.

- Comprehension – ability to understand, remember and communicate with others about what has been read.

Applications for Reading First grants were submitted between July 2002 and September 2003; subgrants were awarded to 1,809 school districts and 5,880 schools. In the state of Florida, there were 45 Reading First school districts and 583 Reading First schools. During the 2003 through 2009 school years, Florida received a total of 300 million dollars. Although

nationwide Reading First directly impacted only 13% of school districts and 6% of schools, the impact of the initiative was much broader as more than 50% of all Reading First districts reported using elements of Reading First in non Reading First schools (Scott, 2007).

Purpose of Reading First

The purpose of the Reading First Initiative was to ensure that all children were reading on grade level by the end of third grade. To attain this goal, Reading First schools were required to implement a core reading program (typically a basal reading series in Florida), provide 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction each day, assess students' progress in the five areas of reading with measures that are reliable and valid (DIBELS was used in Florida), and provide teachers with professional development that was job embedded and ongoing. In Florida, the *Just Read, Florida!* office, established by then Governor Jeb Bush, managed the implementation of Reading First with the assistance of the Reading First Professional Development (RFPD), which was housed at the University of Central Florida. The RFPD was comprised of 30 regional coordinators, who offered support to Reading First schools by working with reading coaches during summer programs and quarterly trainings. Regional coordinators ensured fidelity to the core-reading program and offered reading coaches guidance in professional development activities.

Reading First Reading Coach

The Reading First Initiative required that every Reading First school have a reading coach. This requirement was put into place for the following reasons: (a) an evaluation of the Reading Excellence Act (1998) indicated that schools had consistently higher levels of implementation when a coach was used, (b) coaches who have knowledge in scientifically based reading instruction are the best way to ensure transfer of concepts after teacher in-service, and (c) coaches can coordinate state professional development with district professional development.

Prior to Reading First, reading coaches were not commonly found within schools and school districts. Many researchers contend that Reading First helped highlight the supportive role of reading coaches who can assist teachers in delivering quality reading instruction to students who need it the most (Dole, Liang, Watkins, & Wiggins, 2006).

Although Reading First was a federal initiative, it was the responsibility of individual states to determine how the components of Reading First, including the reading coach, would be enacted. In Florida, this responsibility fell to the *Just Read, Florida!* office. In response to this need, the *Just Read, Florida!* office developed a coaching model, which described the reading coach's role, responsibilities, and minimum requisite qualifications. According to this model, coaches were responsible for providing initial and ongoing professional development to teachers in the five areas of reading, and coaches were responsible for administering and analyzing instructional assessments. In addition, the coaching model outlined the following responsibilities of coaches:

- Model effective instructional strategies for teachers

- Facilitate study groups

- Train teachers in data analysis and using data to differentiate instruction

- Coach and mentor colleagues

- Provide daily support to classroom teachers

- Work with teachers to ensure that research-based reading programs are implemented with fidelity

- Help to increase instructional density to meet the needs of all students

- Help lead and support school reading leadership teams

- Continue to increase their own knowledge base in best practices in reading instruction, intervention, and instructional reading strategies

- Report coach logs bi-weekly through Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN)

- Work with all teachers in the school

- Work with students in whole and small group instruction in the context of modeling and coaching in other teachers' classrooms

This coaching model also specified that reading coaches should spend limited time administering and coordinating assessments, and they may not be assigned a regular classroom teaching assignment nor used to perform administrative duties that would confuse their role for teachers.

The state coaches' model also outlined the minimum qualifications for reading coaches. These minimum qualifications included: experience as a successful classroom teacher, knowledge of scientifically based reading research, expertise in quality reading instruction, strong knowledge base in working with adult learners, data management skills, excellent communication skills, and outstanding presentation, interpersonal, and time management skills. In addition, the reading coach was required to have a bachelor's degree, advanced coursework or professional development in reading, and an endorsement or certification in K-12 reading. If reading coaches were not currently endorsed or certified, then they should be working toward that goal by completing a minimum of two reading endorsement competencies equaling 60 in-service hours or 6 semester hours of college coursework in reading per year. The qualifications required by the *Just Read, Florida!* office also satisfied the qualifications recommended by IRA (2004), which were reviewed earlier in chapter two.

Summary of the Reading First Initiative

Reading First, a component of NCLB, was basically a funding stream aimed at improving reading instruction in low performing K-3 schools. The initiative was based on the 2000 report by the National Reading Panel, and appropriated approximately 1 billion dollars annually to Reading First schools to be used on reading curricula that focused on the five areas of reading,

scientifically research-based professional development, and the diagnosis and prevention of early reading difficulties.

The reading coach, the focus of this study, was only one component of the Reading First Initiative. The role and qualifications of the reading coach were not defined within the initiative; rather, this responsibility fell to states and in Florida – the *Just Read, Florida!* office. As described above, the *Just Read, Florida!* office outlined reading coaches' role, responsibilities, and qualifications. Some of the descriptions provided in the outline, however, were broad, and it is unclear how closely schools were implementing the directives.

Studies of Coaching

Joyce and Showers (1980) reviewed over 200 studies on coaching and professional development and determined that for professional development to be effective, it needed to include follow up for classroom teachers in the form of modeling, practice in simulated and classroom conditions, feedback, and hands-on assistance. Their examination of the literature was comprehensive and included a multitude of subject areas and grade levels. The studies reviewed, however, occurred prior to the National Reading Panel report (2000), NCLB (2001), and Reading First – all policies that have had a direct impact on teachers' professional development and instructional practices, specifically in the area of reading. The above policies have also sparked interest in the use of reading coaches to provide professional development. This increased interest is evident in the position papers recently published on the role of coaches and reading professionals by the International Reading Association (2004; 2007), the increase of coaching editorials in *Reading Today* and *Reading Teacher*, as well as the increased number of "how-to" guides for reading coaches. Unfortunately, this interest in coaching has yet to produce much peer-reviewed research (Dole, 2004; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Walpole & Blamey, 2008).

The focus of this section is on specific investigations of elementary reading coaches that were published after the report of the National Reading Panel (2000). I found four studies that met the above criteria. These studies were particularly relevant to this study as their focus was on understanding and defining the role of elementary reading coaches. Two of the studies were evaluation reports. One was commissioned by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2007) and identified the five categories of literacy coaches in Reading First, while the second was commissioned by the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and examined reading coaches within America's Choice schools. The remaining two studies were case studies. The first, conducted by Rainville and Jones (2008), utilized Gee's (1999) situated identities to examine how one reading coach used power and positioning while engaging with teachers. The second case study, by Walpole and Blamey (2008), examined Reading Excellence schools and how principals and reading coaches conceptualized the coach's role. In the following sections the above studies will be explored in greater detail.

Evaluation Report – Five Categories of Reading First Reading Coaches

In one of the first reports designed to examine Reading First reading coaches, Deussen and her colleagues (2007) surveyed and interviewed K-3 teachers and reading coaches in 203 schools in Alaska, Arizona, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming. The researchers relied primarily on data from surveys, which included over 200 items and were designed to measure attitudes and practices within Reading First schools. Interview data were also collected from 38% of the Reading First schools across the five states. Using a semi-structured protocol, reading coaches were interviewed for an average of 90 minutes and were asked about their roles, responsibilities, successes, challenges, how they selected teachers to work with, and how they worked with resistant teachers. Interview data were then used to validate and explain survey data.

This study was guided by the following questions: Who becomes a reading coach, and what background, skills, and qualifications do coaches bring to their jobs? How do coaches perform their jobs, that is, how do they spend their time, and what do they see as their focus? Answering the first research question, Deussen and her colleagues found that while most reading coaches were experienced teachers with an average of 17 years in the classroom, less than 30% had any prior experience in coaching. With regards to reading coaches' educational backgrounds, 58% had graduate degrees, but only 38% of those degrees were in a literacy related field. In addition, 61% of the reading coaches were hired from within their current schools where they had worked for an average of 10 years. To answer the second research question on how coaches performed their role, the researchers used both cluster and qualitative analyses to identify five categories of coaches: data-oriented, student-oriented, managerial, and two types of teacher-oriented – one focused on working with individual teachers and the other focused on working with groups of teachers.

- Data-oriented coaches spent on average 45% of their workweek on data and assessment-related tasks. They described the focus of their work as facilitating the connection between data and instruction.

- Student-oriented coaches spent more time than other coaches working directly with students and the least (on average just 14%) working with teachers. They viewed helping students as their central task.

- Managerial coaches spent a substantial portion of their time keeping systems running in their schools – facilitating meetings and maintaining paperwork.

- Teacher-oriented coaches spent comparatively little time on paperwork and data-related tasks; they viewed themselves as providers of professional development for teachers. They spent between 41-52% of their time working directly with teachers – both individually and in small groups.

The five categories of coaches were identified from survey and interview data. Once identified, the researchers explored reading coaches' educational background, prior experiences, school size, and state of employment in relation to coach category. After investigating these

possible relationships, Deussen and her colleagues found that the only statistically significant relationship was between how coaches performed their job (coach category) and the state in which coaches worked. The responsibility of states to organize, plan, and deliver professional development and technical assistance to reading coaches within Reading First schools was a possible reason for the relationship between coach category and state of employment. This finding revealed the responsibility and opportunity of states to influence how reading coaches' work within their schools and districts.

Evaluation Report – Coaches' Role in America's Choice Schools

In a 2003 evaluation report, Poglinco and her colleagues examined the various aspects of the coach's role in the implementation of America's Choice. America's Choice offers a set of principles to schools and districts aimed at helping all students meet academic standards. These principles include: high expectations for all students, implementation of standards based literacy programs focused on five areas of reading, using student assessment as a way to inform instruction, and school embedded, ongoing, professional development led by a reading coach. Classroom observations and interviews from principals, teachers, and coaches were collected from 18 elementary schools and 9 middle schools for a total of 130 interviews and 71 classroom observations. The data collected from observations and interviews were focused on teachers' and coaches' understandings and viewpoints of the America's Choice literacy workshops. In addition, all observations were rated based on an implementation scale developed by America's Choice.

The researchers found that coaches' ability to effectively enact their role was attributable to coach's personality, the time available for interactions with individual teachers, and the ability to be flexible while still adhering to the principles of America's Choice. The researchers also found two barriers that prevented coaches from coaching teachers effectively – coaches being

asked to take on additional responsibilities that had little to do with coaching and the general ambiguity of the coaches' role. Finally, reading coaches' previous experiences were found to be both barriers and facilitators, depending on the coach and the school. For example, in some cases it was helpful to hire coaches from within the school, because those coaches already had a rapport with teachers. In other cases, hiring from within put a strain on the coach/teacher relationship, as the teachers viewed the coach as an administrator or supervisor.

Poglinco and her colleagues concluded that reading coaches were an invaluable support to teachers as they enacted America's Choice principles in their classroom instruction. The researchers also concluded that to maximize the positive impact of school-based coaching, reading coaches needed a more detailed job description, excellent communication skills, experience as a teacher, success in training adults, ongoing support of the principal, and prior training on coaching and standards based reform.

Case Study – Exploration of Reading Coach's Identity

Rainville and Jones (2008) explored how one reading coach, Kate, negotiated her identity as she worked with three different teachers. Kate was a participant in a larger qualitative study involving case studies of three reading coaches and how they negotiated their identities across classroom and school settings. The data collection for the larger study took place across four months and included 30 hours of observation, two interviews per reading coach, as well as lesson plans, student work samples, and memos. All data were analyzed using Gee's (1999) theory and method of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is used to analyze social interactions and in this study assisted the researchers in interpreting how reading coaches used language in "combination with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies and distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling and believing to build activities and identities that represent their (coaches) social worlds" (Rainville & Jones, p. 442).

In this study, Rainville and Jones provided a snapshot of Kate as she interacted with three different teachers beginning with Lynn. Lynn and Kate were friends outside of school and the researchers portrayed Kate seamlessly shifting identities from that of a friend (the two giggling about being videotaped) to that of a knowledgeable colleague (when Kate examined student work with Lynn). The second exchange took place between Kate and Mr. Blue, when the two were reviewing a student's running record. Mr. Blue appeared to resent Kate's attempt to teach him how to use running records—an assessment he saw as insignificant. His resistance caused Kate to struggle in her role as the *knower*, as Mr. Blue appeared to not want or need her support. The final section captured Kate as she conducted a book study with five fifth grade teachers. In this situation, Kate took on the identity of co-learner, careful not to lead the conversation, while still pushing the teachers' discussion in the direction of her underlying goals.

In this case study, Kate was portrayed as a knowledgeable colleague, friend, co-learner, and outsider. Generalizing Kate's experience to that of other coaches, the researchers concluded that: (a) power struggles occur less often when the coach and teacher had an informal (or friendly) relationship, (b) the coach taking on the role of co-learner can encourage teachers to take control of their own professional development, and (c) when coach and teacher have different expectations of the coach's role, resistance can occur. The researchers concluded by stating that ongoing support for coaches is needed and should include role-playing scenarios, analyzing videos of teacher/coach interactions, and working through scenarios like the one of Kate and Mr. Blue.

Case Study – Dual Roles of Reading Coaches

In 2008, Walpole and Blamey published a multiple case study with 31 participants (14 principals and 17 reading coaches) to describe how coaches' experiences differ depending on school site and principal. This study was set in 20 Reading Excellence Act elementary schools,

with all participants required to attend professional development conducted by the first author. The required professional development consisted of two 3-day summer institutes, monthly meetings, and book studies for a total of 108 professional development hours. Interviews were the primary data source. Each participant was interviewed after the completion of professional development activities for the year. Data were analyzed using grounded theory.

From analysis of principal interviews, Walpole and Blamey found that the principals viewed reading coaches as either mentors or directors. "Mentor" coaches maintained both a personal and professional relationship with teachers, designing professional development, facilitating teacher study groups, and modeling classroom instruction. "Director" coaches, on the other hand, were responsible for managing materials, scheduling intervention groups, and promoting fidelity to the assessment and curriculum programs used within the schools. These two categories of coaches were then applied to the reading coaches' data. All reading coaches, with the exception of one whose role was more of a tutor for struggling students, fit into the principal identified roles of mentor and director coaches. The analysis of the reading coaches' data also revealed that all coaches, regardless of director or mentor role, spent a portion of their coaching time summarizing school data, observing instruction, and providing feedback.

In this study, coaching was used as a way to implement a new school-wide initiative. The reading coaches within the study, however, did not have a clear definition of their role within their schools and relied on guidance from their principals. The researchers, therefore, believed that how principals viewed reading coaches' roles (either as director or mentor) played an essential role in how reading coaches' would ultimately conceptualize their role.

Summary of Studies on Coaching in Elementary Schools

The literature on elementary reading coaches published since NCLB (2001), though sparse, described reading coaches as experienced classroom teachers who had little experience in

coaching. For some coaches lack of experience was viewed as a barrier as they attempted to enact their role. Another barrier that many coaches faced was an uncertainty of their role within their school. In some cases this ambiguity led to both teacher resistance and reading coaches being asked to take on responsibilities that had little do with coaching teachers.

The research literature also demonstrated that reading coaches' roles are categorized in a variety of ways: data-oriented, student-oriented, teacher-oriented, managerial, mentor, director, friend, knowledgeable colleague, co-learner, and outsider. Federal initiatives, state mandates, principals' conceptualizations, and teachers' preconceptions were all contributors to the different ways coaches' roles were categorized. Further studies on how coaches interpret and enact their role within schools are needed to better understand the complexities of coaching in today's schools.

Conclusion

This literature review has shown coaching to be a key component in delivering site-based professional development. Although reading coaches are a somewhat new phenomenon in today's schools, coaching is not, as it has existed since the 1930s. It was during the early 1980s, however, that coaching was viewed as a way to make professional development more effective thus leading to several coaching models. This led to recent policies, namely the Reading First Initiative, requiring the use of reading coaches as a way to provide teachers with job-embedded and ongoing professional development. Although Reading First is a federal initiative, the job of defining the role, responsibilities, and qualifications of the reading coach were left to the states. For example, in Florida, the *Just Read, Florida!* office has provided schools and districts with a coaching model that describes the requisite responsibilities and qualifications for reading coaches. It is unclear, however, how closely schools and coaches follow states' directives.

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As revealed in the review of empirical studies on elementary reading coaches, coaching has focused on how coaches enact their roles, implement school-based programs, and interact with teachers. Additionally, the literature shed light on the role principals play in determining reading coaches' roles within schools. The previous studies relied primarily on self-report (interviews and surveys) data, and the findings focused on the enactment of coaching roles and the variables (i.e. previous teaching experience, educational background, detailed job description) influencing this enactment. Only one of the four studies (Rainville & Jones, 2008) spent an extended amount of time observing coaches within the school. The findings of this study were focused on the interactions between reading coaches and teachers and how those interactions change depending on context.

Previous studies have shed some light on the various ways coaches enact their role, but more research is needed. In addition, information is needed on how reading coaches interpret and enact their roles as well as the influences on their definitions and practice. Better understandings of how reading coaches interpret and enact their role are important, because if a better understanding can be gained of how reading coaches interpret and enact their role, perhaps we can maximize their potential for improving teachers' reading instruction.

Therefore, a next step is to explore how reading coaches interpret and enact their role by identifying the influences, similarities and differences among coaches' definitions and practice. Through extensive time in the field (over 25 hours per coach) and the collection of both self-report data (interviews and coaches' logs) and observations, I attempted to fill the aforementioned gap in the literature and address the issue of how reading coaches' interpret and enact their role. Additionally, I focused only on how reading coaches (as opposed to teachers, principals, or students) interpret and enact the coaching role. This singular focus on the reading

coach was intentional, as few studies have conducted in-depth case studies on reading coaches alone.

This study will add to our knowledge on how reading coaches interpret and enact their role, while also identifying the influences, similarities, and differences among reading coaches' definitions and enactments. Perhaps by gaining better understandings of how reading coaches interpret and enact their role, their potential for improving teachers' reading instruction can be maximized.

Table 2-1. Similarities and differences among coaching models

Coaching model	Purpose	Who coaches	Weakness	Strength
Technical	Assist teachers in implementing new instructional practices	Expert or highly experienced peer	Suppresses teachers' professional judgments	Very explicit
Peer	Assist teachers in implementing new instructional practices	Peer	Coaches are insufficiently trained Lack of resources in school	Collaboration among peers
Cognitive	Improve teachers' existing practice	Expert or highly experienced peer	Coaches require much training	Fosters teacher reflection
Collegial	Improve teachers' existing practice	Peer	Requires a large amount of time to implement properly	Encourages teachers to take on leadership roles

CHAPTER 3
FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The goal of qualitative research is to understand the world from the perspective of those who live in it (Hatch, 2002). Hence, qualitative methods were well suited for this investigation as its purpose was to investigate how Reading First reading coaches interpret and enact the role of coaching. In this chapter I describe the theoretical perspective and the methods I employed when conducting this study.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective framing this study was constructivism. Constructivism rejects the notion of objective knowledge, taking the opposite view that what is believed to be true is constructed based on perspective (Schwandt, 1994). A basic belief of constructivists, therefore, is that individuals should be viewed as active agents, acquiring knowledge about the world through experiences with their environments (Crotty, 1998). The different ways individuals experience and perceive their environment result in different constructions of meaning, even in relation to the same phenomenon. As a result, multiple knowledges can coexist and change due to individuals' constructions becoming more sophisticated and informed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Within a constructivist perspective, individuals' perceptions and meaning making are of primary importance as is the relationship between researcher and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In qualitative research it is always necessary to acknowledge the researcher's role. This is particularly important within a constructivist perspective in which the researcher's primary responsibility is to frame the study and interpret the data (Patton, 2002). The connections among researcher, participants, and the phenomenon being studied result in the findings emerging as the study develop (Charmaz, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). With this in mind, I examined how

reading coaches interpret and enact their roles within Reading First schools as a way to inform existing constructions.

In this study, I examined the ways reading coaches construct and carry out their role of coach. It is presupposed that the knowledge reading coaches have for role construction and implementation is acquired from multiple sources, such as previous teaching experience, educational background, school environment, professional development opportunities, and federal/state policies. By employing the constructivist perspective, I am acknowledging that reading coaches are individuals who, regardless of their similar or dissimilar backgrounds, will each perceive and interpret their role of coaching somewhat differently.

Knowledge created within the constructivist framework is often presented in the form of case studies. Hatch (2002) referred to case studies as "special kind of qualitative work that investigates a contextualized phenomenon within specified boundaries" (p. 30). A bounded phenomenon, or unit of analysis, can include a person, an event, an institution, a program, or a process (Merriam, 2002). The data collection and analysis procedures employed for case studies are similar to those employed for other qualitative studies. In my study, I have identified the unit of analysis, or bounded phenomenon, as the reading coach and her interpretations and enactment of her role as coach.

Study Design

Pilot Work

In the spring of 2008, I conducted a pilot study. Two reading coaches, Michelle and Dorothy (pseudonyms), were selected for this study. I selected these coaches based on teacher recommendations of outstanding coaches. I collected interviews, observations, and artifacts from each coach. A detailed timeline of interviews and observations is provided in Table 3-1 and Table 3-2.

From the pilot study, I refined my data collection methods, and I discovered that each reading coach is required by the state of Florida to keep a coach's log. The reading coach's log is a form developed by the state of Florida and breaks the reading coach's role into the following twelve categories: professional development, planning, modeling lessons, coaching, coach-teacher conferences, student assessment, data reporting, data analysis, meetings, knowledge building, managing reading materials, and other. In addition, work from the pilot study allowed me to test and refine interview protocols so they more closely aligned with the research questions and observations. For example, within the pilot study the question "What challenges do you face as a reading coach?" was adjusted to "As you think of yesterday (when I was there to observe) what event or situation challenged you the most? How did you handle this challenge?" Finally, the pilot study demonstrated that observations needed to extend to the length of a school day to capture a variety of reading coaches' daily responsibilities. The observations also needed to be targeted – focused on what the reading coach defined as the main components of her job. Once the reading coach identified these components, it was important to view them in observations.

The predominant theme found within the pilot study was the need for the coach to have a flexible schedule to meet the school's needs. Michelle and Dorothy thought the autonomy their role afforded them was a necessity, because it enabled them to meet the needs of both the teachers and the school. This autonomy, however, also contributed to them assuming the following responsibilities: teaching daily science lessons, sitting in on parent/teacher conferences, classroom walkthroughs, teaching first grade for a month, setting up student assessments, running data reports and meetings, assessing students, finding materials, meeting with teachers, arranging teacher collaboration, attending district meetings, working with student intervention groups, and organizing and administering the schools' after-school tutoring

programs. Both Dorothy and Michelle agreed that several of the above responsibilities should have been carried out by a classroom teacher, substitute teacher, or administrator.

Sample Selection

Using criterion-sampling methods, I invited four reading coaches to participate in this study. The selection process was purposeful to provide information-rich cases (Patton, 2002). This study focused on reading coaches who worked full time in Reading First elementary schools within North Central Florida school districts. To recruit reading coaches, I asked county literacy directors to recommend two to three reading coaches whom they believed possessed the characteristics and knowledge of skilled reading coaches. The interview protocol for the county literacy directors is included in Appendix A. The recommended reading coaches were then invited to participate with the permission of both the University of Florida Institutional Review Board (Appendix C) and county school boards. I contacted potential participants via email or phone at their individual school sites. Participation was strictly voluntary. In the following sections, information is provided about each reading coach including prior experiences, educational background, and school context. A summary of each reading coach and her school context information is provided in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4. All names, including school and county names, have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Bonnie: Bonnie was a Caucasian reading coach in her mid-fifties. She was completing her sixth year as a Reading First reading coach at Baxter Elementary, a rural K-5 elementary school in County B in Florida. Bonnie had a B.A. in elementary education and a reading endorsement. Prior to becoming the reading coach Bonnie taught second grade at Baxter Elementary for eight years. Baxter Elementary had 740 students and 50 teachers and was a Title I school where 50% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 17% were minority.

Teaching was a second career for Bonnie, who wanted a bachelor's degree and thought that education would provide her with an outlet to be creative. Although Bonnie enjoyed teaching, she also enjoyed change stating, "I like change and changing all the time, so when they started talking about needing a coach I thought well that sounds interesting and new and different" (09.03.2008). Bonnie also admitted that while she loves her current position as the reading coach at Baxter Elementary, she would like to do something else one day. Bonnie was approached by the *Just Read, Florida!* office about becoming a Reading First coordinator and was interested in pursuing this position but without a master's degree, she was unable.

Karen: Karen, like Bonnie, was a Caucasian reading coach in her mid-fifties. Karen was completing her third year as a Reading First reading coach at Kenwood Elementary, a neighborhood K-5 elementary school in County B in Florida. Karen had both a B.A. and a M.A. in elementary education as well as a reading endorsement. Kenwood Elementary has 325 students and 36 teachers and was a Title I school where 91% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 96% were minorities.

Prior to becoming a reading coach, Karen was a classroom teacher for 13 years. She transferred to Kenwood Elementary to become the school's math coach, a one-year grant funded position. By the end of that school year, the school's reading coach had transferred to a district administrative position, and the principal asked Karen to become the school's reading coach. Although Karen enjoyed being the reading coach at Kenwood Elementary, she realized that when Reading First ended she might be back in the classroom. She was happy with that prospect stating, "And if that happens it just happens. I'll do what I was doing before, what I have spent years doing. It is no big deal either way."

Sarah: Sarah, in her mid-fifties and Caucasian, was completing her sixth year as a Reading First reading coach at Sanders Elementary, a K-5 elementary school in County A in Florida. Sarah had both a B.A. and a M.A in elementary education as well as a reading endorsement. Prior to becoming a reading coach, Sarah was a classroom teacher for 17 years – two of those years were in second grade at Sanders Elementary. Sanders Elementary had 540 students and 44 teachers and was a Title I school where 74% of students were on free and reduced lunch and 71% were minority.

Sarah had 17 years of experience in kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms and then accepted a three-year position as a teacher on assignment. As a teacher on assignment, Sarah's job was to visit district elementary schools and assist classroom teachers in aligning their instruction with state standards. When this position ended Sarah returned to Sanders Elementary as a reading coach under the Coach's Model Grant—a one-year position funded through the *Just Read, Florida!* office. After the year was over, Sarah's principal created a position similar to a reading coach called a reading facilitator. Sarah was the reading facilitator at Sanders Elementary until the school was awarded the Reading First grant in 2003. Then Sarah became the school's Reading First reading coach.

Janice: Janice was African American and in her early-forties. She was completing her second year as a Reading First reading coach at Jefferson Elementary, a K-5 elementary school in County A in Florida. Janice had a B.A in Journalism and was alternatively certified as an elementary teacher. She was working on an M.A. in special education with a reading endorsement at a nearby university. Prior to becoming a reading coach, Janice was a classroom teacher for two years and a reading tutor for three years – all at Jefferson Elementary. Jefferson

Elementary had 520 students and 45 teachers and was a Title I school where 85% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 98% were minority.

After completing two years as a classroom teacher – one year in fourth grade and one year in kindergarten – Janice became a reading tutor at Jefferson Elementary and was responsible for providing reading interventions to struggling students. As Janice finished her third year as reading tutor, the reading coach position became available when the previous reading coach accepted the position of curriculum resource teacher. With the encouragement of her principal, Janice applied for the Reading First reading coach position and was offered the position during year five of the six year Reading First grant. As she entered her second year as reading coach Janice was the newest reading coach in both her county and this study.

Data Collection

Data (interviews, observations, and artifacts) were collected during the fall 2008 semester. A detailed description of data collection procedures is provided in the following sections, and a timeline of the interviews and observations for each participant is provided in Table 3-5.

Interviews: Qualitative researchers often use interviews as a way to uncover how participants experience and make sense of their world (Spradley, 1979). Lincoln and Guba (1985) identified five common outcomes of interviews: here and now constructions, reconstructions, projections, triangulation, and member checking. Within my study, interviews were the primary data source and were used to achieve the five outcomes listed above.

Formal interviews are often referred to as structured, semi-structured, or in-depth, and in a sense, they are all three. As Hatch (2002) explained, formal interviews are structured because the researcher is leading the interview and has established a time and place for the interview. They are semi-structured because the researcher will often bring guiding questions to the

interview but is willing to veer from the questions when the participant leads the interview in other areas of interest. Finally, formal interviews are considered in-depth because they are intended to explore deeply participants' understandings (Hatch, 2002).

Four formal interviews (Appendix B) were conducted with each of the four reading coaches. Each interview lasted between 45 to 65 minutes and took place at the reading coaches' schools. A set of guiding questions focused each interview on the different aspects of the role of coaching as well as the events that took place during observations. Interview one focused on the background knowledge of each coach as well as her perception of the role of reading coach. The second interview focused on events that occurred during the first observation, how each reading coach spent her time, and the challenges she perceived within the coaching role. The third interview focused on the events that occurred during the second observation, job satisfaction, and professional development (the development she offered as the coach and the development she attended as a way to increase her knowledge). The fourth interview focused on events that occurred during the third observation and the relationship between the reading coach and teachers, administrators, district, and state personnel.

Observations: In qualitative research, the goal of observation is to understand that which is being studied from the perspective of the participant (Hatch, 2002). Observations allow the researcher to have a direct connection to the participants and how they understand their setting. Observations also allow the researcher to view things that participants may take for granted and neglect to mention during an interview (Patton, 1990). When observations are used in a constructivist study, the researcher generally assumes a moderate to active level of participation (Hatch, 2002). In my study, I engaged in a moderate level of participation during observations. I was identifiable as the researcher and typically interacted with the people in the setting (Dewalt

& Dewalt, 2002). In essence, I was the reading coach's shadow, following the coach as she engaged in daily school activities.

Each reading coach was observed three times during the fall 2008 semester. Observations were targeted to view the key responsibilities coaches described in the first interview. In addition, observations helped contextualize the interview responses and assisted in the formation of subsequent interview questions. All observations were scheduled in advance and lasted approximately seven hours, the average length of an elementary school day. I used informal interviews during observations. Informal interviews are unstructured conversations that often occur during observations and provide the reading coaches with an opportunity to explain their perspective within the immediate context of the situation (Hatch, 2002). I did not tape record informal interviews, but I did take extensive field notes throughout the observations. Immediately following each observation, I put the field notes into expanded form, with researcher interpretations and reflections bracketed (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2002). Observations occurred at roughly the beginning, middle, and end of the fall 2008 semester. A detailed schedule of all interviews and observations is included in Table 3-5.

Artifacts: In qualitative research, artifacts are defined as items that participants use in the everyday activity of that which is being studied (Hatch, 2002). Collecting these artifacts can give "alternative insights into the ways people think and act" (Hatch, p. 117). I collected artifacts as a secondary data source for triangulation purposes (which will be described in later sections) and as a way to gather additional information from participants. Artifacts were not analyzed using the Developmental Research Sequence.

Within the state of Florida, reading coaches must enter their activities into a bi-weekly reading coaches' log. Although the categories are predetermined, each reading coach decides

how to report her division of time. I requested monthly coach's logs from the participants for the months that data were collected, September through December.

Data Analysis

Within qualitative research, data analysis is viewed as a search for patterns. In this study, Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence (DRS) was used as a way to guide analysis procedures. Within the DRS model, the following four levels of analysis are identified: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and identification of cultural themes. Spradley (1979) defines the term *culture* as the "acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior" (p. 6). In this study, culture refers to the ways reading coaches use their knowledge to interpret and enact their role in the context of their school. Data analysis occurred concurrently with data collection. Within and across cases, I used each of the four levels of analysis listed above, borrowing heavily from Spradley (1980) in terms of language and process. My analysis methods are explained below.

Domain analysis: Domains are categories of meaning made up of three basic elements: cover term, included terms, and semantic relationship. A cover term is the name for a cultural domain, and the included terms are the names for the smaller categories inside the domain. The third element is the semantic relationship, which links the cover term and the included terms. An example of a domain is provided in Table 3-6.

The first step in domain analysis is to code all data. I coded interview transcripts and observation field notes using Spradley's (1980) universal semantic relationships. The following are definitions and examples of the nine universal semantic relationships. The first relationship is strict inclusion (X is a kind of Y): A reading coach is a kind of support for teachers. The second relationship is spatial (X is a place in Y): The coach's office is a place in the school library. The third is cause-effect (X is a result of Y): Morning duty is a result of being non-instructional

school personnel. The fourth is rationale (X is a reason for doing Y): A teacher's unfamiliarity with the curriculum is a reason for modeling. The fifth is location-for-action (X is a place for doing Y): The library is a place where students are assessed. The sixth is function (X is used for Y): Shared planning time is used for teacher collaboration. The seventh is means-end (X is a way to do Y): Whole group is a way to deliver professional development. The eighth is sequence (X is a step in Y): A teacher referral is a step in getting a student served for additional help. Ninth is attribution (X is a characteristic of Y): Organization is a characteristic of reading coaches.

Each reading coach's transcripts and field notes were coded using the semantic relationship process described above. Once coded data were placed into domain sheets (the number of domain sheets varied slightly per case) I then searched through each case and looked for domains that needed to be combined or separated. Next, I took the domain sheets of each case and compared them with other cases. These within and across case domain analysis worksheets assisted me in visualizing the structure of each domain. The ultimate goal of domain analysis is to identify the cultural categories and to gain an overview of that which is being studied. I started domain analysis after the first interview and continued throughout data collection. As data analysis progressed, new domains emerged and old domains needed to be refined (Hatch, 2002). A sample of a domain worksheet is provided in Appendix D.

Taxonomic analysis: After identifying domains, I began taxonomic analysis, which continued throughout the analysis process. Taxonomic analysis serves as a method to search for ways domains are organized and related to one another (Hatch, 1984). The following steps are adapted from Spradley's (1980) description of taxonomic analysis. Step one is to select a domain. The second step is to search the domain for similarities based on the same semantic relationship, which often results in regrouping domains, discovering more categories, and

gaining deeper insights. The third step is to look for additional included terms, which involves applying a structural question to each included term. For example, a structural question for the domain presented in Table 3-5 would be "What are all the types of professional development?" The fourth step is to search for larger, more inclusive domains. To accomplish this step, structural questions such as "Is professional development a stage in something else?" are asked. Based on the steps outlined above, I completed a taxonomy (Figure 4-1) representing the influences on coaches' definitions and enactments of their role.

Componential analysis: When contrasts are discovered within a domain, they are thought of as attributes or components of meaning. A component is simply another word for unit; thus, componential analysis is a "search for units of meaning people have assigned to their cultural categories and includes the entire process of searching for contrasts, sorting them out, grouping some together as dimensions of contrast, and entering all this information onto a paradigm" (Spradley, 1980, p. 131). A paradigm is a chart that makes componential analysis easier and more systematic.

There are eight steps to componential analysis, and step one is to select a domain for analysis—preferably a domain that has contrasts. Step two is to make a list of all contrasts that can be found within this domain. For example, reading coaches engage in the following walk-through behaviors: leaving notes for teachers, taking notes on teachers' instruction, taking notes on the classroom environment, and so on. Step three is to prepare a paradigm worksheet. The paradigm worksheet has the cultural category of the domain and a list of attributes. The paradigm worksheet started in step three is completed and refined during the remaining steps. Step four is identifying the dimensions of contrast that have binary values. A dimension of contrast is an idea or concept that has a minimum of two parts. For example, "do reading coaches leave notes

during walkthroughs?" This dimension of contrast is added to the top of one of the columns on the paradigm worksheet. As binary contrast dimensions are generated, the value for each category of data is entered –in most cases, a simple yes or no is entered. Step five is to combine dimensions of contrast into dimensions that have multiple values. That is, instead of writing yes or no in the column, the type of note the reading coach leaves for the teacher will be written, such as post-it note, formal observation form, no note, encouragement card, and so on. Step six is to prepare contrast questions for missing attributes. For a reading coach who does not leave a note, the space would be blank, and this blank space lets the researcher know that there is missing data. Step seven is to conduct selective observations and interviews to uncover missing information, keeping in mind that blank spaces in a paradigm are acceptable. So, if I felt it was important to learn why a reading coach chose not to leave notes during walkthroughs, I could ask her in later interviews. Step eight is to prepare a completed paradigm. A completed paradigm allows large amounts of information to be presented in a concise and organized manner. I applied componential analysis to domains that emerged as central to the purpose of my study. A sample of the componential analysis is provided in Appendix E.

Identification of themes: Spradley (1980) identified a theme as any "principle recurrent in a number of domains, tacit or explicit, and serving as a relationship among subsystems of meaning" (p. 141). For a theme to be identified, the following are often true: theme reoccurs in two or more domains, theme applies to numerous situations, and theme has a high degree of generalizability. I identified cultural themes by engaging in a systematic comparison of the completed domains, both within and across cases. I asked the following questions: How does all of this fit together? What is similar and different among the domains? How are they linked? In summary, I used the four-step analysis process described above throughout data collection. The

outcome of the final stage of data analysis, identifying cultural themes, is the development of central categories or themes.

Trustworthiness of Study

Qualitative research seeks to reveal participants' construction of reality. There is an underlying assumption that qualitative research can be considered "more trustworthy" when certain techniques are applied (Cho & Trent, 2006). The employment of these techniques is based on Lincoln and Guba's (1985) approach to trustworthiness, which consists of the following four components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Qualitative researchers commonly use the following eight techniques to enhance trustworthiness: prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, clarification of researcher bias, member checking, rich and thick description, and external audit (Creswell, 1998). It is not necessary, however, for a researcher to use all of these techniques in one study (Glesne, 2006). To enhance trustworthiness in this study, I relied on triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analyses, member checking, reflective journaling, and rich, thick descriptions.

Triangulation: Triangulation is used to secure in-depth understanding of that which is being studied (Flick, 1998). In triangulation, multiple perceptions are used to clarify meaning and verify the repeatability of interpretations, while at the same time acknowledging that no interpretation is completely repeatable (Stake, 2000). Triangulation can be employed through multiple collection methods, variety of data sources, multiple investigators, and multiple theoretical perspectives (Glesne, 2006). In my study, data were triangulated through the collection of interviews, observations, and artifacts, as well as by asking similar questions to each reading coach at different times throughout data collection. For example, in interview one I asked, "Is the role of reading coach the same all year or does your role change based on the time of year?" In interview two I asked, "How did you decide what to do yesterday during the

observation? Does this change throughout the year?" The variety of data sources and ways questions were asked helped me verify and enrich the findings.

Negative case analysis: Negative case analysis is a "conscious search for negative cases and disconfirming evidence so that the researcher can refine his/her working hypothesis" (Glesne, 2006, p. 37). I engaged in negative case analysis during each step of the analysis process to ensure that my preconceptions and biases were not leading the analysis.

Peer debriefing: Peer debriefing allows for external input. I employed peer debriefing through bi- monthly meetings with my chair and co-chair during the data collection and analysis phases of this study. These meetings provided the opportunity for discussions regarding preliminary findings, alternative perspectives, and problems that arose.

Member checks: A member check occurs when transcripts, initial analyses, or a draft of the final report is shared with participants to ensure that their thoughts and ideas are being represented accurately (Glesne, 2006). Throughout the interview process, I conducted member checks to ensure that I was accurately capturing reading coaches' views. Based on the coaches' feedback, I made modifications where necessary. A final member check occurred once all data were collected and an initial analysis was complete. Each reading coach was presented with a written description of her interpretation and enactment of coaching and modifications were made where needed.

Reflective journaling: I kept a reflective journal throughout data collection (Appendix F). Journaling allowed me to monitor my reactions to the data and assisted me in keeping my biases in check (Hatch, 2002).

Rich, thick descriptions: Finally, I used the reading coaches' words whenever possible to provide thorough descriptions of the contexts and participants. The extended time I spent in

the field also allowed me to add greater detail to my descriptions. These rich descriptions, as well as the other techniques described above, enhanced the overall trustworthiness of my study.

Study Limitations

Although a number of techniques were used to enhance the trustworthiness of this study, some limitations remain. The small sample size limits the generalizability of my findings; hence, it would be inappropriate to assume my findings apply to all Reading First reading coaches. In addition, qualitative researchers often experience difficulties when they attempt to separate themselves from their personal biases and experiences. In an effort to bring my own personal biases to the forefront, I engaged in reflective journaling (as described above) and bracketed my thoughts and feelings when completing observational field notes. Finally, within the findings section of this dissertation, I discuss my experiences dealing with data that confirmed or negated my biases.

Researcher Subjectivity

In qualitative research, it is important to recognize the researcher as a fundamental part of the data collection and analysis process. Researcher bias is an understandable and common concern in qualitative research, as the data must be filtered through the researcher before being recorded on paper (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In my study, therefore, it was necessary for me to examine and reveal my own ideas, biases, and assumptions about reading and coaching.

My formal training as an educator began when I entered a 60 credit hour dual-track master's program in elementary education. Upon the completion of the program I was hired as an intermediate (third through fifth grade) teacher at a continuous progress elementary school. I loved my experiences as a teacher but was surprised by the number of students who struggled with basic reading skills. I was also surprised and frustrated when I could not help these struggling students to succeed in reading. Although, I had taken numerous reading courses

during my master's program, I did not have the repertoire of skills needed to reach my students who struggled the most. My reading specialist, who assisted all first year teachers, was an invaluable resource during this time. She taught me how to give assessments and how to understand and apply those results; she assisted me in finding the appropriate strategies for the students who just were not succeeding. Occasionally, she came into my class to model small-group reading lessons. The reading specialist provided me with the on-the-job tools that my master's degree, devoid of context, could not provide.

After three years as an elementary school teacher, I entered a doctoral program focused on reading. I view reading as a vital component of education. I realize that for some students, reading can be a complex skill to master, just as it can be a complex subject for some teachers to teach. As a classroom teacher, I had the security of knowing that when I struggled with my reading instruction, I could go to my reading specialist for help. Not every teacher has a resource, such as a knowledgeable reading specialist or coach to provide much needed support. Prior experiences have led me to believe that reading specialists and coaches can be an asset to a school and a valuable resource to classroom teachers. During the data collection and analysis process, I attempted to identify and bracket all of my preconceptions so that my biases did not influence my findings.

Presentation of Findings

This dissertation consists of well-documented and detailed descriptions of how four Reading First reading coaches interpreted and enacted their role as coach. The findings are presented in chapters four and five. Chapter four describes each coach's definition and enactment of the role and identifies the influences on her definition and practice. Excerpts from interviews and descriptions from observations are also included in this chapter. Chapter five provides a

description of the similarities and differences among the coaches' practice with a specific focus on their approach to professional development.

Table 3-1. Pilot study interview schedule

Participant	Interview 1		Interview 2		Interview 3		Total
	Date	Minutes	Date	Minutes	Date	Minutes	
Michelle	01/23/2008	56	02/21/2008	50	04/01/2008	49	155 min.
Dorothy	01/25/2008	65	02/19/2008	46	03/25/2008	58	169 min.

Table 3-2. Pilot study observation schedule

Participant	Observation 1		Observation 2		Total
	Date	Time Spent	Date	Time Spent	
Michelle	02/01/2008	3 hours	02/28/2008	6 hours	9 hours
Dorothy	02/08/2008	6 hours	03/06/2008	3 hours	9 hours

Table 3-3. Reading coach information

RC	Educational background	Years as teacher	Years as RC	Years at school
Janice	B.A in journalism Graduating in summer 2009 with a M.A. in special ed. and a reading endorsement	2*	2	7
Sarah	B.A. in elementary ed. M.A. in elementary ed. reading endorsed	17*	7	12
Bonnie	B.A. in elementary ed. reading endorsed	9	6	15
Karen	B.A. in elementary ed. M.A. in elementary ed. reading endorsed	13*	3	4

* Janice was also a reading tutor for 3 years; Sarah was also a teacher on assignment and reading facilitator for 6 years; Karen was also a math coach for one year
Note. RC: Reading Coach, B.A.: Bachelor of Arts, M.A.: Master of Arts

Table 3-4. School context

RC	School	County	Free/reduced lunch rate	Minority rate	Total students	Total teachers
Janice	Jefferson Elementary	A	85%	98%	520	45
Sarah	Sanders Elementary	A	74%	71%	540	44
Bonnie	Baxter Elementary	B	50%	17%	740	50
Karen	Kenwood Elementary	B	91%	96%	325	36

Table 3-5. Timeline for interviews and observations

Participants	Observations	Interviews
Bonnie		09/03/2008
	09/17/2008	09/18/2008
	10/08/2008	10/09/2008
	12/10/2008	12/12/2008
Karen		09/18/2008
	09/30/2008	10/01/2008
	11/03/2008	11/05/2008
	11/24/2008	11/25/2008
Sarah		09/18/2008
	10/02/2008	10/03/2008
	11/04/2008	11/04/2008
	12/08/2008	12/08/2008
Janice		10/06/2008
	10/17/2008	10/18/2008
	11/17/2008	11/18/2008
	12/09/2008	12/17/2008

Table 3-6. Example of strict inclusion domain

Included terms	Semantic relationship	Cover term
off-site workshops		
co-planning		Professional development
walkthroughs	is a kind of	
modeling		
data meetings		

CHAPTER 4
READING COACHES' INTERPRETATIONS AND ENACTMENTS OF ROLE

Introduction

Chapter four is organized into cases and presents data related to the following three research questions:

- How do Reading First reading coaches define their role?
- How do Reading First reading coaches enact their role?
- What are the influences on their definition and practice?

Evidence was collected of reading coaches' interpretations and enactments of their roles through a series of interviews and observations. Interview transcripts and observation field notes were analyzed using the Developmental Research Sequence (DRS). Data were coded using universal semantic relationships and then placed into domains. Domain analysis provided an initial overview of the influences on how coaches define and enact their roles. Once domains were formed, I engaged in taxonomic and componential analysis. During taxonomic analysis, I searched for how domains were organized and related to one another. Componential analysis was used to search for contrasts within each domain. Through data analysis, it became clear that all four coaches thought of the reading coach role as a support to teachers, however their enactment of the role differed.

Figure 4-1 depicts the taxonomic analysis of the reading coaches' interpretation and enactment of their role. Reading First, school context, and beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction influenced how reading coaches' defined and enacted their role; however, the nature of these influences varied by coach. For example, Janice, Karen, and Bonnie defined their role as a support to *K-5* teachers because that is what they believed their schools needed, while Sarah defined her role as a support to *K-3* teachers because that is what the Reading First guidelines dictated.

The cases of the four coaches are presented in a similar format. A brief overview of each coach is provided, followed by a description of how prior experiences and beliefs, Reading First, and school context influenced her enactment of the reading coach role. Excerpts from both formal and informal interviews are used to provide thick descriptions. Before presenting the four cases, a brief review of the Reading First guidelines is provided (a more detailed description can be found in chapter two).

Reading First

The purpose of the Reading First Initiative was to ensure that all children were reading on grade level by the end of third grade. With this goal in mind, funding from Reading First could only be used to support teachers in kindergarten through third grades. Reading First schools were required to implement a core reading program (in Florida this was typically a basal reading series), to provide 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction each day, to assess students' progress in the five areas of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) using measures that are reliable and valid (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) was used in Florida), and to provide teachers with professional development that is job embedded and ongoing. To ensure that the above requirements were fulfilled the Reading First Initiative required that every Reading First school employ a full time reading coach, who could not be used to provide direct instruction to students on an ongoing basis.

Although a federal initiative, it was the responsibility of individual states to oversee and determine how the components of Reading First were enacted – including the reading coach. In Florida, this responsibility fell to the *Just Read, Florida!* office. All Reading First schools in Florida implemented the *Just Read, Florida!* coaching model, which was described in detail in chapter two. According to this model, coaches were responsible for providing initial and ongoing

professional development to teachers in the five areas of reading as well as administering and analyzing instructional assessments. Under the *Just Read, Florida!* coaching model, reading coaches could not provide ongoing student instruction. The effect of the Reading First Initiative on each reading coach's definition and enactment of her role will be further explored in the following sections.

Janice: "I am Willing and Wanting to Help."

Janice was beginning her second year as the Reading First reading coach at Jefferson Elementary. She entered the coaching role during year five of the six-year Reading First grant. Prior to becoming the reading coach, she had two years of teaching experience at Jefferson Elementary – one in fourth grade and one in kindergarten. Then she was a reading tutor at Jefferson Elementary for three years, responsible for providing reading interventions to struggling students. In addition to her teaching and tutoring experiences, Janice was enrolled in a master's program at a nearby university, expecting to graduate in the summer of 2009 with a degree in special education and a reading endorsement. She defined her role as a support to teachers and took a proactive and collaborative approach in providing that support. Janice's enactment of her role was influenced by her prior experiences and beliefs as well as Reading First and school context.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Prior Experiences and Beliefs

For Janice, the role of the reading coach was to support and motivate all teachers (kindergarten through fifth grades), thus enabling them to better meet the needs of their students. Janice explained,

> I provide support as far as modeling. I provide support as far as curriculum, as far as planning. I provide support as far as making sure that all the materials are available to implement the curriculum. I analyze the data to make sure that we are meeting the students' needs. Probably all of that to make sure we are in-line with all the things we know are the things that are needed to have our students succeed (10.06.08).

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Moreover, Janice's definition of her role as a K-5 support (when Reading First was meant for only K-3 teachers) was indicative of her belief that the purpose of a reading coach is to support all teachers, thus supporting all students. She stated, "There's no way for me to just not work with the other half of the school. I can't just segment like okay I'm working with K-3 and if you're fourth or fifth I'll pretend like I don't see you" (12.17.07). Janice was not indifferent to the Reading First guidelines; she just did not adhere to them when they conflicted with her belief that the coaching role was to support all teachers. Janice stated, "Basically fourth and fifth grade are not a part of Reading First but I still work with those teachers to help them meet the needs of their students also" (10.18.2008).

In addition to providing all teachers with support, Janice felt that it was important to keep all teachers motivated. During my first observation, I witnessed Janice giving a "pep-talk" to a fifth-grade teacher who was unhappy with the size of her reading group. Janice listened to the teacher's concerns and then explained why the group size had increased. Janice communicated that, while she understood the teacher's concern, she was also confident that the teacher would do a great job with the reading group she was assigned. In a subsequent interview I asked Janice if she felt that motivating teachers was a part of her role as reading coach, and she replied that it "absolutely was." Janice explained,

> Sometimes teachers feel as though oh God, this is not gonna work, and I can't do this and I do feel that a part of my role is to help motivate the teacher and help her to realize and remember that yes you're a great teacher and you're gonna be able to do it, you've done it in the past and I know this is difficult but I have all the confidence in the world that you're gonna be able to do this. I am here to work through it with you, anything you need from me I am willing and wanting to help you out. I know you are going to be able to do this (10.18.08).

As a relatively new reading coach, Janice's understanding of the coaching role continued to develop as she attended coaches' meeting and trainings offered by the district and the *Just Read, Florida!* office. Her knowledge was also strengthened by the support she received from

fellow Reading First reading coaches. Although she was still learning, Janice defined her

Reading First reading coach role as being a source of both support and motivation to teachers.

When asked to further explain her definition of the role, she did so through the explanation of her

practice. The following sections, therefore, explain Janice's enactment of the coaching role as

influenced by Reading First and school context.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Reading First

As previously explained, Reading First schools were required to implement a core

reading program, provide 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction every day, assess

students' progress in the five areas of reading with measures that are reliable and valid, and

provide teachers with professional development that is job embedded and ongoing. In addition,

Reading First schools were required to employ a full time reading coach to ensure that the above

requirements were fulfilled. As a requirement of the Reading First Initiative, the roles of the

reading coaches were clearly defined at this one level. This suggests that among all Reading First

reading coaches there will be similarities in how they defined and enacted their roles as each

reading coach's role was organized around the responsibilities specified in Reading First. While

similarities did emerge, there were also differences in how coaches performed responsibilities

and differences in the level of importance each coach placed on these responsibilities. The

following section outlines responsibilities that were directly connected to the Reading First

Initiative. As Janice's case demonstrates, however, the extent to which the Reading First

guidelines were carried out was influenced by how each coach defined her role.

Assessment drives instruction: All Reading First schools were required to administer

valid and reliable assessments, and Florida used DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early

Literacy Skills). In accordance with the Reading First guidelines, DIBELS was to be

administered during a two-week window at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year for

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all kindergarten through third grade students. Outside of the two-week window, Janice also

assessed fourth and fifth grade students using DIBELS, which at that level is an oral reading

fluency assessment. During assessment periods Janice's primary responsibilities were data

collection and analysis. She explained, "in the middle of an assessment period I'll be doing a lot

more data collection, data analyzing, and things like that" (10.18.2008). In addition to DIBELS,

Janice used a variety of formal and informal assessments including: running records, assessments

from the basal reading series, and the DAR (Diagnostic Assessment of Reading). Janice used

these assessments as tools to better determine students' needs. Although formal data collection

(i.e. DIBELS) occurred at predetermined times of the year, informal assessments occurred

throughout. Janice explained, "there are just a lot of other little parts that go along with the data

that aren't a part of my major assessment period, so I say that just to say data is pretty much

ongoing throughout the year" (10.18.2008).

For Janice, assessments were a major part of her role "because that's what drives how we

look at our instruction" (10.18.2008). She used formal and informal assessments to assist

teachers in placing students in reading and intervention groups as well as tailoring instruction to

better meet students' needs. Janice's reflective nature led her to view assessments as tools to

better support teachers in meeting students' needs. Janice explained that assessments allowed her

> To actually look at what the students are doing. At that point I'm able to go in and then
> you know the teachers and I are seeing our successes and then seeing where we need to go
> from there and I really do like to get to that point so we can see wow, this is really working
> this is great let's continue! Or sometime it is okay that didn't really work, let's take a step
> back and see what we can do, how we can change it to best meet the needs of the students
> (10.18.2008).

In addition to using student assessment data to influence student grouping and

instruction, Janice also used these data to influence teacher professional development. Janice was

responsible for keeping a school-wide data notebook, which contained all K-5 students'

assessment scores. Although the data notebook was not a requirement of Reading First, it was a byproduct of the assessment data the grant required. After reviewing the data notebook, Janice noticed that fluency seemed to be an issue of concern for a majority of students. She reflected, "this is something I hear from teachers, this is something I have read about and this is something for us all to talk about as a school community and get a little bit more knowledge on" (11.19.2008). As a result, Janice organized a book study to increase teachers' knowledge on fluency, which she believed would ultimately improve their fluency instruction.

During my third observation, Janice presented the book and the schedule for upcoming book studies to the teachers. This was met with various degrees of enthusiasm from teachers. For instance, during the meeting only a few teachers were engaged in the whole group conversations regarding fluency (e.g. When assessing a student's fluency, is the hot read or cold read more valid?), while a majority of the teachers arrived late and left early. Moreover, no member of the lead team — principal, curriculum resource teacher, behavior resource teacher, or fine-arts facilitator — was present. As Janice and I walked back to her office at the end of the first book study I commented that some of the teachers looked unhappy about the upcoming book study. Janice responded, "no there were definitely some complaints, but in general I try to stay really positive with them because I want them to see the value of it. I'm also interested to see how our assessment scores will change" (12.09.2008).

Janice valued assessments and used them to influence the grouping of students, professional developments, and ultimately teachers' instruction. In our final interview Janice mentioned that some of the teachers' resistance toward the book study had changed. They even complimented her on her choice of books stating, "we started reading the book and it's really good. We've gotten into it and it is an easy read and doesn't make you feel as though you need to

know all of this research jargon" (12.09.2008). This type of reassurance from teachers strengthened Janice's belief that assessment data should help to drive instruction and that a positive attitude could help shape teachers' reactions and efforts.

Implementing core curriculum: All Reading First schools were required to implement a core curriculum and in Florida this was typically a basal reading series. Until the year of the study, however, Jefferson Elementary continued to use their old reading curriculum – Success For All (SFA). SFA is a scientifically research based curriculum, in line with NCLB guidelines, which highlight prevention and early intervention as a way to respond to and solve students' reading problems. As Jefferson Elementary entered its sixth and final year as a Reading First school, the county decided to adopt a basal reading series. The recent adoption of a new basal series meant that a number of Janice's responsibilities as a reading coach changed. For example, there were new types of data to analyze, how students were placed into reading groups changed, and teachers were now expected to implement classroom centers. These changes led Janice to increase the amount of classroom modeling to help teachers become familiar with the new curriculum. She also increased her classroom observations and walkthroughs to ensure that teachers were implementing the curriculum with fidelity and receiving the support and feedback they needed. In addition to extra teacher support, Janice's material management responsibilities increased as a result of the new basal series. She reported that material management was her least favorite aspect of the reading coach role. This was because she defined her role as a support to teachers and viewed anything that prevented her from providing in-class or out-of-class support as an inefficient way to spend her time. Janice stated,

> With the new reading series materials are coming in and you know opening boxes and stamping it this that and the other, and delivering it and figuring out where to store it, which is just tedious work. That type of stuff, that is just stuff that takes up a lot of your

time, and I know that it plays a small role but it should be just that the smallest percentage of my time (10.06.2008).

Janice understood that the most important part of her role in relation to the new reading series was to "add as much clarity to the curriculum as possible… to make sure that we are doing it with as much fidelity as possible, making sure we are meeting the kids' needs as much as possible" (10.06.2008). To better understand how teachers structured their 90-minute reading blocks Janice increased teacher observations explaining,

> We switched to more centers and they're not too familiar with how to bring in centers with our new reading series, so I'm looking for that and just looking to be able to give them some information on their day as far as their students and making sure they're being able to reach them academically and how I can help them with that. So it's like stepping back and just being able to give them some feedback on the things that I saw that sometimes they might not be able to see when they're into the lesson (10.l8.2008).

In addition, Janice used classroom walkthroughs to gauge teachers' comfort level with the new basal. As a result of one classroom walkthrough Janice noticed that Mrs. Johnson, a second year teacher, was struggling to implement reading strategies from the new basal series and Janice explained, "I wanted to use that as an opportunity to model for her" (11.19.2008). For an entire week Janice used Mrs. Johnson's 90-minute reading block to model from the basal reading series. Janice explained that modeling for such an extended length of time allowed her to increase her own knowledge regarding the basal stating, "it gave me the opportunity to become more familiar with the new curriculum to enhance my knowledge and better be able to say okay you can use this part when you're doing this or this would help these students" (11.19.2008). The extended modeling session also benefited Mrs. Johnson as Janice explained, "her students were all grouped homogenously but they're not really all the same. It is a whole process of trying to move towards organizing the room for the centers that are in the new basal" (11.19.2008). To further support teachers' implementation of the new basal series, Janice arranged for teachers who were struggling with the new series to observe teachers who felt more successful. Thus,

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while Janice viewed her role as a support to teachers, she also understood that support did not always have to come directly from her; rather, she could also empower teachers to support each other.

Professional development: Another responsibility of Reading First reading coaches was to provide professional development to K-3 teachers, specifically in the five areas of reading. Janice provided professional development to all K-5 teachers in whole group, grade level, and individual formats. The topic of the whole group professional development remained the same throughout the school year and was focused on one of the five areas of reading. For example, during Janice's first year as reading coach the whole group professional development was focused on meta-cognition. Janice explained, "I focused on meta-cognition last year, trying to see if we can really get students to think about their reading. Trying to get teachers to implement techniques like questioning, predicting, summarizing, the reciprocal teaching type of things" (10.06.2008). This year, as previously described, Janice focused her whole group professional development on a book study involving fluency— a result of low student assessment scores in fluency.

Janice admitted that there was teacher resistance to whole group professional development, because some teachers viewed it as "just another meeting that takes away from their time" (12.17.2008). Janice, however, viewed whole group professional development as valuable stating, "there is always something new we can learn and different approaches that we've not tried that are working for students just like ours" (12.17.2008). Janice's perspective that there is always more to be learned led her to enroll in a master's program in a nearby university and to seek support and guidance from fellow Reading First reading coaches as ways to increase her own coaching knowledge. Although Janice had an inquisitive nature, she

understood that her teachers wanted professional development that was directly applicable to their teaching situation. For example, the primary teachers wanted more emphasis on phonics while the intermediate teachers wanted a greater emphasis on vocabulary and comprehension. Although Janice was willing to accommodate her teachers' requests, she still valued whole group professional development stating,

> If you look at it in the real world it does pertain to them, because in the real world setting we unfortunately do have some fourth graders that really never mastered phonemic awareness or those types of things. So it really can give you some insight (10.06.2008).

Finally, Janice delivered professional development on an individual basis – observing, modeling, and providing feedback. When asked during our initial interview which of her reading coach responsibilities she enjoyed the most, Janice quickly replied, "I love being in the classroom modeling" (10.06.2008)! This response led me to ask her in subsequent interviews – what does modeling look like, how were teachers selected, and what were the overall goals? To answer my questions, Janice spoke of Mr. Lopez, a second-year first grade teacher I viewed on a walkthrough during my second observation. Janice explained to me that all first grade teachers used a similar 90-minute reading block schedule, and during our walkthrough she noticed that Mr. Lopez's whole group instruction was only five minutes when it should have been closer to 20 or 25 minutes. Janice stated, "That was one of the things that prompted me to find out, because after I went back he said, "I don't do that part", but later told me he's going to do it at another time. So you know..." (11.19.2008). She then explained that after the walkthrough and brief conversation with Mr. Lopez, the next step would be,

> To find out the reasonings – finding out why he chose to do it that way and then kind of talking it through as to what might be a better approach, or why it was presented in this way in the curriculum, those types of things. I found that to be a lot more helpful as opposed to saying you didn't do this and you probably should have done that, so I will start off with the reasoning behind it, and do you think I could possibly come in and we could try to do this that and the other? I try to work with teachers from that perspective (11.19.2008).

Janice believed Mr. Lopez struggled because of the new curriculum and because his first language was Spanish, so he sometimes pronounced English sounds incorrectly. Janice explained, "I think he views phonemic awareness and phonics (as) being the same thing, not really understanding that they're two separate skills, so that is where I'll try to go in and model and show him the difference" (11.19.2008). I asked Janice if she thought it would be beneficial for Mr. Lopez to view another teacher's instruction. She hesitated and then replied, "yes, and I have done that, but I don't know that he – I really hate to say it, but that he doesn't know what to look for. I think he is looking for other things" (11.19.2008). Janice reflected on her role as reading coach and shouldered part of the responsibility stating, "what I can do a better job at is giving him the focus of what to look for" such as, "when she gets to this part, this is the part I am talking about, or notice the difference in the way she does this or that" (11.19.2008).

For Janice, professional development responsibilities were divided into three parts: whole group, grade level, and individual. Whole group professional development was yearlong focusing on one area of reading, whereas grade level professional development focused on the specific needs and requests of teachers within a grade level. Finally, individual professional development had a practical skill focus where Janice identified a teacher struggling with the curriculum and offered support through modeling and feedback.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by School Context

School context played a strong role in how Janice enacted her coaching responsibilities. Jefferson Elementary was a Title I school where 85% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 98% of the students were minorities. In addition, Janice had eight teachers with less than two years of classroom experience, a student population that was highly transient, and parents who were not always sure how to help their children academically at home. The needs of

Jefferson Elementary provided Janice with additional reading coach responsibilities that were not directly connected to the Reading First guidelines.

Motivate students: My first observation occurred on a Friday, and though I didn't know it at the time, Fridays were reserved for Janice's transformation from reading coach to homework fairy. As the homework fairy, Janice required no costume, just a basket full of decorated pencils and tattoo stickers along with a green and white pom-pom. As I followed behind she entered classroom after classroom, always with a similar routine: a shake of the pom-pom and the proclamation in a singsong voice that "the homework fairy is here" (10.17.2008)! The students cheered her appearance and the teachers typically laughed or cheered. Janice would then ask the students what cheer they wanted to hear and they would call out "home alone" or "rock and roll." The cheers were relatively simple, for example, the "home alone" cheer consisted of putting your hands on your face and screaming "AHHHH" like Macaulay Culkin in the movie *Home Alone*. After the cheer the teacher read aloud the names of the students who had completed homework for the week. Those students then selected either a pencil or a tattoo from Janice's basket. As we left each classroom Janice would remind students that when the whole class completed their homework for one week they would earn a popcorn party and then she would say "remember the more you read" and the students would join her and say "the better reader you become" (10.17.2008).

As we were walking from class to class Janice explained that the purpose of the homework fairy was twofold. First, the students liked the homework fairy and it encouraged them to do their homework, which supported teachers' instruction. Second, it was a fidelity check for the teachers who should be assigning a reading log as part of students' weekly homework. In the reading log, students have to read for 20 minutes, record it, and have a parent

sign it. When teachers neglected to assign this homework students got upset because they wanted

the prize from the homework fairy. In addition to the homework fairy, Janice also ran the

Ravenous Readers club for all students making A-B honor roll in reading. Ravenous Readers

received a certificate from the school and a pencil. Janice explained that the students at Jefferson

Elementary were not accustomed to being recognized for their academic achievement, and

though the prizes were small, students seemed motivated by them.

Family support: If an issue touched upon the subject of reading then Janice viewed it as

a part of her coaching responsibilities. Janice therefore considered increasing family participation

in reading as one of her responsibilities and planned a family fun night that included reading

activities, food, and games. Janice explained the need for family fun night by stating,

> A lot of our parents feel as though they are not equipped educationally to bring about
> literacy with their children. Some of our parents have had bad experiences in schools, so
> because of the bad experiences they take a standoff approach, stating that they don't really
> want to do this because they don't really know how. I think most of our parents can do the
> basics to encourage reading and to instill that in their kids. So it is a hope and a start… a
> way to re-route literacy within the home, by having them see that it can be fun
> (11.19.2008).

Janice also believed that providing support to both parents and teachers during

conferences was part of her role as reading coach stating, "I'm called in if the parent has some

question that the teacher might have a hard time answering, which is typically explaining the

DIBELS scores" (11.19.2008). Janice explained that parents do not like their children being

measured by certain standards and they do not like that the test is timed, so I come in and "I

explain the reasoning, the scoring, and the purpose of the tests and then I have to talk to them

about the importance of automaticity and mastery" (11.19.2008). Although Janice was typically

called in to conferences to explain test scores, she remembered a conference earlier in the year

when a mother who had no money to buy materials wanted to know what she could do at home

to help her child. Janice recalled,

> I started giving her suggestions of things she could do, but I wished I could have done more. I was talking about this with another teacher and I said you know really what I should do is just spend some time and go through the FCRR (Florida Center for Reading Research) activities and get some phonemic awareness or phonics or whatever activities, then if I am sitting with a parent I could always just bring that. That would be good because then they could go home with something (11.19.2008).

Janice believed that when families felt comfortable participating in their children's academic lives, it benefited students by providing continuity between home and school, which benefited teachers by supporting their classroom instruction. As a result, Janice viewed increasing family participation as a part of her role as reading coach.

   Writing support: At Jefferson Elementary, two fourth grade teachers shared the writing instruction responsibilities for all fourth grade students. As the state writing assessment approached Mrs. Jackson, a fourth grade writing teacher who was new to Jefferson Elementary, became anxious that her students were not ready for the upcoming assessment. Mrs. Jackson asked Janice to visit her classroom and help explain the writing process to her students and guide them through a writing assignment. Janice said, "Yeah – sure. So then we talked about what we are going to do with the lesson and I will probably go in during that time as much as I can until the writing assessment comes" (12.17.2008). Although I knew Janice offered support to K-5 teachers, I was surprised that she also supported subject areas outside of reading. When I asked her about supporting other subject areas Janice replied,

> I don't usually help with writing. That is not anything that I do during say my regular everyday thing. I just started this maybe two weeks ago because she wanted to have more help in her classroom. I taught writing in fourth grade also and so you know I pretty much understand the students in the school. I have been there, exactly where they are (12.17.2008).

Janice's prior experiences as a fourth grade teacher enabled her to support Mrs. Jackson's writing instruction. Moreover she believed that her role was to support teachers and that this support would ultimately benefit students. Janice therefore tried not to limit the role of reading

coach to only being a support to certain grade levels or subject areas. If a teacher needed support, then Janice attempted to provide it.

Lead team: At Jefferson Elementary the lead team consisted of the principal, behavior resource teacher, curriculum resource teacher, fine arts facilitator, and the reading coach. The lead team met biweekly and represented the leadership of the school. During my second observation the principal invited me to observe a lead team meeting and the topics discussed included: the upcoming book study, the theme for family reading night, ideas for decreasing the number of tardy students, behavior problems among fourth and fifth grade students, preparation for fourth grade writing, and the faculty Christmas party. Janice described the lead team as a "sounding board to help resolve those issues that might come up within the school" and described her role on the lead team as, "adding any information regarding the reading curriculum in the school" (11.19.2008). Janice also stated that topics discussed in the lead team might not be in her area "but because I am in and out of the classroom I can see that behavior (for example) can affect the curriculum" (11.19.2008).

Janice realized that as a member of the leadership team teachers were sometimes hesitant to share their classroom struggles with her. Janice attempted to explain,

> It is a precarious situation that a reading coach is in. I am part of the leadership in the school and they (teachers) know that if I am asked something (by the lead team) – well what do you think about this that or the other? I will take the fifth on that. It is kind of a funny situation. So, I think that is what they (teachers) think because they can't help but think it if you are a member of leadership… (11.19.2008).

Although the positions of reading coach and classroom teacher are equivalent, because the step from teacher to reading coach is a lateral move with no salary increase, Janice understood that her role could be misconstrued as "an administrator or supervisory role" (10.18.2008). The interpretation of her role as anything other than a support was troubling to Janice as she explained,

I work a lot on my relationships with teachers. My role is support. My role is not here to critique the teacher as to make the teacher feel as though she is not valued or worthy. My role is simply to support her in meeting the needs of the students. I want everyone to feel okay and comfortable and if we can have that relationship then we will be able to move forward (10.06.2008).

Janice understood that teacher resistance would impede her ability to provide support, and therefore, she worked hard to build relationships with teachers where there was mutual trust and respect.

Additional responsibilities: Everyday, 10 minutes before the final bell, Janice's room filled with 20-25 kindergartners. The kindergartners came in and sit in a line by the door. Janice read them a story and then walked them to the cafeteria where the after-school program was held. When I asked why this was her responsibility, Janice explained that everyone has an afternoon duty and this was hers. Janice accepted her afternoon duty and turned it into a reading experience, which extended students' instructional day. In addition to her afternoon duty, Janice was called on to handle the occasional discipline issue. Janice explained, "If a teacher comes to me sharing information about a student's behavior and I'm aware of the situation then I will help out. But handling discipline is pretty rare for me" (10.18.2008). Finally, Janice was a team leader for the school's four reading tutors. Janice described the reading tutors as being "responsible for meeting the reading needs of struggling students" and her role in relation to that was "allowing them the same autonomy as any teacher while making sure that they are providing scientifically research based curriculum" (10.18.2008). Throughout all of her various responsibilities at Jefferson Elementary, Janice was always cognizant that her primary role as reading coach was to support and motivate teachers so they could better support their students.

Interplay of Prior Experiences and Beliefs, Reading First, and School Context

As a reading coach, Janice described herself as a "go-getter who is always searching for a way for it to be better" (11.18.2008). Janice's commitment to giving teachers the support they

need to scaffold student learning was a driving force behind her role as reading coach. Her proactive approach to coaching allowed Janice to support and motivate teachers, ultimately benefiting students, which she felt was a key part of her role. While the components of Reading First guided Janice's interpretation and enactment of the reading coach role (e.g. providing professional development, implementing core curriculum, and administering DIBELS), Reading First did not prevent Janice from (a) providing support to all K-5 teachers, (b) providing support in subject areas other than reading, or (c) engaging in any of the additional responsibilities that were required of her at Jefferson Elementary. Janice's willingness and desire to help teachers defined her role as reading coach, not the Reading First Initiative. Although Janice did work to meet the Reading First responsibilities, she did not let its guidelines limit her role. Janice had a "whatever it takes" approach to coaching and viewed her reading coach role as a support to all teachers at Jefferson Elementary.

Sarah: "An Expert Driven Definition of Reading Coach."

Sarah was beginning her sixth year as the Reading First reading coach at Sanders Elementary. Prior to becoming a Reading First reading coach, Sarah had 17 years of experience in kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms (two of those years were at Sanders Elementary) and three years as a teacher on assignment. As a teacher on assignment, Sarah's job was to go into elementary schools within the district and assist classroom teachers in aligning their instruction with state standards – presumably the district's goal was to increase state assessment scores. This position lasted three years, and when it was eliminated due to budget issues, Sarah returned to Sanders Elementary as the reading coach under the Coach's Model Grant. The Coach's Model grant was a one-year grant from the *Just Read, Florida!* office. At the end of the year, Sarah's principal created a position similar to a reading coach and titled it reading facilitator. Sarah was the reading facilitator for three years until Sanders Elementary was

awarded the Reading First grant, at which time she became the Reading First reading coach. In addition to her teaching and coaching experiences, Sarah had also worked for a textbook publisher in the summers and more recently, as a Reading First facilitator at the four-day summer institutes. She defined her role as a support to teachers, and her prior experiences and beliefs, Reading First, and school context influenced her enactment of the role.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Prior Experience and Beliefs

For Sarah, the role of the Reading First reading coach was to provide support in reading to teachers (kindergarten through third grades), in turn allowing those teachers to better support the reading needs of their students. As a reading coach and facilitator prior to the Reading First grant, Sarah's principal helped to define her role. Sarah explained, "I did what she wanted me to do. Like if she wanted me to go help teachers I did that. If she wanted me to give a test I did that, you know so it just kind of evolved" (11.04.2008). Seeking clarification, I asked Sarah, "So the principal defined your role?" Sarah replied,

> Yeah, very much, and that was nice. Then by her (the principal's) last year here we were onto the Reading First grant and then by that time it was pretty much that a lot of my duties were already established and it was just making sure that I was being compliant to the grant (11.04.2008).

For Sarah, it was her principal and then Reading First that helped to define her role as reading coach. As a Reading First reading coach Sarah defined her role as a support to K-3 teachers. She believed that within the Reading First Initiative the coach's job was defined as, "training teachers, doing professional development, and modeling in the classrooms" adding, "that is basically what the majority of our job should be" (09.18.2008). A self-described "rule follower" Sarah incorporated the above description as well as the additional Reading First guidelines (e.g. DIBELS assessment and implementing a core reading curriculum) and the needs of Sanders Elementary into her definition of how to provide support to K-3 teachers. As Sarah explained,

I do professional development… I am in the classrooms a lot… When we get new kids I stop that day and figure out what reading level they are on. I do some type of assessment placement with them to get them into the right reading groups… I also do a lot of assessments; we do DIBELS three times a year... I give out a lot of materials I am in charge of that. There is all this stuff that has been purchased with Reading First money and it just came so it all had to be stamped and inventoried and taken out to the classrooms. I model – I go in classrooms… I set up intervention groups and work with those teachers about what intervention materials they are using making sure that they are doing the programs right, I train the people on different programs (Reading Mastery, Kaleidoscope and Corrective Reading)… Every morning I have sidewalk duty and every afternoon I will work with car pickup (09.18.2008).

Sarah wanted to adhere to the Reading First guidelines but realized in some instances that was not possible stating, "I generally am out on the sidewalks and this is not part of the job… really it is totally against the Reading First model" (09.18.2008). Sarah, however, rationalized this additional responsibility by explaining, "I find with where my room is located people don't come down here, so by being on the sidewalk I have a lot of coach-teacher conversations, like they'll just come up to me and we can talk about things" (09.18.2008). Willing to modify her Reading First responsibilities in some instances, there were other instances when she felt the guidelines were fixed and inflexible. For example, Sarah generally did not provide support for fourth and fifth grade teachers, because they were not included in the Reading First Initiative. Sarah stated, "I don't really do very much with them at all because the grant is K-3… my focus is on K-3" (10.02.2008). In a subsequent interview I asked Sarah how that worked, understanding that fourth and fifth were not a part of Reading First but that she was also the school's reading coach. Sarah explained,

Well, I am kind of on an as needed basis with fourth and fifth. I met with them when I had my (data) conferences. If they are having problems with a student they will ask me if I will do a diagnostic test or go over it. Um they ask me for materials, so I help out in that way. We do have a new fifth grade teacher so I have tried to sit with her a couple of extra days, but she also has a very strong mentor so I feel like she is getting a lot of support… You know, I also feel like the upper grades kind of feel like if we can really get those kids into shape in K-3 then it makes their job easier (11.04.2008).

While Reading First helped to shape Sarah's definition of her reading coach role, she believed that her previous experiences helped her to enact those responsibilities stating, "because of my previous jobs I felt pretty well prepared. I had a lot of training going in and modeling. I was also used to standing in front of people and delivering professional development" (09.18.2008). In addition to her prior experiences and beliefs, Sarah's enactment of her role was influenced by Reading First and school context. The following sections explain these influences on Sarah's enactment of her role and through this explanation her definition of the reading coach role can be better understood.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Reading First

As Reading First guidelines were identical among Reading First schools, Sarah was expected to fulfill the same Reading First requirements as Janice. Similarities, therefore, existed in their practice. Yet, there were also differences in how they carried out their coaching responsibilities and the extent to which they followed Reading First guidelines. The following section outlines Sarah's reading coach responsibilities that have a direct connection to Reading First. Like Janice, Sarah's definition of her role influenced the extent to which she carried out Reading First guidelines.

Assessment drives student placement: Sarah administered DIBELS to all K-3 students three times a year during a specified two-week window. Fourth and fifth grade students were also assessed in DIBELS, but a resource teacher, not Sarah, administered that assessment. Sarah explained,

> We have a resource teacher this year and she used to be a reading coach, so I have asked her if she would do the fourth and fifth grade for me. She has a block of time in her day about and hour or hour and 15 minutes so during that time she can just sit in the center room of the fourth (and fifth) grade pod and call those kids out (09.18.2008).

Except for the fourth and fifth graders, Sarah administered DIBELS to every student at Sanders Elementary. She described a typical day during that two-week window as "starting at 8 o'clock in the morning and testing until 1:35… I just test all day long to try to get it done because there's nobody else to do it" (09.18.2008). Although it made for long days Sarah was happy to have the information DIBELS provided stating,

> I don't mind doing DIBELS because I almost like the opportunity to sit down with kids one on one and that is how I kind of get to know them. It is hard but you can get to know almost every kid in the school and kind of know what is going on with their reading. So I do like that and the kids think it is a treat" (09.18.2008).

Although DIBELS was the required assessment for the two-week testing windows, Sarah also used a variety of formal and informal assessments throughout the year including: assessments from the basal reading series, running records, DAR, and on-track testing.

Due to the highly transient student population at Sanders Elementary, assessments were a major part of Sarah's role. She explained, "each week we probably have somewhere between three and five students come and go. So when we get these new kids one thing that I do is stop that day and figure out what reading level they're on" (09.19.2008). Sarah then placed these assessment scores into the school's data binder. This binder, which was Sarah's responsibility to maintain, housed the informal and formal assessment scores for all K-5 students. Although the data binder was not a requirement of Reading First, it was a byproduct of the assessment data the grant required. The data binder allowed Sarah to look across a class or a grade level to "see if there is one skill that everyone is more or less bombing and you know we can make some decisions like we need to be spending more time" (12.08.2008). She also used the binder as a tool to help her place students into reading groups.

For Sarah, a large part of her job was placing students "in the right reading groups" (09.18.2008). During my second observation, for example, I watched Sarah use assessment data

to place second grade students into intervention groups. Afterwards she informed the second

grade teachers of their students' placements. Thinking it strange that the teachers had little input

into their students' placement, I asked Sarah in a subsequent interview if those groupings were

based solely on test scores or if the teachers had input as well. Sarah replied, "usually the CRT

(curriculum resource teacher) and I work on that together and we just look at the data"

(10.03.2008). Sarah, however, explained that there were instances when

> We had some kids that looked pretty good on DIBELS but then in the actual classroom
> they weren't that good so that's where you need teacher input so we always try to – if we
> can take their advice. But if they (teachers) are saying things like, and this doesn't happen
> very often, I really think they (the student) know it, then that doesn't count. I'm like well
> that's not what I see in the scores or I'll go in and sit in and watch and see how the kid is
> doing and that helps me because if you don't see them in action then you don't know
> (10.03.2008).

Similarly, when implementing a new kindergarten intervention, Sarah relied on a

phonemic awareness inventory to group students. A level one on the inventory indicated the

level students should reach by the first half of kindergarten, and Sarah explained, "so I gave them

all a level one and anyone that didn't meet mastery is in an intervention group" (12.08.2008).

Again I asked Sarah about teacher input and what happened if the teacher disagreed with the

inventory results. Sarah stated, "I would give them each a copy of their (the students') test. Not

fully satisfied I rephrased the question, "So the teacher just goes with whatever the test says?"

Sarah replied,

> There is one little boy that is in the low group and his teacher is a brand new teacher, first
> year, and she was like I don't think he belongs in that group. He might be one of the higher
> ones in that group but when I watch him in there he can't do everything that we are doing
> and that was the only question out of anybody (12.08.2008).

Sarah felt that by placing students in the "right" reading groups she was acting as a support to

teachers. To place students Sarah relied on assessment outcomes and when those outcomes were

questioned she relied on her own judgment. Sarah also felt that a lack of personal involvement

was sometimes needed to best meet the academic needs of a child, as a result teacher's

professional judgments were often disregarded in favor of assessment data and Sarah's own

professional opinion. She explained,

> I can be really cold hearted about a child as far as like saying this one is not going to be promoted or they're not meeting standards or they're not doing this, but those teachers have their whole heart and soul invested in them and they are like, it is hard for them. So sometimes that causes some friction (10.03.2008).

Sarah valued assessments as a primary way to group students and she viewed this

responsibility as an important part of her role as reading coach. While Sarah rarely consulted

with teachers regarding students' placements, she did value how difficult their job could be

stating, "and like those kindergarten teachers… I just told them the other day I am so glad I am

not teaching kindergarten because they have so much to teach and when you have that many kids

it's hard" (12.08.2008). Sarah believed that by placing students in the right reading groups they

were getting the skills and attention they needed, which ultimately made teachers' instruction

more effective. Sarah explained, "It is gratifying to me to be able to put these kids into specific

programs and then see how much it helps them. I like that feeling" (09.18.2008).

Implementing core curriculum: Sanders Elementary had recently adopted a new basal

reading series, which changed Sarah's coaching responsibilities. Her new responsibilities

included assisting teachers in administering the new assessments, attending the professional

developments offered by the textbook publisher for each grade level (K-3), and increasing the

frequency of classroom observations and walkthroughs to view teachers' implementation of the

new series. In addition, she was responsible for assembling and distributing the decodable

readers, which focused on fluency and vocabulary and accompanied the weekly story within the

basal series. While Sarah was responsible for distributing the weekly readers, the CRT was in

charge of all other textbook materials including ordering, delivering, and keeping track of the

resources that accompanied the new basal series. Sarah explained that part of the CRT's job was to handle the textbook materials for the school, while Sarah's primary job was to be an in-class support to teachers.

To offer in-class support and become more familiar with the new basal series, Sarah assisted classroom teachers in administering the end of the unit tests. She explained, "since I am not teaching a class that is the only way I can become familiar with what's on it and what they are asking kids to do and things like that" (10.03.2008). During my first observation, I accompanied Sarah to a first grade classroom where we administered the basal assessment to a group of four students. The assessment contained 20 questions and took over 45 minutes for the two of us to administer during which time two of the four students became so frustrated that they cried. Sarah later said, "see I needed to be in there for that because now we are going to be splitting that test up and not doing the whole thing in one day" (10.03.2008). Before splitting up the first grade assessment, however, Sarah called another Reading First reading coach to ask what she was doing with her first graders. Sarah also spoke to the Reading First coordinator who confirmed that the unit tests were difficult and could be modified.

In addition to assisting teachers with their assessments, Sarah increased the frequency of her classroom walkthroughs and observations to become more familiar with the new series. During the second observation Sarah observed a teacher at each grade level (K-3) to view the small group portion of their 90-minute reading block. Teachers signed up for these observations ahead of time, and Sarah explained that the goal of the observations was "to see if they (teachers) were breaking up into small groups… how small group instruction was taking place – if it was taking place" (11.04.2008). Small group or center activities were being implemented in each of the five classrooms we visited. In three of the classrooms Sarah and I were given a small group

to run together. Sarah provided instruction for the small group while I focused on taking field notes. In the remaining two classes Sarah and I were each given a small group, so Sarah and I were providing instruction to students separately, and I was not able to observe Sarah. At the end of the day I joked with Sarah that this was the first time one of my participants put me to work. She laughed and said that she asked teachers to give her a small group to run so she was not just sitting and watching. She also explained,

> It helps me when I sit there and try to do some of those activities with the kids so I can see what level the kids are actually on. Like take for instance that kindergarten class we worked with, you know a certain number of those kids are probably going to be in red (indicating below level) and typically we wouldn't have kids in red so much the second time we do DIBLES, but I could see where we could and that makes me realize that we need to get that intervention up and running, because there were a lot of students like that (11.04.2008).

After we completed the classroom observations, Sarah said she was generally pleased to see teachers using center ideas from both the new basal series and the binder of Reading First center activities that focused on the five areas of reading. I asked Sarah if she felt like she had a better feel for the basal series. She replied, "No. I really feel like I need to teach it… to have my own reading group for six weeks. It is really hard to get a feel for exactly how it goes unless you teach it" (12.08.2008). I then asked if she would have the opportunity to teach a reading group for that length of time. She replied "probably not this year, maybe next year." I questioned if this was due to Reading First and Sarah confirmed, "we are not supposed to have a reading group assigned to us" (12.08.2008). Sarah realized that the Reading First guidelines limited her ability to become familiar with the basal series, but rather than disregard the guidelines, she continued to follow them. Moreover, when the need to alter elements of the core curriculum arose Sarah deferred to others (i.e., reading coaches at other Reading First schools and Reading First coordinators), indicating reluctance or a need for assurance before disregarding components of the Reading First guidelines.

Professional development: Sarah provided whole group, grade level, and individual professional development, typically for kindergarten through third grade teachers. Sarah utilized whole group professional development when providing brief tutorials, such as how to access the PMRN (Performance Monitoring and Reporting Network) reports. She also used whole group professional development to present information from a Reading First quarterly training. She explained, "sometimes I will come back and present that to the whole faculty… but I just kind of pick and chose what I want to share because our faculty meeting was you know an hour" (09.18.2008). Whole group professional development was also used to explain the fluency take-home books that accompanied the new basal series, as well as to focus on skills or strategies that Sarah felt were missing from teachers' instruction stating,

> I did a professional development on effective questioning techniques and that was one I did a couple of years ago I just kind of resurrected it because we have a lot of new teachers and people have kind of gotten away from it um so it was like effective questioning techniques slash active engagement strategies (11.04.2008).

For Sarah, however, whole group professional development was on an "as needed" basis. She explained, "it is really hard to get a whole faculty professional development done because everybody is tutoring after school and they, I don't know, it is just hard" (11.04.2008).

Sarah felt it was easier and often more beneficial to meet with teachers by grade level stating, "I would almost prefer to do it by grade level and then you can kind of make it more specific to what their needs are" (10.03.2008). For example, a new phonemic awareness intervention was being implemented in kindergarten, and Sarah provided the initial training explaining that the next step was to "let them use the program for a week or two then come back and say now lets go over those things that we didn't know to ask before we began the program. Review what's going good and what's not" (11.04.2008). Sarah then planned to meet with the kindergarten teachers during their 45-minute team meeting to better understand how the new

interventions were going. I asked if a classroom follow up would also be included and Sarah replied, "Yeah, that is usually the better way to do it… Show them by grade level here it is, but I will be coming around to each class to check and see how it is going" (11.08.2008).

For Sarah, delivering professional development on an individual basis included in-class follow ups from whole group and grade level professional development, as well as conducting observations and walkthroughs, modeling, and providing feedback. Sarah found individual professional development to be rewarding stating,

> I like to do professional development. I like every once in a while when you get somebody that is really not doing well and they listen to everything you say. To see somebody kind of turn around and sometimes it takes two or three years, but to just see somebody that you worked with over the years and all of the sudden you realize wow they are really doing a great job (12.08.2008).

When I asked Sarah to describe what in-class professional development looked like and how she decided which teachers to work with she explained, "This year we have three new people teaching kindergarten that never taught kindergarten before so I'm trying to work with them… we have another second grade teacher who never really had a classroom. So, working with people like that" (09.18.2008). Sarah felt her new teachers needed varying levels of support stating, "For some, I just pop my head in and out and kind of see that they are doing fine… or I help them with their intervention materials and make sure they are doing the programs right" (09.19.2008). For other teachers, however, more of Sarah's time was required.

Miss Smith was an example of a new teacher who Sarah felt needed additional in-class support. Sarah explained that Miss Smith was the school's music teacher, but due to budget issues within the county her position was cut and she became one of the new kindergarten teachers. During the first observation we observed Miss Smith's 90-minute reading block and saw both whole group and small group instruction. Sarah took notes during Miss Smith's whole group instruction and during small group instruction, Sarah and I ran one of the groups. In the

subsequent interview I asked Sarah what her next steps would be for supporting this teacher. She explained, "What I want to happen next is we need to sit down when we have time to talk and I'm just going to start with a couple of things from yesterday's summary" (10.03.2008). Sarah described the list of things the teacher needed to work on including: consistently using her light-speed microphone, shortening whole group instruction, holding up larger letter cards, not placing things high up on the board where students cannot see, making sure her body is positioned so students can see the board, using centers that are age appropriate, and having materials organized and ready to go before beginning whole group and small group instruction. Sarah realized that these comments might be overwhelming stating,

> I wouldn't want to just hit her with all of that at one time so I am going to pick out two things. Like I went in today and she has the light speed on so that has already been fixed, we are going to shorten that whole group and then at the same time some better centers and center management. So, I think if we start with those two areas it should help… So I am going to start with like really big areas and then gradually fine-tune it down (10.03.2008).

When providing Miss Smith with in-class support Sarah's role was that of an expert, telling Miss Smith how to make instruction more effective rather than establishing a collaborative relationship.

During the observations I witnessed Sarah providing in-class support by assisting teachers with their assessments, performing classroom walkthroughs, observing instruction, providing feedback, and running small group centers. With the exception of assessing one fourth grade student, this support was offered only in kindergarten through third grades and only in reading. Knowing that Sarah's main focus was K-3, I asked if her support was also limited to only reading. Sarah replied, "I work with them on reading. I am not in there helping them with math or things like that, but definitely with reading which is our focus" (09.18.2008). Sarah understood her role as a support to K-3 teachers in reading, a definition that aligned with the parameters of the Reading First Initiative.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by School Context

Although Reading First played a strong role in both her definition and enactment of the reading coach role, Sarah's reading coach responsibilities were also influenced by school context. Sanders Elementary was a Title I school were 74% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 71% of the students were minorities. Sanders Elementary was also the largest Reading First school in the county with 662 students and 46 teachers. Moreover, Sarah had five teachers who were new to teaching or had never taught their current grade level, a student population that was highly transient, and parents who needed guidance in how to support their children academically at home. The context in which Sanders Elementary was situated, therefore, required Sarah to take on reading coach responsibilities that were not directly connected to the Reading First guidelines.

Family support: At Sanders Elementary, Sarah was often asked to assist with parent teacher conferences for those students struggling in reading. She explained, "teachers like me to be there and because I've been doing it a long time and I'm not emotionally involved I lay out the information and explain it to them and it just kind of makes it go smoother" (09.18.2008). During parent teacher conferences Sarah believed her role was to provide and explain students' reading scores, however, she often used her morning and afternoon sidewalk duty to develop a rapport with parents stating,

> It is sometimes easier for me standing out on the sidewalk to talk about different things with them. Just if they know you care they know you are trying as opposed to your kid is kind of different and we just want to get rid of him, you know you've got to win them over to your side (10.03.2008).

Sarah wanted parents to understand their children's reading needs, so she had no objection to supporting teachers during parent conferences, but as Sarah explained, "Every so often someone has not really informed the parents like they should have and then I have to sit there and

convince the parent why that kid is going to be retained – I hate that with a passion" (12.08.2008). Sarah attempted to prevent those situations by reminding teachers at the beginning of the year not to "sugar coat" students' information and offered to sit in on any conferences that might make teachers feel uncomfortable. Sarah reiterated, "I just hate walking in those meetings where parents don't know… It's awful" (12.08.2008).

In addition to conferences, Sarah supported the parent workshops Sanders Elementary provided twice a year. At October's workshop, for example, Sarah's role was to provide parents with information regarding the new decodable books and the school's new grading policy regarding fluency. She explained, "First I talked to them about keeping those books in one central location at their house and the different things they can do with them. If they keep them their kids will always have something to practice their reading" (09.18.2008). Sarah then informed parents that fluency would comprise 10% of their child's grade and provided them with the following information on fluency,

> I explained that the goal wasn't to see how fast you could read, but really to see how well you could read. I talked to them about listening for pauses or listening to see if their voices change and listening to see if their voices raise at the end of a sentence that has a question mark. I kind of explained the crossover to comprehension and um then I had a little boy come up and we talked about what would be considered an error and then he read one of these passages for me for a minute and then we stopped and I showed the parents how we calculated the score and then (I) just kind of answered questions (11.04.2008).

Sarah felt it was important to provide parents with the above information stating, "A lot of our students don't have guidance… they don't have that model to copy… I mean some of our kids don't even have electricity" (11.04.2008). Sarah viewed the parent workshops as her opportunity to increase parents' knowledge of how to better support their children in reading, believing this would have positive outcomes for both students' learning and teachers' instruction. Sarah again assumed the role of expert, providing parents with information about how to help their children.

Additional responsibilities: As a Title I school, Sanders Elementary received Title I funding and it was Sarah's responsibility to oversee any funds that were used for reading. During my third observation, for example, Sarah spent the first half of the day ordering over $1,300 dollars in children's books from the money in the Title I parent involvement account. The parent workshops that Sanders Elementary hosted were also funded by Title I parent involvement money, and as described above, Sarah played a large role in those workshops.

Sarah's responsibilities as reading coach also included morning and afternoon sidewalk duties, which she used as opportunities to meet informally with both teachers and parents. In addition, she was occasionally asked to handle discipline. The morning of my second observation, for example, Sarah had to board one of the buses to help the driver handle a group of disruptive students. She explained, "The BRT (behavior resource teacher) is not here today and also the principal is not here which is why my day started with the bus" (11.04.2008). I asked Sarah if that was a responsibility that commonly fell to her when the principal and BRT were absent. She replied, "I try not to… I think typically I would be fourth or fifth down the line" (11.04.2008).

Finally, Sarah was responsible for submitting a bi-weekly coach's log to the state. This responsibility was not related to Reading First or Sanders Elementary but was a state requirement for all reading coaches within the state of Florida. Sarah told me, "I hate the coach's log, especially this year because of the way they changed it." Previous reading coach logs allowed coaches to simply record time spent on various coaching tasks, but now the log required them to identify the teacher as well. As a self described "rule follower" Sarah took this requirement seriously stating,

> I walk around with a clipboard and literally, you know 8:00-8:10 talk to co-worker. Then when you are putting it in, you have to name all the teachers and then push submit and it

takes like a minute or two and that's on each little section, that takes a huge amount of time… Last year of course I probably wasn't right down to 10 minutes when I did it, but I am trying to be very accurate this year (09.18.2008).

The needs of Sanders Elementary and mandates issued by the state dictated some of Sarah's coaching responsibilities. Sarah, however, viewed her role as a support to K-3 teachers in reading and responsibilities that drew her away from that role were avoided if possible. Sarah's stance regarding extra responsibilities was "if you cannot find anyone else then call me, but don't call me first" (11.04.2008).

Interplay of Prior Experiences and Beliefs, Reading First, and School Context

For Sarah, the role of a Reading First reading coach was to develop expertise about the Reading First guidelines and to pass this knowledge on to teachers. Sarah defined her role as a support to K-3 teachers in reading and took a proactive approach to coaching — providing in-class support to new teachers and placing students into appropriate reading groups. Sarah rarely viewed the Reading First guidelines as barriers to her effectiveness; rather, she viewed them as rules that helped to create the definition of a reading coach for herself, her teachers, and her principal. She chose to follow the rules because in doing so, she believed she was drawing on the expertise of the program developers. She believed this expertise would help teachers strengthen their classroom instruction, which would ultimately benefit students. While the needs of Sanders Elementary influenced some of Sarah's responsibilities as a reading coach (e.g. family support, morning and afternoon duty, ordering materials), it was the Reading First Initiative that largely defined her interpretation and enactment of the role.

<div align="center">Karen: "I'm Just Here to Support."</div>

Karen was beginning her third year as the Reading First reading coach at Kenwood Elementary. She entered the reading coach role during year four of the six-year grant. Karen initially transferred to Kenwood Elementary to become the school's math coach, a position that

lasted for only one year. When the school year ended Karen's principal offered her the reading

coach position, a position left vacant when the previous coach was offered a position at the

county office. Prior to becoming a coach Karen had 13 years of experience as a classroom

teacher, however none of these years were at Kenwood Elementary. This made Karen the only

coach in the study to have never taught at the school where she coached. Karen had a bachelor's

degree and a master's degree in elementary education and a state endorsement in reading. Karen

defined her role as a support to teachers and her prior experiences and beliefs, Reading First, and

school context influenced her enactment of the role.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Prior Experiences and Beliefs

For Karen, the role of the reading coach was to support teachers (kindergarten through

fifth grades), which would allow their instruction to be more effective and their classrooms to

run more efficiently. Karen explained,

> I spend time with my brand new teacher… I model lessons… I have teachers sign up for
> observations and after they will come and talk to me about it… I make centers… The
> beginning of the year is so much reading materials I spend a lot of time delivering them
> and looking through them to pull out lessons… I take care of all in-service… I help with
> DIBELS of course… So it's basically just letting me know what you need and when you
> want it (09.18.2008).

Despite the fact that Reading First was intended for only K-3 teachers, Karen defined her role as

being a support to all teachers – kindergarten through fifth. When asked, however, about

providing support to fourth and fifth grade Karen responded, "I will tell you that is not one of the

things I like to do, I don't visit them very often because they are absolutely vile; they are just it is

unreal, their behavior" (11.25.2008). She described a time when she had planned a lesson to

model for a fifth grade class but had to leave the room when the teacher was unable to control

students' behavior. She returned the following week and completed the lesson explaining, "the

next time I went in there it was totally different… they were very apologetic; they knew why I left" (09.18.2008).

Karen continued to define her role as a support to all K-5 teachers, but behavior problems in fourth and fifth grade classrooms led Karen to adjust her level of in-class support. Although Reading First resources were only intended for K-3 teachers, Karen extended those resources to all of the teachers stating,

> Yeah, like when I order things you can order a small library (referring to the Reading First money that is intended to build K-3 teachers' classroom libraries). I pull out the ones (books) that are upper and give them to fourth and fifth grade. You have to justify it when you are buying things they also get to well they certainly do all the professional development that I give, they are all just involved (11.25.2008).

Karen defined her role as a support to all teachers and believed that all teachers at Kenwood Elementary should be involved in her professional development, walkthroughs, observations, and modeling. Karen's desire to include all teachers justified extending the Reading First support beyond K-3 teachers.

The newest coach in her county, Karen initially struggled to understand her role stating, "I was lost. I had no idea… I wasn't sure what I was supposed to be doing" (11.25.2008). She felt "paranoid" her first year, afraid the Reading First coordinator would do a fidelity check to see, for example, if teachers were implementing centers that reflected the five areas of reading. During her first year Karen believed, "that was my job to make sure they had that in their room" (09.18.2008). A principal who offered little support exacerbated this initial uncertainty. Karen explained, "Mrs. Kramer (the principal) thought that once you became the reading coach it was up to you to find out exactly what the role was because you're in charge of reading – explaining it to the staff and everything" (11.25.2008).

As Karen struggled to understand her role, she looked to other Reading First reading coaches within her county for support. Karen credited these other reading coaches for helping

her understand and become better at her reading coach role stating, "It's just the support I get from fellow coaches, because we share so much… we email each other we're in constant contact, thank the Lord they are the support group and I've learned a lot from that" (10.01.2008). In addition to the support of other reading coaches, Karen's understanding of the reading coach role continued to develop as she attended quarterly Reading First meetings and professional development. Karen said, "now that I have gotten really comfortable with what I should and shouldn't be doing I really enjoy it" (11.04.2008). Although Karen was still learning, she realized that her role was not that of a compliance monitor, but rather a support to K-5 teachers. In addition to her prior experiences and beliefs, Karen's enactment was influenced by Reading First and school context and is explained in the following sections.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Reading First

As previously stated, Reading First guidelines remained consistent for all Reading First schools, hence, all Reading First reading coaches were expected to fulfill the same Reading First requirements. Similarities, therefore, existed among the reading coaches' practice. They differed, however, in the extent to which they adhered to Reading First guidelines. The following section outlines Karen's reading coach responsibilities that have a direct connection to Reading First. Like the other coaches, how Karen defined her role influenced her enactment of the Reading First guidelines.

Administering assessments: At Kenwood Elementary DIBELS was administered to all K-5 students three times a year during a specified two-week window. A testing team consisting of the first, third, and fourth grade paraprofessionals, the technology teacher, guidance counselor, and reading coach administered DIBELS. Karen explained, "we each have our designated classes and we pull out students in that class and then go to the next class. Heck no I can't test everybody – no not me" (10.01.2008). In addition to DIBELS, Karen used a variety of

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assessments including: STAR, DAR, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT), and running records. These assessments occurred at various times throughout the school year. For example, STAR was a computerized reading assessment used to measure students' reading levels and reading growth. This assessment was given four times a year but required little preparation — Karen simply scheduled time for all classes to visit the computer lab and then assisted teachers if there was a problem. Other assessments such as the PPVT and running records were more informal and could be administered by Karen, trained paraprofessionals, or teachers at anytime throughout the school year.

In addition to administering and scheduling assessments, Karen (a) attended and provided input regarding students' assessment scores during grade level data meetings, (b) assessed all new students, and (c) prepared all testing materials prior to assessment administrations. When I asked Karen how much time she usually spent on data management responsibilities she replied,

> Well our teachers are responsible for their own data. So when we have our data meetings I will have a copy of everything for when we meet with the principal, but they are responsible for coming up with everything it is all on their back. They have whatever they are doing whether its STAR or simply DIBELS. I have all of it stored, but they have everything they get a copy of all of it so it is up to them to make arrangements. I don't have to do anything (11.25.2008).

While Karen viewed administering assessments as a part of her role she believed teachers were responsible for determining how the data would influence classroom instruction. This approach was based on her belief that teachers should have the freedom to decide what was best for their students. Karen was also wary of altering teachers' instruction for fear they would view her as a "know-it-all." Karen explained, "I don't want them to think that. I'm always so leery when I'm talking that I don't want them to think that I'm telling them what to do or that I know everything" (10.01.2008). Although Karen understood her role as a support to teachers, she did

not help teachers use assessment data to best meet students' needs, because she feared teachers would view her as an authority figure.

Implementing core curriculum: Kenwood Elementary recently adopted a new basal reading series, which changed some of Karen's coaching responsibilities. In addition to organizing and delivering all of the new reading materials, Karen had to familiarize herself with each grade level's basal. To increase her familiarity with the basal, Karen looked through each teacher's edition, planning lessons to model and centers to make. She understood the most important part of her role in relation to the new reading series was showing teachers new ways to structure reading lessons. For Karen, modeling was the most enjoyable part of her role and during the final interview she said, "I love it (modeling)! It gives me my fix to get back in the classroom" (11.25.2008). Although she enjoyed being in the classroom, she was careful not to take over stating, "I always tell them, I'm not showing you how to teach reading I'm going to show you another way that you can combine a lot of benchmarks in" (11.04.2008). I asked Karen how she selected teachers and what her goals were for modeling. She explained that she kept a sign up sheet in the office for teachers to select a day stating,

> I always want it to be on a Monday so that I would be able to start their actual reading lesson – their story for that week on Monday… I would say that I'd be able to do every teacher twice this year. And they like it, honestly they really do (11.04.2008).

The second observation occurred on a Monday and as a result, I observed Karen modeling a lesson from the basal. There were 17 students in the third grade class and one long-term substitute who was filling in for a teacher on maternity leave. The students were excited to see Karen. During the lesson she implemented whole group and small group activities including having students: write answers on the board, collaborate with a partner, and break into small groups to rotate through four different centers. Although Karen presented a typical reading lesson — engage students in whole group activities, read the story, and then break into small

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groups to work on the focused reading skill — the students were engaged and seemed to enjoy both the reading lesson and Karen's presence. When I asked Karen in the subsequent interview what her goals were for that lesson she replied, "I wanted every student engaged in work. I wanted them all to get up and I wanted them to experience going to learning centers" (11.04.2008). Karen also explained that the regular classroom teacher was out on maternity leave, so she hoped the full time substitute would "benefit" from a modeled lesson.

Karen's modeling often focused on lessons from the basal, though she was willing to model anything teachers needed stating, "I will go in and help just anytime during a week that a teacher wants me to come in and help… as long as I'm not already doing something somewhere else" (11.04.2008). Karen was willing to support teachers whenever they asked for help, but she was uncertain as to how to identify teachers' needs on her own. Therefore, teachers had to identify their instructional needs to receive Karen's help.

For Karen, the recent adoption of a new basal reading series meant her material management and lesson modeling responsibilities increased. Karen did not complain about her extra responsibilities. In fact, she believed that modeling was the aspect of the coaching role that benefited teachers the most. Karen defined her role as a support to teachers and believed that showing teachers different ways to structure reading lessons or engage students ultimately provided teachers with the in-class support they needed to make their instruction more effective and to make their classrooms run more efficiently.

Professional development: Karen provided professional development to all K-5 teachers in whole group, grade level, and individual formats. The topic of the whole group professional development remained the same throughout the school year and was focused on an area that Karen identified as a need. For example, during this study, the professional development focused

on best practices, and the entire faculty viewed one of Harry Wong's effective teacher videos each month. The Harry Wong series did not have a reading focus, but Karen believed her faculty "needed to watch it to become more familiar with how to run classroom procedures" (10.01.2008). In addition to the Harry Wong series, the faculty at Kenwood Elementary engaged in a book study, which was organized by the county. Each year the county selected, purchased, and provided a one-day in-service on a chosen book. At the time of the study, the book was *Boys in Crisis* (Slocumb, 2004). I asked Karen how she supported the county's book study and she explained, "we discuss it openly especially at grade level meetings… they have to write a paragraph of reflection (required for in-service points) about it per chapter – I'm not picky about it" (11.04.2008). Karen's whole group professional development tended to focus on broad issues such as classroom management rather than reading. She also relied on others (e.g. Harry Wong or the county's book study) to deliver the professional development. Thus, Karen continued to avoid situations in which teachers might view her as an authority figure or expert.

For Karen, grade level professional development meant providing teachers with resources. Karen believed that providing resources was an important support for teachers stating, "I love doing stuff for them like the centers because I was in the classroom so long and I remember what it was like to be so tired after school that you struggle to get up the next morning" (09.18.2008). By making centers, Karen felt that she was encouraging teachers to use them in their classroom and saving them time. She explained,

> Like last year I made four different ones (centers) for the four first grade teachers so I made 16 different centers then 16 different second, third, fourth, and fifth because once it starts it's just a constant thing you're cutting out, you're Xeroxing, and you're laminating and I know that sounds crazy because you're handling reading materials but to me that's professional development because once I hand it to them and when I meet with the small group teachers I'm explaining how to use it (10.01.2008).

By making teachers' centers and then explaining how to use them, Karen was able to be a resource to her teachers, while not interfering in their classroom practice.

Finally, Karen delivered professional development on an individual basis — conducting walkthroughs, observing, modeling, and providing feedback. As with modeling, Karen had a sign-up sheet to schedule observations, but she noted that teachers also "come in or stop you on the sidewalk and say will you please come by and look at this and you know it's a lot of that spur of the moment type thing" (10.01.2008). Observing teachers' instruction and providing feedback were important parts of Karen's role. Although some observations were "spur of the moment," Karen observed every teacher in the school. Karen spent additional time with Mrs. Kelly, the new third grade teacher. When asked about Mrs. Kelly's progress, Karen said she believed Mrs. Kelly was doing well overall but then noted a few areas of concern explaining,

> She doesn't have an active word wall and she goes in from reading automatically to math without a little break and they (students) need that. So her peer teacher Mrs. Kent and I will work with her on that but we don't want to do it all at once because she is new and that is the least of my problems. She handles the discipline really well (09.18.2008).

Although Karen identified areas in Mrs. Kelly's reading instruction that needed additional support, she believed that those areas were not especially problematic because Mrs. Kelly had effective classroom management skills. Karen often linked effective classroom management to effective classroom instruction; she tended to provide feedback on classroom management more than classroom instruction.

Delivering feedback was challenging for Karen especially when "you're delivering not so good news" (10.01.2008). This might be why she chose to focus her attention on what the students were doing as opposed to what the teachers were doing. The following excerpts are from interviews in which Karen described the feedback she gave to teachers after an observation. Karen explained,

No matter how much work I think that teacher has I am always positive. (For example) I could say do you recall when you were doing echo reading and there was a group of students over there chitchatting? I bring it up and I say now I don't know if you were just nervous because I was in the room, things like that. I want her to know it, but I don't want her to think I'm sitting there saying okay I wanted to see so and so and you didn't do that (11.04.2008).

In the final interview, Karen spoke again about providing teachers with feedback stating,

I think I have a great personality when I work with them. I kind of laugh about it and say oh it's not that bad, listen I just want you to try something different for me. Because maybe I noticed Johnny was kinda out there he wasn't paying a bit of attention and I thought if you could just take his eraser away from him, or whatever the problem was it might work out (11.25.2008).

In both examples Karen was positive with her teachers but focused her feedback on students' behavior as opposed to the teachers' instruction.

For Karen, professional development responsibilities were divided into three parts: whole group, grade level, and individual. Whole group professional development was yearlong and focused on general topics such as classroom management skills, whereas grade level professional development focused on providing teachers with resources. Finally, individual professional development consisted of in-class support; Karen observed, modeled, and provided all teachers with feedback.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by School Context

School context played a prominent role in how Karen enacted her reading coach responsibilities. Kenwood Elementary was a Title I school where 91% of the students were on free and reduced lunch and 96% of the students were minorities. Karen described Kenwood Elementary as a neighborhood school stating, "Our campus is small, only about 300 kids… most of them live around here. We have one bus but most of our kids walk home" (09.18.2008). Due to its size, Kenwood Elementary had four teachers at each grade level kindergarten through third, two fourth grade teachers, two fifth grade teachers, and two self-contained ESE teachers. Karen

described the small teacher population as "bad because every campus has different committees you are on well see that makes our teachers double up more and they are tired" (09.18.2008). In addition, Karen felt a lack of parental support affected her role as reading coach stating, "There are things that their parents actually volunteer for (describing another school) that ours just aren't capable of doing, we just don't have it. So if I went in and wanted help making materials they can get their parents to do that" (11.25.2008). Karen felt her school's size and lack of parental support added to her coaching responsibilities.

Responsible for paraprofessionals: At Kenwood Elementary, each grade level had a paraprofessional to support teachers' instruction. In addition, the school used a portion of its Title I money to hire part-time reading tutors for extra support during small group instruction — a practice that was common in this county. It was Karen's responsibility to supervise all paraprofessionals and reading tutors, making their schedules and training them in assessment and intervention programs. During the second observation, Karen met with the paraprofessionals and reading tutors for their monthly meeting. At this 35-minute meeting, Karen provided a quick review of how to administer the PPVT and then reviewed how to read DIBELS reports. She also encouraged them to look up the scores for the students with whom they worked. At the end of the meeting, Karen gave everyone the opportunity to share good things they were doing in classrooms, as well as to share concerns, comments, or complaints. Because paraprofessionals and reading tutors supported teachers' reading instruction, the responsibility of training, scheduling, and meeting with them fell to Karen.

Leadership committee: At Kenwood Elementary the leadership committee consisted of the principal, curriculum resource teacher, guidance counselor, a classroom teacher, and the reading coach. The leadership committee met weekly and represented the leadership of the

school. Karen explained that the leadership committee was the place to voice concerns stating, "I voice my concerns in leadership meetings so that I have everybody there and I'm not just gossiping about somebody" (10.01.2008). Karen told me that when committee members felt a teacher was struggling they would try to pair that teacher up with a stronger teacher from the same grade level. She explained, "after the meeting I am usually the one to go to one of those teachers on the team and say hey I need your help a little bit can you do so and so with her" (10.01.2008). Although Karen defined her role as a support to teachers, she realized that the support did not have to come from her directly.

Additional responsibilities: The first 30 minutes of Karen's school day began with cafeteria duty. When I asked her about this responsibility, she explained, "Everybody has some type of duty and in the morning I have cafeteria duty to make sure everything is okay and just to add an extra hand or an extra eye" (11.25.2008). In addition to cafeteria duty, Karen was responsible for collecting canned foods for Thanksgiving baskets. She explained that this responsibility usually fell to the guidance counselor, but she was out on maternity leave, so Karen was asked to assume the responsibility. Karen was also asked to run occasional errands, for example, during the third observation Karen drove to the supermarket to purchase a cake for a teacher's wedding shower. Karen did not mind these extra responsibilities stating, "I don't (mind). We (reading coaches) all do things that are not supposedly on our duties, but I don't think any of us complain about stuff like that" (10.01.2008). Finally, Karen was responsible for submitting a bi-weekly coach's log to the state. In the final interview Karen said, "I hate that thing. That is one thing I despise. It's time consuming" (11.24.2008). Karen explained that the form had changed, now requiring coaches to identify the teachers they supported, which took additional time. I asked Karen if she ever received feedback on her coach's log and she informed

me that the only feedback coaches received was an email notification if the form was late. When asked what purpose the form served, Karen stated,

> I think, here is my honest opinion; I think it is a way to justify the reading coaches. It is just one of those things we have to do to justify having a reading coach… to a point we are doing different things but it is still whatever your school needs (11.25.2008).

Throughout all of Karen's various responsibilities at Kenwood Elementary, she tried to be a support to her teachers so they could run their classrooms more efficiently and strengthen their classroom instruction.

Interplay of Prior Experiences and Beliefs, Reading First, and School Context

Karen described herself as "positive" and having a "high level of interest in what I'm doing" (11.04.2008). She defined her role as a support to all teachers K-5, believing that it was important to include all teachers regardless of Reading First guidelines. Although Karen was confident in her position that all teachers needed to be supported, she often felt uncertain in her position as a reading coach stating, "I think I just need support from higher ups and to have somebody tell me Karen I don't think that is a good way to do that" (11.04.2008). Due to her uncertainty, Karen developed a limited role for herself as a Reading First reading coach. For example, Karen offered professional development but did not directly address teachers' classroom instruction. Likewise, Karen scheduled and assessed students but rarely used assessment data to help teachers group students or alter instruction. Karen thought one way to provide support was to assume whatever additional responsibilities the school needed. For Karen, Reading First guidelines, school context, prior experiences and beliefs, and her uncertainty shaped her definition and enactment of the reading coach role.

Bonnie: "Reading Coach as Problem Solver"

Bonnie was beginning her sixth year as the Reading First reading coach at Baxter Elementary. Prior to becoming the reading coach, she taught second grade for nine years, with

eight of those years at Baxter Elementary. In addition to her elementary teaching and coaching experiences, Bonnie taught online reading endorsement classes for the North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC) and worked as a facilitator for summer academies offered by Reading First. Bonnie had a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a state endorsement in reading. She defined her role as a support and believed that meant responding to teachers needs as quickly as possible. Similar to the other three coaches, Bonnie's enactment of her reading coach role was influenced by her prior experiences and beliefs, the Reading First Initiative, and school context.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Prior Experiences and Beliefs

For Bonnie, the role of the reading coach was to meet the needs of her school. Bonnie's definition of meeting school needs was inclusive and encompassed students' learning, as well as principal expectations. In addition to meeting school needs, Bonnie defined her role as being a support to teachers (kindergarten through fifth grades) stating, "my role is to make them more effective teachers because they are the ones in the classroom doing the work" (09.03.2008). When asked to further define her role she said,

> At the beginning of the year I do a lot of organizing and making sure that people have the materials they need, making sure that our lowest kids –I call it kid start, we already know they are low so we need to start their interventions as soon as possible… In the beginning of the year it is kind of more general getting the whole school to get the interventions, getting everything settled. In the middle of the year it is more a teacher saying you know I've got a group that I don't know what to do with or I don't like how my 90 minutes is going, can you sit down and help me figure it out… It's more of them coming to me in the middle of the year and at the beginning of the year I guess it is more me going to them… right now I am creating the problems that later I will help them solve (laughs)… At the end of the year we do retention conferences so there is probably a little more of me doing special assessments on kids at the end of the year because the teacher is considering retention (09.18.2008).

Moreover, Bonnie felt limited for time, so when it came to prioritizing her coaching responsibilities, she always asked herself, "what is going to help my school most" (09.18.2008)?

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Her inclusive definition of the reading coach role meant that Bonnie did not always adhere to Reading First guidelines explaining, "I serve all six grade levels… and anything they (teachers) want me to do I will do and they know that" (09.03.2008). When asked if she provided support outside of reading she replied, "Some. I'm not really supposed to, but I do it anyways – math intervention and things like that" (09.03.2008). Bonnie felt it was more important to meet the needs of her teachers and their students than to adhere to the Reading First guidelines.

During the first interview, Bonnie said, "I can say we have done our very best to be compliant with everything we can be, but we are not going to sacrifice our kids" (09.03.2008). At times Bonnie believed there was disconnect between the Reading First guidelines and the needs of her teachers and their students. She likened her role as a reading coach to

> A person caught between situations. Being the cheerleader for things you don't like yourself and you have to make sure you are true to the grant, make sure you are making your principal happy, you are working with the teachers and doing what is best for kids (09.03.2008).

Although Bonnie was critical of Reading First, she realized that it led to several "benefits" including: funding for classroom libraries and materials, teachers' increased use of assessment data to better meet students needs, and teachers learning to use the scope and sequence of the basal. Bonnie also stated, "and you know I have a good job due to Reading First and I love it (being the reading coach)! So good things come out of it but you can't wholesale lock stock and barrel go into something" (09.03.2008).

As one of the first Reading First reading coaches in her district, Bonnie had attended almost six years of coaches' meetings and trainings offered by the *Just Read, Florida!* office. Bonnie credited those workshops and trainings with strengthening her knowledge of reading and coaching stating,

> When I think of where I started… my personal understanding of the reading process, my personal understanding of how to work with adult learners… I have grown more than they

(teachers) have. So as I become more professionally developed I am a better resource for them (09.03.2008).

Bonnie defined her role as a support to teachers and Baxter Elementary and realized that as her knowledge of reading and coaching increased, she became a better coach.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by Reading First

Being a Reading First reading coach, Bonnie was expected to fulfill the same requirements as the other coaches in this study. Although Baxter Elementary sometimes "went around" the Reading First guidelines, those guidelines still shaped Bonnie's coaching practices. There were similarities and differences in how all four coaches performed certain responsibilities as well as how much importance they placed on each responsibility. The following section outlines Bonnie's reading coach responsibilities that were directly connected to the Reading First Initiative. However, her definition of her role as a support to both teachers and the school influenced the extent to which she carried out Reading First guidelines.

Assessment: In accordance with Reading First guidelines, K-3 students at Baxter Elementary were assessed in DIBELS three times a year during a specified two-week window at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Fourth and fifth grade students were also assessed in DIBELS — typically before the Reading First testing window. During assessment periods, Bonnie's primary responsibility was gathering and analyzing the data. She explained, "when it is DIBELS time that is my number one priority. It takes up 100% of my time on those days" (09.17.2008).

The first observation occurred on a DIBELS assessment day. The assessment process at Baxter Elementary was structured and organized. Bonnie's preparation for DIBELS began with an eight-hour K-5 DIBELS training — a Reading First requirement for anyone administering the assessment — for all available paraprofessionals and tutors. Once this training was complete,

Bonnie created a master five-day DIBELS schedule, which included all K-3 classrooms (there was a separate schedule for fourth and fifth grades). When the assessment window opened classes arrived at the library according to the schedule. Tutors and paraprofessionals picked up the testing materials Bonnie had prearranged and then selected a student to assess in one of the library's side rooms. While individual students were being assessed, the rest of the class sat and read. The whole process took approximately 20 minutes per class, and while the paraprofessionals and reading tutors administered DIBELS, Bonnie calculated and entered scores into the state's Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network (PMRN). In addition to DIBELS, Bonnie used a variety of formal and informal assessments including: running records, PPVT, Think-Link, and DAR.

Bonnie viewed assessments, both formal and informal, and the data meetings that followed as key parts of her role, using them to place students in intervention groups and to help teachers plan instruction. At the end of each DIBELS testing window, for example, there were two weeks of data meetings. Bonnie explained,

> Week one the data meeting will be to go over all of the students (in that grade level), in other words look at the whole thing, have a quick talk about what we saw as a grade level, what we saw in your classes, a discussion. The next week they will bring only their yellows and reds and we will specifically look at intervention kids (09.18.2008).

Bonnie's mention of yellow and red students was in reference to their DIBELS scores. DIBELS scores are numerical and categorized into colors which indicate the level of risk — above average is blue, low risk is green, moderate risk is yellow, and high risk is red. Students whose scores were in the yellow and red range were obvious concerns, but during data meetings, Bonnie also cautioned teachers to be aware of those students in green "because if they were a point or two away from being yellow then they you need to make them your concern"

(09.18.2008). To further explain her point Bonnie picked up a teacher's data sheet and pointed to a student stating,

> So this one was an eight but the next target is 25 so they need to look at this guy. He's green and [designated] low risk now but he's not going to be green next time unless we really work on that… just making sure they look at certain things on their reports (09.19.2008).

For Bonnie, grade level data meetings provided her the opportunity to review classroom data reports with teachers making them "more aware of what they need to be doing in their classroom" (09.18.2008).

Bonnie also incorporated professional development (so teachers could get in-service points) into some grade level data meetings. When asked how a data meeting could be considered professional development Bonnie answered, "it does because I make it professional development" (10.09.2008). Bonnie further explained that there must be an agenda with a specific focus such as data analysis or error analysis. She further stated, "it's just me teaching them how to dig deeper into their DIBELS data" (10.09.2008). In addition to scheduling assessments, entering assessment data, distributing data sheets to all teachers, training faculty and staff to administer assessments, and holding grade level data meetings, Bonnie was responsible for keeping the school-wide data binder which contained all K-5 students' assessment scores. As mentioned previously, the data binder was not a Reading First requirement, but it was a byproduct of the assessment data the grant required.

Although the reading coach role came with many data management responsibilities, Bonnie had a positive view of data management— seeing it as a way to support teachers' instruction. She also found her data responsibilities to be a rewarding part of her role, which she attributed to working with teachers who valued data. During the first observation, numerous teachers came to Bonnie requesting their assessment reports, even though their classes had only

recently been assessed. Bonnie commented that her teachers were anxious to find out how their

students did. She went on to describe that they would start to approach her in the upcoming

weeks for new resources and ideas on ways to regroup students. In a subsequent interview

Bonnie explained that having teachers who were responsive to the data was why she enjoyed her

data management responsibilities stating, "As a reading coach that is what you want to see

happening. You want the data to influence classroom instruction" (09.18.2008).

      Implementing core curriculum: Prior to Reading First, Baxter Elementary had never

used a basal reading series. Reading was instead taught through rotating thematic units that

focused on the Sunshine State Standards. After being awarded the Reading First grant, Baxter

Elementary adopted its first basal reading series. Bonnie remembered teachers' initial resistance

towards the basal stating,

> Well the first year they were like – this is not better than what we were doing. This makes
> me mad… It was kind of this attitude by God if they want me to teach through this stupid
> book I will even if the kids don't learn as much. There was a little bit of that attitude going
> on. This is silly and it's not good for the kids but if that is what the state wants then that is
> what the state is going to get. Well of course they (teachers) couldn't stand it. So then we
> started saying as long as you are using the scope and sequence of the books you can choose
> your own materials, but they had to use it as a tool it doesn't have to be the only tool
> (10.09.2008).

Although teachers were initially resistant to the basal, Bonnie knew that it strengthened their

instruction in some areas. She explained, "they learned, for example, that phonemic awareness

was something that they didn't do enough of" (09.03.2008). Furthermore, as Bonnie provided

professional development on the five areas of reading and teachers became more familiar with

the basal, their understanding of how to select strategies and skills from the basal increased.

Bonnie explained, "they learned how to do it and do it effectively… to use it as a tool using the

scope and sequence, but it has been a process" (10.09.2008).

Part of the process of using a basal is selecting and adopting a new one every five to six years, which Baxter Elementary recently did. The recent adoption of a new basal altered the professional development Bonnie provided. She explained, "I love doing professional development. I love making the power points. I love finding the research. I love all of that, but that is not what my school (teachers and students) needs right now" (09.03.2008). Bonnie believed that the teachers at Baxter Elementary needed time to become familiar with the new basal and all of the materials that accompanied it. To support her teachers' familiarization with the newly adopted basal, Bonnie planned to organize guided grade level planning times. Teachers would be given an agenda and an area of the core curriculum on which to focus. She explained,

> I will ask (for example) what does the reading series offer you to help students with fluency? You know make them look for it because they may not have had the time to look specifically for the fluency things in there. The number of resources per basal – there is a ridiculous number of supports that go along with a basal. So that is what is more effective for this school right now, not me standing in front of them (09.03.2008).

For Bonnie, encouraging teachers' use of the basal was a part of her role as a Reading First reading coach. However, she defined her role as a support to teachers and therefore, altered her professional development to assist teachers in becoming more familiar with the basal, and encouraged them to use the basal as a tool – selecting strategies to incorporate in their classroom instruction. When it came to implementing the core curriculum, Bonnie's role was that of a mediator between teachers' professional judgments and the requirements of Reading First.

Professional development: Bonnie provided professional development to all K-5 teachers in whole group, grade level, and individual formats. During the first interview, Bonnie talked about the part of the reading coach role she enjoyed the most stating, "The professional development. I love the whole group professional development and the small group. I love to plan, do the agendas, get all my materials together because I love to teach" (12.12.2008). For

Bonnie, the "coolest" professional development activity she ever planned had a Harley Davidson

theme with a "Go Hog Wild for Reading" slogan. Her goals for the professional development

were to encourage teachers to implement more differentiated centers in their classrooms and to

have fun on a teacher workday. Bonnie explained,

> I did an hour-long lesson on differentiated centers. I asked each teacher to set up three
> centers in their room that they use on a regular basis something they really thought was
> good – you know show off stuff. Three show off centers. Then I put them in teams (with a
> teacher from each grade level on each team) and they traveled and everybody got to see
> every grade level's centers and they became the teacher in their room… So every teacher
> got the chance to be on the pedestal and everybody was forced to share and they absolutely
> loved it… We also moved from class to class with the sound of a motorcycle, they got
> little clipboards with motorcycle stickers we tried to make it a lot of fun (10.09.2008).

Although professional development activities of this scale were not typical at Baxter Elementary,

Bonnie believed it important to provide teachers with an opportunity to view each other's

classrooms, giving them a school-wide perspective while still focusing on a specific skill or

strategy.

Less elaborate in scale, but equally well planned was a whole group professional

development on round robin reading that occurred during the third observation. In round robin

reading, students take turns reading aloud from the same text. Although it is a reading practice

that researchers have deemed ineffective for increasing oral reading fluency, it still persists in

many classrooms today. Bonnie said, "I've seen it in a couple of my classrooms lately and it's a

real pet peeve of Barbara's (the school principal)" (12.12.2008). Wanting to address the topic of

round robin reading, Bonnie planned a 60-minute after school professional development that

included: sharing a book titled *Goodbye Round Robin*, a brief presentation on effective ways to

increase oral reading and language fluency, and an opportunity for teachers to partner and share

how they promote oral reading and language fluency in their classrooms. The professional

development ended with Bonnie reminding teachers that a lesson's strategy and objective must

match asking them, "when you put all of your high kids in the corner and have them reading aloud to each other what is the objective?" A teacher raised her hand and replied, "to keep the kids busy" (12.10.2008). Bonnie agreed and told her teachers that round robin reading was not a huge problem at Baxter Elementary; although as winter vacation approached, she noticed it a bit more. The teachers laughed and the professional development ended on time.

For this after school professional development, all of the teachers arrived on time and members of the lead team – curriculum resource teacher, principal, guidance counselor, and reading coach – as well as a few paraprofessionals attended. Bonnie explained that this professional development "wasn't very deep it was just a bring it to your attention kind of thing" (12.12.2008), which she felt was appropriate because winter vacation was only one week away. Bonnie considered her teachers to be responsive to professional development and believed that she was supporting effective classroom instruction by reminding teachers of the ineffectiveness of round robin reading, while also providing them with other oral reading options.

Bonnie also provided her teachers with grade level professional development. Her role in grade level professional development was to schedule time for the grade levels to meet and then provide them with agendas that focused on topics of concern such as assessment data or the new basal series. Bonnie explained,

> A lot of professional development in a school like this has to be listening to each other because that is what they need to do. They can learn from each other, but you have to provide that time – uninterrupted time that they can't opt out of so they have to hear what other people are doing (10.09.2008).

Bonnie provided both the time and opportunity for teachers to collaborate, recognizing that support did not always have to come from her directly. Although Bonnie provided time for teachers to meet she did not attend the meetings, nor did she add any structure to the meetings. By failing to both add structure and then follow-up with teachers after these collaborative

conversations, she missed an opportunity to encourage teachers to push each other to deeper levels of understanding about student learning.

Finally, Bonnie provided professional development on an individual basis by finding resources, observing, and conducting classroom walkthroughs. Bonnie walked through classrooms on a daily basis and used these walkthroughs to inform professional development "99% of the time" (12.12.2008). Some walkthroughs were planned, such as when she wanted to view all kindergarten intervention groups. Other walkthroughs were not planned, such as when teachers asked her to come in or when she popped into a classroom because she saw something interesting through the window. Planned or unplanned, Bonnie used classroom walkthroughs to view teachers' instruction and share good lesson ideas with other teachers. Observations, however, occurred less frequently —typically by principal request. Bonnie said, "she (the principal) says to me I've been in this classroom and I'm just a little bit concerned about what I saw during small groups and she needs help" (09.03.2008). Bonnie explained that the principal looked at teachers' instruction with more of an "administrative eye" and so she sometimes noticed things Bonnie did not. I asked Bonnie if she would address this concern by modeling small group instruction for this teacher and she replied, "I'm not usually modeling. I'm observing and talking to her… I'll also let her go observe in a very effective teachers' room during small groups" (09.03.2008).

In subsequent interviews, Bonnie described her opinions on modeling, providing a number of reasons why she did not model. She explained,

> Every time I have ever done modeling it is so fakey because I don't know those kids. Like the first few years when we did fluency I went in and modeled all kinds of fluency things, but I don't know their kids and I don't know that teacher's personality and that teacher is going to put their personality to it… I think it is more authentic for a teacher to watch another teacher in their classroom (09.03.2008).

Bonnie believed making arrangements for teachers to view others' instruction was a better support than if she went in and modeled. Throughout the course of the interviews and observations, the topic of modeling came up repeatedly. In the final interview, Bonnie talked about modeling and she said, "that's my weakness, not doing more of that" (12.12.2008). She added,

> But this school is full of very, very experienced teachers and for me to go in there not knowing the students, all their names, and all their levels, and all their stuff like that and do a canned lesson. That comes from my teacher background I would have resented that… Plus the other thing is truly, truly, truly when I was in the classroom say the guidance counselor had to come once a month and do something I resented giving up that time. I said what I've got to do is too important and I know a lot of the teachers here are like you know hey I got too much to do to give her 30 minutes of my time to come show me something. Just tell me what you want me to do and I'll try it. (12.12.2008).

For Bonnie, individual professional development was providing resources, sharing ideas, and arranging times for teachers to view others' instruction—all supports to teachers that respected their instructional time. Whole group professional development, on the other hand, was informed by walkthroughs and focused on strategies and skills that teachers needed to improve on or implement. Finally, grade level professional development provided teachers more time to review data and new materials.

Enactment of Role as Directly Influenced by School Context

School context played a prominent role in how Bonnie carried out her Reading First responsibilities. During the first two minutes of the initial interview, Bonnie said that Baxter Elementary was different than other Reading First schools stating, "In reality, we are not a school that should have gotten Reading First. We don't really fit the box that Reading First was meant for, which was for low performing schools with lots of low socioeconomic and reading needs" (09.03.2008). Although Baxter Elementary was a Title I school where 50% of the students were on free and reduced and 17% were minorities, their percentages were lower than

the other schools in this study. In addition, Baxter Elementary had little teacher turnover (there were no new teachers during the study), a stable student population, and a thriving Parent Teacher Advisory (PTA). The expectations and needs of Baxter Elementary provided Bonnie with additional reading coach responsibilities that were not directly related to the Reading First guidelines.

Creating schedules: At Baxter Elementary all teachers had a paraprofessional and a tutor in their room everyday during their 20-minute small group reading time. These paraprofessionals and tutors were funded through the school's Title I and supplemental academic improvement funds. Bonnie was responsible for creating the master schedule for paraprofessionals and tutors. To create this schedule, Bonnie met with teachers to discuss available and convenient times. Bonnie said, "I do a lot of running around and a lot of tweaking it" (12.12.2008). When asked why scheduling the tutors and paraprofessionals was her responsibility Bonnie explained,

> I usually work on the schedules because you know someone in the school's gotta do the scheduling, because I've seen and I know more about how their instruction runs probably you know like from a teacher's perspective and from an instructional perspective you know people don't want you to say okay someone is coming from 9:30-10:00 if that is when you always do whole group math (12.12.208).

Bonnie considered creating the master schedule an important part of her role, because she viewed it as a way to meet teachers' and students' needs by providing them with additional support during small group reading. In the final interview, Bonnie said she liked creating the schedules, "even through it drives me crazy. It's like a big puzzle and it's fun to me to get to put it together and I get satisfaction out of the teachers' appreciating it" (12.12.2008).

Lead team: At Baxter Elementary the lead team consisted of the principal, curriculum resource teacher, guidance counselor, and reading coach. The lead team represented the leadership of the school and met on an "as needed" basis. Bonnie explained that faculty and staff could bring concerns to the lead team stating, "that is what you are supposed to do… The four of

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us get together and we try to solve problems" (09.18.2008). As a member of lead team, however, Bonnie felt that her relationship with teachers, particularly those with whom she was close, had changed. She explained,

> It is difficult is when you have very close friends that are teachers, because my best friend of course I taught side by side with in second grade and I have to be careful of what I say sometimes that is hard. I have a lot more knowledge of things… I have to be real careful about what I say and of course she is careful about what she says to me too, which is kind of a stressful thing. Our school talk has changed (09.18.2008).

Bonnie described that is was hard to no longer be considered "one of them" (classroom teacher) stating, "but what I always want to do is remember what it is like to be one of them because then if you can think from that perspective I understand what irritates them before I let it irritate them" (09.18.2008). Bonnie understood that being a member of the lead team altered her position with teachers, however, she felt that as member of the team she was able to support teachers by considering their viewpoint and advocating for their instructional needs.

Meetings and conferences: As a self-described "data person" teachers often asked Bonnie for support during parent conferences. She explained,

> I mean they come to me and say help me figure out how to do this. You know from help me print out the reports to re-explain it to me so I can explain it to them or come into the conference and explain that data and so I can do that… And usually if I know they are coming then I go to the teacher and say what do you want me to emphasize that they just need to hear from somebody else? (09.18.2008).

In addition to supporting teachers during parent conferences, Bonnie – along with the curriculum resource teacher, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, and district staffing specialist – was responsible for attending all school staffings. Her role on this committee was to suggest new interventions and strategies, explain student's data, and "back the teacher up against her (the district staffing specialist) if she says we don't have evidence to test… (Although) we don't have that problem here because she trusts us that we have done what we say we've done" (12.12.2008). Finally, Bonnie was in charge of the school's literacy council. The literacy council

consisted of the principal, curriculum resource teacher, media specialist, and a classroom teacher from each grade level. During the second observation, I attended the after school literacy council meeting and the topics discussed included: ordering new books for the library, ordering more PPVT assessment kits, Accelerated Reader goals, data notebooks, and finding a Christmas book to represent the school theme. Reading issues that concerned the whole school were discussed in literacy council and then the grade level representatives were responsible for bringing the information back to their teammates. Bonnie believed that through her participation in parent teacher conferences, staffings, and the literacy council she was supporting teachers, which allowed them to better support their students.

Additional responsibilities: For 25-minutes at the end of everyday Bonnie called students' names on a megaphone at the car-loop. I asked Bonnie why this was one of her responsibilities, and she told me that all non-instructional personnel were responsible for morning or afternoon duty explaining, "everyone does duty… if you didn't you would be the outcast (laughs)" (10.09.2008). Bonnie also supported teachers in areas outside of reading, such as finding science resources or scheduling math interventions. She believed that eventually reading coaches would be called curriculum coaches, responsible for supporting teachers in all academic areas. In addition, Bonnie took on the extra responsibility of coordinating the district's reading coaches when the district coordinator resigned. Bonnie stated, "I took it on because I would just as soon do it than sit around and wait for someone else to do it. I've been doing this longer than the others and I'm the mommy coach as they call me" (10.09.2008). Finally, like all reading coaches in the state of Florida, Bonnie was responsible for submitting a coach's log bi-weekly to the state. Bonnie explained that the form was not comprehensive enough to cover all of the reading coaches' responsibilities stating, "I believe the coach's log is certainly not

indicative of what coaches are doing. I think it is a bunch of hullabaloo" (09.03.2008).

Throughout all of her various responsibilities at Baxter Elementary, Bonnie defined her reading coach role as supporting the needs of her teachers, her school, and at times, her district.

Interplay of Prior Experiences and Beliefs, Reading First, and School Context

As a reading coach, Bonnie viewed herself as "problem solver" who was "highly organized and enthusiastic" (09.03.2008). She believed her primary role was to support the needs of both her teachers and her school. To support these needs, Bonnie adopted a whole school point of view; hence, she struggled to isolate reading from the school's other instructional needs. The needs and expectations of Baxter Elementary often dictated Bonnie's role, while the Reading First guidelines typically did not. This was due in part to Bonnie's belief that Baxter Elementary was not the typical Reading First school, and therefore, many of the Reading First requirements were not appropriate. She adhered to some of the Reading First requirements such as implementing a core curriculum and assessing students in DIBELS three times a year, but she ignored other requirements such as providing support for only K-3 teachers and in-class modeling. Bonnie, with the support from her principal, relied on her own reading knowledge and her knowledge of teacher and school needs to define her role, as opposed to the federal and state guidelines issued by Reading First. Bonnie exercised a high degree of autonomy in enacting her reading coach role. Although that might not have been the intended role for a Reading First reading coach, Bonnie believed that by deviating from the grant's guidelines, she was better able to meet the needs of her teachers and her school.

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Summary

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The reading coaches interpreted their role as a support, however, their definitions of support varied from proactive to responsive and from collaborative to expert-driven. In addition, Reading First, school context, and the coaches' prior experiences and beliefs influenced their

enactment of the role. As described, however, the nature of these influences varied by coach. In the following chapter, the similarities and difference among the coaches' practice will be discussed.
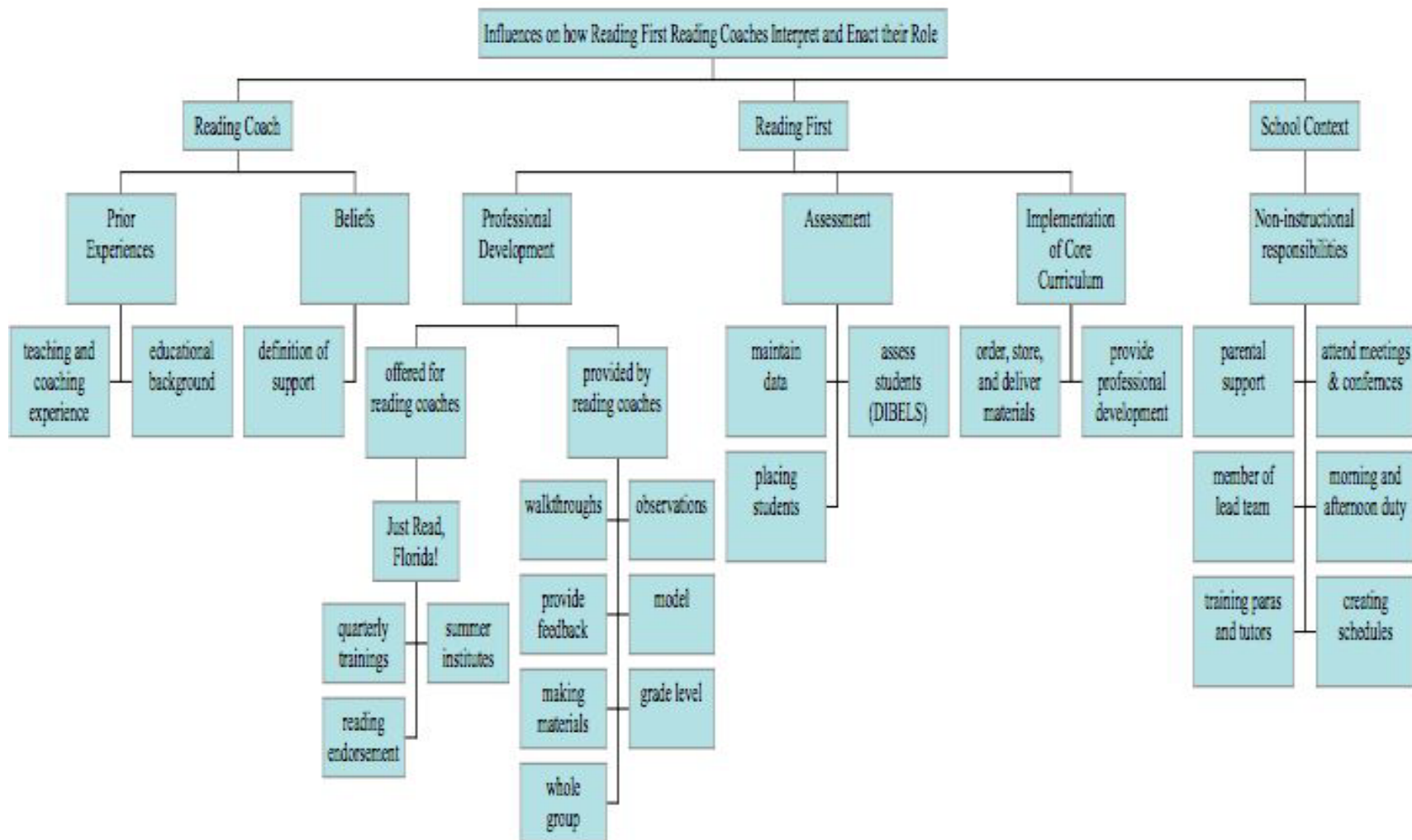
Figure 4-1. Influences on how Reading First reading coaches interpret and enact their role

CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The current study was designed to address the following research questions:

- How do Reading First reading coaches define their role?
- How do Reading First reading coaches enact their role?
- What are the influences on their definition and practices?
- What are the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role?

In chapter four I presented data related to the first three research questions. I described how each reading coach interpreted and enacted her role. The data highlighted how Reading First, school context, and beliefs about how to best support teachers influenced the coaches' definition and practice. In this chapter, I provide data related to the fourth research question: What are the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role? All four coaches engaged in similar coaching responsibilities (e.g. student assessments, members of schools' leadership teams, provide professional development), however, it was their approach to professional development (expert-driven versus collaborative) that differentiated them. To explain the differences in the coaches' approach to professional development, Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) outline of the three conceptions of teacher learning: knowledge-*for*-practice, knowledge-*in*-practice, and knowledge-*of*-practice were used. This chapter also explains how the findings from the study support the existing literature and how they extend it. Finally, included in this chapter are implications for further research, the preparation of reading coaches, and school-based personnel.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how four Reading First reading coaches interpreted and enacted their roles as coach. Coaching has been heralded as a way to provide job-embedded ongoing professional development. The idea of coaching as a way to provide high

quality professional development led Reading First to mandate the use of reading coaches in all Reading First schools. Coaches are able to work in teachers' classrooms observing, providing feedback, modeling, and supporting teachers' instruction. The Reading First Initiative created an immediate need for large numbers of coaches with no clear definition of their roles, responsibilities, and qualifications. This recent increase in reading coaches has generated strong interest within the reading community, but there are few empirical studies on the role of the reading coach.

Coaching is viewed as an alternative to traditional professional development (i.e. one-time workshops), which is viewed as sporadic, disconnected, and without adequate follow through at the school level. Existing literature suggests that coaching is an effective way to provide job-embedded ongoing professional development (Bean & Morewood, 2007; Knight, 2007; Swafford, 1998). Within this literature coaches are viewed as resources that can model new strategies, discuss concerns, provide feedback, and foster reflection. Missing from the literature are descriptive studies of coaches' practice that examine how the practice of coaching connects to the theoretical descriptions of coaching. These studies are necessary as the role of coach is different from any other role previously found in schools. In theory the professional development and in-class support provided by reading coaches is intended to increase the effectiveness of teachers' instruction, which would ultimately increase students' achievement. However, there is little evidence to support this theory. An essential step in providing this evidence is to understand how reading coaches interpret and enact their role.

To understand how each reading coach interpreted and enacted her role, a constructivist approach was used. Four Reading First reading coaches, recommended by district personnel, participated in this study. Data collection consisted of four formal interviews lasting 45 to 65

minutes with each reading coach, three observations lasting approximately seven hours, informal interviews during observations, and reading coaches' bi-weekly logs. Because the purpose of this study was to examine how each reading coach interpreted and enacted her role, member check interviews were conducted during data collection and after data analysis to ensure that interpretations were accurate.

Data analysis and data collection occurred concurrently using the four levels of the Developmental Research Sequence (DRS): domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and the identification of cultural/central themes. This process consisted of coding all data using semantic analysis and then placing the coded data into domain sheets. After identifying domains, I used taxonomic analysis to create a taxonomy representing the influences on the reading coaches' interpretations and enactments of their role. Componential analysis was also employed, and through the eight-step process, I was able to identify contrasts among the coaches' domains. Finally, through the DRS process, a central theme explaining how reading coaches interpreted and enacted their role emerged. This theme answers the main research questions: How do Reading First reading coaches define their role? How do Reading First reading coaches enact their role? What are the influences on their definition and practice? What are the similarities and differences in how coaches interpret and enact their role?

Descriptions in chapter four provided extensive information about how Reading First, school context, and coaches' beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction influenced each reading coach's interpretation and enactment of the reading coach role. The similarities and differences among the reading coaches, described in this chapter, present a cross-case analysis of how the reading coaches interpreted and enacted their roles.

Together, chapters four and five present a description of the influences, similarities, and difference among reading coaches' interpretations and enactment of their roles.

The reading coaches all defined their role as providing support to teachers, and the enactment of this support was influenced by their beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction, Reading First, and school context. Although the reading coaches had similar responsibilities, they had different approaches, specifically in their approach to providing professional development. The differences among their approaches to providing professional development were linked to their understandings about how teachers learn. Because the coaches had different understandings of how teachers learn and how to support that learning, their approaches to professional development ranged from expert-driven to collaborative. Although the coaches' enactments of their roles extended along this continuum, all reading coaches' roles were influenced by the components of Reading First, the context of their schools, and their beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction.

Overview of Reading Coaches

The following section provides a brief overview of each reading coach. As Reading First reading coaches, all four coaches attended the quarterly Reading First trainings and the summer institutes offered by the grant. Also, in accordance with the state of Florida requirements, Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie were reading endorsed and Janice was scheduled to complete her reading endorsement courses by summer 2009.

Janice

Janice was entering her second year as a Reading First reading coach at Jefferson Elementary and was the newest coach in both her county and this study. Prior to becoming a reading coach Janice had two years of teaching experience and three years of experience as a reading tutor. With a bachelor's degree in journalism, she was alternatively certified and was

planning to finish her master's degree in special education with a reading endorsement in the summer of 2009. Janice described herself as a "go-getter" and had a proactive "whatever it takes" approach to coaching. She believed her role, as coach, was to encourage teachers to reflect on classroom practices and then work with them to implement new approaches and reading strategies and skills. Ultimately, she felt that the support and motivation she provided teachers would benefit their students, which she felt was a key part of her role.

Sarah

Sarah was entering her sixth year as a Reading First reading coach at Sanders Elementary. Prior to becoming a reading coach Sarah had the following years of experience: 17 years as a classroom teacher, three years as a teacher on assignment, one year as a reading coach on the Coach's Model Grant, and three years as a reading facilitator. The most experienced coach in the study, she also had a bachelor's and a master's in elementary education and a state endorsement in reading. Sarah believed her role was to develop expertise about the Reading First guidelines and the "best practices" supported within the grant and then pass this knowledge on to teachers. She believed that by drawing on the expertise of those who developed the Initiative, she could help teachers strengthen their classroom instruction, which would ultimately benefit students.

Karen

Karen was entering her third year as a Reading First reading coach at Kenwood Elementary. Prior to becoming a reading coach she had 13 years of teaching experience and was also a math coach for one year. Karen had a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in elementary education and a state endorsement in reading. Karen described herself as positive but admitted that at times she felt uncertain as a reading coach and wished that someone would tell her if she was doing the right thing. These feelings of uncertainty impacted her role as a reading

coach. For example, while Karen was comfortable observing and modeling for all teachers, she was uneasy at the prospect of identifying and providing support to specific teachers.

Bonnie

Bonnie was entering her sixth year as a Reading First reading coach at Baxter Elementary. Prior to becoming a reading coach she had nine years of teaching experience, a bachelor's degree in elementary education, and a state endorsement in reading. Bonnie described herself as a problem solver and often deviated from the Reading First guidelines, which she felt were sometimes inappropriate for Baxter Elementary. Bonnie viewed her teachers as experienced. She believed that they were best supported when she created reading schedules and analyzed data rather than when she conducted classroom modeling and observations.

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Similarities

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On the surface Janice, Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie engaged in similar tasks. They administered student assessments and then analyzed and interpreted the resulting data. A majority of their assessment responsibilities were centered on DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), which as per the Reading First guidelines, must be administered during a two-week window at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. In addition, all four reading coaches had similar non-instructional responsibilities such as morning and afternoon duty, parent teacher conferences, and service on leadership teams. Finally, the coaches were also responsible for distributing materials from the new basal series, as well as providing support to teachers in their use of the new series. This support was connected to teacher professional development, which coaches provided through whole group and grade level activities, as well as on an individual basis through observations, feedback, and modeling.

Providing professional development was another main responsibility of all four reading coaches. As opposed to administering student assessments, there were no prescribed methods for

coaches to follow in how to provide professional development. The reading coaches, therefore, were able to exercise their own discretion when choosing professional development topics and delivery methods. The coaches' professional development activities ranged from school wide book studies to in class modeling. Their varying approaches to delivering professional development illustrated their different orientations toward how knowledge is acquired. In the following sections, the coaches' different approaches to providing professional development, the connections between these approaches, and the coaches' assumptions about how teachers learn are discussed in detail.

<p style="text-align:center">**Differences**</p>

For all four coaches, professional development was viewed as a way to support teachers in fostering effective classroom instruction—ultimately benefiting student learning. Janice, Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie had similar understandings for why they provided professional development to teachers, but the four varied in how they provided professional development. For Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie professional development was centered on showing and telling teachers what to do. The key assumptions behind their practice were that showing and telling would increase teacher knowledge and this knowledge would improve teachers' instruction. In contrast, Janice and her teachers made joint decisions about how to make classroom instruction more effective. The assumption behind Janice's practice was that teachers learn when they have the opportunity to examine their own practice and participate in the decision making process. These differences in how the coaches enacted professional development were indicative of their different perspectives on how knowledge is acquired. In this section the relationship between the coaches' approach to professional development and their perspectives on how teachers acquire knowledge is explained using the three conceptions of teacher learning developed by Cochran-

<p style="text-align:center">137</p>

Smith and Lytle (1999). These conceptions are: knowledge-*for*-practice, knowledge-*in*-practice, and knowledge-*of*-practice.

Conceptions of Teacher Learning

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) provide an outline of three conceptions of teacher learning — knowledge-*for*-practice, knowledge-*in*-practice, and knowledge-*of*-practice. Knowledge-*for*-practice is based on the idea that knowing more (e.g. subject matter, theory, pedagogy) leads to more effective practice. It is assumed that the knowledge teachers need to improve their practice can be attained from an outside source such as university-based scholars, or in this case, the reading coach. Within the knowledge-*for*-practice conception, it is understood that teaching is primarily a process of applying recently acquired knowledge to a practical situation. This presents an image of teachers as "knowledge users, not generators" (p.257). The second conception of teacher learning is knowledge-*in*-practice. This conception is based on the idea that what competent teachers know is expressed in their practice, reflections, inquiries, and narratives. It is assumed that the knowledge teachers need to improve their practice comes from enhancing their own understandings of their actions (i.e. their reasonings, assumptions, and decisions). Within the knowledge-*in*-practice conception, it is understood that teaching is a process of acting and thinking sensibly in the immediacy of the classroom context — quickly making decisions, choosing how to present subject matter, and attending to students' needs. The third conception of teacher learning is knowledge-*of*-practice, and within this conception what counts as knowledge, who generates it, and how it should be used and evaluated in certain contexts are always open to discussion. The basis of this conception is that teachers play a significant role in generating knowledge-of-practice by "making their classrooms and school sites places for inquiry, connecting their work in schools to larger issues and taking on a critical perspective on the theory and research of others" (p. 273). The knowledge-of-practice conception

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highlights the mutually informative process between knowledge and practice and the theoretical aspects of both.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) three conceptions of how teachers learn are fundamentally different from one another and were derived from "differing ideas about knowledge and professional practice and how these elements are related to one another in teachers' work" (p. 251). As previously stated, the coaches differed in their views of how teachers learned, and this influenced how they approached their role in delivering professional development. While none of the coaches' approach to professional development fits perfectly within the above conceptions of teacher learning, there were enough similarities between the coaches' practice and the above conceptions to draw comparisons and conclusions. The approach to professional development used by Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie reflected a knowledge-*for*-practice conception, whereas the approach used by Janice reflected a knowledge-*in*-practice conception. None of the coaches operated from a knowledge-*of*-practice perspective.

The coaches' interpretations of how teachers learn were evident in their approaches to professional development. For Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie professional development was didactic and focused on showing and telling teachers what to do to make classroom instruction more effective. Janice, however, focused her professional development on establishing a collaborative relationship with teachers. She attempted to understand the reasoning behind teachers' instruction and then worked with them to make and assess instructional changes. In the following sections the connection between the reading coaches' approach (expert-driven vs. collaborative) to providing professional development and their different views on how teachers' acquire knowledge are discussed in detail.

Expert-Driven Approach

At one level, certain aspects of the professional development that Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie provided were different. Sarah was often in and out of teachers' classrooms conducting walkthroughs, modeling, observing, and providing feedback. She only provided whole group professional development occasionally. A majority of her support was focused on teachers who were new to the school, curriculum, and profession. Karen was also in and out of classrooms supporting teachers, but as opposed to Sarah, Karen's professional development was scheduled so that every teacher received the same level of support — with whole group professional development scheduled once a month. In contrast, Bonnie offered little in-class support aside from conducting classroom walkthroughs, and instead focused a majority of her support on planning and implementing grade level and whole group professional development activities. Regardless of the particular activity, when providing professional development, all three coaches assumed the role of expert, providing teachers with the knowledge they needed to know to improve their instruction. Implicit in this knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning was an image of teachers needing someone with expert knowledge to show them how, when, and what to do to make classroom instruction more effective.

Sarah was arguably the most expert-driven coach of the three and believed that if she explicitly told teachers the reading strategies and skills to implement, then teachers' classroom instruction would be more effective. As discussed in chapter four, Sarah used whole group professional development as an opportunity to share materials and guidelines related to Reading First or to tell teachers about the effective strategies they needed to implement in their practice. Individual professional development was often situated in teachers' classrooms where Sarah focused on helping teachers correctly use intervention materials or the materials from the new basal series. When Sarah believed a teacher needed additional support (e.g., Miss Smith, the new

kindergarten teacher described in chapter four) she observed the teacher's instruction and made a list of the things that needed to be improved. Sarah then selected the items she deemed most important, and in the case of Miss Smith stated, "I am going to start with like really big areas and then gradually fine tune it down" (10.03.2008). Implicit in Sarah's approach to professional development was the view that she is the expert who decides what teachers need to know and identifies the elements of instruction that need improvement. Sarah's view of how to effectively provide professional development was connected to the knowledge-*for*-practice conception. Under this conception, a more knowledgeable outsider identifies the knowledge teachers need and then provides it to foster more effective instruction.

Likewise, Bonnie and Karen operated from the same assumptions about teacher learning—demonstrating a knowledge-*for*-practice conception. Their approach to professional development, however, was slightly less expert-driven. Bonnie, for example, used whole group professional development as an opportunity to describe effective reading practices. As described in chapter four, she planned a whole group professional development in which she shared a book, gave a brief presentation, and then paired teachers to share ideas. Although Bonnie occasionally provided teachers the opportunity to share their knowledge, a majority of the professional development was centered on her sharing her knowledge with teachers. Also, during grade level professional development Bonnie most often told teachers how to use assessment data to better support students. Although she scheduled professional development time for teachers to collaborate as a grade level, she provided little structure for these sessions, and so it was unlikely that teachers attained a deeper understanding of student learning. Karen used the Harry Wong DVD series for her whole group professional development. This approach to professional development was grounded in Karen's expert judgment that the key challenges

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teachers faced were in management and organization. Karen was not the "expert" in this example, but the approach was still expert-driven with Wong in the expert role. As explained in chapter four, Karen was uncomfortable with the thought that teachers would view her as an expert or authority figure and stated, "I don't want them to think that I'm telling them what to do or that I know everything" (10.01.2008). However, when she provided individual professional development she often assumed the role of expert by telling teachers the practices that needed improvement and showing teachers the strategies and skills that needed to be implemented.

Although Bonnie and Karen seemed less comfortable taking on the role of expert, their approach to professional development which included showing and telling teachers the right things to do was similar to Sarah's approach. Thus, these three coaches' approached professional development based on the knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning. They focused more on what they were teaching than on what teachers were learning. The current emphasis on scientifically research-based practices also seems to support a knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning, because the assumption is that teachers need knowledge of the standards for reading and the strategies and skills that have proven to be effective. Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie taught teachers how to incorporate best practices, as identified through empirical research, into their classroom instruction. They believed that if teachers learned "proven" practices, their instruction would improve.

Collaborative Approach

Janice was frequently in and out of teachers' classrooms conducting walkthroughs, observing, providing feedback, and modeling. She also provided school-wide professional development in the form of a book study. In general, Janice's professional development activities looked similar to the professional development activities of Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie. However, the nature of the content and the strategies for engaging with content was different. Janice's

approach to professional development was collaborative, working with teachers and providing opportunities for them to reflect on their actions within the classroom. In her work with teachers Janice frequently asked them to explain the reasoning behind their instructional decisions in an attempt to better understand their practice and to help them clarify their thinking. In contrast to the other three coaches, Janice did not believe she could tell or show teachers what to do to improve their practice. Rather, she believed her role was to work with teachers to help them understand their instructional decisions and then make a joint plan to develop effective classroom practices. Janice's approach to professional development was based on the knowledge-*in*-practice conception of teacher learning, grounded in the assumption that teachers' practical knowledge (i.e., how strategies are selected, how subject matter is conveyed, and how to transition from one subject to another) can be obtained through conscious reflection on classroom actions.

Janice's collaborative approach to professional development was evident in her interactions with teachers. As discussed in chapter four, she provided school-wide professional development through a book study on fluency because student assessment data revealed fluency was an area in need of attention. Janice believed that fluency was a topic that needed to be examined and stated, "this [fluency] is something for us all to talk about as a school community and get a little bit more knowledge on" (11.19.2008). Janice's role in the book study was that of a co-learner, participating in the book study and sharing the facilitation responsibilities. Teachers were also encouraged to experiment with the strategies and techniques promoted in the book to see how they worked in their classrooms. Their successes and challenges with the strategies would be discussed at subsequent book studies. For Janice, individual professional development was situated in teachers' classroom where she typically spent an extended amount of time. For

example, she worked with Mrs. Johnson for a week — modeling, observing, and talking with her about how to move her classroom towards centers. Mrs. Johnson also believed that her students were grouped homogenously, so Janice worked with her to identify the differences among the students. When working with teachers, Janice wanted to understand and also have them understand their reasoning behind certain instructional decisions. Janice worked with teachers to try different approaches that might be more effective. As noted in chapter four, Janie explained her approach to working with teachers by saying,

> [I] Find out the reasonings. Finding out why they chose to do it that way and then kind of talking it through as to what might be a better approach… I found that to be more helpful than saying you didn't do this and you probably should have done that" (11.19.2008).

In addition, Janice arranged for teachers who felt like they were struggling with the new basal series to observe teachers who felt more successful.

Janice's approach to providing effective professional development was connected to the knowledge-*in*-practice conception of teacher learning in which it is understood that the knowledge for effective teaching comes from within the teaching profession — not from outside experts. She believed that engaging teachers in deliberate reflection concerning their classroom actions and then working with them to try new approaches was the best way to bring about instructional changes. She also felt that teachers learned how to improve their instruction by observing experienced teachers who had exemplary classroom practice. This approach emphasized teachers' learning as coming primarily from within the teaching profession— discovered by reflecting on the act of teaching itself. This reflection occurs when teachers work with others, such as a reading coach, to examine their practice or when they observe the effective practices of their more experienced peers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999).

Summary

All four reading coaches engaged in similar tasks – administering student assessments, managing data and materials, carrying out additional responsibilities as needed by their schools, and providing professional development. It was their approach to professional development, however, that differentiated the coaches. Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie had an expert-driven approach to professional development in which they taught teachers how to implement best practices through a show and tell approach. This approach to professional development is tied to the knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999), knowledge-*for*-practice emphasizes teachers' learning as coming from an outside expert (in this case, the reading coach) who has knowledge of best practices. While Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie operated primarily from this conception of teacher learning, it was not a perfect fit and there were some deviations, such as Bonnie arranging for teachers to model and observe each other's instruction. As opposed to the other three coaches, Janice's approach to professional development was collaborative, working *with* teachers to improve classroom practice— not telling and showing them what to do. Her approach to professional development centered on what Cochran-Smith and Lytle refer to as a knowledge-*in*-practice conception of teacher learning. Within this conception, teacher learning is based on strengthening teachers' understandings of their own actions.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from this research study explain how Reading First reading coaches understand and enact their role, supporting much of what is already known about reading coaches. The findings and previous research suggest that there are two key components to coaches' practice — assessments and professional development. Within coaches' assessment responsibilities, however, there is little ambiguity; thus, the coaches enacted this role in similar ways. The nature

of professional development, on the other hand, allows for variation. Therefore, the reading coaches differed in the professional development content they presented and the strategies they used for delivering the content. In the following section, two areas of the study are discussed: ambiguity within reading coaches' role and reading coaches' approach to professional development.

Ambiguity within the Reading Coach Role

The Reading First Initiative and school context influenced the roles and responsibilities of all four coaches, as was evident in the similarities among their coaching tasks. The findings of this study support the image of coaches presented in coaching guides as well as in the limited empirical research. These resources depict reading coaches as helping with assessments and working one-on-one with teachers in their classrooms observing, providing feedback, and modeling (Deussen, et. al., 2007; Poglinco, et. al., 2003; Puig & Froelich, 2007; Rainville & Jones, 2008; Walpole & Blamey, 2008; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). The coaches' responsibilities also extended to other activities, some outside the classroom, including assisting teachers in implementing new curricular programs, leading book studies, and administering student assessments. Although the literature concerning elementary reading coaches is sparse, the findings from this study support prior studies that found when reading coaches are used within a federal initiative or policy, certain aspects of their role are clearly defined (Deussen, et. al.; Poglinco, et. al.). For example, the reading coaches in this study all described the components of Reading First — helping teachers implement the core curriculum, administering student assessments, and conducting professional development — as key parts of their role. The similarities among the coaches' enactments of certain Reading First responsibilities (e.g. DIBELS assessment) were a result of those responsibilities being prescribed. However, when tasks were not clearly defined, such as providing teachers with professional development, the

coaches used their own discretion about how to provide that support. The result was wide variation in how they approached professional development.

The finding that coaches varied in their approach to providing professional development is not surprising given the swift implementation of reading coaches brought about by policies such as Reading First. Deussen and her colleagues (2007) found that the immediate need for large numbers of coaches resulted in ambiguous definitions of reading coaches' roles, responsibilities, and qualifications. In addition, the training for Reading First reading coaches was primarily the responsibility of the states, however, states had little guidance in how to develop and design such training (Deussen, et. al., 2007; Dole & Donaldson, 2006). In Florida, Reading First reading coaches were required to earn state reading endorsement and attend the quarterly trainings and summer institutes provided by Reading First through the *Just Read, Florida!* office. The endorsement and trainings presumably increased coaches' knowledge of reading and the components of Reading First; however, they offered little guidance in how to approach professional development so it influenced teachers' classroom practice.

In their 1980 study, Joyce and Showers introduced reading coaches and coaching as an alternative to traditional professional development (one-shot workshops) through working one-on-one with teachers in their classrooms — modeling, observing, and providing feedback. Findings from this study established professional development as a key component of each reading coach's role. This finding supports and extends the studies and published guides on coaching, in which reading coaches are viewed as a way to provide job-embedded contextual professional development (Bean, 2003; Deussen, et. al., 2007; Joyce & Showers, 1980; 1995; 2002; Poglinco, et. al., 2003; Puig & Froelich, 2007; Rainville & Jones, 2008). However, the results of my study also shed light on the important connection between coaches' conception of

teacher learning and their approach to professional development. This connection has yet to be explored within the coaching literature, which is in need of more empirical studies on the role of the reading coach and the enactment of coaching responsibilities (Bean 2007; Dole, 2004; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; IRA, 2004; Shanklin, 2007).

One element of coaching that has been given a great deal of attention is how ambiguity within the reading coach's role leads to additional non-coaching, often clerical, responsibilities (Dole, 2004; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Knight, 2007; Vogt & Shearer, 2007; Wong & Nicotera, 2003). Findings from my study indicate that reading coaches are given non-coaching responsibilities, and these responsibilities were typically influenced by the school context. These responsibilities, however, did not comprise the majority of the coaches' roles. Instead, professional development was found to be a key responsibility of all four reading coaches, and it was the ambiguity of how to provide that professional development that led to the most variation in the coaches' roles.

Approach to Professional Development

Overall, the reading coaches in this study understood their role as a support to teachers and spoke of providing this support primarily through professional development. Despite this shared understanding of their role, the coaches demonstrated different approaches to professional development, which illustrated their different conceptions of how teachers learn. Three of the coaches enacted an expert-driven approach to professional development. This approach to professional development is connected to what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) refer to as a knowledge-*for*-practice conception of teacher learning where an outside expert tells or shows teachers what to do to make instruction more effective. The fourth coach approached professional development from a collaborative perspective, which is connected to a knowledge-*in*-practice conception of teacher learning where teachers can obtain knowledge through

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"conscious and collaborative reflection on classroom actions" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p.254). Although all four coaches talked about supporting teachers, the three coaches who adopted an expert-driven approach engaged in professional development practices that are commonly criticized for resulting in shallow implementation, limited sustainability, and teachers being viewed as technicians not professionals (Butler, Lauscher, Selinger, Beckingham, 2004; Gersten, 1995; Joyce & Shower, 2002; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

Placing reading coaches in schools was a strategy to help professionals move away from the traditional top-down approach to professional development. There was an expectation that coaches would provide authentic and individualized learning situations, providing different levels of ongoing job-embedded support for teacher learning (Bean, 2003; Knight, 2007 Sparks &Hirsh, 1997). All four of the coaches in the study provided ongoing contextual professional development. Three of them, however, maintained the expert-driven traditional approach to professional development, albeit on a one-on-one basis rather than the usual whole group setting. Contextualized professional development is better than de-contextualized professional development; however, when coaches take on the role of expert, it places them in the role of decision maker. This often makes it difficult for teachers to take ownership of their learning. Furthermore, providing feedback is a common coaching practice, but there are different approaches to providing it—some more effective than others. For example, providing knowledge based upon coaches' judgments of competence versus collaboratively seeking knowledge based on teachers' stated needs and concerns. For teachers to benefit from feedback they must work with the coach to identify areas where change is desired; feedback that is based solely on the coach's opinion is unlikely to bring about sustainable instructional changes (Bean, 2003; Puig & Froelich, 2007; Walpole & McKenna, 2004). These findings indicate that the reading coaches

needed to be better prepared for their professional development role. They also indicate that requiring coaches to be reading endorsed might increase their knowledge in reading, but it does not adequately prepare them to work effectively with teachers.

This finding establishes the significance of preparing reading coaches to deliver effective professional development, as the larger body of professional development literature suggests (Bean, 2007; Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Guskey, 2000; Lyons & Pinnell, 2001). The expert-driven approach to professional development used by Sarah, Karen, and Bonnie is largely considered ineffective at producing sustainable changes in teachers' practice. This approach to professional development is also similar to technical coaching where the coach acts as expert and tells teachers how to implement a new strategy or skill. Janice's collaborative approach to professional development is considered more effective at producing sustainable changes in teachers' practice. Her approach is similar to cognitive coaching where teachers are encouraged to reflect on their practice. Janice, however, did not demonstrate the approach to teacher learning that Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) suggest is the strongest approach. Inquiry-driven approaches to professional development that integrate expert knowledge with teacher inquiry and then use that knowledge to inform both theory and practice is the strongest approach (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Joyce & Showers, 2002). This approach to professional development is what Cochran-Smith and Lytle refer to as knowledge-*of*-practice where knowledge is developed and transmitted from practice to research and back again (Hammerness, et al.). None of the coaches constructed this type of approach to professional development, and Janice was the only coach who did not approach professional development from an expert-driven perspective. She was also the only coach who was not reading endorsed and had the least amount of teaching and coaching

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experience. Similarly, Deussen and her colleagues (2007) found that prior education and experience of Reading First reading coaches were not predictors of how they performed their jobs.

Finally, this study extends the current literature by examining reading coaches' approach to professional development and connecting it to their beliefs about teacher learning. As previously stated, there are a limited number of studies on reading coaches. Of the existing studies researchers tended to concentrate on the various responsibilities of the reading coach and the general ambiguity within the role. They did not look at reading coaches' approach to professional development or their different perspectives about the development of teacher knowledge. This study explored the issue that published guides and position papers deemed as the most important role of the reading coach — providing professional development— by examining both reading coaches' approach to professional development and their beliefs about teacher learning.

Summary

This research study highlights the importance of examining both reading coaches interpretations of their role as well as their enactments. Unlike other studies, which focused primarily on the ambiguity of the coaching role or its various responsibilities, the present study explained not only how ambiguity affected the reading coaches' role, but also how ambiguity affected the coaches' approach to professional development. Because professional development was viewed as a key component, both within the coaching literature and by the reading coaches themselves, I paid special attention to how they approached this responsibility. By looking at the connection between coaches' approach to professional development and their conception of teacher learning, I found a need for coaches to be better prepared — not necessarily in reading— but in how to work effectively with teachers. Therefore, these findings provide valuable

information about how and why the coaches in this study approached their role in a particular manner.

Implications

The findings of the current study are not intended to be generalized to the entire population of reading coaches or even all Reading First reading coaches. The four reading coaches in the study were located in north central Florida and were selected based on (a) recommendations from county literacy directors and (b) their willingness to participate in the study. In addition, data collection did not extend beyond the fall semester of the final year of Reading First. Despite these limitations, these findings have implications for the preparation of reading coaches, research, and school-based personnel.

Implications for Preparing Reading Coaches

The findings generated from this study highlight several issues that are important for districts and states to consider as they prepare reading coaches for their role. First, providing job-embedded ongoing professional development is a key component of the coaches' role (Bean, 2003; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; Knight, 2007; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997); however, coaches who are not prepared to deliver effective professional development are not likely to change teachers' practice. Three of the four coaches in this study adopted an expert-driven approach to professional development — showing and telling teachers what to do. This expert-driven approach is similar to technical coaching, which is an effective coaching practice when coaches are providing targeted feedback on a newly learned strategy. Technical coaching, however, is not an effective way to change teachers' practice and should not be used on an ongoing basis or as the primary coaching technique. Researchers have criticized this expert-driven approach to professional development as being ineffective at altering teachers' practice (Butler, Lauscher, Selinger, Beckingham, 2004; Joyce & Shower, 2002; Putnam & Borko, 2000). All four coaches

in this study understood their role as a support and each felt that her approach to providing professional development was meeting the needs of the teachers. The reading coaches' desire to support their teachers suggests that if preparation for the role included an emphasis on how to provide effective professional development and identified why some professional development practices are less effective, then coaches would be willing to change their approach to professional development.

Second, the preparation and qualifications for reading coaches vary across states and in some cases school districts. In Florida, the only required qualification for reading coaches was that they be reading endorsed or working towards endorsement. Allington (2006) suggests that reading coaches need more than a state endorsement to be qualified and believes they should also have an advanced degree in reading theory, instruction, and assessment. Allington's suggestion, however, for coaches to acquire a master's degree in reading is no more likely to prepare coaches for their role to provide effective professional development than a state reading endorsement — unless that content is a part of the degree. Defining effective professional development practices and providing guidance for coaches on how to provide this professional development has been noticeably absent from state requirements and descriptions of reading coaches' role. Therefore, the emphasis on reading coaches' preparation has been on deepening coaches' knowledge of reading and scientifically based practices. Although it is necessary for reading coaches to have knowledge of reading and scientifically based practices, this knowledge is insufficient in preparing them for one of the key components of their role – providing professional development. Finally, Reading First reading coaches were required to attend the Reading First quarterly meetings and summer institutes as provided through the *Just Read, Florida!* office. The coaches in this study reported that the quarterly meetings and summer trainings provided them

the opportunity to meet and share ideas with other coaches in their district. While they found these experiences to be valuable, it seemed that the focus of these meetings was on providing support to coaches rather than preparing them for their role.

Although reading coaches had a variety of responsibilities, professional development was viewed as a key component of their role and one of the areas in which they were able to exercise discretion. As a result, the preparation for reading coaches needs to extend beyond an in-depth knowledge of reading and include increased knowledge about how to effectively approach professional development. This suggests that the preparation for coaches (offered through states, districts, or universities) should include development of knowledge about how teachers learn and methods and strategies for developing and implementing effective professional development within schools. The criteria from the literature also suggests that coaches need to know more about professional development and adult learning, but this suggestion falls through in coaches' preparation and coaches are therefore working with professionals without any preparation in how to effectively work with adults. Reading coaches cannot be expected to enact effective professional development and establish effective working relationships with teachers without first being prepared to do so.

Implications for Research

Educators have acknowledged that there is a need for more empirical studies on the role of the reading coach and the enactment of coaching responsibilities (Bean 2007; Dole, 2004; Dole & Donaldson, 2006; IRA, 2004; Shanklin, 2007). The findings from this study showed that though coaches enact a number of responsibilities, there are two key components to coaches' practice — assessment and professional development. Once administered primarily by classroom teachers, assessments are now viewed as one of the responsibilities of reading coaches. This shift in responsibility is due in part to the increased number of assessments required by both state and

federal initiatives. Because the assessment component of the coaching role was well defined, the coaches enacted this responsibility in relatively similar ways. Professional development was also a key component of their role, but their approach to professional development differed. The findings from this study illustrate the connection between coaches' conception of teacher learning and their approach to professional development, a connection that has not been explored within the coaching literature.

This study establishes the need for more research to increase the empirical knowledge base about how reading coaches understand and enact their professional development responsibilities. While the current study provided some initial knowledge about how reading coaches approach professional development, additional research about how this approach is connected to their conception of teacher learning is needed. Further research is also needed to explore why coaches have different conceptions of teacher learning. Furthermore, this study's findings were based on a small sample of reading coaches, and to replicate or substantiate these findings further research is warranted. Researchers must continue to explore how reading coaches enact their roles and specifically how they approach their professional development responsibilities. In addition, future research should focus on how coaches' enactment of their role affects teachers' practice and ultimately how it affects student achievement. If reading coaches are going to continue to be used within schools this connection must be made.

This study also examined how Reading First, school context, and the coaches' beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction influenced practice. Reading First influenced the key components of the coaches' role —assessments and professional development—while school context influenced additional or secondary responsibilities (e.g. parent teacher conferences and morning or afternoon duty). As the Reading First Initiative,

which was credited for the recent need for large numbers of reading coaches, comes to a close, it is important for researchers to examine the effects of this initiative on reading coaches, schools, districts, and states. Will reading coaches remain in schools after Reading First, and if so, will their role change? Will schools continue to implement the core curriculum and assessments that were required by Reading First? Will schools be able to implement the Reading First guidelines without the assistance of the reading coach? Will states and districts continue to implement the mandates of the last six years or will they be abandoned? Researchers will need to investigate these policy-related issues to understand what the lasting effect of a federal initiative is once the funding has been removed.

Finally, this study was designed using constructivist principles. The focus, therefore, was on the understandings and practice of reading coaches and did not include the perspectives of principals, teachers, or students. While constructivist studies can provide rich in-depth information about reading coaches' practice, the use of other research methods would paint a more inclusive picture of reading coaches' roles. Social constructionist methods would offer a comprehensive understanding of how reading coaches, principals, teachers, tutors, and paraprofessionals construct knowledge jointly. Discourse analysis would offer information about the types of dialogue between coach and teacher or coach and principal that impact coaches' understanding and enactment of their roles and that differentially impact teaching practice. Lastly, studies of coaches who are not in Reading First schools, work in secondary schools, or coach subject areas outside of reading would reveal additional information that researchers should consider.

Implications for School-Based Personnel

This study also has implications for school-based personnel, specifically for classroom teachers and administrators. School principals typically have the responsibility of hiring the

reading coach, so they need to know what qualities to look for in a reading coach. As reading coaches are still relatively new to most schools, many principals do not have a clear understanding of what the coaching job should include, what qualities characterize effective coaches, and what their role should be in working with these coaches. Therefore, it is important for the principal and coach to devise a shared description of what the coach's role will be, so that both parties are working from a similar expectation (Shanklin, 2007). For example, is the coach expected to work with all teachers or only teachers within specific grade levels? Does the coach select which teachers to work with or does the principal also have input? Is the coach expected to assess all students or is a testing team to be established? Does the coach have the autonomy to set up school-wide book studies or do such decisions need to be discussed with the principal? Does the coach establish the content for professional development or does the principal make those decisions? How can the principal and coach work together to create a learning environment for both teachers and students? Can some non-instructional tasks be given to other school staff or are they the coach's responsibility?

In addition to a shared expectation of the role, certain selection criteria should also be required. These criteria should extend beyond coaches' knowledge of reading and professional development and include excellent interpersonal and communication skills (Bean, 2003). These skills are important, because to effectively work with teachers, reading coaches need to be good listeners and work collaboratively with teachers to help them address concerns and instructional challenges. It is also important for coaches to develop a trusting relationship with teachers. A trusting relationship will help teachers to view the coach as a support who they can go to when they need guidance with their instruction. Developing this type of relationship takes time, but if

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coaching is implemented effectively it can be a valuable approach to strengthening reading instruction within schools.

The recent appointment of the reading coach position has established a need for teachers to understand the importance of coaching as a way to provide continuous improvement within the school (Knight, 2007). Again, principals are instrumental in developing this understanding and should, therefore, work with coaches and teachers to establish professional development goals in reading and to establish and support a learning culture within the school – where coaches are provided with time to work with teachers and school-wide professional development is supported. Additionally, by reinforcing that the coach's role is not evaluative, principals can make it easier for coaches to build a positive relationship with teachers (Shanklin, 2007). A school-wide understanding of what the role of coaching is and how it will affect teachers' instruction will also create a more collaborative environment in which teachers want to participate in the process. Finally, principals can support reading coaches by providing adequate time for coaches and teachers to plan together and reducing the number of non-coaching responsibilities.

Conclusion

This study contributes to empirical research designed to understand how reading coaches interpret and enact their role. In doing so it describes the influences (e.g. Reading First, school context, and beliefs about how to best support teachers to foster effective instruction) on reading coaches' interpretations and enactments, as well as the differences and similarities in coaches' practice. Professional development was found to be one of the key components of the reading coaches' role, and as a result, specific attention was paid to how reading coaches approached their professional development responsibilities and how that approach was connected to their conception of teacher learning. The results of this study indicate that preparation for reading

coaches cannot be limited to developing their knowledge in reading; it must also include developing their knowledge and skills in how to work effectively with teachers. As reading coaches are being used more frequently within schools to deliver job-embedded contextual professional development, it is important to understand how coaches approach this key aspect of their role.

APPENDIX A
LITERACY DIRECTOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about the role of reading coaches within Reading First elementary schools. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

This interview will be recorded for research purposes and its tape will be available upon your request. You may end this interview at any time.

1. How closely do you work with the elementary reading coaches? Do you feel that you have a good knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses?

2. Out of the ___ number of Reading First schools, how many of the reading coaches are full time?

3. According to the literature regarding reading coaches, knowledge in the following area is beneficial to coaches: reading, assessment, working with students, working with adults, professional development, and leadership. Out of the ___ number of Reading First schools in your county, do you know of any coaches that exemplify the characteristics and knowledge described above, if so, please provide me with the coaches' name and information.

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B
READING COACH INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Reading Coach Interview I Protocol

I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about the role of reading coaches within Reading First elementary schools. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. This interview will be recorded for research purposes and its tape will be available upon your request. You may end this interview at any time.

1. Tell me about how you became a reading coach. What were you doing before this? (Want to explore educational background, how/why he/she became a teacher, the transition from teacher to coach.)

2. What does a reading coach do? Tell me everything you do. It might help to think about your day and the various things you do each day.

3. Is the role of reading coach the same all year long or does your role change by time of year? Explain.

4. You have said that the main function of the reading coach is a, b, c, and d. If you had to assign percentages to the amount of time you spend in each function what would they be? In your view are you spending time on the right things and in the right percentages? Explain.

5. In which of the roles of reading coach do you feel most comfortable? In which of the roles of reading coach do you feel uncomfortable? Explain.

   (Want to explore what training they had for their current position – professional developments, additional certifications, master's degree, etc…)

6. Are there ways you feel unprepared for your role as reading coach? Explain.

7. What helps or supports do you perceive that enable you to do this job well?

   (Probe for contextual factors, policy, administrative support, district support, and other coaches…)

8. Are there any barriers that make it hard to do the job as well as you would like? (Probe for contextual factors, policy, administrative barriers, district barriers, federal barriers, etc…)

9. What else could you tell me that would help me to understand what you do as a reading coach?

Reading Coach Interview II Protocol

I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about the role of reading coaches within Reading First elementary schools. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. This interview will be recorded for research purposes and its tape will be available upon your request. You may end this interview at any time.

1. How did this observation compare to a typical day at this time of year?

2. What did I observe that was a critical part of your role as the reading coach?

3. How did you decide what to do yesterday during the observation? Does this change throughout the year? (i.e., Do you do things at the beginning of the year that you do not do in the middle of the year?) Explain.

4. Are you happy with the time allocation explained above? Is there a certain time of the year when you are happier with your time allocation as opposed to another?

5. What challenges do you face as a reading coach? During yesterdays observation, was there anything that happened that you felt was challenging? Explain.

6. Specifically to yesterday's observation, and in general, how do you manage the concerns/worries/dilemmas of your job?

7. Explain what you do when you face conflicts between what you want to do and what you have been told to do.

   (Want to explore how autonomous his/her role is, how involved the administration is, and delve further into the various responsibilities the coach has. In addition, the professional relationship the coach has with the teachers.)

Reading Coach Interview III Protocol

I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about the role of reading coaches within Reading First elementary schools. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. This interview will be recorded for research purposes and its tape will be available upon your request. You may end this interview at any time.

1. During yesterday's observation I observed you doing a, b, and c. Can you explain why you chose to do those activities?

2. Yesterday when you were working with teachers what was your goal in working with those teachers and why did you select those specific teachers to work with?

3. What have you found are the most effective ways to work with teachers? How did you discover or create them?

   (Want to explore relationships with teachers and professional development.)

4. Describe the reading professional development at your school.

5. How do you decide the focus of the reading professional development and the individual coaching you do with teachers?

   (Want to probe whether the decisions are collaboratively made and if the district determines focus.)

6. How do school/district administrators and policies affect your role as the reading coach?

7. Tell me about your strengths as a reading coach.

8. How did you develop these strengths?

   (Want to explore the attributes of reading coach…)

9. What do you think you still need to "work on" to become a better reading coach? Explain.

Reading Coach Interview IV Protocol

I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about the role of reading coaches within Reading First elementary schools. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. This interview will be recorded for research purposes and its tape will be available upon your request. You may end this interview at any time.

1. During my observations I notices that some activities, such as a, b and c seem to be a part of your regular routine, while other activities such as, d and e seem to be done less often. Can you explain this difference?
   (Want to explore how the role of reading coach changes throughout the week/month/year.)

2. During this fall semester I have observed you in various tasks. Which of those tasks did you enjoy the most? Which tasks have you not particularly enjoyed? Explain.

3. What didn't I observe that you feel is an integral part of your role as reading coach?

4. What help or support has enabled you to do your job?

5. In what ways, if at all, have you collaborated with other reading coaches?

6. What advice would you give to a beginning reading coach?

   (Want to explore the different aspects of the job that they find important/challenging, attributes of job, etc…)

7. Is there anything that you might not have thought about before that occurred to you during this interview? Are there aspects of being a reading coach that I have not explored?

8. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

APPENDIX C
INFORMED CONSENT LETTERS

Dear Reading Coach,

My name is Charlotte Mundy, and I am a doctoral student in the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida, conducting an independent study on the role of reading coaches in an elementary setting. I am conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Zhihui Fang and Dr. Dorene Ross. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which elementary school reading coaches conceptualize their role. Based on the results of this study, teacher educators, administrators, classroom teachers, and policymakers will have a better understanding of the role reading coaches play in elementary school settings. With your permission, I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate, I will be observing you 3 times during the 2008-2009 school year. During my observations, I will be taking notes on the daily activities that you are engaged in, and will not disrupt classroom practice or your daily routine. Observations will last approximately 7 hours, the average length of an elementary school day. I would also like a copy of your monthly coaches' log for the following months: September 2008 through May 2009. Finally, I would like to interview you 4 times throughout the 2008-2009 school year, with questions that address the roles and responsibilities you have as a reading coach. The interviews will last 45-65 minutes, and will be scheduled at your convenience. You are not required to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable. With your permission, I would like to audiotape the interviews. My faculty advisors and myself will be the only ones who have access to the tapes, which I will personally transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. The tapes will be safely stored in my office cabinet until this study finishes, and will then be erased. Your identity and all interview, observation, and artifact data will remain confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in any oral or written report of this study.

There will be no more than minimal risk and no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. Potential research benefits, however, include gaining more information about reading coaches and their roles and responsibilities in an elementary school. Your participation is strictly voluntary. I will be willing to discuss this study with you at any time and will answer any questions. At the completion of the study, I would like to discuss the findings with you if you want to. You have the right to withdraw consent for your participation at anytime without consequence. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at the University of Florida, Department of Special Education, G-315 Norman Hall, P.O. Box 117050, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0701 or my supervisor, Dr. Dorene Ross, at the University of Florida, School of Teaching and Learning, 2423 Norman Hall, P.O. Box 117048, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-9191. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UFIRB office, University of Florida, P.O. Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.
I read the procedure described above. I voluntarily participate in this study and I have received a copy of this description.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____
Print Name

Informed Consent

Dear Literacy Director,

My name is Charlotte Mundy and I am a doctoral student in the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida, conducting an independent study on the role of reading coaches in an elementary setting. I am conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Zhihui Fang and Dr. Dorene Ross. The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which elementary school reading coaches conceptualize their role. Based on the results of this study, teacher educators, administrators, classroom teachers, and policymakers will have a better understanding of the role reading coaches play in elementary school settings. With your permission, I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate, I will be interviewing you 1 time during the 2008-2009 school year. The interview will last 10-15 minutes, and will be scheduled at your convenience. You are not required to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer, and with your permission I would like to audiotape the interview. My faculty advisors and myself will be the only ones who have access to the tapes, which I will personally transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. The tapes will be safely stored in my office cabinet until the completion, and will then be erased. Your identity and all interview data will remain confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in any oral or written report of this study. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

There will be no risks and several benefits for your participation. Potential benefits include gaining more information about reading coaches and their roles and responsibilities in an elementary school. Your participation is strictly voluntary. I will be willing to discuss this study with you at any time and will answer any questions. You have the right to withdraw consent for your participation at anytime without consequence.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at the University of Florida, Department of Special Education, G-315 Norman Hall, P.O. Box 117050, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0701 or my supervisor, Dr. Dorene Ross, at the University of Florida, School of Teaching ad Learning, 2423 Norman Hall, P.O. Box 117048, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-9191. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UFIRB office, University of Florida, P.O. Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611, (352) 392-0433.

I read the procedure described above. I voluntarily participate in this study and I have received a copy of this description.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____
Print Name

APPENDIX D
DOMAIN WORKSHEET

Rationale: X is a reason for Y

Location in protocol			Included terms	Comments/Structure
#	P	L		Reason For
SI3	5	19-22	One thing I wanted to see is if they were breaking up into small groups, which is why I timed it so that we would miss the whole group instruction and try to get in for the small groups. So today that was one of my main goals was to see how small group instruction was taking place – if it was taking place.	Observation
SI4	14	7-8	It is so monotonous. It is just hard tying to get it all done.	Not liking DIBELS assessment

#-Protocol number
P- Page number
L- Line number

APPENDIX E
PARADIGM WORKSHEET

Domain	Dimensions of Contrast			
	Provided by all coaches	Type of Support	Influenced by Reading First	Influenced by School Context
Observations	yes	in-class	yes	yes
Morning and afternoon duty	yes	out-of-class	no	yes
Modeling	no	in-class	yes	yes

September 8, 2008

Today was my initial interview with Bonnie. She was very talkative and I had to work to get her to answer my questions. Barnard Elementary was starting DIBELS the next week, so Bonnie really wanted to talk about assessment and Reading First. Bonnie seems full of energy and opinions and I look forward to the first observation which we set up before I left.

November 4, 2008

Today, I both interviewed and observed Sarah. She was very busy and in and out of teachers classrooms all day. She informed me at lunch that she would not have time later this week for our interview and asked me if it would be possible to do it after school. I agree and while she was at her afternoon duty I went over the interview questions and my field notes. Because we did the interview after school I was concerned that Sarah would feel rushed, but she was very expansive in her answers.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Charlotte Mundy was born in LaBelle, Florida. After graduating from LaBelle High, Charlotte attended college at the University of South Florida receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications with a minor in women studies. After graduation, Charlotte realized her love of teaching and entered into a dual-track masters program in Elementary Education at the University of South Florida. Receiving her Master of Arts in elementary education in 2001, Charlotte began her teaching career in Pasco County where she worked as an intermediate continuous progress teacher in the rural community of Dade City, FL. Three years later, Charlotte decided to return to school and pursue a doctoral degree in curriculum and instruction with a focus on reading at the University of Florida. She was admitted to the University of Florida as a doctoral student in the fall of 2006.

During her doctoral program, Charlotte served as a research assistant on the OSEP funded personnel preparation grant Preparing Reading Endorsed Secondary Special Educators (PRESS), and in 2007 she was appointed to the position of project coordinator. Charlotte also taught courses in reading and participated in various research projects through the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE). Her research interests include reading, comprehension, adolescent literature, teacher preparation, and professional development. She will begin the next phase of her professional development as an assistant professor at the University of Alabama.