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Picturing the Reader: English Education Pre-service Teachers' Beliefs About Reading Using Photovoice

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Picturing the Reader: English Education Pre-service Teachers' Beliefs
About Reading Using Photovoice

by

Michael DiCicco

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction
with a concentration in English Education
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DEDICATION

To my son Vincent, keep smiling.

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ABSTRACT

As students begin secondary school, they are charged with learning more content, at a faster pace and with increased pressure from accountability measures (Dreschler, Shumaker, & Woodruff, 2004). If secondary students' reading difficulties are not identified and remedied, the gap between struggling readers and their peers widens every academic year (Edmonds, Vaughn, Wexler, Rutebuch, Cable, Tackett, and Schnakenberg, 2009).

The task of reading instruction primarily falls on English teachers, but Strickland and Alvermann (2004) note that while secondary English Teachers do have more preparation in reading instruction compared to other content area teachers, they are not as prepared as they need to be and do not provide reading instruction even when given the opportunity. Additionally, little attention has been given to how teacher should be taught to teach reading (Moats & Foorman, 2003) and even less attention has been given to reading instruction at the secondary level (Edmonds, et al., 2009).

Pre-service teacher's beliefs influence how they take in information presented in their teacher education program and classroom instructional decisions (Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Richardson, 2003). However few studies have examined English education pre-service teachers beliefs about teaching struggling readers at the secondary level. The purpose of this study is to describe and explain secondary English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers using Photovoice.

This study uses a combination of constructivism, Lakoff and Johnson's concept of metaphor, and interpretivism as the theoretical framework. Research methods examining beliefs often involve using surveys or interviews (i.e. Sadaf, Newby, & Ertmer, 2012; Sandvik, van Dall, & Ader, 2013). However, these methods may not provide as representational responses as a method that allows participants to respond through multiple mediums and through metaphor. This study uses a modified version of the Photovoice method to examine secondary English education pre-service teachers' beliefs. Because Photovoice has not been used to examine beliefs of this population, an additional aim of this study is to examine Photovoice as a reflection method. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are English education pre-service teacher beliefs' about teaching struggling adolescent readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teacher beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

Findings suggest English education pre-service teachers had not considered struggling readers as part of their classrooms, did not understand the complexities of the reading process, held a deficit view of struggling readers, assumed a teacher's identity, saw reading as an experience/event, found the discussion in the Photovoice process helpful in reflection, Photovoice helped address some issues with teacher reflection, and Photovoice helped develop as well as capture beliefs. Implications for teacher education are discussed.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“We are our beliefs. They direct everything that happens in or out of our classroom” (Watson, 1994, p. 606)

It was raining as soon as I left the building, but I was too excited to notice. I knew I was heading to a classroom that was small, cramped, and had pipes sticking out of the walls. I did not care. I was on my way to teach the first class meeting of the university’s Teaching Reading in the Secondary English Curriculum course. As a former secondary reading teacher, it was the class I most looked forward to teaching. I loved teaching reading and I was excited to be able to share what I learned in my classroom with English education pre-service teachers.

With this enthusiasm I entered the classroom and was immediately met with less than excited faces. Normally, I would chalk this up to it being a night class and pre-service teachers being tired from jobs or other coursework, but as I walked toward the front of the classroom I overheard a student say, “I’m so not looking forward to this class. I shouldn’t have to teach reading in high school. This course is all going to be elementary stuff.” I continued to the front of the class, but this comment stuck with me. My excitement started to wane. I wondered how many others felt the same way.

After introductions, I asked, “How many of you feel that you can read well?” Almost all hands went up. “How many of you have felt that you have always read well?” Again almost all hands went up. “Okay, pretend I am an alien that has just heard of this thing called reading. Someone explain to me how to read.” Hands went up much more slowly after this request. Finally, a brave soul answered, “Okay, so look at the words on the page and read them.” “You

just have to go slow” said another student. Finally, I asked, “What will you say to the high school students in your class who is having trouble reading in your class?” “Just reread the parts you don’t understand. It’s not like they have a learning disability, they just need to concentrate and have a good teacher” said yet another.

While I cannot say what I was expecting, I was not expecting these responses. I thought to myself, I am about to begin teaching a course on reading instruction in secondary English classrooms that focuses on struggling readers to a roomful of future teachers who have not struggled themselves. In fact, I discovered many of them loved reading and felt they had never struggled with reading before. As a teacher educator I never realized this profound contradiction. If there were ever a group of individuals not suited to understanding and teaching struggling readers, it may be a group of people who have not struggled with reading themselves and who love to read. I began to question. What do these students who love to read think about reading instruction? What do they think about struggling readers? The answers to these questions would greatly impact how I revised the structure of the course.

For the pre-service teachers taking my course, reading was seen as something to be taught in elementary school, not at the middle or high school level. Answers such as “you just have to go slow” suggested some of my students may have viewed reading as an invisible process that they had internalized over the years. If students believed reading was an easy and invisible process, then as an instructor I would need to focus on why the reading process seems invisible. If they believed good reading instruction was simply a teacher providing suggestions to go slow, concentrate, or reread to struggling readers, I would need to explain the complexity of the reading process. If they believed reading instruction was the same for secondary students as it is for elementary students, then I would have to point out the difference. In short, I needed

to know what they believed in order to teach my course effectively. For some in my course, reading instruction did amount to basal readers and phonics. As I walked in the rain back to my office after class that night, I thought about how I would have to take a different direction with the curriculum than I had planned. I realized while I could give them the tools, tips, and strategies to help readers, if they didn't see the value of teaching reading at the secondary level or thought teaching reading was an elementary school teachers' job, then those tools would go waste. I would first have to understand their beliefs about reading instruction and learning to read. Only then would I be able to give them the tools to teach reading effectively.

Statement of the Problem

Struggling Secondary Readers. The Nation's Report Card on Reading (2011) stated 39% of eighth grade students scored at the Basic Level and 25% scored below the Basic Level. These percentages are even more dismal for students of color. Compared to only 15% of White students scoring below the Basic Level, 41% of Black students and 36% of Hispanic students score below Basic Level. As students begin secondary school, they are charged with learning more content, at a faster pace, and with increased pressure from accountability measures (Dreschler, Schumaker, & Woodruff, 2004). Not unlike the pre-service teachers in my class, secondary teachers expect students to be able to decode fluently and comprehend challenging material (Alverman, 2004). However, struggling readers lack advanced decoding skills, fluency, and comprehension skills to understand difficult content (Kamil, 2003).

Furthermore, if reading difficulties are not identified and remedied, the gap between struggling readers and their peers widens every academic year (Edmonds, Vaughn, Wexler, Reutebuch, Cable, Tackett, & Schnakenberg, 2009; Stanovich, 1986). Reading difficulties that extend beyond elementary school may cause students to become increasingly frustrated with

school and more vulnerable to behavioral problems. Behavioral problems and negative attitudes toward school as a result of reading problems can lead to dropping out or even incarceration (Malmgren & Leone, 2000). Indeed, there is a strong correlation between academic failure, particularly reading difficulties, and delinquency (Coleman & Vaughn, 2000; Drakeford, 2002; Leone, Krezmien, Mason, & Meisel, 2005; Malmgren & Leone, 2000). These findings highlight the importance of providing effective reading instruction at the secondary level.

However, little attention has been given to how teachers should be taught to teach reading (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001; Moats & Foorman, 2003) and even less attention has been given to reading instruction at the secondary level (Edmonds, et al, 2009). English teachers, like content area teachers, have a curriculum to teach and often at the secondary level reading instruction is generally not part of the curriculum. While secondary English teachers do have more preparation in reading instruction compared to other content area teachers, they are not as prepared as they need to be and do not provide reading instruction even when given the opportunity (i.e. given an extra class period with the same students) (Strickland & Alverman, 2004). Relatively few researchers have looked at the process that pre-service teachers go through as they learn to teach reading (Duffy & Atkinson, 2001). Hall (2006) calls for the need to examine teachers' beliefs and how teachers think about reading instruction and struggling readers as they are major influences that can affect student learning and growth.

Preparing English Teachers to Teach Reading. Green (1971) suggested a major goal of teacher education is to help teachers examine and identify tacit beliefs. He notes, "Teaching is an activity which has to do, among other things, with the modification and formation of belief systems" (p. 48). Pre-service teachers enter education programs with strongly held beliefs about teaching and learning (Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 2003), which

have been developed throughout their 12-14 years of schooling experience (Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975). These strongly held beliefs can affect how pre-service teachers receive information presented to them in their program (Holt-Reynolds, 1992) and the instructional decisions they make in their classrooms (Richardson, 2003). Identifying and examining those beliefs becomes an instrumental way of preparing teachers to teach reading at the secondary level.

Addressing Beliefs. Reflective teaching has emerged as an approach in teacher education for pre-service teachers to identify and examine their attitudes, beliefs and assumptions to promote self-evaluation and change (Su, 1997). Bullough and Gitlin (2001) suggest pre-service teachers need to identify, examine, and possibly challenge their tacit beliefs in order to avoid overgeneralizing teaching and learning. Teacher education programs may address tacit beliefs through personal writing (Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008). Narratives allow pre-service teachers to interpret and reinterpret their experiences with teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Personal writing assignments may include autobiographies, case studies, and/or reflections on teaching (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest we speak, write, and think in metaphoric terms. Therefore, these personal writings are often made up of metaphors about teaching and learning (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). Calderhead and Robson (1991) proposed we all hold images of our beliefs about teaching and learning and these images are best described through the use of metaphor. Examining these metaphors may give insight for the teacher educator and the pre-service teacher about pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning. Green (1971) suggests, "...if we cannot think without the use of metaphor, it is also true that we cannot think well without thinking about the metaphors we use" (63).

Studies that have examined pre-service teacher beliefs often use surveys and/or interviews (e.g., Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011; Busch, 2010; Hudson, Kloosterman, & Galindo, 2012; Sadaf, Newby, & Ertmer, 2012; Sandvik, van Dall, & Ader, 2013). If pre-service teachers do think in images and think, perceive, and act through metaphors, these methods may not provide the most representational responses. A method, such as Photovoice, that asks pre-service teachers to respond through images (i.e. visual metaphors) and affords multiple opportunities for explanation, may be more representational of teacher beliefs. Having a complete understanding of English education pre-service teacher beliefs about reading instruction may help inform teacher educators in planning for effective reading courses. The current study sought to describe and explain English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction through a modified version of Photovoice method.

Research Questions

1. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

Methodology

This study utilized a modified version of Photovoice method to examine English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers. Traditionally, Photovoice has been used as a participatory research method that asks participants to answer a prompt or a question using photography and an accompanying narrative (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice entrusts the cameras in the hands of the participants so they can act as recorders for

their own beliefs. A major aim of Photovoice is to promote critical dialogue and reflection (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Photovoice as it is used in this study may provide more representational responses than traditional research methods (e.g. interviews, focus groups, surveys) because it asks participants to respond to a prompt in three different ways, through photography, a narrative, and small group discussions. The use of different mediums to respond to the same prompt/question provides participants multiple opportunities to express and explain their beliefs. Additionally, the multiple opportunities to respond allows for reflection on and expansion of their responses as each medium requires participants to revisit their response, thus increasing clarity and ensuring trustworthiness. The use of photography is instrumental to Photovoice. Photographs have no meaning by themselves; meaning is assigned. How images are created and the meaning viewers assign to them depends on cultural assumptions, personal knowledge, and the context in which the picture was taken and how it was presented (Barndt, 2001; Orelanna, 1999). How the photographs are seen and read is shaped by values, experiences, and beliefs of both the photographer and the viewer. With Photovoice, the researcher does not ascribe his or her interpretation on the photo. Rather, the photographer is charged with sharing his or her interpretation of and rationale for the photograph.

The photographs are shared through small group discussions. These images can serve as discussion points in small group discussions. Visual images as discussion points have been shown in qualitative research to be effective at understanding beliefs, “the combination of reflection using images means the participants’ narratives are more representative of how they themselves interpret their context, relationships, decisions, and realities” (Liebenberg, 2001). Many researchers now attest to the value of incorporating images in research, especially methods

that include interviews (i.e. focus groups) because they can bring greater depth to topics discussion (Daniels, 2003; Gloor & Meier, 2000; Harper, 2002; Pink, 2001). Experiences and meanings may become explicit through the use of photography, which other verbal forms of communication may not necessarily allow (Lienbenberg, 2001). The written narratives and small group discussions provide two mediums through which participants can explain and elaborate on their photographic response.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study consists of, constructivism, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conception of metaphor, and interpretivism. Constructivist theory states meaning of and about the world is not discovered, it is constructed through social/cultural knowledge as well as experiential knowledge. While there is a physical world for constructivists, the world has no meaning other than what humans have ascribed to it (Paul, 2005). Our culture (Crotty, 1998) and our experiences (Lortie, 1975) provide the knowledge bases through which we construct our realities. Beliefs too are constructed through social/cultural values and prior experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lortie, 1975). Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang and Minkler (2007) write, "constructivists focus on teacher education as a learning problem and document conditions that may contribute to changes in teachers use of multiple knowledge sources to solve problems" (p. 74). Beliefs about reading instruction then are constructed allowing the examination of not just what pre-service teachers believe about reading instruction, but also how those beliefs were formed. However, beliefs cannot be examined if they are not communicated.

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) seminal work *Metaphors We Live by* suggests we think, speak, and act through metaphors. They argue that we think metaphorically on a conceptual

level. Concepts, such as argumentation, are conceived on a metaphoric level, which in turn affects the language we use. For example, the concept of argumentation has been conceived in terms of war. We speak of arguing in much the same way we talk of war. We use phrases such as, “You *win* an argument,” “You *shot* my argument down,” or “I had to defend my argument” Metaphors are how we make sense of the world are able to relate our ideas to others. If our conceptual frameworks are metaphoric and are expressed through metaphoric language then it stands to reason that through examining metaphors we would be able to understand a person’s conceptual and belief system (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Examining pre-service teachers’ metaphors about reading instruction may provide insight into their beliefs about reading instruction.

While constructivism provides a framework for understanding how beliefs are created and Lakoff and Johnson’s conceptual metaphors provides a framework for how beliefs are expressed, interpretivism provides a framework for how beliefs can be understood by pre-service teachers and researchers. Interpretivism aims to examine, “...culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (Crotty, 1998 p. 67). Similar to constructivism, interpretivism views knowledge as constructed by individuals through his or her experiences and social/cultural values. In this way all knowledge has the mark of the interpreter (Bochner, 2005). Interpretivism intends to investigate the meanings of the interpreter while also understanding that the researcher is interpreting as well. This theoretical framework aligns with the goals of the study which acknowledges teacher beliefs are individually constructed, bear the mark of the individual, and that I sought to interpret their interpretations in this study.

Importance of Study

This study seeks to describe and explain English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers. While reading instruction has been a focus on national attention for some time, less attention has been paid to the preparation of reading teachers (Snow, et al., 1998), especially at the secondary level (Edmonds, et al., 2009; Hall, 2006). While studies have looked at beliefs of content area teachers' beliefs about reading (e.g., Ness, 2009; Tan, 2011; Ulusoy & Hakan, 2011), few studies have looked at specifically English education teachers' beliefs about reading instruction (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Asselin, 2000; Cunningham, Zibulsky, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2009; Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 2001).

Describing and explaining these beliefs may also provide valuable information to teacher educators to help plan for effective instruction. This study also seeks to investigate Photovoice as a method to gather pre-service teachers' beliefs and determine the extent to which this method resulted in substantive reflection of personal beliefs as compared to more traditional methods.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the current study is to describe and explain secondary English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers. Specifically, this study will examine English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers and beliefs about the teaching of struggling adolescent readers.

Limitations

This study is not without limitations. First, few studies have used Photovoice as a method to gain insight into pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading. It is an assumption of this study that Photovoice will be an effective method for identifying and examining pre-service teachers' beliefs. However, an additional purpose of this study is to determine the use of

Photovoice as a method to get at teacher beliefs. After the Photovoice activities, pre-service teachers will reflect on the Photovoice process as it pertained to their beliefs. This will provide insight into the pre-service teachers views of how effective this method was to examine their beliefs.

Second, this study will take place in the College of Education of one large urban university in the Southeastern United States with one group of students taking the same class. As such, results cannot be generalized to the general population. This study aims to build the literature base on secondary English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction. The results of this study could be used as a guide for teacher educators in similar contexts and as a stepping stone for additional research.

It should be noted as well the participants are likely to be novices with photography, which may also compromise the representativeness of their responses as they may not be able to take the pictures they want to take. Just as with any medium through which we communicate (speaking, writing, drawing, dance) a person must have some skill in that medium to communicate what they want to say. While the mechanics of taking a picture are fairly simply (aim and shoot) the artistry of photography can take years to learn. However, this study asks participants to respond through writing and speaking as well as through photography. The participant is able to explain the photograph, which may include an explanation of how he/she would take the picture had they had the skills to do so. An additional safeguard for this concern is the training at the beginning of the project that aims at giving all participants the basics of photography (rule of three, horizons, etc.).

Finally, as beliefs are tied to self-identity (Kagan, 1992) there may be some hesitancy by participants in sharing beliefs or they may provide responses which they perceive to be more

socially acceptable (Cunningham, et al., 2009). The addition of the narrative which will not be required to be shared with groups, will allow an outlet for participants to share more personal beliefs if they so choose. Attempting to create a classroom climate that is open and respectful to a variety of opinions may help address participants looking to share only what they believe is socially acceptable.

Assumptions

While Photovoice has been used to describe and explain beliefs with adults and children (e.g., Booth & Booth, 2003; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001; Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang & Minkler, 2007) , I could not identify any literature that has used Photovoice to capture and examine pre-service teachers' beliefs. It is an assumption in this study that Photovoice will be an effective method for capturing pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction. It is also assumed I will be able to capture representational beliefs of pre-service teachers within the context of an educational course.

Definition of Terms

Adolescent: For the purposes of this study adolescent will refer to children in grades 6-12.

Beliefs: Beliefs are a “set of conceptual representations which signify to its holder a reality or given state of affairs of sufficient validity, truth and/or trustworthiness to warrant reliance upon it as a guide to personal thought and action’ (Harvey, 1986 p. 660 as cited in Richardson et al 1991).

Photovoice: Photovoice is participatory action research method that asks participants to answer a prompt through the use of photography, an accompanying narrative, and small group discussion. Photovoice as three main goals: (1) to empower and enable people to reflect on their

communities, (2) encourage critical dialogue and (3) to give a voice to under-represented populations (Berg, 2009).

Pre-service teacher: Students who are completing a teacher education program at a college or university with the expectation of becoming a licensed classroom teacher.

Struggling reader: Often struggling readers are defined as students who score poorly on standardized tests (e.g. Christle & Yell, 2008; Hall, 2006; Malmgren, et al., 2000). However, in addition to this definition readers struggle with comprehension because they do not apply or lack one or more the following (1) short working memory capacity, (2) have limited knowledge on text structures, (3) have trouble with word recognition/knowing how to correct interpretation of words, and (4) do not know or do not use reading comprehension strategies (i.e. identifying main idea, predicting, summarizing, and comprehension monitoring) (Byrnes & Wasik, 2009).

Summary

I began this chapter with a statement of the problem, which discussed the need for preparing secondary English teachers to teach reading and the need to address beliefs in preparing secondary English teachers. The current study sought to describe and explain English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction. The questions guiding this study are:

1. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about the teaching of struggling adolescent readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

To answer these questions Photovoice method was utilized as it may provide substantive reflection and more representational responses from pre-service teachers. Constructivism, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor, and interpretivism were discussed as theories consisting of the framework for this study. Finally, the importance of this study and its limitations are discussed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a survey of the literature most pertinent to this study. I begin by examining the relationship between constructivism, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conception of metaphors, and interpretivism, as they create the theoretical framework for this study. Building on this framework, I review the research in three key areas: teacher beliefs, beliefs in the preparation of teachers, and beliefs related to literacy instruction. In discussing teacher beliefs, I provide a definition of beliefs, discuss the characteristics of beliefs and review how beliefs develop. Regarding beliefs in the preparation of teachers, I discuss reflection as a goal in teacher education, the influence of beliefs on teacher education, and the ways in which beliefs are addressed in teacher education programs. Included in this discussion will be a review of the literature on metaphors and images as a means to understand pre-service teachers' beliefs and knowledge. I then review the literature on teacher beliefs about literacy instruction. Finally, I discuss Photovoice as a method to identify and examine pre-service teacher beliefs.

Theoretical Framework

Three theories make up the framework for this study: constructivism, Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conception of metaphors, and interpretivism. Constructivism provides an understanding of ways beliefs and meanings are constructed. Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) provides a framework for understanding how pre-service teachers make meaning of their experiences and communicate their beliefs. Interpretivism suggests the

importance of providing descriptions to highlight deep understandings of social occurrences, such as understanding English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction.

Constructivism and interpretivism suggest a relativist ontology and a transactional epistemology which rejects the belief of the existence of any one *true* reality. Since meaning is created by individuals about objective reality there are multiple realities (Paul, 2005). This idea may be best illustrated by thinking about differences in perspectives. If a number of people with differing perspectives were examining a classroom discussion, each may see things differently depending on their perspective. An example would be the differences in how a post-positivist, a feminist, and a critical race theorist view a classroom discussion. A post-positivist may look at a number of students participating in class discussion based on the conversation topic, a feminist may be examining the woman's roles in those class discussions and the conversation dynamics between the girls and boys, and critical race theorist may be examining the race relations of that classroom¹. Each of these perspectives is looking at the same "objective" reality of a classroom, but each has constructed their own realities based on their perspective. As with most qualitative research studies my aim in this study is to produce, "reconstructed understandings of the social world" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000 p. 184). In this section I discuss each theory and then provide a discussion on how these theories intersect to provide a complete framework for this study (Figure 1).

Constructivism

Constructivism provides a framework for understanding how beliefs and knowledge are formed and developed. Constructivists believe there are two realities: one that is made up of physical entities (e.g. rocks, trees, houses) and the other is *constructed* by individuals giving

¹ This example was for illustrative purposes only. I recognize that a research study may hold multiple stances and that these are by no means mutually exclusive.

meaning to those physical entities (Paul, 2005). For constructivists, meaning is not discovered: it is constructed. Humans ascribe meaning to the world around them. For example, diamonds have no meaning of their own. Without humans they are just rocks. Meaning is constructed by humans. Investigating objects in and of themselves is fruitless because constructivists, "... realize that it is less the measurable physical/temporal reality which determines the shape and contours of social life, but rather the meanings which are imputed to, within, and between physical/temporal realities" (Paul, 2005, p. 61). Students and teacher educators alike construct meaning from their prior experiences and the knowledge that is presented to them (Risko, Roller, Cummins, Bean, Block, Anders, & Flood, 2008). Additionally, culture provides a major source of information through which we use to construct knowledge. It is through society, culture and experiences that pre-service teachers may form their beliefs about teaching and learning (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992; Kagan, 1992).

Constructivism in teacher education began by studying prospective teachers and how they transform their professional knowledge by connecting prior knowledge and constructing meanings to classrooms (Risko et al., 2008). In teacher education, constructivists aim to describe and explain the conditions of teaching that may contribute to the many different types of knowledge teachers use to solve problems (Wilson, et al., 2001). This framework allows the examination of pre-service teachers' beliefs which have been and are actively constructed and are socially and experientially based (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Furthermore, by examining the construction of beliefs from pre-service teachers, the researcher is also constructing knowledge; an interpretation of the pre-service teachers' interpretations. The outcomes of this research will be, "...a literal creation or construction of

the inquiry process” (Schwandt, 1994 p. 128). Equally as important as how knowledge and beliefs are constructed is how knowledge and beliefs are communicated.

Lakoff and Johnson’s Conception of Metaphors

Vygotsky (1986) argued language defines and limits our thinking, in much the same way prior experiences determine how we interpret present and future events. Pre-service teachers describe their experiences and beliefs through language, whether it is spoken or written. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest metaphors are the primary way in which people come to make meaning of their life experiences and through which they describe those experiences. As individuals we seek out personal metaphors:

...to highlight and make coherent what we have in common with someone else...and make coherent our own pasts, our present activities, and our dreams, hopes, and goals as well. A large part of self-understanding is the search for appropriate metaphors that make sense of our lives (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3)

Metaphors are created so we can understand one thing in the terms of another. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued our conceptual systems (concepts and processes that govern our thought and everyday function) are metaphoric in nature. If we think and act through metaphor then it only follows that our language structure would be metaphoric. To illustrate Lakoff and Johnson (1980) explore the metaphor *argument is war*. When we discuss arguments, the expressions we use often refer to the action of war. For example, “Your claims are *indefensible*,” “I’ve never *won* an argument with him,” or “he *shot down* all of my arguments.” We do not use language to just describe arguments. In a real sense we lose or prevail in an argument. We attack the other’s position and we defend our own. The very concept of argumentation is structured

metaphorically by the concept of war. While there is no physical battle (although one may occur after heated arguments) we still defend and attack when we argue. It is not that we just talk metaphorically, but also our thought processes are largely metaphoric. Since this is the case, we should be able to study metaphoric language to understand a person's conceptual system or beliefs (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

To illustrate how we can understand a person's conceptual framework through metaphor I again borrow an example from Lakoff and Johnson (1980). The expression "Time is money" is a popular way to describe time. Expressions such as, "you are wasting my time," "I don't have time to give you," or "thank you for your time" all suggests that time is valuable in our society. Time is money in several ways in our society. For example, minutes per month for cell phone usage, hourly wages, interest on credit cards or even hotel room rates. As a society we are structured in such a way time can be spent, saved, wasted and invested. As such, metaphors do not only govern the language regarding time, but how we think about time as a concept. Since conceptual frameworks are expressed metaphorically, then the examination of metaphors that a person uses could lead to understanding of that persons' conceptual framework. Regarding teacher education the metaphor of "teaching as giving" evidenced by phrases such as, "I *gave* her the skills she needed to pass a test," or "I *delivered* my lesson" may provide insight into a conceptual belief about teaching, such as the belief that teaching is presenting information to students.

Constructivism provides the frame for understanding how beliefs are formed and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conception of metaphors provides a frame for understanding how those beliefs are expressed. Interpretivism provides a frame for understanding how beliefs can be understood by pre-service teachers and researchers.

Interpretivism

The interpretive stance suggests we cannot separate completely the describer and the described. As with constructivism, the mind plays an active role in meaning making helping to construct realities, knowledge, and beliefs. The aim of this approach is to look for, "...culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). All knowledge has the mark of the interpreter (Paul 2005). From this perspective all research activities seek to inscribe meaning. In contrast to post-positivism, interpretivism looks to understand how meanings are made and the focus on values rather than on the meaning of objects. This lens allows researchers to go beyond dichotomies of reason and emotion, science and literature, and objects and subjects. Rather than pretending to be completely objective, interpretivism focuses on the values that are subscribed to the social situation (Paul, 2005).

In this study I seek to interpret the interpretations of my participants. Through attempting to understand English education pre-service teacher beliefs I am aiming to understand their stories through their narratives. Bochner, in Paul (2005), writes of the interpretative stances:

In shifting focus of inquiry from objects to meaning, interpretative social science invites a corresponding shift from theories to stories. The primary means that human beings use to attach storytelling at least insofar as we make sense of our lives and experiences by placing them in an **intelligible frame** (original emphasis p. 66).

Interpretivism holds language is the primary way through which we make sense of the world. Crotty (1998) writes, "We are essentially language beings. Language is pivotal to, and shapes, the situations in which we find ourselves enmeshed, the events that befall us, the practices we carry out and, in and through all this, the understandings we are able to reach" (p. 87). As

“language beings” we have a need to classify and define the world around us. This means using arbitrary sounds and symbols to describe the world around us so that, “...rather than concepts points us to realities, realities are relegated to being mere exemplifications of concepts” (Crotty, 1998 p. 81). As we construct our realities through experiences, metaphors serve as a way to express our realities in a way for others to understand our experiences. Through the study of beliefs as expressed through metaphors it may be possible to understand what beliefs are and how they are formed. This section is focused on the theoretical base for understanding beliefs and knowledge, how they develop, and how they are communicated. The following section reviews the literature on the nature of teacher beliefs.

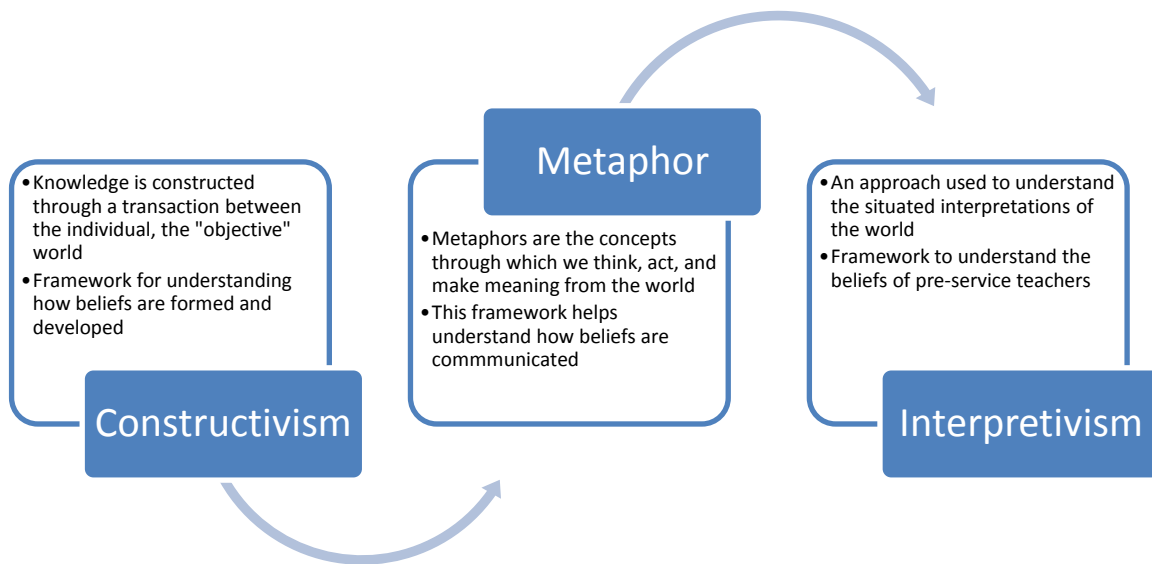


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

The Nature of Teacher Beliefs

What Are Beliefs? Beliefs are often understood as a result of their relationship to knowledge (Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992). I begin with considering the relationship between beliefs and knowledge, followed by a discussion of the characteristics of beliefs, and a definition of beliefs for this study will be provided.

Beliefs and knowledge. Beliefs and knowledge can be difficult to separate. In fact, Kagan (1992) suggests creating a concrete definition of beliefs without knowledge is too difficult. However, others have attempted to distinguish beliefs from knowledge. Most notably is Nespor (1987), who drew heavily from Ableson (1979). Nespor (1987) argued beliefs are less dependent on logic and more dependent on personal experiences than knowledge. It is because of this dependency on personal experiences that Nespor (1987) is able to identify four characteristics which distinguish beliefs from knowledge: existential presumption, alternativity, affective and evaluative loading, and episodic structure.

Existential presumptions are personal truths that every person holds. Pajares (1992) notes, “Existential presumptions are perceived as immutable entities that exist beyond individual control or knowledge. People believe them because, like Mount Everest, they are there” (p. 309). They are deeply personal beliefs, unaffected by persuasion and can be formed through traumatic or intense experiences (Nespor, 1987). Existential presumptions also include beliefs about ones' self and about what others are like. An example of existential presumptions would be a teacher's perception of laziness. Based on prior experiences a teacher may believe a teacher may believe academic success is based on effort; thus a student who fails does so because they did not exert sufficient effort.

Beliefs can also lead teachers to attempt to create an ideal or alternate situation that differs from reality. Nespor (1987) terms this alternativity. For example, a teacher who has become a teacher because she has had poor experiences in schooling may attempt to create an ideal situation in her classroom so others do not have the same poor experiences she has had. She has created an ideal of teaching to which she has little or no experience or knowledge, yet she will attempt to implement this ideal in her classroom. In short, her beliefs are based on her alternate reality for teaching. Often these alternate realities are developed before entering the program.

Beliefs are connected to self-identity and as such they tend produce strong feelings (Pajares, 1992). Because of these strong feelings (Nespor, 1987) suggests beliefs have stronger *affective and evaluative components* than knowledge. In other words, knowing about something is different than having feelings about something. A prime example would be the difference between knowledge of self and feelings of self-worth. As a result of these strong feelings about self-worth, Nespor (1987) notes beliefs are often evaluative and include judgment. It is in this way that beliefs can affect knowledge. Pajares (1992) gives the example of a teacher's understanding of the faculty handbook. She may have knowledge of what it says and what it means, but her understanding of the faculty handbook will be effected by her belief that her principal is weak and ineffective (Pajares, 1992).

Finally, beliefs are different than knowledge because they are formed through episodic structures rather than through semantic networks (Nespor, 1987). Episodic structures are personal experiences, events, or episodes. Semantic knowledge, on the other hand, is thought to be abstract concepts such as logical structure or propositions. Nespor (1987) suggests critical episodes in a teacher's past will influence and form her beliefs. For example, a teacher may

believe that using pop-corn reading in her class is the most effective teaching method, because her experiences with pop-corn reading in her own schooling were positive leading to positive feelings about the strategy. It is likely these episodic experiences with past schooling create a template and/or inspiration for a teacher's teaching practices (Nespor, 1987). Understanding the differences between beliefs and knowledge helps in providing a definition of beliefs.

Defining beliefs. Discussing beliefs in teacher education can be a “messy” (p. 307) endeavor partly because there is the lack of consistent terminology in the literature discussing beliefs (Pajares, 1992). Beliefs have been referred to as knowledge, preconceptions, attitudes, values, judgments, opinions, or axioms (Pajares, 1992). Despite the difference in terminology, there has been some consensus on the characteristics of beliefs (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). Beliefs have been seen as representations that are held strongly based on experience, feelings, and emotions (Abelson, 1979; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). While belief systems may not develop in a logical way, they are organized (Abelson, 1979; Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). For the purposes of this study beliefs will be defined as, “set of conceptual representations which signify to its holder a reality or given state of affairs of sufficient validity, truth and/or trustworthiness to warrant reliance upon it as a guide to personal thought and action” (Harvey, 1967, p. 660).

How Beliefs are Developed. As noted above, pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs come from professional and personal experiences (Lortie, 1975; Richardson, 1996; Risko, et al., 2008). Based on the literature beliefs are developed from three sources: personal experiences, experience with formal knowledge, and experience with school and instruction (Richardson, 1996).

Personal experiences are the aspects of life that go into forming one's worldview. Personal experiences includes ethnic and cultural backgrounds, beliefs about the self as it relates to others, religious upbringings, gender, and major life decisions. These personal experiences perhaps play the most integral part in shaping and developing beliefs (Pajares, 1992). For example, Bullough and Knowles' (1991) case study examined three teacher's metaphor for teaching and found many of their beliefs about teaching, such as teaching philosophy or the purpose of education, were formed through prior experiences, such as experiences as a parent.

Beliefs also may come from formal knowledge taught in education programs. These are beliefs often shared by a community of scholars and include content knowledge and pedagogy (Richardson, 1996). John (1991) studied five math and geography students through a course on lesson planning and teaching. Math students who had strong content knowledge had definite beliefs about math instruction and included that in their planning. The geography students on the other hand did not feel they had strong content knowledge and had much less defined beliefs about geography instruction. While perhaps the least influential aspect of belief development, formal knowledge, including pedagogical knowledge, still plays a role in belief development (Richardson, 1996). Featherstone (1992) has suggests that there may be a "sleeper effect" (p. 18) on pedagogical knowledge. That is to say, the impact of pedagogical knowledge on pre-service teachers may be small at the time it is presented in the program, but it can grow as a pre-service teacher transitions into his or her own classroom.

Beliefs resulting from experiences with school and instruction may be the most impactful in the formation of pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning (Lortie, 1975; Richardson, 1996). Unlike most other professions, students enter teacher training programs with 12-14 years of exposure in the field. Termed the "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 61) by

Lortie (1975), students develop strong conceptions of teaching and learning from these years of exposure before they enter an education program. Kagan (1992) and Lortie (1975) both suggest, as a result of this extended experience, teachers tend to teach the way they were taught.

Beliefs and Action. Implicit in discussion about beliefs is the assumption that beliefs affect classroom practice and pre-service teacher learning in education programs. Beliefs by themselves have no effect in reality. It is the relationship to action that makes beliefs of interest to study. To understand discussions on beliefs relation to action it is helpful to examine Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action and Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory.

Fishbein and Ajzen's theory of reasoned action (1975) is a model in social psychology to predict behavior intentions and/or behavior. This model posits behavior is based on the belief of how a particular behavior/action will lead to specific outcome (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). Beliefs, according to this theory, are formed through prior experiences of a particular action and through the subjective norm (perceived social pressure to engage or not engage in a behavior). To illustrate, a teacher who has tried Socratic circles in his classroom for a number of years only to find it ineffective, may form the belief that Socratic circles, in general, are not effective. This teacher has had prior experiences with Socratic circles work and those experiences have led to similar outcomes (i.e. poor student learning), therefore, according to the theory of reasoned action, the teacher will not likely use Socratic circles in the future. His prior experiences with Socratic circles affect his beliefs (that Socratic circles do not work) which will affect his attitude toward Socratic circles (that it is not effective) and lead to the teacher not incorporating Socratic circles in his classroom. However, this teacher may continue trying to incorporate Socratic circles work because of the subjective norms. In this case, it may be the perceived social

pressure from teachers and/or administrators to incorporate Socratic circles work into the classroom.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) suggests learning occurs from observing one another, imitating and modeling. He suggests people learn the most from imitating and observing these behaviors. Beliefs are then formed through these observations, imitations and modeling. Students entering teacher education programs have strongly held beliefs about teaching and learning because they have learned through over a decade of observation being a student (Lortie, 1975). It may be the case teacher education programs are viewed as places to imitate and model that same teaching they have experienced in their schooling (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992).

Present in both theories is the idea that beliefs do influence action, whether that is determined through observation and imitation (Bandura, 1977) or through prior experiences with particular actions and social norms (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In either case, beliefs are developed through prior personal experiences (Richardson, 1996) and consist of characteristics that differ from knowledge (Nespor, 1987). Beliefs can influence teacher perceptions of students and student achievement, influence teachers' classroom practice as well as influencing how pre-service teachers accept or reject information presented to them in their education programs.

Beliefs on Expectations of Students and Student Achievement. Beliefs can influence the expectations teachers have of students and student achievement (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). As mentioned above, one of the characteristics of beliefs are existential qualities such as laziness (Nespor, 1987), which can affect expectations for students and their achievement by the teacher (Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992). Gomez, (1994) examining pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching diverse learners, found teachers in her study believed low-achieving students

were not their responsibility and can only be helped by special teachers. Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, and Cassidy-Smith (2000) support Gomez's findings. Participants in their study initially believed the reading problems of their students were the fault of someone else (i.e. past teachers) or that because the students were low achieving, it was not the teachers' responsibility to teach them. Furthermore, Zohar and others (2001) examined 40 teachers and their beliefs about low-achieving students and higher order thinking. Results revealed 45% of teachers believe higher-order questions were inappropriate for low achieving students. Teachers, according to the study, held a view of learning where students who were lower achieving could not grasp higher level questions.

Richman, Bovelsky, Kroovan, Vacca, and West (1997) examined ethnic bias of 20 European-American pre-service teachers by asking participants to guess GPA, IQ, and personal characteristics (i.e. leadership potential, likelihood to use drugs, honest, self-confidence, and likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior) based on photographs. The pre-service teachers were randomly divided into two groups of ten. One group was shown photographs of African-American children while the other group was shown photographs of African-American children and European-American children. In both groups pre-service teachers rated the African-American children lower for IQ and GPA, as well as rating African-Americans as having less ambition and less self-confidence compared to European-American children.

Su's (1997) case study of Asian-American, African-American, Hispanic, and European-American teachers found Asian-American, African-American, and Hispanic teachers have a strong belief that the role of teaching is for social justice. Minority teachers reported that good teachers are those who not only care for children, but they are also aware of diversity and are committed to improving society. European-American teachers, on the other hand, did not share

the vision of teacher as change agent and saw teaching as caring for children. Ball and Farr (2003) examined studies on teachers' perceptions of language variety. They found in-service teachers often make negative evaluations of students based on students' use of dialectical English or African-American vernacular.

Beliefs Influence on Classroom Practice. Beliefs can serve as a filter for judgments and decisions in the classroom (Nespor, 1987). Anning (1998) found beliefs about learning directly influenced instructional strategies that teachers employ. Teachers will spend more time on instructional practices they see as more valid or more important (Powers, Zippay, & Butler, 2006; Winograd & Johnston, 1987). Reading instruction is no exception. Studies have shown teacher beliefs about literacy instruction influence their instruction and assessment practice (Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Powers, et al, 2006; Pressley, 2005; Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991; Risko, et al., 2008). For example, a teacher who believes reading aloud is a more effective strategy than Sustained Silent Reading will devote more time to read alouds in her classroom (Powers, et al., 2006).

Hall's (2011) case study of three student-teacher pairs found elementary teachers' interactions with struggling readers were based on the teachers' beliefs about what it means to become a good reader. Also, teachers' created identities for their students based on a number of sources (achievement in class, prior student work, etc.), and this too effected how teachers interacted with struggling readers. Additionally, teachers viewed struggling readers as unmotivated, lazy, and uninterested in improving. Among other characteristics, struggling readers do not have good fluency abilities, do not use comprehension strategies, and do not talk to others about reading tasks. Furthermore, struggling readers are seen as not getting good grades, having little to contribute to class discussions, and/or not knowing how to ask good

questions. Good readers, on the other hand, are interested in learning, motivated, contribute to class discussion, and get good grades.

Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, and Schmitt (2000) examined 67 pre-service elementary school teachers' beliefs and knowledge throughout three semesters in a reading practicum course. Pre-service teachers began the course believing it was not their responsibility to teach students with reading problems. According to participants, struggling readers did not receive the proper reading instruction before entering their class and therefore would not restructure the course to accommodate the students. This belief led the teachers to assign the responsibility of these students to special teachers. Furthermore, the researchers suggest pre-service teachers can become frustrated and disillusioned with literacy instruction and suggested it may be a conflict between pre-service teachers' beliefs that are deeply rooted in their prior experiences and the realities of the classroom.

Alvermann (2004) suggests teachers believe students enter secondary schools with the ability to decode fluently and comprehend more difficult material. Ness (2009) suggests because of these beliefs, teachers often do not provide reading instruction in their classrooms. In addition to influencing classroom practice, beliefs also plays a role in preparing future teachers.

Influence of Beliefs on the Presentation of Material. Before pre-service teachers step foot in their first education course, they have well developed beliefs about teaching and learning (Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992). These beliefs can influence whether or not pre-service teachers accept information presented to them in their coursework (Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). Bullough and Gitlin (1995) suggest knowledge presented in teacher education that contradicts strongly held beliefs tends to be discounted or ignored. For example, Calderhead and Robson (1991) followed seven elementary school teachers through the first year

of their education program in England. Through interviews and observation, the researchers wanted to understand how pre-service teacher beliefs influenced how they approached their coursework. The researchers found pre-service teacher's perceptions of teaching greatly influenced how they approached their classes. For example, one participant, Anna, believed the only knowledge worth getting in her program was the knowledge gained through actual teaching experiences (i.e. practicums). On the other hand, Harriet and Vanessa saw the decision of how to teach was decided by their principal and/or school culture.

Holt-Reynolds (1992) examined the relationship between personally held beliefs of nine teachers and the principles advocated in one reading course by the instructor. She found pre-service teachers used their own experiences as students to develop beliefs about how other students will react to certain teaching behaviors. The participants often used experiences when they were bored or interested as data to justify a belief about a teaching strategy. For example, a pre-service teacher may have had pleasant experiences with lecture only classrooms and felt she learned the most in those situations. Those experiences may make her form the belief that lecture style works, while possibly rejecting other teaching styles presented in her program. Furthermore, this study found pre-service teachers' beliefs differed because they held different definitions of terms and values. It was found pre-service teachers had different definitions of terms, such as lecture. For pre-service teachers, lectures were narrowly defined as the teacher talking without giving pause so students can ask questions. This led to the belief that lectures are an ineffective way to teach in all situations. Values differed as well between the pre-service teachers and the instructor. Pre-service teachers valued interestingness in their lessons because they believed learning was simply an issue of motivation. Beliefs, then, influence how pre-

service teachers received information in their teacher education programs, their expectations of students and instructional decisions and classroom practices.

Beliefs and Teacher Education

Beliefs and Reflection in Teacher Education. Philosopher Thomas Green (1971) suggested that one goal of teacher education is to help teachers examine and identify tacit beliefs about teaching and learning. He suggested an important aspect of all teacher education programs is to ask the pre-service teachers to identify and examine their beliefs as they relate to classroom action. Richardson (2003) suggested it is not enough to identify and examine tacit beliefs. Beliefs need to be transformed into beliefs based on evidence.

A number of scholars agree with Green (1971) and Richardson (2003) that education programs need to address beliefs of pre-service teachers in teacher education (Calderhead, 1989; Pajares, 1992; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Tannehill & MacPhil, 2012; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). Examining beliefs allows teacher educators to potentially challenge existing beliefs, make pre-service teachers aware of their beliefs, and help foster self-examination of their own beliefs which all may impact the teaching practice of pre-service teachers (Calderhead, 1991; Pajares, 1992; Tannehill & MacPhil, 2012). Johnston (1992) suggested that teacher educators' foremost tasks are to help pre-service teachers to explore their practical knowledge and build programs to help them develop, identify, articulate and utilize practical knowledge, including personal practical knowledge.

A major goal of many teacher education programs is to prepare pre-service teachers to become a "reflective practitioner." Reflective practitioners are able to study their own practice in order to determine what works best for their students (Schon, 1983). Reflective practitioners use past experiences teaching combined with their pedagogical knowledge to reflect and make

classroom decisions. A major aspect to becoming a reflective practitioner is reflection.

Reflective teaching emerged as an approach in teacher education for pre-service and in-service teachers to think about their attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions to promote self-evaluation and change (Su, 1997).

Ways Beliefs are Addressed in Teacher Education Programs. Teacher education programs may attempt to address beliefs through reflection in three major ways: personal writing, case studies, and, action research. These approaches ask pre-service teachers to reflect on different aspects of teaching, but in these reflections their beliefs are examined. For example, in case studies pre-service teachers are asked to reflect on the practices of other teachers. By reflecting on watching a classroom, what pre-service teachers reflect on reveals their beliefs about different aspects of teaching. The following examines each of these reflection exercises in turn.

A major way teacher education programs address beliefs is through personal writing (Risko, et al., 2008). Cochran-Smith and Lytle, (2009) have suggested that narratives are the way teacher knowledge is structured. Narratives allow pre-service teachers to interpret and reinterpret their experiences with teaching and learning. One particular way to address beliefs through personal writing is through autobiographies (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Clark and Medina (2000) found the use of autobiographical narratives increased pre-service teacher's understanding of multiculturalism, allowed pre-service teachers to make connections to theory, and helped pre-service teachers recognize the limits of their own perspectives. Through reflective writing assignment, Farrell (1999) found pre-service teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction were able to be identified and addressed. For example, many participants believed the most effective way to teach grammar was through rote drilling. Through reflection pre-

service teachers in the study realized this belief came from their own experiences and became open to trying new methods and strategies (Farrell, 1999).

Teacher education programs may attempt to promote reflection through case-studies and through explicit systematic inquiry into practical teaching (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Cases provide pre-service teachers with real-world scenarios through which they are able to apply theories. While, case-studies focus on seeing the connections between research and practice, case studies can provide a venue for student discussion that may lead to students revealing misconceptions or even stereotypes (Richardson, 2003). Teacher educators can ask students to reflect on the cases to help them see what is evidenced in the case and what assumptions students may be making. Case studies provide opportunities for students to reflect on a particular situation chosen by the teacher educator. Action research helps teachers to reflect on their practice while they are teaching.

Another method used to help teachers reflect on their practice is action research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Through applied experiences and student teaching pre-service teachers can reflect on their own practice through the realities of the classroom and from a number of perspectives. Richardson (2003) writes, “the reflection involved in writing about classroom problems interwoven with the social interaction and multiple perspectives of other researchers may have a powerful influence on the development of pre-service teachers’ beliefs, knowledge and confidence” (p. 32). Through action research, pre-service teachers are able to critically reflect on their own practice to possibly confront their own beliefs as it relates to practice. Rearick and Feldman (1999) suggest one type of reflection that occurs in action research is autobiographical reflection, where teachers examine their own stories and experiences

and see how they relate to others. This type of examination can aide a teacher to critically reflect on his or her own beliefs about teaching and learning.

Teacher Reflection: Metaphors and Images of Teaching. Educational research has explored how metaphor can promote reflection and improve classroom practice (Bullough, 1991; Carlson, 2001; Tobin, 1991). Calderhead and Robson (1991) suggest pre-service teachers think through images and suggest metaphors are the most efficient means through which to understand those images. First, salient studies regarding the use of metaphor to understand teacher beliefs will be examined, followed by a discussion of the literature on the use of images to understand teacher beliefs.

Metaphors. Metaphors provide a glimpse of the values and beliefs of pre-service teacher because metaphors express the images and analogies for the work that teachers do (Chen, 2003; Ornstien, 1999; Tannehill & MacPhil, 2012). For the purposes here, metaphor will be defined as devices that serve as a means for understanding and defining experiences that may lie at the subconscious level (Hardcastle, et al., 1985; Shaw, 2008; Yamamoto, Hardcastle, Muehl, & Muehl, 1990).

Alger (2009) examined 110 secondary teachers' conceptual metaphors of teaching and learning over the course of their semester. Using a survey instrument that supplied six different metaphors, teaching is guiding, teaching is nurturing, teaching is molding, teaching is transmitting, teaching is providing tools, and teaching is engaging in community, the researcher surveyed secondary teachers at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. In explaining why she choose metaphors to study, Alger states, "we have experiences for which we develop conceptual metaphors to aid in giving meaning to the experience, which we then use as a filter to make sense of new experiences" (p. 743). Nearly 40% of pre-service teachers began the project

choosing the teaching is guiding metaphor. This suggests pre-service teachers at the beginning of the program believed that it was the teacher's role to lead the students. At the end of the program more teachers chose the *providing tools* metaphor, suggesting a shift from believing in providing students with information to the belief of helping students take charge of their own learning.

In a similar study, Tannehill and MacPhail (2012) examined the teaching metaphors of 16 pre-service physical education teachers in Ireland. Pre-service teachers wrote metaphors and reexamined them a year later. The authors found that many students held beliefs of teachers as transmitters of knowledge, but became more constructivist as the year went on. Findings suggested three themes. Initially, pre-service teachers believed they were the most important role in student learning, but as the semester went on they saw that the student plays a role as well. Second, teachers initially believed they could accomplish more in the time they spent teaching. The realities of the classroom made them realize they could not accomplish all the lessons and activities they wanted to. Third, teachers' initially focused primarily on their role, rather than on the individual students. They came to realize that they had to focus on the individual differences of the students.

Martinez, Sauleda, and Hubers (2001) approached the study of metaphor by analyzing 50 in-service teachers' metaphors and comparing them to 38 pre-service teachers' metaphors of from the perspectives of the role of the teacher, learner, and learning. The study found a majority (56%) of the pre-service teachers used metaphors that saw the teacher as a facilitator and student as the constructor of knowledge compared to 38% of in-service teachers. Pre-service teachers were less likely to use behaviorist metaphors to describe teaching than in-service teachers (22% vs. 57%). Pre-service teachers equally chose transmissive metaphors, which

suggests they viewed teaching giving or delivering students content and socio-cultural metaphors that suggest teachers and students should work together (22% each). The authors concluded that metaphors in teacher training can play a role in helping pre-service teacher bridge the gap between explicit and implicit knowledge through examining their beliefs in relation to classroom practice.

In reviews of literature on metaphors in teaching and learning Chen (2003) and Saban (2006) both categorized how metaphors have been used. Chen (2003) developed a classification system of metaphors used to describe teaching. He found five major categories of metaphors used to describe teaching, art-based, business, science, power, and personal dynamics. Art-based metaphors included metaphors such as “teaching is sculpting” and “teaching is entertaining.” These metaphors referred to the creative side of teaching and highlighting the unique and creative personality of the teacher. Business metaphors focused on how information was presented and included phrases such as “teaching is selling” and “teaching is delivering.” Metaphors about science such as, “teaching is performing a scientific experiment” and “teaching is a treasure hunt” focused on the skills and strategies needed that would help anyone become a great teacher. Power metaphors included phrases such as “a teacher is a captain” and “a teacher is a facilitator” and referred to the power relations between the teacher and the student. Finally, personal dynamics metaphors focused on the teacher themselves as they teach. Metaphors for person dynamics include, “teaching is a journey” and “teaching is riding a roller coaster.” Chen warned that while these categories are helpful in understanding metaphors about teaching from pre-service and in-service teachers many of the categories are not mutually exclusive and do overlap.

Saban (2006) examined the ways in which metaphors have been used in the literature. He found metaphors have been used 10 different ways, blueprint for professional thinking, as an archetype for professional thinking, as a pedagogical device, as a medium of reflection, as a tool for evaluation, as a research tool, as a curriculum theory, as a mental model, as an instrument of discovery, and as a springboard for change. The researcher concludes, the study of metaphor should begin with the notion that no single metaphor is able to capture the complexities of teaching. Saban (2006) writes, “the present review clearly illustrates that teachers do have certain implicit theories and belief systems which significantly affect their cognition and behavior in teaching. In this sense, metaphors can act as a ‘lens’ in understanding about teachers’ tacit referential systems and serve as a ‘filter’ through which teachers can clarify their own teaching practices” (p. 312). In addition to metaphors, research in teacher education has also examined the use of images as a form of reflection.

Images. Connelly and Clandinin (1986) argued teaching is understood in terms of the individual’s life history or narratives and images provide the thread to meaningfully connect past experiences to action. Additionally, these images may not only provide meaning from present actions, but they also show insight into future actions by providing perspective of how plans and actions are made and examined (Johnston, 1992).

Calderhead and Robson (1991) examined seven pre-service teachers through their first year in the college of education to identify the understandings of teaching, learning and the curriculum as they related to the interpretations of their own and others practices as they began teacher training. Explaining why the authors decided to examine images they wrote, “the term ‘image’ appeared a useful one in analyzing the transcripts because it emphasized the experiential biases of the know students held, and its strongly visual nature, which were characteristics of

many student reports" (Calderhead & Robson, 1991, p. 3). The authors found that pre-service teachers hold definite images about teaching and learning that was derived from their experiences as a student. Through interviews, participants were asked to imagine or form images of various teaching scenarios or concepts. Some used images to describe students while others used them to describe concepts. Images consisted of conceptions of themselves as a model teacher, past negative experiences with teachers, and subject area ideals (what teachers are supposed to be like as a particular content area teacher—i.e. subcultures).

Johnston (1992) explored practical knowledge of pre-service teachers focusing on personal practical knowledge and the way they construct images to identify ways in which they think about themselves as teachers. The researcher interviewed 25 pre-service teachers in elementary education in Australia, but only reported on two. The author reported pre-service teachers' practical experiences were formed through personal and professional experiences. She wrote, "this suggests that much is lost if the formal pre-service educational experiences of student teachers are kept separate from their personal experiences prior to and during their educational program" (Johnston, 1992, p. 133). Johnston found that images provide a medium through which pre-service teachers could understand themselves as teachers and that images provided a visual discussion point to talk about teaching. The researcher suggests more research on using images as they may provide a way to study the changes that pre-service teachers go through in teacher education programs as well as promote student teacher reflection as the progress through a teacher education program.

Researchers have made calls for more research to be done examining metaphors and images in teacher education (Calderhead & Robson, 1992; Johnston, 1992; Shaw, et al., 2008; Tanhill & MacPhil, 2012; Tobin, 1991). Shaw et al. (2008) argues few studies have examined

how metaphors have changed over time and how they relate to the theoretical orientation of pre-service teachers and more specifically research needs to examine more metaphor about pre-service teachers' beliefs about literacy. Identifying differences between pre-service teacher beliefs and the programs key concepts (i.e. program standards) and themes are essential to creating a coherence between the two (Shaw, et al., 2008). Shaw and others suggest that by identifying the possible mismatch between beliefs and program key concepts can serve as one way to help pre-service teachers reflect on their own beliefs. Calderhead and Robson (1992) conclude that further research should be done on pre-service images of teaching as pre-service teachers do imagine their own classrooms and practices and those images may be quite powerful and influential. Providing an outlet to describe those images and addressing those images may provide helpful for teacher education programs and preparing pre-service teachers more effectively. While there are many methods to help pre-service teachers to reflect, there are several challenges with reflection and addressing beliefs in teacher education programs. Teacher education programs that attempt to address beliefs through reflection can face challenges having pre-service teachers reflect.

Challenges with Teacher Reflection and Addressing Beliefs. Beliefs are tied to self-identity (Kagan, 1992), so students may be wary of sharing beliefs that are revealing or sensitive (Richardson, 2003). Perhaps as a result, students may provide instructors with reflections they believe the instructor wants to see (Richardson, 2003) or what they believe is the socially “correct” way to answer (Cunningham, Zibulsky, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2009). Both provide issues with pre-service teachers identifying their tacit beliefs which influence how they take in the information presented to them in their programs (Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992).

Reflection can often be autobiographical in nature, which may explain the popularity of using autobiographies to promote reflection and address beliefs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The authors point out challenges related to using autobiographies for reflection. While the focus is on autobiographies, the challenges can be the same for any reflective writing. First, while reflection activities can allow students to make tacit beliefs explicit, without proper follow through, those tacit beliefs may remain undeveloped and unchallenged. Simply identifying beliefs is not enough to change beliefs (Kagan, 1992). Beliefs need to be identified, examined, reflected on and even challenged (Bullough & Gitlin, 1995). Second, Florio-Ruane (2002) argues that personal reflection activities, such as autobiographies may overemphasize the role of teacher, isolating the teacher from the context. Finally, teacher educators must pay attention to the ethical considerations in asking students to share possibly sensitive or intimate details of their lives through reflection activities. Through these assignments, teacher educators are asking students to reveal these aspects of their lives possibly for public scrutiny. The teacher educator's response to these writings through the assignment and in class can effect further reflections (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

While similar metaphors can be identified by participants, how strongly they hold to that metaphor may differ depending on how that metaphor is understood (Chen, 2003). Having students focus on metaphors may make pre-service teachers focus too much on themselves (Bullough, 1992). Furthermore, the use of metaphors in reflection relies on how well the student is linguistically able to form and express metaphors (Chen, 2003). In some cases, students may choose metaphors that they have heard before by mentor teachers or teachers from prior experience, thus not necessarily getting at their own beliefs.

While there are challenges with reflection in teacher education programs, it is clear pre-service teacher beliefs are too important not to address in teacher education programs. This review has discussed the theoretical framework for which beliefs are constructed, the literature on beliefs in teacher education, and how beliefs are addressed in teacher education program. The following section is concerned with the literature on teacher beliefs about literacy instruction.

The Role of Beliefs in Literacy Instruction

Because of the dearth of research directly regarding pre-service secondary English education or even pre-service secondary education beliefs, I expanded my search to include literature that examines both in-service and pre-service teachers, secondary and elementary teacher beliefs. I also included literature on teacher beliefs about writing instruction because writing instruction is another related content that English teachers are expected to teach. Examining beliefs about writing instruction may give insight into teachers' beliefs about reading instruction. In addition, I included literature on content area teachers' beliefs about reading instruction as it may be the case at the secondary level English language arts teachers may see themselves as content area specialists and hold similar views about reading instruction as other content areas. I will begin with a discussion on the role of the secondary English teacher as put forth by professional organizations. I then discuss the role of beliefs in writing instruction followed by a discussion of secondary content area teachers' beliefs about reading instruction. Finally, I will discuss beliefs as they directly relate to reading instruction.

The Role of the Secondary English Teacher. Before discussing literacy instruction it is important to understand the role of the secondary English education teacher as defined by professional organizations. The National Council for the Teachers of English (NCTE) and the

International Reading Association (IRA) include a number of standards related to the teaching of reading strategies, such as standard 3:

Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writings their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (NCTE, 2013)

In a joint position statement with the Association of Middle Level Education (AMLE), the International Reading Association (IRA) suggests educators at the middle level:

...understand reading/learning processes, the complexity and diverse needs of young adolescents, and know how to help students develop both the competence and desire to read increasingly complex materials across the curriculum. Reading strategies and skills are central to the success of the integrated, multidisciplinary middle school curriculum and every teacher must possess the knowledge and skills to integrate reading instruction across the curriculum (IRA, 2001)

Finally, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) also outline the role of English language arts teachers. Included in the standards at the secondary level are standards related to teaching reading at the secondary level. For example, standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy, Reading for information, 6th grade states, “By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range” (Core Standards, 2013). Standard CCSS.ELA-Literacy, Reading literature 9th-10th grade states “Determine a themes or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific

details” (Core Standards, 2013). These standards help show the role of a secondary English language arts teacher. At the secondary level, the English language arts are considered a content area (NCTE, 2013). To gain insight into the beliefs of secondary English language teachers’ beliefs, it may be helpful to examine research on secondary content area teacher beliefs about reading instruction.

Secondary Content Area Teachers’ Beliefs about Reading Instruction. Secondary English education pre-service teachers are content area teachers, so understanding other content area teachers’ beliefs about reading instruction may provide some insight into secondary English education pre-service teacher beliefs. In this section I focus on four research studies examining secondary content area teacher and pre-service teacher beliefs about reading instruction. These studies represent a cross section of the overall literature and were most closely related to this particular study.

Ness (2009) examined social studies and science middle and high school classrooms to identify the frequency of reading comprehension in content area classrooms. In addition, Ness (2009) explored the beliefs of these teachers regarding reading instruction. Through interviews and observations of 23 secondary science and social studies teachers, Ness found content area teachers are unsure about how to teach reading strategies. Content area teachers believed they did not have enough time to teach reading strategies and did not feel that they should give up instructional time to devote to teaching reading. Content area teachers saw their major responsibility to teach content not reading and identified themselves as content area specialists. One participant noted, “The role of the secondary teacher should be to improve reading but not have to teach reading comprehension at the high school level” (Ness, 2009, p. 156).

O' Brien and Stewart, (1990) examined 250 pre-service teachers over 12 content disciplines in a content area reading course over two semesters. Data included group discussions, reactions to academic journals, narratives for course evaluations and 10 hours of structured interviews. The study found that as a whole, content area teachers were resistant to including content area reading instruction for three reasons. First, many content area teachers held firm beliefs about their perceptions of school and what they believed teaching would be like as a job. Participants noted anxiety about fitting in and teaching the way the school expected them to teach. Furthermore, they were concerned about fitting in with their content area subcultures. For example, one participant, Ron a math education major, noted that math pedagogy is very structured and linear as opposed to English which he suggested is much less structured.

Second, pre-service teachers had misconceptions about content area reading. Some believed that reading instruction was the job of reading teachers and similar to Ness' (2009) results, believed that reading skills and content reading should already be mastered by secondary school. Also, like Ness (2009), they believed it was not their job to teach reading. Content area teachers in the study did not see reading as a preferred mode of instruction and they believed pre-reading strategies took too much time. Many of the teachers saw value in post-reading assessments, but did not see the value in during reading strategies. Participants saw reading activities as a "re-instructional device." That is to say, they believed reading instruction was to be used to re-teach concepts due to weak understanding of the material by the students. Many of the teachers did not feel reading was an integral part of their lessons.

Finally, pre-service teachers had general assumptions about the inclusion of content area reading. Many of the participants felt that reading instruction (and teaching in general) is

common sense. For example, they believed explicit instruction (before, during and after reading strategies) were already being implemented in classrooms and that teachers in their content area already planned lessons with explicit instruction embedded. Furthermore, participants in the content area reading course felt the information presented in the course was not generalizable to their content area. They saw the reading course a completely separate form their content courses.

In an attempt to examine the beliefs about content area reading instruction from both teachers and students, Hall (2011) examined three teacher-student pairs to explore how middle school struggling readers and content area teachers made decisions regarding classroom reading tasks over the course of a year. She found that teachers' interactions with students were based on the teachers' beliefs about what makes a good reader. Teachers believed good readers are interested in learning and are motivated to learn as well as are able to monitor their comprehension, ask others for help, participate in class, and work until they understand texts. Teachers believed poor readers, on the other hand, are lazy, unmotivated, uninterested in improving, do not monitor their comprehension, do not talk to others about reading tasks, and do not use comprehension strategies. The teachers' interactions with the students were also tied to their beliefs about the students' identity that the teacher created. Hall (2011) explains, "The teachers openly stated to me, and in some case to their classes, that they limited how they worked with students who did not demonstrate that they wanted to become good readers" (p. 1824). She concludes teachers misinterpreted the students behaviors and motivations towards reading as not wanting to become better readers and being uninterested in learning, when the students' behaviors are also based on social factors (i.e. not wanted to show their peers they have trouble reading).

Finally, Daisey (2009) examined 124 pre-service teachers of multiple content areas attitudes about reading. The survey examined past reading experiences, present attitudes and beliefs about reading, their attitudes and beliefs about a required content area literacy course and their predicted use of reading in future instruction using survey with open ended questions. The study found 36 (30%) of the pre-service teachers did not enjoy reading. For those pre-service teachers, reading was something that was done for someone else. Furthermore, nearly 60% of those who enjoyed reading felt that it was their role as a teacher to be a positive reading role model compared to 25% who did not enjoy reading, 15% did not feel strongly either way.

These studies have shown some content area teachers believe they do not have enough time and it is not their job to teach reading at the secondary level (Ness, 2009; O'Brien, 1990). They expect students to have the necessary reading skills once they enter the secondary level and believe students who are not interested in reading are lazy (Hall, 2011; Ness, 2009). Content area teachers also felt reading instruction takes too much time in a content area classrooms and that reading instruction in content area reading course was not generalizable to their content area (Hall, 2011; Ness, 2009; O'Brien, 1990). Examining secondary content area pre-service and in-service teachers may be helpful in understanding the beliefs of secondary English pre-service teachers' beliefs as they too are content area teachers. English teachers are also charged with teaching writing. Understanding the role of beliefs may be helpful in understanding how secondary English pre-service teachers' beliefs relate and influence reading instruction.

Teacher Beliefs and Writing Instruction. Beliefs about writing instruction may also help in understanding pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading instruction since writing is also a subject English teachers are expected to teach. Hall and Grisham-Brown (2011) examined pre-service elementary and pre-school teachers' beliefs about writing and their intentions for

writing instruction in the future. Pre-service teachers (N=14) participated in two focus groups. The authors found pre-service teachers' beliefs about writing instruction were negative or positive based on three factors. Participants had positive attitudes towards writing if their writing had been published or showcased and have had teachers who offered creative opportunities (e.g. interesting writing topics, choice of writing topics) and environments where authentic writing could happen. Participants have negative beliefs about writing if they had negative feedback from teachers, which negatively impacted their self-confidence in writing. These factors may have influenced their beliefs about writing instruction. All participants believed in providing writing opportunities during the day to provide quality writing instruction. Those pre-service teachers who struggled with mechanics of writing did not feel comfortable teaching those skills to their students and overall pre-service teachers did not agree on one specific method for teaching writing or the amount of instructional time that should be spent on writing instruction.

Norman and Spencer (2005) examined pre-service teacher's beliefs about writing and writing instruction. They examined 59 pre-service teachers' beliefs from looking at their writing history projects from a course project. Most pre-service teachers held positive views of themselves as writers. They believed in providing choice within writing instruction, that writing assignments are more meaningful when connected with student interests and background and that writing should be supported with positive reinforcement. The participants valued writing but related more negative views when it came to expository or analytical writing. The study found that a large number of pre-service teachers believed that "good" writing is a talent that only a few enjoyed. The same participants also believed that even good writing instruction did not have a positive influence on writing development. "Good" writing instruction focused on giving student opportunities to write and encouraging writing. In short, participants believed the

amount of writing a student does is more essential their writing development than writing instruction given by the teacher. The authors conclude, “Teacher educators should encourage preservice teachers to become aware of the intersection of personal history and the larger educational context and to engage in ongoing reflection as they move through the course and their field experiences” (Norma & Spencer, 2007, pg. 37).

Powers, Zippary, & Butler (2006) examined the changes in four teachers’ beliefs and practices in literacy over the course of a year in a graduate level clinical experience. Two are elementary teachers and two are high school teachers. The study used surveys, interviews, and observations to record beliefs. The study found that what teachers believed did not always match their classroom practice. For example, while elementary school teacher Mary believed that students should write every day, there was a lack of writing instruction in her classroom as she was dealing with classroom management issues. Further, the study found that the instructional framework employed by teachers influences their application of literacy instructional strategies. For example, while the program that Mary is implementing in her classroom is constructivist in nature, Mary’s focus is on scheduling and organizing. She spends most of her time managing her students. Catherine, also an elementary teacher had trouble implementing a required program because it went against her principles. Finally, the study found teachers are the most important assessment instrument for their students’ literacy development.

Of particular note in the literature on beliefs in writing instruction are teacher beliefs about grammar. Phipps and Borg (2009) examined the tensions between grammar beliefs and the teaching of grammar of three practicing English teachers working in Turkey. Interviewing and observing teachers over an 18 month period, the researchers found tensions between the beliefs about grammar and how it was taught through these three participants. One teacher

believed grammar should be taught in context, but over the course of the the semester, saw his students were not interested or engaged in those lessons. His belief that students needed to be engaged outweighed his belief that grammar should be taught in context. Another participant felt that mechanical practice for grammar learning was not beneficial, although she ended up using mechanical practices as a result of classroom management issues. Beliefs about grammar pedagogy changed through their beliefs about class engagement. Echoing Lortie (1975), two of the participants reverted back to how they were taught despite their beliefs.

Furthermore, Farrell (1999) examined four pre-service teachers enrolled in a grammar pedagogy course in Singapore through a multi-part reflection assignment. Participants believed the teaching of grammar should be done through “drills” where grammar is taught in repetition. Agreeing with Lortie (1975), the authors reflected that the reason they believed this was the most effective way to teach grammar is because that was how they taught and they passed their exams.

Researchers examining beliefs about writing instruction also call for more research to be done examining beliefs. For example, Norman and Spencer (2007) conclude, “by understanding the nature of beliefs about writing their students hold, teacher educators can more effectively meet the needs of their students both in the classroom and in the field” (p. 38). This may be true for beliefs about reading instruction as well. The following section will present the literature on pre-service and in-service teacher beliefs about reading instruction.

Teacher Beliefs and Reading Instruction. Three relevant themes were found in the literature on teacher beliefs about reading instruction: beliefs about literacy and literacy practices, beliefs about struggling readers and learners, and beliefs about reading.

Beliefs about literacy and literacy practices. In a study examining teacher practical knowledge Meijer, Verloop, and Beijaard (1999) examined 13 teachers’ beliefs about their

practical knowledge about reading instruction in the Netherlands. They found teachers have differing beliefs about subject area knowledge, knowledge of student learning and understanding, knowledge of purpose of reading courses, curriculum knowledge, and knowledge of instructional techniques (Meijer et al., 1999). Some teachers believed reading comprehension was a result of understanding the essence of a text, while other teachers believed reading comprehension is, “ ‘to relate the content of the text to the world’ ” (Meijer, et al., 1999 p. 65). Further, the study found teachers believed the content of the texts are more important, while others saw the structure of the text to be more important. Further still, some teachers believe reading to be a completely separate subject, while others saw the connection between reading and the other language arts (speaking, listening, and writing).

In regards to teachers’ beliefs about student learning and understanding, Meijer, Verloop and Beijaard’s (1999) study found that while teachers often talked about differences between students in reading level or reading skills, they differed in the explanation of these differences. Some teachers felt the differences in reading levels were attributed to student characteristics, such as level of confidence, talent, intelligence, or power of concentration. While other teachers saw the differences attributed to malleable elements such as vocabulary, background knowledge and knowledge of reading strategies. When asked about the purposes of teaching reading, the teachers responded with purposes inside and outside of school. Some teachers believed reading is an important skill to teach because it is the basis for all other subject and required for exams. Others pointed out that reading is the basis for essential communication in all areas of life.

In examining change in literacy beliefs through field and traditional settings, Linkek and others (1999) examined pre-service teachers enrolled in a literacy course, but who went through differing experiences. A total of 40 pre-service teachers participated in surveys and

observations, nine of those 40 participated in in-depth interviews. The study shows participants before the literacy course believed literacy as acquiring a set of skills and those skills should be scaffolded in a particular order. Further, they believed the teachers are the imparters of information and the child receives this knowledge. Literacy instruction included Basals, flashcards, and workbooks. Students saw assessment in a deficit view and had vague ideas about what was to be tested about reading. Finally, participants believed they did not know enough about reading to teach it.

Asselin (2000) examined 30 pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading and literature in a language arts education course. Participants wrote reflections on their experiences and assumptions regarding reader response, novel studies, and literature based learning units. In regards to the reading process, participants saw the reading process as an interactive process between the reader and the text. Through the assignments participants became aware of how much thinking they do when they read. Participants also believed before the assignments that texts were more or less objective. They began to see how much their world view plays a role in their interpretation and began to see the importance of schema. Many participants referred back to their own pasts to explain where their beliefs came from and through the assignments began to identify and examine their past instructional experiences. Furthermore, participants began to see the connection between reading and writing, which they did not see before.

Shaw, Barry, and Mahilos (2008) examined through a survey the metaphors of 66 English and foreign language pre-service teachers at both the secondary and elementary levels. The authors discovered four of the nine metaphors related to the pre-service teachers' beliefs about literacy, which included metaphors about nurturing, self-identity, promoting learning and guiding. Metaphors about nurturing suggest pre-service teachers believe in a classroom that is a

safe place where students take risks. This is in line with using small group literature circles. Metaphor statements of self-identify concentrated on the pre-service teachers knowledge of themselves and learning how best to use their strengths and address their weaknesses. This is similar to sharing private interpretation of texts through transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1994). For promoting learning, participants believed it was their role to give students the tools they need, "...think, to be responsible and to learn from the world around them" (Shaw, et al., 2008). Finally, the study found pre-service teachers favored guiding as a metaphor for helping students gain new knowledge. The authors conclude that this metaphor suggests in scaffolding and explicit instruction.

Wolf and others (1996) examined 43 elementary teachers enrolled in an undergraduate childrens' literature course beliefs about literary response. Participants kept a carefully detailed journal of their thoughts during the semester as they observed and worked with case study students during literary activities. In the beginning of the course participants had expectations of their students that were often focused on assignments and the role of the teacher as being comprehension based. Participants in the beginning of the course believed students would benefit the best through teacher-directed questions and comprehension questions. As a result, participants stuck with only written texts and had a hesitation to take risks in story reading. Their views changed as the semester progressed to a more student-centered approach and taking more risks in story reading. Research has also examined the beliefs of in-service and pre-service teachers about struggling reader (Mallett, et al., 2000; Sweet, et al., 1998).

Beliefs about struggling readers. Mallette, et al., (2000) examined the literacy beliefs of six pre-service teachers about struggling readers and the pedagogy they used while working with an elementary student. Participants espoused a particular "stance" based on their beliefs. For

example, participant Kaley suggested that reading difficulties resulted from a lack of parental involvement. Randi felt reading difficulties resulted from students' inability to make connections. Paula believed there is little to be learned from emergent readers while Gabrielle believed reading difficulties resulted from a lack of opportunities. Jan believed reading difficulties need to be prevented at an early age and finally Gayle believed it was her job as a teacher to help struggling readers. Mallette, et al., (2000) noted these beliefs affected their instruction over the course of the semester. For example, Randi's belief that reading difficulties stemmed from lack of connections focused her instruction on making connections. The authors conclude that making the participants stances explicit helped them solidify and expand their own stances.

Sweet, Guntrie, and Ng (1998) surveyed 68 teachers and conducted six in-depth interviews on their beliefs of students' intrinsic motivation for reading achievement. The study found that teachers believed that students who become agents of their own learning will academically grow more than those who do not. Teachers believed low achieving students needed autonomy and activity. Therefore, those teachers favored activities that promoted those values over individual and topic motivations (i.e. individual work and class topic selection). Teachers believed hands' on activities and giving students' choice would help students become agents of their own learning. Teachers in the study generally believed high-achieving students were more intrinsically motivated while low-achieving students were more extrinsically motivated. These beliefs about motivation shaped how they approached instruction.

Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillion and Cassidy-Smith (2000) examined 67 elementary education pre-service teachers' beliefs about struggling literacy learners and what they could do to help these students. The study found pre-service teachers felt that students struggled with

reading because of issues related to the child's home. They believed that the students did not get the instruction they needed from previous teachers. Pre-service teachers also felt that students struggled because they were not able to use or did not have adequate reading skills or strategies. For many of the participants, their initial beliefs reveal that they did not believe it was their responsibility to teach struggling literacy learners. Participants initially assigned the responsibility of teaching students to read to other teachers or a specialist believing it was not their job to teach them.

Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) examined the relationship between fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers' beliefs and practices in reading comprehension instruction. The authors interviewed 39 teachers to examine their beliefs about teaching reading and predicted practices based on those interviews and then observed their practice. Teachers' beliefs were categorized in the study. Twenty six of the teachers believed in phonics instruction while 13 believed in literature-based instruction. Thirty-one of the teachers believed meaning is derived from the text while eight held more constructivist views. Some teachers who were literature-oriented answered that they used basal readers and other phonics-oriented strategies in their classrooms because they believed that was what the district or the school was expecting of them. Other teachers who described themselves as having a phonic orientation used literature based activities (i.e. literature circles, drama, etc.), however they explained that they did those activities not to help them read, but to motivate them.

Cunningham, Zibulsky, Stanovich, and Stanovich (2009) also examined the mismatch between teachers' self-reports and their practices in how they would spend their time teaching language arts. The study examined 121 1st grade teachers reading instruction beliefs and how they would spend their time using surveys. The study found that both phonics emphasis and

literature emphasis (whole language) teacher allocated their time in much different ways. For example, phonics emphasis teachers spent more time on explicit and systematic instruction while language emphasis teachers spent more time on more unstructured activities relating to literature. The study also examined if reading beliefs were associated with regular or special education teachers, the number of years they have been teaching and their discipline knowledge. They found that these factors were not significantly associated with teachers beliefs about reading. In addition to teacher beliefs about literacy instruction and beliefs about struggling readers personal reading habits may play a role in their beliefs about reading instruction.

The “Peter effect.” Teacher beliefs about reading itself may play a role in their instruction. Applegate and Applegate’s *Peter effect* suggests that teachers who do not believe reading is fun will have a difficult time engaging struggling readers. They explain:

Because classroom instruction is largely driven by the beliefs of the teacher, it seems reasonable to conclude that some teachers will be unable to promote aesthetic reading through their instruction because they have had no experience with it. If teachers cannot effectively promote a love of reading, then the Peter Effect will propagate in many of their students and the cycle will remain unbroken (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 561).

To study this they surveyed 195 pre-service teachers in beginning education courses in two universities about their reading habits and attitudes about reading instruction. They found 54.3% of pre-service teachers were not enthusiastic readers (i.e. participants who responded that they had no or very little enjoyment reading and did little to no leisure reading over the summer) (Applegate & Applegate, 2004).

McKool and Gespass (2009) conducted a similar study examining 65 elementary school teachers personal reading habits and beliefs and their instructional practices through a survey. The authors found that while most teachers valued reading for pleasure only about half actually read for pleasure. Teachers who said they read 30 or more minutes a day used best practice strategies more often in their own classroom. The authors also found teachers who valued reading tended to share more about their reading in their classes and teachers who read for pleasure used both intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation in their classroom. Morrison and others (1999) surveyed 1,874 teachers throughout the U.S. examining personal reading habits and the use of best practices in their classrooms. The authors found teachers who read more often reported using best practices more often than teachers who did not enjoy reading circles to promote engagement.

Photovoice

For many of the studies presented in the previous section (e.g. Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Linkek, et al, 1999; Shaw, et al, 2008) surveys were used to capture beliefs. A limitation to using Likert-type scales is that participants are often forced to agree or disagree with extreme statements without the opportunity to explain their choice (Fang, 1996). Additional concerns include the possibility that participants may respond carelessly without fully reading the sentence or that participants provide answers they deem as socially acceptable (Cunningham, et al, 2009). While surveys do result in important information they may fail to provide a more thorough and complete understanding of participants beliefs. If it is the case that pre-service teachers think through metaphors (Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Tannehill & MacPhil, 2012) and images (Calderhead & Robson, 1991) then a method, such as Photovoice, that incorporates both metaphor and images may help to provide more insight into pre-service teacher beliefs. In the

following section, I will provide a rationale for the use of Photovoice, define Photovoice, and examine relevant literature relating to Photovoice as a method as it is being used in this study.

Why Use Photovoice to Examine Beliefs? Photovoice was chosen to examine English education pre-service teachers' beliefs for two main reasons, (1) its ability to allow pre-service teachers to reflect using images and metaphors and, (2) the trustworthiness of the Photovoice method. Researchers suggest pre-service teachers think through metaphor (Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and images (Calderhead & Robson, 1991; Tannham & MacPhil, 2013). Research has examined the usefulness of metaphors and images to aid in reflection and address beliefs (Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Calderhead & Robson, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Rosaen & Florio-Ruane, 2008; Saban, 2006). Photovoice as it is used in this study will ask pre-service teachers to respond using metaphors and images providing a medium for responses that may be more representative of their beliefs.

The Photovoice process provides a visual discussion point, allowing for multi-modal responses, and encourages participant revision, that aid in the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. Photographs taken during the Photovoice process are used to elicit discussion in small group and whole group discussion. Photographs then serve as a visual discussion point (Liebenberg, 2009). Participants use the images they have created to reflect and communicate their ideas to the group. As noted by Liebenberg (2009),

When researcher participants *actively re-construct* their reality through images in the research process, they use a powerful medium to help the researcher understand their reality. Experiences and meanings become tangible through visual representation and may be understood in ways that other conventional forms of communication may not necessarily allow (p. 445).

Since photographs have no meaning by themselves participants must ascribe meaning (Orellana, 1999). The way images are created and interpreted reveals cultural assumptions, personal knowledge, and the context in which the photographs were taken (Harper, 2003). In Photovoice, the participant shares his or her interpretation and rationale for the photographs through small group discussions and written narratives.

Defining Photovoice. Photovoice is a participatory research method that asks participants to answer a prompt or question using photography, an accompanying narrative, and small group discussions (Wang & Burris, 1997). Participatory research methods are methods through which participants and researchers work together to define a problem in the community, investigate it, create a solution and carry out that solution (McIntyre, 2008). Photovoice is a process through which participants bring to attention issues within their community using photography. Photography becomes a medium for participants to become engaged in their community and engage in critical reflection. Photovoice has three major goals:

- (1) Empowering and enabling people to reflect their personal and community concerns, (2) to encourage a dialogue and to transfer knowledge and information about personal and community issues through discussions about photographs among participants, and (3) to access the perception of those not in control of various issues and share this information with those who are in control (Berg, 2009, p. 262).

With its commitment to social action, engaging communities in critical reflection, empowering and giving voice to underrepresented communities, and using photography to document their lives, Wang and Burris' Photovoice theoretical grounding is in Freire's critical pedagogy, Feminist theory, and documentary photography (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Friere's (2009) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* emphasized the power relationships within education centering on giving voice to the students and creating an environment where knowledge is co-created. Through this co-creation and conversation, "teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge" (Friere, 2009, p. 69). While the strands of feminist thought are diverse (Tong, 1998) feminist theory and research is focused on doing research with women rather than on women. The belief is that sexism and inequality of the sexes is not only a problem for women, but men as well. As with Friere (2009), many feminists believe in the co-construction of knowledge as a way equalize education. Documentary photography aims to record visually images that, "...portrayed the social and mental wellness of both its subjects and the society of which they are part" (Wang & Burris, 1994, p. 175). However, rather than having professional photographers record these images, Photovoice gives the camera to the participants to document and report their lives.

The Photovoice method is a process. First, participants are asked to conceptualize a problem or problems and devise a solution. Participants are provided with specifics on what Photovoice is and how it is used as well as the art of taking photographs. Participants then go out and take pictures. Themes of the photographs are based on SHOWeD. To engage participants with their pictures and to promote critical reflection studies have used SHOWeD, (Wang, 1994; Wang & Burris, 1994; Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang, & Minkler, 2007) a series of questions as a format to help participants discuss their photos. SHOWeD stands for: What do you *See* here? What's really *Happening* here? How does this relate to *Our* lives? *Why* does this problem exist? What can we *Do* about it? After a discussion about the

photography process, participants reflect on their photos selecting one to discuss further. As participants tell the stories of their photographs they look for themes across their work. Participants then document the stories of the photos through a literacy component and decide on a way to present their work to policy makers, donors, researchers or others. Finally, participants evaluate the outcomes of their project (Wang and Burris, 1998).

Ways Photovoice Has Been Used. Photovoice was originally used in the health sciences as a method to collect a needs assessment from a community (Wang & Burris, 1997). As a participatory action research method, one of the major goals of Photovoice is to allow the community to address its own needs, create its own solution, and to reach outside the community to help others understand the needs and strengths of the community (Berg, 2009). Photovoice has been used in this way with women in rural China (Wang, Yip, Zhang, Wang, & Hsiao, 2005), women with learning disabilities (Booth & Booth, 2005), and with children in Flint, Michigan (Redwood-Jones & Wang, 2005). Relatively few studies have examined teacher beliefs through Photovoice.

While no studies using Photovoice to examine reading beliefs were found, some research has examined secondary teacher beliefs. Stuart (2006), for example, examined the use of Photovoice as an approach to gain an understanding of pre-service teachers' beliefs about a social and health issue with the goal of identifying and examining beliefs of these pre-service teachers to prompt critical dialogue and address misunderstandings about HIV and AIDS. Stuart (2006) asked participants to bring in photographs to express their ideas as they relate to HIV and AIDS. There were four major findings from this study. First, the combination of texts and photos gave participants the ability to explore a wide range of their own perspectives. Second, because pre-service teachers took pictures from their own social cultural context, differences in

the socio-cultural differences created new powerful dialogues that have the potential to shape social change through shaping the social discourse. Third, as this was a participatory study, pre-service teachers were compelled to become active participants in the discussion. Some participants were noted as saying they felt liberated to be able to express their point of view. Finally, through the use of photography, pre-service teachers had to grapple with the social contexts and stigmas of AIDS as well as the power of photography. For many participants it was difficult to take pictures of people because they did not want to be associated with HIV or AIDS. They did not want others to see the photographs and think they had AIDS.

Photovoice has been used as a critical pedagogy for pre-service teachers (e.g. Chino & Fandt, 2007; Cook & Quigley, 2013; Kroeger, Embury, Cooper, Brydon-Miller, Laine and Johnson, 2012). Chino and Fandt (2007), in a response to calls for pedagogical methods that engage pre-service teachers in self-reflection and pedagogy regarding inclusion, used Photovoice in a diversity class over the course of two years. They found the Photovoice process offered the opportunity for group story-telling. The authors write, “In these instances, the sharing of stories and issues allowed students to become more aware about the existence and legitimacy—of multiple perspectives” (p. 492). Cook and Quigly (2013) used Photovoice as a method to help college students who had interest in becoming teachers, connect science to their everyday lives. The authors found Photovoice helped connect students to science in their everyday lives, helped create authentic connections to scientific inquiry and empowered students to dialogue with community members about scientific issues.

I have conducted two unpublished studies using Photovoice to examine pre-service teacher’s beliefs. One examined English education pre-service teachers’ perceptions of struggling readers. Enrolled in the “Teaching Reading in the Secondary Language Arts

Curriculum” taught by the author, 24 pre-service teachers conducted a Photovoice project for a class assignment answering the prompt, “what do you think of when you hear the phrase struggling adolescent reader?” Findings suggest participants believed struggling readers are motivated to learn to read and in most cases were struggling because they were not given the correct attention or instruction in previous grades. One pre-service teacher, Mary, took a picture of an unfinished house that had been abandoned in her neighborhood. Of the picture she wrote:

For struggling readers, much like this piece of property, it is not the inability to develop skills for successful reading, but the indeterminate amount of circumstances that cause them to miss out on the more in-depth development of reading skills while others around them smoothly transitioned.

Furthermore, participants saw the teachers’ role as being the dispenser of knowledge (i.e. reading strategies) and caring enough to want to help struggling readers. Reflecting on the Photovoice assignment itself, many participants reported that this made them reflect on what a struggling reader may feel like and how they will teach them in their own classrooms. For some who felt they have never struggled with reading, the assignment helped them to put themselves in a struggling readers’ shoes. One participant, Kasey wrote,

Still it is hard to explain to someone, who has never struggled in reading, how it feels to not automatically understand, what is considered a simple reading passage. Then I remembered that as English education majors, we are more likely to relate with struggling in other subjects, such as math and/or science.

The study took place in the middle of the semester and I found that many of their responses used phrases and terms that had come from our texts and classroom discussions. This led me to be concerned that using Photovoice that late in the semester did not get at their true beliefs about the

subject. Further, the question for this study focused on the pre-service teachers' beliefs about the population of struggling readers instead of the teaching of struggling readers. While many of the responses to the question were related to teaching many spent time attempting to understand the struggling reader mindset.

Additionally, I have conducted another study examining science pre-service teachers' concerns about their final internship. Over the course of the semester, the five pre-service teachers completed Photovoice projects as part of a graduate course answering the question, what are your concerns about your final internship? Primary findings suggest pre-service teachers were concerned about instructional concerns, such as having time to plan and grade and getting supplies for their classroom. They were also concerned about having time to spend with their family and friends as well as concerned about how their age will be a factor in their teaching. The Photovoice method helped uncover concerns related to ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender, and teaching philosophies.

In a review of the Photovoice literature in the Health science fields Catalani and Minkler (2010) found procedures for the Photovoice method differed greatly throughout the literature. This was found to be the case too with the studies above. As a participatory research strategy it may be the case that methods are adapted to the particular research project (Yin, 2011) and this is the case for this study as well.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the literature relevant to examining pre-service teachers' beliefs reading instruction. I began with a discussion of constructivism, Lakoff & Johnson's conceptual metaphors as a framework for thinking, and interpretivism as theories that inform the theoretical framework for this study. I then defined beliefs and discussed how

their characteristics and how they develop. Literature regarding beliefs in teacher education, including how beliefs are addressed in teacher education programs, the role of metaphor and images in reflection in teacher education programs, and the challenges of reflecting in teacher education programs is provided. Next, I review the literature on teacher beliefs about literacy instruction. Included in that conversation I discuss content area teacher beliefs about reading instruction and teacher beliefs about writing instruction. A discussion on beliefs regarding literacy instruction, beliefs about students who struggle with reading and the role of personal reading beliefs in the use of instructional practices was given. Finally, literature regarding Photovoice and its use in this study was examined.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this current study is to describe and explain English education pre-service teacher's beliefs about secondary reading instruction through Photovoice method. Studies examining pre-service teachers' beliefs often use surveys (e.g., Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011; Busch, 2010; Hudson, Kloosterman, & Galindo, 2012; Sadaf, Newby, & Ertmer, 2012; Sandvik, van Dall, & Ader, 2013). If pre-service teachers do think in images and think, perceive, and act through metaphor, these methods may not provide the most representational responses. A method that asks pre-service teachers to respond through images, metaphor, and afford multiple opportunities for explanation may provide more representational beliefs than surveys that use a Likert-type scale. Having a full picture understanding of English education pre-service teacher beliefs about secondary reading instruction can help inform teacher educators in planning for effective courses. The questions guiding this study are:

1. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling adolescent readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

I begin this chapter by discussing my role as a researcher. The remainder of the chapter addresses Photovoice and its application in this study, participant selection, data collection and data analysis. Information addressing quality indicators conclude the chapter.

Role of the Researcher

There are three aspects that comprise my role in this research, my personal and academic beliefs, my work with Photovoice, and my dual role as a researcher and an instructor.

My Beliefs about Beliefs. While I had known I wanted to teach English since high school, I earned a BA in Philosophy before returning to get my Masters of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T) English. I was sidetracked by philosophy because I fell in love with the style and content of the literature. I saw English literature as discovering and recognizing universal human themes, but I saw philosophical literature as going beyond themes and attempting solutions to the world's problems. As I pursue my doctorate, my socio-cultural history and experiences have informed my personal and academic interests in examining teacher beliefs. In my experience as an undergraduate student, I noticed that the College of Education was not held in high esteem by students outside the college. There seemed to be the belief by these students that education classes were easy and that one only pursued that degree because it was easy. When I was completing my undergraduate degree I often heard the saying, "people who can, do; those who can't, teach." Teaching was just a matter of having content knowledge. Having no experience with education at the time, I am ashamed to say that I, too, held some of these beliefs.

I remembered having these beliefs in mind as I began the education program. I thought my courses would be easy and that pedagogy was just going to be common sense strategies. To some extent those beliefs lasted throughout the program as I viewed the courses as fairly easy at the time. It wasn't until I had my own classroom that I realized how much pedagogy I missed because of those beliefs. They seemed easy to me because I didn't see how the information could be applied to the classroom. I saw again and again issues that had been addressed, but I had dismissed during my coursework. I returned to my textbooks and assignments and began

applying the information. I see now that just as Pajares (1992) and Nespor (1987) have suggested my beliefs about education prevented me from getting all I could from the M.A.T program.

It is because of this experience of seeing my beliefs influence how I accepted the information in my M.A.T. courses and my classroom practices that I was taken aback by the comments made walking into the first class meeting I was teaching the reading course. I knew from experience that those beliefs, the things they were saying were going to influence how they accepted the information from the course. It is through my own mistakes and experiences that I saw the importance of addressing beliefs as a teacher educator.

Photovoice. I took an interest in Photovoice in my first year in the doctoral program. The more I read about the method, the more I saw its value in educational research. As I progressed through the doctoral program I have been able to extend my knowledge of Photovoice through coursework and research projects.

I pursued a cognate in qualitative research that allowed me to take a number of courses that added to my understanding of and experience with Photovoice. I was first introduced to Photovoice in a course qualitative research course called “Performing your Research,” which focused on arts-based qualitative research. As a result of that course, I began working on a research project that examined middle school students’ perceptions of teaching and learning through Photovoice. I was fortunate enough to work closely on this project with a faculty member through two independent studies and beyond. A course in Qualitative Case Study helped conceptualize Photovoice as a storytelling process. A course in Action Research provided a framework for understanding Photovoice as an instructional method and with understanding the dual roles of the researcher and instructor.

In addition, I have completed three Photovoice research projects where I have been intimately involved in the design, implementation, data collection, and data analysis. One project examined middle school students' perceptions of teaching and learning through Photovoice. Over the course of 12 weeks, students learned about photography, Photovoice and visual metaphor. Participants completed four complete Photovoice projects over the course of the study. My two other projects have focused on the beliefs of pre-service teachers. One project, again working closely with a faculty member, examined the concerns of pre-service teachers' concerns about their final internship. This project explored the concerns of pre-service teachers preparing for their final internship. Five pre-service teachers completed two Photovoice projects over the course of a semester as a way for the pre-service teachers to identify and examine their concerns.

Finally, I have examined English education pre-service teachers' perceptions of struggling readers. In a reading course that I was teaching, I used Photovoice as a way for the pre-service teachers to identify their own beliefs about a large population they would most likely encounter in their classrooms. While this study was illuminating on a number of levels, I found that by focusing on the struggling reader participants did not necessarily focus on their teaching beliefs. Rather they largely focused on what they believed struggling readers felt like. Also, the study took place late in the semester and it became evident that the course texts and class discussions had influenced their responses because phrases from course discussions and course texts found their way into the narratives.

I have also used Photovoice as an assignment for reflection in other courses. In particular I have had students reflect on their beliefs about their ideal classroom in an English education

practicum course and in an additional section the same reading course used in this study. I have learned from each of these projects and used those insights to inform the design of this study.

Role as Researcher and Instructor. In many ways this study resembles an action research project. The impetus for this study arose from a problem I saw in practice and one of the aims of this study is to understand English education pre-service teachers' beliefs. Action research, simply put, is the systematic investigation of one's own practice (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch, and Somekh, 2008). Educators, who study their practice to improve and understand how they teach, are engaging in action research (Feldman, 2007). In addition to identifying and examining pre-service teachers' beliefs in my course, I also examined the use of Photovoice as a reflection method for students in my class. It is in this way that I am systematically investigating my own practice, therefore taking on the role of both researcher and instructor.

Methods

This study employs a modified model of Photovoice to help capture beliefs of pre-service teachers to examine their metaphors (Table 4). As described by Wang and Burris (1997), Photovoice is a process that begins with the development of a problem or theme in the community. Participants are then trained in photography, take photos, and come together to discuss them. They critically reflect by selecting photographs that best represent the problem or theme, telling the story of their photograph, and coming up with similarities between the photos taken. Participants are then asked to document their stories, often through writing, to accompany their photographs. These stories are then combined and presented to policy makers so that they may have a better understanding of the needs and strengths of the community. Finally, participants reflect and evaluate the entire process.

Table 4: Data collection table

Photovoice activity	Photovoice prompt	Research Question addressed	Data collected
Photovoice 1	What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers?	What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling adolescent readers?	Photovoice narratives Focus group transcript
Photovoice 2	Who are you as a reader?	What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?	Photovoice narratives Focus group transcript
Photovoice reflection	Describe your experience with Photovoice. What surprised you? What did you find valuable about the project? Explain. What would you change about the project? Explain. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and your beliefs about teaching struggling readers? How will you apply what you have learned in your practice?	In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?	Photovoice reflection narratives Focus group transcript

The Photovoice model used in this study differs from Wang and Burris' (1997) model in three key ways (Table 2). First, Wang and Burris use Photovoice to capture beliefs from a marginalized community. In this study, Photovoice was used to capture beliefs from a community comprised of English education pre-service teachers in order to identify how these individuals perceive the teaching of struggling readers.

Second, the Photovoice method has been modified for a classroom setting and to capture the beliefs of this population. For this study, each research question was given to the participants separately. The questions were discussed in class in small group and whole group settings. A class session was devoted to explaining Photovoice and teaching participants the basics of photography. While participants took as many pictures as they pleased, they submitted only three photographs that best described their response to the prompts along with a narrative detailing why they took the picture and how it answered the question. Having participants choose three photographs and write a short explanation helped participants to focus their response to the prompt for in class discussions. This process was the same for the second question. The writing in this model was utilized to help each participant better frame their answer for discussions in class (Liebenberg, 2009). Liebenberg writes, "the combination of reflection using images means that participant narratives are more representative of how they themselves interpret their context, relationships, decisions and realities" (p. 442).

The three photographs and narratives were brought into class and discussed first in small learning groups and then as a whole class. After discussing in small groups we moved to a whole group discussion. Whole group discussion provided a forum to share ideas with each other and identify possible themes in their beliefs. At the end of the discussion participants decided on one photo they feel best described their answer to the prompt. They wrote an in-depth narrative explaining why they chose that photo over the others. This process helped again to focus the participants' response and gave them the opportunity to write a final response to the question. Additionally, their response as to why the other pictures did not adequately represent their response gave the researcher further insight into the participants' response.

Finally, this model differs from Wang and Burris' (1997) model in that participants were asked to respond using visual metaphors in their photography. Wang and Burris' (1997) model does not have restrictions on what photographs can be taken by the participants. The use of metaphor in this research is based on the idea that metaphor is a primary means through which teachers come to terms with experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Metaphors are more than just a matter of language; they are the way humans think, perceive, and act. Pajares (1992) in reviewing the research on teacher beliefs called for more research using images and metaphors because it allows the teacher to fully conceptualize their beliefs. Metaphors has been seen as one way to help pre-service teachers understand pedagogical knowledge, in much the same way Shulman (1986) suggests teachers should be able to use metaphor in their teaching practices to aid in student learning (Tannehill & MacPhail, 2012). Metaphors provide a medium that may be more representative of how participants structure their thinking (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and a medium to express the mental images pre-service teachers may have (Calderhead & Robson, 1991).

Table 2: Comparison of Photovoice models

Wang and Burris (1997) model	Model used in this study
<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns • Promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues • To reach policy makers 	<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people to record and reflect on their own strengths, concerns, and/or beliefs • Promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues • To reach teacher educators

Table 2 (Continued)

Process:

- Problem and themes developed by participants
- Training in photography
- Take photos
- Group discussion
- Critical reflection
- Choose photo
- Story tell
- Code themes
- Document stories (literacy component)
- Reach policy makers
- Program evaluation

Photography:

- Representative

Process:

- Problem has been conceptualized the researcher
- Training in photography
- Take photos—written component infused
- Small group and whole group discussion
- Critical reflection
- Choose photo
- Story tell
- Code themes
- Document stories (larger narrative)
- Reflection on photovoice experience (final reflection narrative)

Photography:

- Visual metaphor
-

Participants and Context

The sample for this study was drawn from a group of pre-service teachers taking a course entitled, “Teaching Reading in the English Language Arts Curriculum” in a large diverse urban public university in the Southeast. The university serves a student population of 45,479 students with 2,840 students in the College of Education. The class consisted of 29 total students (five male and 24 females). Twenty one students signed consent forms to participate in the study. However, one participant dropped the course after completing the first Photovoice activity and a second participant did not turn in Photovoice activity two. Participants were 19 of these students (four males and 15 females). The course is offered annually to junior and senior English education majors. The course was taught in a classroom in the Education building and met once a week at night (5:15-8:00).

Course objectives include having pre-service teachers:

- Recognize the component skills necessary for reading proficiency and develop effective objectives and activities for teaching those skills in a balanced and integrated reading program that is age appropriate
- Re-examine personal educational philosophies and teaching behavior in light of their own experiences and changing conditions by translating research and theory into classroom practices and materials.

This course was chosen because of its focus on reading instruction and emphasis on struggling readers, which provides a forum through which participants can discuss their beliefs on reading instruction. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants. Purposeful sampling is when the researcher selects participants based on their knowledge of the topic being studied, willingness to reflect on that topic and time to commit to the project (Richards & Morse, 2007). English education pre-service teachers enrolled in the course were selected because of their experiences as English education pre-service teachers, willingness to participate in course activities, and their commitment to weekly course meetings.

Consent Process. The consent forms were sent to all pre-service teachers in the course one week prior to our first meeting with a message asking students to review the document before our first class meeting. At the end of our first class meeting I explained the study, went over entire consent form, and answered any questions. I was sure to make explicit that student participation or non-participation in the study would have no effect on their grades for the course. I then left the room, leaving a colleague who was not connected to the study and did not conduct the focus groups or serve as an independent coder for this study. The colleague collected any consent forms from students who decided to sign that night. Students were given the colleague's office address and stamped, addressed envelopes if case they wanted to mail the

form. Participants were told they could mail or drop off consent forms if they chose to participate later in the semester until our last class meeting. No participants chose to mail the consent forms.

The following week, the colleague came at the end of class to collect additional consent forms. I left the classroom when she came so as to avoid knowing who signed and turned in consent forms. The colleague came at the end of class after each week of the project for a total of six times. The colleague kept the consent forms in her locked office in a locked file cabinet until final grades for the course were submitted.

Data Collection

Data are comprised of the narratives from each phase of the Photovoice project as well as reflections on the participants' experience using Photovoice. Data collection took place during the first six weeks of the fall 2013 semester.

Photovoice Data Collection. This study began with an introduction to Photovoice and photography (see table 8 for a timeline of the study). I taught the participants basics of photography, including the rule of threes, lighting, and framing through defining the concepts and showing examples. During the practice prompt (explained below) students attempted the photography techniques from this lesson. I then discussed the historical roots of Photovoice and its purpose as a participatory research method and its purpose for being included in the course. Next I explained the photovoice activities that they would participate in over the coming weeks. After this explanation, we practiced the Photovoice process.

I gave participants a practice prompt, "what is the goal of education?" and asked them to take three pictures to represent their answer to the prompt. They were instructed to try out some of the photography techniques they had learned earlier, use visual metaphors and were asked not

to take pictures of people or existing images (i.e. posters or images originating from the internet). All participants used their cell phones to take pictures. They were given 20 minutes during the class meeting time to take pictures. Once they returned, participants discussed their pictures with their learning community (LC) groups. LC's consist of four to five students and were established at the beginning of the semester through team-building activities. After 15 minutes of discussion, we had a whole group discussion about their answers to the prompt and about the process.

Logistical questions were raised during this discussion including questions about uploading pictures, where to include narratives with the pictures and where to post their assignments. I asked students to choose one of the photos that they felt best represented their answer and discuss that with their group. A whole group discussion followed that included no other questions regarding the process. After the practice activity was completed, I asked again if there were any questions about the Photovoice process or photography. A few clarifying questions were answered, such as the restrictions for their photos and what they were supposed to bring to class. Participants could bring hard copies of photos to class or bring a device with a large enough screen (no cell phones) that they could share their photos with the group and possibly the whole class.

Once all questions were answered, I introduced the first prompt, "What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling adolescent readers?" This is considered Photovoice activity one. We discussed this prompt and what it was asking for. I clarified for a few students that I was looking for their beliefs about teaching struggling readers, not a specific definition of struggling readers. I asked them to consider the images and/or experiences that they thought of when they think of teaching struggling readers and use that to guide their responses. Participants

were instructed to take as many pictures as they want to answer the prompt, but to bring in three photos to the next week's class. For each of the three photos, participants were instructed to write a short narrative explaining how the photo answered the prompt. They posted their photos and responses to the public discussion board the course website before the class meeting.

During the next class meeting participants shared their photos answering the prompt, "what do you think of when you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers" with their LCs. They were asked to identify themes that they saw were common amongst their work. Small group discussions lasted nearly an hour. We then discussed the pictures they had taken and some of the themes they found in their work as a whole group. Many students shared their pictures with the rest of the class. After this discussion I asked participants to think about which one of their photos they felt best represented their response to the prompt. I told them they were allowed to take a new picture if they felt it was necessary. In addition to choosing the photo, participants were instructed to write an in-depth narrative explaining in more detail how their photo answered the prompt and why they picked that photo over the others.

The next week (week three of this activity) participants submitted their final narratives and pictures to the assignment function on the course website. The assignment function on the website allows for the document to be graded and can only be seen by the instructor. Participants brought in their final photographs and narratives to class. Again, I allowed students the option to bring in electronic copies of these documents as long as the screens were large enough to share photos. Participants were asked to share their final photos and discuss why they chose that photo over the other two photos or why they decided to retake the photo. Discussions lasted nearly 30 minutes. Then we had a whole group discussion about their photos and why they chose those photos over the others. This discussion concluded the Photovoice one activity.

After this class meeting, a voluntary focus group was held to help triangulate data found in the narratives. These focus groups were led by a colleague with graduate training and experience with individual and focus group interviewing. She was informed about the aim of the study and given the interview protocol. She did not have any relation to the class, but she had been an instructor for courses in the same department and by chance knew some of the participants from prior semesters. A total of 11 participants participated in this focus group. The focus group interview lasted 63 minutes and six seconds (see table 4 for details of data collection).

During the class meeting where participants concluded the Photovoice one activity, the prompt for the Photovoice two activity was introduced. The prompt was, “who are you as a reader?” A whole group discussion about the prompt was conducted. During this discussion, participants asked for further clarifying questions about the prompt, in particular they wanted to know what part of their reading identity I was looking for. I told them that as long as they were responding to the prompt they could not be wrong. Just like Photovoice one activity, participants were instructed to take as many pictures as they wanted to answer the prompt, but to decide on three to bring in to class the next week. They were also instructed to write short narratives for each of the pictures to explain how that picture answered the prompt, “Who are you as a reader?” They turned in the three photos before the next class meeting to the discussion board on the course website.

The next class meeting participants discussed their three photos in their groups identifying themes they saw in their discussion. We then had a whole group discussion. Participants were instructed to choose one of the photos that best represented their answer to the prompt, “Who are you as a reader” and write an extended narrative. Once again they were told

they could retake the photo if they wanted. The extended narrative and photo were to be submitted to the assignment function on the course website before the next class meeting.

For the next meeting (week 5) participants brought in their final narratives and photos and discussed within their groups their photos and why they chose that photo over the others. I conducted a whole group discussion after the students had discussed their individual photos and narratives in their LCs. After this class meeting a voluntary focus group was held to provide data to triangulate the information in their narratives. The focus group was led by the same colleague as described above. Seven participants participated in this focus group which lasted 51 minutes and 33 seconds.

During the conclusion of the Photovoice 2 activity, but before the focus the group, participants were given the prompt:

Describe your experience with Photovoice. What surprised you? What did you find valuable about the project? Explain. What would you change about the project? Explain. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and your beliefs about teaching struggling readers? How will you apply what you have learned in your practice?

Participants were instructed to answer this prompt over the coming week and provide any other information about their experience with Photovoice they felt was important to note. Participants turned in these narratives to the assignment function on the course website before the start of class the next week. We discussed their experiences with Photovoice as a whole group. A focus group was conducted at the end of this class period to triangulate data. The focus group was led by the same person as the other two focus groups. A total of five participants participated and the focus group lasted 41 minutes and 40 seconds.

Table 3: The Photovoice process

Week	In-class activities	Focus Groups	Homework
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to photography, visual metaphor, and Photovoice • Practice Photovoice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reveal prompt -Discuss prompt in small groups (SG) -Take pictures -Discuss pictures in SGs -Choose one -Discuss • Reveal prompt: What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are instructed to take as many pictures as they would like to answer the prompt. They are asked to bring in three they feel best represent their answer to the question. They are asked to write a paragraph for each of the three photos explaining how that picture represents the answer to their question
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of three pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (share if they would like) • Identifying themes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After their in-class discussion participants are to decide on one picture that best represents their answer to the prompt. They are asked to write an extended narrative explaining in detail how the picture answers the prompt and why they choose that picture over the other pictures
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG group discussion of final pictures • Whole group discussion of final pictures (voluntary presentations of photos) • Identifying themes • Reveal second prompt: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group held after class to discuss Photovoice 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same directions as week one. Participants are asked to take as many pictures they would like to answer the prompt, but asked to bring in three pictures with accompanying paragraphs

	Who are you as a reader?	activity	explaining how the pictures represent their answers to the prompt
Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (share if they would like) • Identifying themes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as week two. Choose one of the three pictures that best represents their answer to the prompt and write an extended narrative explaining how the picture represents their answer to the prompt and why they choose the picture over the other two.
Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (voluntary presentations) • Identifying themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Focus group was held to discuss Photovoice activity 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be asked to write a final reflection on the Photovoice process to be turned in the following week
Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reflections will be discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Focus group was held to discuss Photovoice reflections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole group discussion about the Photovoice activities

Photovoice Projects. Photographs were taken either by participants' cell phones or by participants' personal digital cameras. Photographs were uploaded to the course website electronically. The initial three photographs were uploaded to a discussion board on the course website that was open to all students in the class. Most participants chose to bring their photos

electronically either on their computer or tablet. A few participants printed out copies of their photos. Final photographs and narratives were uploaded to the assignment function on the class website. Documents uploaded to the assignment function on the course website can only be viewed by the instructor. Narratives and photos were submitted as Word files with the photography embedded in the narrative.

Final Reflections. Upon completion of the Photovoice project, candidates submitted a reflection on their experience utilizing the following questions:

- Describe your experience with Photovoice. What surprised you? What did you find valuable about the project? Explain. What would you change about the project? Explain. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and your beliefs about teaching struggling readers? How will you apply what you have learned in your practice?

This prompt was given and explained in class. Participants completed the narrative over the following week and uploaded to the assignment function on the course website. Small group and whole group discussions were held to discuss the contents of their narratives.

Focus Groups. Focus groups were held after each Photovoice activity and after participants turned in their Photovoice reflection narratives (see table 4). Focus groups were held after class meetings and were completely voluntary. Once the class session was over, I left so I did not know who participated in the focus groups to avoid any bias as their instructor. Focus groups were conducted by a colleague who was a doctoral candidate at the time and had experience with individual and focus group interviews as well as had been trained for interviews through her graduate work. Focus groups interviews were semi-structured and lasted about an hour (see appendix B for interview protocol) (table 4).

Table 4: Focus group data collection

Focus group number	Focus group question	Number of participants	Focus group length	Pages of focus group transcript
1	What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers	10	63:06	90
2	Who are you as a reader?	6	51:37	86
3	Reflecting on the Photovoice process	5	41:40	83

The interviewee had no connection to the class, but had taught courses for the college before and ended up knowing a few of the students to participate in the focus group. The interviewee was trained by the researcher and was familiar with the research protocol and the aims of the project.

Attendance dwindled after each project (11, 7, and 5). I attributed this students becoming stressed by coursework in the course and their other courses. Only two students participated in all three focus groups. Six participated in two focus groups and three participated in only one (see table 5).

Table 5: Focus group participation

Focus group 1	Focus group 2	Focus group 3
Cynthia	Cynthia	Cynthia
Alice	--	Alice
Victoria	Victoria	--
Kathy	Kathy	--

--	Heather	Heather
Caroline	--	Caroline
Cassie	--	--
Mary	Mary	Mary
Edith	--	--
Nina	--	--
Jared	Jared	--

Researchers Reflective Journal. I kept a researcher’s reflection journal to record my thinking throughout the study. I began the journal after the first class meeting and continued to write throughout data collection and data analysis. The journal helped me to reflect on my data as well as myself as a researcher. Researcher reflective journals are a good strategy to clarify thinking, evaluate experiences, and reflect on one’s data (Janesick, 2011). Reflective journals can be helpful for the researcher to see patterns or themes in the data and help the researcher better understand the data and the study (Janesick, 2011). My journal began as a word document stored on my password locked computer. I began journaling after every class session or any time I interacted with the data (i.e. grading the narratives). This was effective during data collection, but I found the process inconvenient during data analysis. While analyzing data, even after memoing, I found myself wanting to journal. I began using Microsoft OneNote to jot down ideas to put into my word document, but found it more convenient to journal in OneNote. As a result the second half of my reflective journal was done in OneNote. After the analysis of the data I used the data from my research journal to discuss what I had learned and how this process has changed me as a teacher educator and a researcher.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using Atlas.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. I chose Atlas.ti because I had prior experience with the program. Coding entailed multiple

iterations (Table 6) that began with a holistic reading of all the narratives in order to gain an understanding of the data. This was followed by open coding. Open coding is a process through which data are broken apart to create concepts or terms to that stand for small blocks of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Analysis then proceeded to level two or axial coding where categories were developed from the initial codes. Constant comparison method was used to compare data between the narratives. Constant comparison consists of comparing data from two segments to look for similarities and differences in order to determine trends in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Memoing was utilized throughout the data analysis process as it helped preserve the thought processes and ideas the researcher has I interpreted the data as it can help me think critically and reflexively about the data.

While the narratives and final reflections were be analyzed separately, the process used for analysis was the same. All narratives were read holistically prior to beginning any coding in order to gain familiarity with the data. All narratives were coded by the researcher and a code book was developed. An independent coder was used to address interrater reliability. I taught an independent rater how to code and gave him 20% (four narratives from each Photovoice project totaling 16 narratives) of the narratives. The independent coder was a doctoral candidate with training and experience with coding. He was given the narratives and coded them individually. Codes were discussed and a consensus was reached (Harry, Sturges, & Klingner, 2005).

Codes were collapsed into categories based on their relationship to each other. Each participant was sent a code with a quotation for member check. I selected quotations that could possibly have different meanings than I surmised from the text. Since data was not analyzed until after the semester was over, I conducted member checks after the semester was completed. On the consent form participants were asked if they would like to learn more about the findings

of the project and if so to provide contact information. No participants provided contact information. Sixteen participants responded to the member check email. All participants that responded agreed with the coding.

Data were aggregated based on common themes that emerged in each Photovoice projects and in the final reflections. Salient quotations derived from the coded narratives were used to create a narrative describing and explaining each theme (Yin, 2011).

Table 6: Iterations of Data Analysis²

Iteration	Purpose	Procedure
First iteration	Familiarity with data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic reading of narratives
Second iteration	Initial Content analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding of all narratives and the development of a code book
Third iteration	Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent coder coded 20% of narratives • Results were compared and discussed. A consensus was reached.
Fourth iteration	Member check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select quotations and codes were sent to participants for member checks
Fourth iteration	Categorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes are sorted into categories
Fifth iteration	Creating themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes across the categories were be

² The framework for this table was derived from Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, (2002)

Trustworthiness

There are a number strategies used to aid in the trustworthiness of the data in this study. I used Guba and Lincoln's (2000) terms, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability to refer to the strategies used to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Credibility refers to the extent that the research says what the researcher and participants want it to say. Credibility in this study was addressed through member checks and my researcher's reflective journal. Dependability refers to transparency and full description of the research process, so that if another were to complete the same study they may get similar results. Dependability was addressed through a researcher's reflective journal, inter-coder reliability, and member checks. Confirmability refers to the extent that the study's findings are from the participants rather than characteristics of the researcher through primarily making explicit the researchers position and predispositions to the research. Confirmability was addressed through a researcher's reflection journal which also served as an "audit trail" for the decisions I made throughout the study.

Transferability refers how well this study applies to other similar situations. Transferability was addressed through a "thick description" of the context of the study. This description is to, "... allow readers to have a proper understanding of it (the phenomena), thereby enabling them to compare the instances of the phenomena described in the research report with those that they have seen emerge in their situations (Shenton, 2004 p. 72).

Summary of Chapter

I provided an in-depth discussion of the method that will be used for this study. I first discussed my role as the researcher in this study, including my personal beliefs and experiences as a English education pre-service teacher, my research with Photovoice, and my role as both

researcher and instructor. I then examined the model of Photovoice that was utilized in this study. I then discussed data I collected and how I collected it. Data analysis was examined next which included discussion on the strategies I used to ensure trustworthiness of the data. In chapter four I will report the findings of this study and in chapter five I will discuss the findings and implications from this research.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers through a modified version of Photovoice method. An additional aim for this study was to examine the ways, if any, did participants in the study believe Photovoice facilitated reflection. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling adolescent readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

A modified version of Photovoice was used to answer research questions one and two and a final reflection paper was used to answer question three. This project is comprised of two data sets: two Photovoice activities, one focused on participants' perceptions of teaching struggling readers and the other focused on participants as readers; a final reflection on the Photovoice activities; and three focus group discussions (one taking place after each Photovoice activity and the final reflection). I collected data after each Photovoice activity at three time points in the beginning of the semester (see table 7)

Table 7: Data collection

Photovoice activity	Photovoice prompt	Research Question addressed	Data collected
Photovoice 1	What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers?	What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling adolescent readers?	Photovoice narratives Focus group transcript
Photovoice 2	Who are you as a reader?	What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?	Photovoice narratives Focus group transcript
Photovoice reflection	Describe your experience with Photovoice. What surprised you? What did you find valuable about the project? Explain. What would you change about the project? Explain. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and your beliefs about teaching struggling readers? How will you apply what you have learned in your practice?	In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?	Photovoice reflection narratives Focus group transcript

Participants were 19 English education pre-service teachers enrolled in a course entitled, “Teaching Reading in the English Language Arts Curriculum” at a large diverse urban university in the Southeast. The university serves a student population of 45, 479 with 2,840 students in the college of education. There were a total of 29 students in the class. Twenty one signed consent forms to participate in the study. However, one participant dropped the course after completing the first assignment and a second participant did not turn in Photovoice activity two (who are you

as a reader?). The course was taught in a classroom in the education building and met once a week at night (5:15-8:00). The objectives for the course included having pre-service teachers:

- Recognize the component skills necessary for reading proficiency and develop effective objective and activities for teaching those skills in a balanced and integrated reading program that is age appropriate
- Re-examine personal educational philosophies and teaching behavior in light of their own experiences and changing conditions by translating research and theory into classroom practices and materials.

This course was chosen for this study because of its focus on reading instruction and its emphasis on struggling readers, which provides a forum through which participants can discuss their beliefs on reading instruction.

All participants were English education majors in their junior or senior years, with ambitions of becoming secondary Language arts teachers. Participants had either completed a practicum course and/or were enrolled concurrently in a practicum course. Thus, participants had limited field experiences totaling 30-40 hours of field experiences. Most participants were in their early 20's with one non-traditional student in her forties. Participants in this study included four males and 15 females. The class itself consisted of five males and 24 females.

The researcher was also the instructor for the class (see chapter 3 for the discussion of obtaining consent). This class started with a strong sense of community as most of them have taken multiple classes together. Perhaps as a result the class did enjoy discussions and more than once had lively debates. As the instructor, there were times during the semester where our discussions would get off topic and I had to steer the class back to the topic at hand. The class was split randomly by the instructor into seven learning community (LC) groups after team

building exercises. Each LC had three to five members. With the exception of one (LC) group, small group discussions came easily for this class. One LC group had many members that would be absent often in class or had not completed their work on time, which contributed to the lack of discussion in this group. Only one member from that group participated in this study. I would often turn my attention to that group to get discussion flowing.

Since many of the students in the class knew each other and were friends, discussion might include comments from discussions they had outside of class while talking about assignments for the class or topics from the class. However, perhaps because they knew each other so well, some students had cliques that they wanted to work in. For example, Alice would often try to move to another group that had her friends in it at the beginning of class. It became a running joke at the beginning of the semester. It was not that Alice did not enjoy her group, because she stated she did, she was just more comfortable with her friends. There were a few groups like this in the class. Because the class was so talkative, I noted more than a few times that the class was rambunctious.

Participants completed two Photovoice activities and a Photovoice reflection that served as data for this project (see table 8 for a timeline of the study). Focus groups were conducted after the completion of the two Photovoice activities and then after the one Photovoice reflection activity. Focus groups were led by a doctoral student in English education who graduated the following semester and had experience with individual and focus group interviewing. She was informed about the aim of the study and given the interview protocol. She did not have any relation to the class, but by chance she had been an instructor for some participants in prior semesters.

Table 8: Timeline of Data Collection

Week	In class activities	Focus groups	Homework
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to photography, visual metaphor, and Photovoice • Practice Photovoice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reveal prompt -Discuss prompt in small groups (SG) -Take pictures -Discuss pictures in SGs -Choose one -Discuss • Reveal prompt: What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are instructed to take as many pictures as they would like to answer the prompt. They are asked to bring in three they feel best represent their answer to the question. They are asked to write a paragraph for each of the three photos explaining how that picture represents the answer to their question
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of three pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (share if they would like) • Identifying themes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After their in-class discussion participants are to decide on one picture that best represents their answer to the prompt. They are asked to write an extended narrative explaining in detail how the picture answers the prompt and why they choose that picture over the other pictures
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG group discussion of final pictures • Whole group discussion of final pictures (voluntary presentations of photos) • Identifying themes • Reveal second prompt: Who are you as a reader? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group held after class to discuss Photovoice 1 activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same directions as week one. Participants are asked to take as many pictures they would like to answer the prompt, but asked to bring in three pictures with accompanying paragraphs explaining how the pictures represent their answers to the prompt

Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (share if they would like) • Identifying themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as week two. Choose one of the three pictures that best represents their answer to the prompt and write an extended narrative explaining how the picture represents their answer to the prompt and why they choose the picture over the other two. 	
Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG discussion of pictures • Whole group discussion of pictures (voluntary presentations) • Identifying themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Focus group was held to discuss Photovoice activity 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will be asked to write a final reflection on the Photovoice process to be turned in the following week
Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reflections will be discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary Focus group was held to discuss Photovoice reflections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole group discussion about the Photovoice activities

Photovoice activity one, which addressed the research question number one, “What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers?” A voluntary focus group was conducted the day the activity was due. Eleven pre-service teachers participated in that focus group. A total of 54 pages of narratives and 36 pages of focus group transcript were collected for the Photovoice 1 activity. Photovoice 2 was completed two weeks later. Photovoice activity

two addressed the research question number two, who are you as a reader? A total of 48 pages of narratives and 38 pages of focus group transcript were collected. Finally, participants completed a photovoice reflection narrative that addressed the research question number three, in what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate beliefs about reading instruction. Reflections resulted in 54 pages of narratives and 29 pages of focus group transcript (see table 9).

Table 9: Data collected

Project	Narratives: # of narratives/# of pages	Focus group transcript pages	Focus group length	Focus group attendance	Total pages
Photovoice 1	20/54	36	63:06	10	90
Photovoice 2	20/48	38	51:37	6	86
Photovoice Reflection	20/54	29	41:40	5	83
Totals	60/156	103	156:23	21	259

Each Photovoice activity and Photovoice reflection were analyzed separately (see table 10). For each activity, I first read the narratives holistically to gain familiarity with the data. I memoed, using Atlas.ti, occurred during the holistic reading and during initial analysis. After initial content analysis I developed a codebook. A colleague with training and experience with coding, who was different than the colleague who led focus groups was given 20% (4 narratives from each Photovoice activity) to independently code. Results of his coding and my initial analysis were compared and a consensus was established. Select quotations and codes were sent to participants in the study for member check. All responses confirmed established codes. Relationships between codes were established and categories were formed. Once the code list

was established for a Photovoice activity, I printed the code list and looked for relationships between the codes. I grouped codes based on these relationships. As I grouped codes, I started to see further relationships resulting in categories. Once categories were established, I noticed relationships between categories. I created families to represent the relationships between categories.

Table 10: Iterations of Data Analysis³

Iteration	Purpose	Procedure
First iteration	Familiarity with data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic reading of narratives
Second iteration	Initial Content analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coding of all narratives and the development of a code book
Third iteration	Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent coder coded 20% of narratives • Results were compared and discussed. A consensus was reached.
Fourth iteration	Member check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select quotations and codes were sent to participants for member checks
Fourth iteration	Categorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codes are sorted into categories
Fifth iteration	Creating themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes across the categories were be identified

For Photovoice one activity 89 codes emerged resulting in seven categories and two families.

Sixty codes emerged from Photovoice two projects resulting in seven categories and two

³ The framework for this table was derived from Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, (2002)

families. The photovoice reflections resulted in 47 codes, ten categories and three families (Table 11).

Table 11: Data analysis

Project	Codes	Categories	Themes
Photovoice 1	89	7	2
Photovoice 2	60	7	2
Photovoice Reflection	47	10	3

In this chapter I present the findings of each Photovoice activity (Photovoice one activity, Photovoice two activity, and Photovoice reflection narratives) separately as they were analyzed separately. For each Photovoice activity, I will first present the findings from the narratives by families and then discuss the categories included in that family. I then discuss the focus group data, and end with a summary of the findings of each activity. Photovoice activities ask participants to discuss different aspects of their beliefs (i.e. Photovoice one activity, beliefs about teaching struggling readers and Photovoice two activity, beliefs about themselves as readers) and participants completed these projects at two time points (week three and week five). I have presented the Photovoice activities separately here because their answers naturally were separated based on the prompts and to preserve their beliefs at that point. Participants also noted in the Photovoice reflection that their beliefs changed. Presenting the material this way will help to highlight participants' beliefs that will be discussed in chapter five. Additionally, I present the findings using families to group categories as a way to help the reader see the connections between the categories. To maintain voice in Photovoice, in each category I present many

excerpts from the narratives. Due to the nature of the Photovoice activity, participants often refer to their photographs in their narratives. I have included in the appendix a table that describes each participant, includes major quotations of each participant and includes both photographs for that participant (Appendix C). I begin the discussion of each project by highlighting two cases that largely represent the findings of that project. Finally, I conclude with what I have learned and how I have changed from this study and a summary of this chapter.

Research Question One: What Are English Education Pre-Service Teachers’ Beliefs About Teaching Struggling Adolescent Readers?

Categories that emerged from the Photovoice one narratives dealt with beliefs about struggling readers and beliefs about teaching struggling readers (see table 12).

Table 12. Data analysis for Photovoice activity one

Family	Category	Sample codes
Beliefs about struggling readers(SR)	Student challenges	SR will face obstacles; SR will be challenged
	Characteristics of struggling readers	SR have low self-esteem; SR have low self-confidence; SR try to hide
	Struggling readers’ histories	SR have been left behind; SR have been yelled at; SR have not received support
	Struggling readers have potential	SR have potential; SR can succeed; SR can grow as readers
Beliefs about Teaching Struggling Readers	Teaching challenges	Teaching SR is challenging; Many SR in a classroom; Teaching reading is complex
	Importance of support	SR need support; Importance of support; Teachers as necessary

Teacher as supporter	Teacher as supporter; teacher as motivator; teacher as guide
Teacher as instructor	Proper instruction; Teacher as provider of tools; Teachers must provide practice

I have selected two narratives that highlight the findings from the narratives of the Photovoice one activity. The purpose of highlighting these narratives is to give the reader an overall sense of the findings for this research question. Cassie, Ashley, Heather, and Nina’s narratives encompassed many of the beliefs of the participants for the first Photovoice activity (Table 13).

Table 13: Highlighted cases for research question one

Family	Photo	Categories highlighted
Beliefs about struggling readers	Cassie’s Car	Characteristics of struggling readers, struggling reader’s histories, struggling readers have potential
	Ashley’s driftwood	Student challenges, characteristics of struggling readers
Teaching struggling readers	Heather’s knitting	Teaching challenges, teacher as instructor
	Nina’ pom-poms	Importance of support, teacher as supporter

Highlighted narratives: Beliefs about struggling readers. Participants noted their beliefs about struggling readers in the Photovoice narratives. In particular they noted the challenges and obstacles that struggling readers will face when becoming a better reader. Cassie’s photo of an abandoned car (figure 2) and Ashley’s picture of driftwood by the sea (figure 3) highlight beliefs held by most participants.

Cassie felt struggling readers have been left behind and let down. She explains this car was once a beautiful, running, “top-of-the-line machine.” However, it has been abandoned. Cassie noted that surely people have walked by this car and could have taken the time to fix it up and make it run again, but no one has. She believes that just like the car, struggling readers have been left behind too. She wrote:

Struggling readers have been let down and left behind. At some point, these readers were possible (sic) excited about school and tried their best. And I am sure that many people – especially past teachers—who could have helped these students read better just passed him/her by.



Figure 2: Cassie’s photo

Cassie, like many of the participants, blames past teachers for why struggling readers are struggling. She notes that because the car is in bad shape, few people want to give it any attention. The same is true for struggling readers. Many teachers, according to participants, do not want to deal with struggling readers in their classrooms. Cassie stated teachers need to pay attention to struggling readers and see their value. The assumption that seems to be made by Cassie and other participants is that past teachers do not want to give the time and effort to help struggling readers. As a result Cassie and others see helping struggling readers as spending the

time and effort to help them. She wrote, “It only takes one person to see the potential in a struggling reader. It only takes a little time and dedication to get the student reading.”

Ashley’s photo highlights beliefs about the challenges struggling readers will have in trying to become better readers. She took her picture of driftwood on a beach to represent the obstacles struggling readers will face in their journey to become better readers (figure 3).



Figure 3: Ashley’s photo

Ashley noted struggling readers will face obstacles in becoming better readers, but also acknowledged that some struggling readers will refuse to overcome the obstacles. Obstacles, according to Ashley, include not wanting to look dumb in front of their friends and not being able to read the text at all. However, while other participants noted that struggling readers must overcome obstacles, they did not explain what those obstacles were. Ashley believed that not all struggling readers will “fight” to become better readers and as such they will, “...remain stuck on the shore, never able to see the beauty and vividness of the sea.” The sea is meant to represent the journey books can take a reader on. Ashley notes the picture is meant to represent,

“...a struggling reader in their most vulnerable form.” She noted the loneliness of the struggling reader stuck on the beach. Much like Cassie, Ashley believes that struggling readers are being abandoned and left behind.

Cassie and Ashley both wrote about the potential that struggling readers have to become better readers. Ashley wrote of those students who would be willing to work to become better readers, “...others will fight and struggle and learn to succeed and find strength to overcome their struggles.” Cassie wrote of the potential being used up of these students being abandoned. She felt that it was up to the teacher to find these students so they can reach their potential.

Highlighted narratives: Beliefs about the teaching of struggling readers. Participants also discussed their beliefs about teaching struggling readers. Many participants noted the challenges that will be involved in teaching struggling readers. Heather highlights these challenges in her narrative on her picture of knitting needles and lace (figure 4). She explained that knitting with lace is a difficult and time-consuming process. She wrote, “Teaching struggling readers is knitting lace. Though in the end, when all is said and done, the result is beautiful, it is a difficult and time-consuming process.” She, like other participants, noted teaching struggling readers is a big project that will take time and effort. Like Ashley, she believes struggling readers are fragile, like the lace, so they require the knitter/teacher to work carefully and to have patience. She compares knitting to teaching skills and strategies that need to be taught. She wrote, “Everything must be woven together. Each and every stitch matters. In the same way, each strategy a reader is given, each moment of instruction impact the students.”



Figure 4: Heather's photo

For many participants, also noted by Cassie above, teaching struggling readers is a matter of supporting struggling readers as they become better readers. Nina's narrative and picture of pom-poms highlights participants' beliefs about the importance of support and the teachers' role as supporter (figure 5).



Figure 5: Nina's photo

Nina believed that it's the teachers' role to support struggling readers. In her metaphor, teachers are cheerleaders and struggling readers are playing the game (i.e. football, basketball,

etc.). She believes all games have cheerleaders and notes that they are necessary for these games. Struggling readers, according to Nina and other participants, need to know that they have someone who will support them. She noted while teachers can support their students, the teachers cannot play the game for students. Nina is acknowledging that while teachers can support students, teachers cannot learn for students.

Nina also worries too many teachers try to make students into their own image. That is to say, she is worried about teachers trying to make students. She does not explain what this image is, but she feels teachers try to make students think like the teachers want them to think. Nina and others highlight the importance of respecting students' individuality. This is why struggling readers must play the game on their own. Other participants also noted the need for teachers to support students. While some noted that teachers need to be there for their students, others noted that teachers needed to be supportive by helping students gain self-confidence and self-esteem. Next, I discuss the findings of this project in further detail including the other participants' photos and narratives.

Beliefs about Struggling Readers. Four categories are included in this family. Participants had beliefs about the challenges facing struggling readers to become better readers, characteristics of struggling readers, struggling readers' histories, and struggling readers' potential.

Student challenges. Participants believe struggling readers will and have struggled to succeed in reading. They believe struggling readers have to overcome obstacles in order to succeed. Ashley took a picture of driftwood on a beach to represent the obstacles struggling readers will face (figure 3). She wrote:

A struggling reader faces many obstacles, such as the driftwood in the foreground of the picture. Some students will refuse to step over and defeat the obstacles and remain stuck on the shore, never able to see the beauty and vividness of the sea. They will never be able to go on a journey that a book can take them on unless a teacher can help them defeat the driftwood obstacle and lead them on a journey.

Victoria discussed how she shot her picture as a way to signify the struggle struggling readers have ahead of them (see figure 6):

...my picture was of a bookshelf and so I kind of angled my camera up at the bookshelf from the computer lab, so it's full of all this technology handbooks and stuff I don't understand, so for me it was putting myself in the place of a struggling reader and them not knowing really where to start and very overwhelmed when faced with a novel or reading list for the year...but I was symbolizing the upward movement that they would have to do to get where they needed to be with their reading level.



Figure 6: Victoria's photo

To represent the obstacles struggling readers will face, Jane took a picture of a two lane highway under construction with an “Uneven Lanes” sign in the foreground. She wrote, “the sign itself, though is equally as important as the background. As we teach struggling readers there will inevitable be obstacles; obstacles not only for the students by for the teacher a well.” She continued, “There will be obstacles and uneven lanes that students and teacher will both have to face if they hope to continue building and moving forward.” Kathy used weights to represent the obstacles struggling readers will face (figure 7). She wrote of her picture of weights:

This photo really highlighted the essence of what it means to push through a struggle that presents a number of obstacles. This image followed the prompt because struggling readers need to see the benefits of continuing to push themselves toward their goals. This is the same concept for people who push themselves to workout. They understand what the end results can be, and they know the steps they need to take in order to make it there.



Figure 7: Kathy's photo

Lisa took a picture of the Grand Canyon (figure 9). She wrote, “The different slopes and angles of the canyon would pose difficulty to a climber, so too will each hurdle have a different level of difficulty for each individual reader.”

Characteristics of struggling readers. Participants expressed beliefs about how struggling readers act and feel. Many believe struggling readers feel ashamed and unconfident about not being able to read well. As a result of these feelings, struggling readers try to hide in the classroom. Ashley wrote of her picture of driftwood on the beach (figure 3), “This picture represents a struggling reader in their most vulnerable form. A shoreline uninhabited by life. They are alone, and scared to explore.” Ashley in her narrative asked the reader to experience what struggling readers are feeling. She wrote, “Imagine spinning in circles and not seeing anything new or different to help lead you down the right path. You would become lost and confused and scared, just like a struggling reader when they are having difficulties reading.” Cynthia suggested struggling readers lose self-esteem and confidence. She wrote, “Students who are struggling readers lose the goal of understanding even half of the concepts and lose any self-confidence and self-assurance for progress.” Cynthia took a picture of a jar half full with water as a way to show struggling readers’ perceptions of themselves as successful readers (see figure 8). She explained:

It is a play on the popular cliché of the glass half empty or half full, depending on your perception of the situation. In that situation the amount of water stays the same, but ‘seems’ to be more or less depending on whether you have a pessimistic or optimistic view. In the case of the struggling readers, however, the glass is usually not even half-filled. If students are really struggling readers then they will be so discouraged that they will only see the glass and their hope as partially there.



Figure 8: Cynthia's photo

Jared also believed that struggling readers' perceptions of themselves were problematic. He wrote, "A pervading problem can be seen amongst those who are struggling readers: low self-esteem." He continued, "Watching others pull words from paper, seemingly without struggle, emotionally damages many students. They feel ignorant and/or incompetent." Jared commented on the effect that past teachers and supports have had on struggling readers in describing his picture of a trailer full of trash. He wrote (see figure 10), "The trailer, full of trash, is a metaphor for the outlook many struggling readers have of themselves; they feel like trash. Years of being laughed at, making poor grades, falling behind in classes and much more abuse has lead countless to this conclusion." He suggests that struggling readers carry "emotional baggage" with them in the classroom as a result of years of abuse by teachers and students.

Participants felt struggling readers believed they could not succeed at becoming better readers. Jane suggested struggling readers feel as though becoming a good reader is too difficult and therefore impossible, when she wrote, "I want my students to know that difficulty does not foreshadow impossibility." Mary also believes struggling readers feel that becoming a good

reader is a daunting task. In her picture of a tree and a bush symbolizing the difference in growth between good and bad readers, she explained, “this difference in overall growth can be intimidating to many struggling readers because they don’t think they can ever become a huge oak tree or will read complex novels for fun.” Nichole wrote of her picture of a flower, “I do believe that struggling readers may feel alone at times. They may also feel as though they are the only one in the class that can’t read as good as others or that they will never be able to read.” She explained that a reason for this may be because they have convinced themselves that they can’t be good readers. She wrote, “Many probably use the statement of ‘I can’t’ so much that they have begun to believe just that.

Participants believe the negative feelings struggling readers held led struggling readers to hide that they are struggling in the classroom. Caroline wrote, “struggling readers will not easily admit to anyone that they have difficulty with reading comprehension. The more these students hide their disability the less teachers can help them.” She compared their hiding to the bark of a tree. Describing her picture of a tree, she wrote, “These branches have a thick coating called bark, similar to the hardness that many struggling readers develop; they hide behind that hardness and pretend like there’s nothing wrong.” She continued, “in order to trick everyone around them, they pretend that they can read and understand. Inside these branches there is a soft pulp just like struggling readers that are highly sensitive and easily embarrassed.” Alice cautioned that spotting struggling readers is not as easy as looking for a student that is in the back of the classroom. She wrote, “Although, students who have their head down, slump posture hiding in the mid-back or back of the classroom is a dead giveaway, all struggling readers don’t expose themselves.”

Jared felt that because struggling readers have low self-esteem and low confidence, “some begin to withdraw from the educational system as a whole, especially those who do not receive proper instruction for learning disabilities.” Lisa believes that struggling readers are well aware of how they compare to competent readers. She writes, “Many students notice the difference between themselves and more advanced reader.” Mary suggests struggling readers feel like they should be literary scholars when she writes, “I think that teaching my students to love reading is important, but not as important as helping them understand that I value their growth and effort more than I value being a literary scholar.” Cassie believes struggling readers do not like school, but they have not always felt that way. She wrote, “At some point, these readers were possibly excited about school and tried their best.”

Others discussed how struggling readers felt about books and reading. Avery wrote of her picture of a set of stairs (figure 13), “Also, the steps are made out of stone and they are cold, just like when a struggling reader has a book set before them and they find the book cold and are resilient to open it. Struggling readers need to warm up to books in general, so getting them to read something they are interested in is a good step forward.” Lisa’s picture of the Grand Canyon is meant to show the vast expanse of reading (figure 9). Comparing struggling readers to people who love reading, she wrote:

Those who don’t get it find it hard to experience the many wonders available with each story. For struggling readers, reading can be like a canyon; a vast expanse of unknown scary places. It’s hard for them to see the beauty in it because they tend to stop at their first fear and first obstacle. In a canyon such as the one in the image it would be easy for a person to feel alone and overwhelmed. Likewise, a struggling reader will feel alone in this path; as a result they will be reluctant to undertake the reading journey.



Figure 9: Lisa's photo

Struggling readers' histories. Participants believe struggling readers have had a difficult academic journey that was ultimately responsible for their reading problems. Danielle felt struggling readers have been, "...told you will never succeed or amount to anything." Jared noted that some struggling readers may have even endured abuse leading to their belief that they will never be able to read, "years of being laughed at, making poor grades, falling behind in classes...and much more abuse has led countless to this conclusion."

Cassie feels struggling readers have been abandoned. She wrote, "Struggling readers have been let down and left behind." Cassie took a picture of a rundown car sitting in the woods (figure 2).

She explained:

This car has been let down and left behind. At some point, this car was a great running, efficient top-of-the-line machine. And I am sure many people who could have helped fix this car back into shape passed it by. Anyone could have stopped and washed it. Anyone could have taken the time and effort to fix something here and there – or very least of all taken the car somewhere where someone had the resources and knowledge to fix it. But no one did. And now the car is sitting there with all its potential being used. And I am

sure that many people—especially past teachers—who could have helped these students read better just passed him/her by. Any teacher/adult in their life could have stopped and helped. Any teacher/adult could have taken the time and effort to help these students read better – or very least of all taken the student somewhere with the resources to help these students learn to read better. But no one did. And now the student is sitting there with all their potential being used.

Jared also took a picture of trash, but his was contained in a trailer (see figure 10). He explained:

This is a pile of junk that is so hard to get rid of, so I took a picture of it where I angled it in to this, the pretty trees, the light coming down and an antique look and everything to show that this is their self-worth that they lose and the trash kind of represents their lack of self-worth from not being able to read for so long. Like struggling and being made fun of and crying, kids laughing at them when they can't pronounce words or understand sentences.



Figure 10: Jared's photo

Also, many participants believe teachers simply overlook struggling readers. Carrie wrote teachers have to be careful not to overlook struggling readers. She wrote, “You may pass a struggling reader and not give them a second chance, but if you really look, you might see a

readied learner just looking for a nudge in the right direction. These students may be bright and intelligent, but you will never know until you really look” Edith’s picture of a bush with varying colors of leaves on it was to show how teachers view their classrooms (see figure 11).

She wrote:

When we look at a picture of a bush, we see a lot of leaves. When we look at a school, we see a lot of students. Each leaf is in a different condition. Some are green and healthy, some are yellow, and some are brown. Power in numbers does not decrease the significance of each individual. Instead of looking at a whole, we must pay attention to the parts that make that whole. When I think of teaching reading to struggling readers, I think of the leaves that have been overlooked for the sake of the whole bush.



Figure 11: Edith’s photo

Struggling readers have potential. Despite the challenges facing struggling readers and teachers of struggling readers, the participants uniformly felt all struggling readers had great potential and could succeed. Adam took a picture of a rainbow over a dark sky (see figure 12).

He wrote of the rainbow, “It shows that there is always hope for struggling readers... is a rainbow which signifies hope and good luck.”



Figure 12: Adam’s photo

Avery’s picture of a student climbing the stairs represented hope (see figure 13). She wrote, “This is how I see my students; they are climbing stairs and eventually will make it to the top. It is not a race, it is a process and it is better to be done correctly than quickly.” She continued:

I placed the lady’s legs in the far right corner to show that first step she has taken to becoming a good reader. There are many more steps for her to take to reach her goals of a very successful reading, but every step is still an achievement and should be celebrated.



Figure 13: Avery’s Photo

Despite the setbacks struggling readers might have Cynthia noted that every day is a new day to which struggling readers have hope to succeed. She wrote:

Tomorrow is another day for a student to pick up the pieces of his or her dreams and hopes and continue his or her progress. Every tide has its ebb, and with a teacher that truly understands struggling readers, the student can start re-filling his or her glass up, with anticipation and joy when he or she reads.

Cassie also believes struggling readers have potential. In Cassie's picture of a rundown car she noted the way she took the picture when she wrote:

I chose the lighting and the angle because it almost makes the car look beautiful. The light is bright and shining; the flowers and other foliage surround the car like a nice backdrop should. At first glance, you might not see how great the car really is—much like a struggling reader. I did my best to show it in the best light.

Jared, also used lighting to show potential (figure 10), "The beauty is represented, metaphorically, above when light comes through the trees; just beyond struggling readers' poor self-image is another place where they can be happy and free. ... The beauty represents what is inside of every struggling reader." Jane felt the reality of struggling readers catching up to all other readers in the classroom will be very difficult, but it doesn't mean that can't succeed. She wrote, "I want them to know that even though they may not currently be on the same level as other students, that they can work and put forth the effort to choose the path of personal growth and development." Tom, also mentioned that no matter what level struggling readers are on, they can always improve. In discussing his picture of a tumbling stack of children's play blocks he wrote (see figure 15), "the fortunate thing is that it is never too late to pick up the fallen

blocks and place them on the stack when the support is right.” In addition, to beliefs about struggling readers, participants also noted their beliefs about teaching struggling readers.

Teaching Struggling Readers. Participants did not just point out what they believed the realities of the classroom are, but they also expressed they knew what was best for the instruction of struggling readers. Participants believed teaching struggling readers would be a challenge, acknowledged the importance of support to struggling readers’ success, the teachers’ role as support, and what teachers should do in instruction.

Teaching challenges. Many participants felt teaching struggling readers was going to be a complex and challenging task. Heather compared teaching struggling readers to knitting with lace (figure 4), “Teaching struggling readers is knitting lace. Though in the end, when all is said and done, the result is beautiful, it is a difficult and time-consuming process.” Her picture was of an unfinished lace scarf with knitting needles. She wrote, “I chose to shoot from this angle because I wanted to show how big of a project lace knitting, and teaching a struggling reader, happens to be.”

Jane understood the struggles of teaching struggling readers and hoped to work through them, “I hope to be able to work through the inevitable struggles to help my students succeed.” Edith noted that teaching struggling readers is even more complex because there are many struggling readers. She wrote, “In a regular English classroom, we can assume that we will have some, if not many, struggling readers.” Heather agreed. In discussing what she would do differently in her picture she wrote:

...I would want to include multiple works of lace knitting, done with different yarns and different needles with different projects. This is because rarely are you working on one

work or student at a time, and rarely will all of them be of the same material and going in the same direction.

Importance of support. Participants considered the importance of having a support system in general. In Avery's photo of a staircase, she noted the importance of the railing (figure 13). She wrote:

The railing in the picture represents the stability students need in order to become more successful readers. This includes parents, teachers, and surrounding environment being positive role models in reading. They need someone to hold on to and care about them to help motivate them.

Cynthia suggests there needs to be a safety net for students so they always have support. In discussing what she would add to her picture of a jar half-filled with water, she wrote (figure 8), "Also I could have included some sort of permeable lid that could have symbolized a sense of safety, a safety net, and a way to prevent regression in the student's abilities in case a teacher could not assist them properly." Caroline took a picture of a tree with a bench under it. She wrote, "The benches beneath the tree represent the parents and the school which should support the students in case they fall." Nina saw the teachers' role as being a cheerleader for students, who were the real players of the game (figure 14). She wrote:

When I see this cheerleading pom-pom, I think of struggling readers. I chose this image because it reminds me of the supports that are needed with struggling readers, which most lack, but this shows me our jobs as teachers to be cheerleaders for the struggling reader as they are in the game of reading. Likewise cheerleaders, they aren't the main players of the game, but they assist with the additional support that is needed you will never see a football team or basketball team without cheerleaders. They are wanted and

seemingly essential, but aren't the main players of the game, the players are. Our struggling readers should always be the main players in this game of reading. What is best for them, what works for them, how we can approve them, so we can all win.



Figure 14: Nina's photo

Nina explained why she chose this picture over the others when she wrote, "I picked this photo over the others simply because support plays an essential role in anyone's life. Many of the things that sustain us come from support, especially if it is something we are first embarking on." Tom took a picture of a stack of blocks falling (figure 15). He wrote "The fortunate thing is that it is never too late to pick up the fallen blocks and place them on the stack when the support is right." He continued:

The wooden desk on which they sit, is the necessary foundation required to learn how to read. A strong support system only benefits a struggling reader. Without the foundation of family friends and teachers, the building blocks of reading would have nowhere to sit. Without this foundation the blocks cannot even begin to be stacked.

Many participants feel the teacher is the most important source of support for struggling readers. Edith explained the meaning of the light in her picture of a bush when she wrote (photo 10):

The sun produces light, just like teachers produce education. There has to be a central force that holds everything together. The school system is our earth, the students are living in it, and teachers provide the nutrition of knowledge. Just like the earth revolves around the sun, teachers should revolve around students.

Jared also used the lighting in his picture to describe the importance of teachers. Describing the light shining by the trailer of trash, he wrote (figure 10), “The light shining through the trees also has another meaning: educators are looked at as angelic individuals. They are there to rescue students from hardships. They are the light that is to help other students find beauty within.”

Caroline wrote, “The blood mobile that is seen in the left side of the picture represents the teacher. This bus is in the background because a teacher should be able to work behind the scenes in order to set up their students for success.”

Teachers’ role as supporter. Participants believe an important part of the teachers’ role is to provide affective support for struggling readers including being a motivator and helping them build confidence. Cynthia wrote, “I believe that self-esteem and personal perceptions of ability and hope are what helps or hurts struggling readers. If they have hope and their glass is filled more, then they are likely to perceive themselves as more able and are more likely to succeed.” She continued (figure 8):

Looks at the actual picture itself, the glass jar does not have its usual lid. I chose this intentionally so that the water would be more accessible and thus would easily symbolize hope. If the glass jar had its lid on then the potential for the struggling reader to redeem

him or herself would be almost non-existent. It would be like sealing his or her fate and trapping him or her in eternal darkness. There would be no way for the student to get worse, or the water to decrease, but conversely, there would also be no way for the water to increase, or the student to get help and solve his or her reading goals. Additionally, there would be no way for light to get in. In this metaphor the teacher would represent the light. Thus, no lid would mean no future and would just further hinder the student. Jared felt it was the teacher's job to help struggling readers change their self-image. He wrote, "It is the job of educators and parents alike to help struggling readers in order to change their destructive perception of self. ...It is imperative that educators help this heterogeneous group of individuals find peace and self-worth." According to Jared, teachers should improve reading abilities because, "through improved reading abilities students can boost their self-worth and the emotional baggage within can finally have a chance to disappear."

Participants noted the importance of motivating struggling readers. Ashley wrote, "It is important that a teacher is a solid motivating force for the struggling reader. They should do whatever they can to help struggling readers leap over obstacles and see the beauty and wonder of books and reading." Jared wrote about the struggles of struggling readers, "the road ahead is difficult and without hard work-this is not to take away from the duty of the teacher to try, at every conceivable moment, to instill motivations within the student-nothing is possible."

In order to motivate struggling readers, teachers need to take the time and effort to look for struggling readers. Cassie wrote about why teachers need to look for struggling readers: You may pass a struggling reader and not give them a second glance, but if you really look, you might see a readied learner just looking for a nudge in the right direction. These students may be

bright and intelligent, but you will never know until you really look. It only takes one person to see the potential in a struggling reader.

Edith wrote of why teachers should pay attention to struggling readers (figure 11):

The lighting in this picture is shining down from the right side. I think this symbolizes how teachers' hard work and dedication is often overlooked and underappreciated. If we took the time to appreciate the individual leaves on a bush and the nutrients that help it grow, I think the world would be a better place. ...

Ashely believes teachers need to help struggling readers enjoy the journey books can take them on. She wrote, of her picture of the shore, "As teachers, it will be our job to guide them safely home and take them on an unforgettable journey through books. ... As teachers, it will be our job to guide them safely home." Mary also wants to help struggling readers being to love reading. She wrote, "I would love to see them love reading like I do, but as long as they find at least a couple books they can enjoy, I will be happy with that."

Participants also noted teachers need to be patient with struggling readers. Alice wrote, "Patience is the key and with every step, they get closer to becoming better readers." Heather felt patience was an important quality teachers must possess. In writing about why her photo (photo 3) was the best photo Heather wrote, "I picked this image over my other pictures because I have personally felt the same knitting lace as I have teaching readers that struggle I think it represents the core of what I believe is needed when teaching struggling readers: patience."

Teacher's role as instructor. In addition to providing support, participants believe it is the teacher's job to provide skills and appropriate instruction. Caroline saw her role as teacher to provide struggling readers with the strategies and skills they were missing. She wrote, "As a teacher I intend to provide and model as many strategies as necessary in order for my students to

learn and hopefully love to read.” Tom also feels it is his job to provide struggling readers skills and strategies, but he highlights the importance of providing instruction in the right sequence (figure 15). He wrote:

...the leaning column of blocks illustrates the skills needed to read and comprehend. They are leaning because a teacher needs to know when to try and put another block on the stack and when to straighten the column to ensure that the stack can handle another block. If you try and situate blocks on the stack without the proper support you get the blocks that have fallen off the stack. The letters and pictures on the blocks represent the various ways a reader needs to visualize the words on the page. They need to turn the letters into words and the words into pictures in their mind in order to comprehend what they are reading.



Figure 15: Tom’s photo

Heather’s picture of a knitted scarf and knitting needles was taken to show the complexities of reading instruction (figure 4). She wrote, “I also wanted to showcase the unfinished scarf and the stitching to show the process of teaching reading and comprehension. It’s a work in progress, and I wonder if it will ever truly be done.” Heather continued, “In the same way, each strategy a reader is given, each moment of instruction impact the students.” Lisa wrote of the importance of providing struggling readers with the tools to become better readers.

She wrote, “Although initially a reader may see these hurdles as impossible obstacles to overcome, it is our job as educators to provide each student with the essential tools to overcome them.”

In addition to practice, participants believe it is the teacher’s job to allow struggling readers to practice. Alice wrote, “Practice will help each individual to start exceeding in reading, they just need to take that first step.” Avery wrote, “Practice will help each individual start exceeding in reading, they just need to take that first step.” Participants explored many of these same findings in the voluntary focus groups.

Focus Group Data for Research Question One. Voluntary focus groups were conducted after each Photovoice activity to triangulate data from the narratives. Participants were asked a number of questions regarding their photos, narratives, and beliefs about teaching struggling readers during the focus group (see appendix B for interview protocols). Their discussions confirmed many of the categories and families in the narratives. Participants noted the challenges with teaching struggling readers. Edith believes some struggling readers may not want to be taught at all. She stated:

I also want to touch on the fact that there are some students who are not going to want to learn how to read. We take it as a ‘oh they can.’ We just have to help them, but there is going to be some students that just aren’t going to. They just don’t care enough about it. It’s just something they don’t feel like they need.

Jared believes Edith’s comments reflect having “realistic expectations” to teach struggling readers. He feels all teachers need to go into their classrooms with “realistic” expectations. He explained:

I think part of it is that you have to have realistic expectations. Otherwise I think you are going to run into a situation where you are going to be let down or heartbroken or something. ... You are not going to just have this epiphany, like every student is going to have an epiphany in your class. What is it? 80% of students with learning disabilities has (sic) a reading disability and you have something like severe dyslexia and things like that, severe emotional issues. That's not saying you can't reach them, but it's going to be very difficult and some of them like with severe dyslexia, well in all honestly we would need to be incredibly qualified. So you have to be realistic.

Alice noted in her small group discussions some of her peers were thinking of an ideal classroom. She explained:

...there were some people in my class who thought like that but I thought realistically, oh I have students who are not paying attention and some who are and some are just there, but then you have to go deeper than you have to figure out why are those students just there. Is it because they are here, they are struggling readers like if you are thinking about it from a language arts teacher aspect and they don't know why they're here.

Because of all these challenges for teaching struggling readers, many discussed fears about being able to teach struggling readers well. Heather stated that teaching struggling readers is, "... an enormous undertaking for the teacher as well and I'm discovering as a tutor there are kids that can't read and I'm trying to figure out what to do. I know that it's a long term project. It's not going to be something that I can fix." Mary discussed this fear as well:

my biggest fear about teaching is that there is going to be a kid I can't teach and I'm going to feel like a failure and I have to fight myself on that because I have to accept that as long as I work my butt off, that's all I can do. Sometimes you just can't and learning

to accept that about yourself and accept your own flaws is a big part of teaching struggling readers because it is different in every classroom.

Heather agreed with Mary and discovered new meaning to her photograph of knitting needles and yarn. Heather responded, “she just added a new layer to my metaphor because if I’m knitting and I drop a stitch that’s my fault as the creator and all of it unravels and it’s almost impossible to get back especially with lace so that’s one.”

When discussing how to teach struggling readers, pre-service teachers noted the importance of respecting students’ individuality. Alice noted:

...we as teachers need to be more open to individuality and stop always grouping our students as one group because of who they hang out with, granted that plays a big role in how judge and pre-judge decide how your students are but that still doesn’t take away from the fact that they are struggling even if it is not reading it is something else so we should always be helping them and we should and we adhere to their growth and make the biggest deal out of anything even if they get a question right and they never speak you should acknowledge that.

Nina shared a story about the importance of catering to the individual aspects of the students. She stated:

I had to actually pick a quote out and see how it shaped my teaching philosophy. There was a quote from C.S. Lewis and I’m probably chopping through it, but it says something along the lines of modern educators aren’t meant to cut down jungles, but irrigate deserts and for me I often times I picture me as a student in grade school and often times teachers tried to cut down every bit of individualism to create this everyone has a one mind that you never enjoyed actually reading. I think a big struggle with reading teachers and for

me, I'm not going to be that teacher, but maybe I will follow that track because not every teacher will stop. I'm not going to be that teacher in the sense that I'm not going to try and break down all my students' individualism and make them in one or make them like how I want them to be, but more so watering the desert, just watering it and letting it grow until what it's meant to be so instead of well I'm going to cut down this jungle to create all roses, no just let me water this desert and see what grows naturally.

Cynthia discussed the importance of seeing struggling readers as growing individuals instead of students in a static state. She explained;

...I feel us as prospective teachers or people in general our minds are going to conflict and re-form like who we are today is not going to be who we are in like ten years. Our minds are going to continue to re-form so looking at students don't look at them as if that is their final state. More than that is the beginning of that process and you can see their final state because you can see where they got them from."

Participants in the focus group discussed many of the same ideas as their narratives. However, participants in the focus group discussed their fears of teaching struggling readers. These fears were not present in the narratives.

Summary of findings of Photovoice activity one. When asked about their thoughts about struggling readers, participants discussed their beliefs about struggling readers and teaching struggling readers. Regarding struggling readers, participants believe struggling readers are described as having low self-esteem and little confidence about themselves and their reading abilities. They were also seen hiding in the classroom and trying to move on without anyone noticing. Participants believe an important reason for struggling readers' feelings and actions in the classroom are a result of prior academic experiences. Struggling readers have been yelled at,

embarrassed, and left behind by other teachers and support. In particular, other teachers have not taken the time and/or effort to look for struggling readers to help them. Finally, participants believe that despite these challenges and poor experiences, struggling readers with hard work and correct instruction have the potential to succeed in becoming strong readers.

Participants discussed how struggling readers should be taught. They noted the challenges teachers will face and the importance of support for the success of struggling readers, noting in particular the integral role of teachers. A major component of a teachers role, according to participants is to support struggling readers by helping them gain confidence and self-esteem. Teachers need to take the time and effort to search out and find struggling readers in order to help them. Additionally, teachers need to provide appropriate explicit and sequenced instruction so struggling readers can become better readers. Finally, participants noted the importance of not giving up on struggling readers and teachers having the mindset that they can help struggling readers.

Research Question Two: Who Are You As A Reader?

In the second Photovoice activity, participants were asked to discuss their beliefs about themselves as readers. Two families emerged from the narrative data: Reading purposes and the realities of reading. Reading purposes included codes regarding why pre-service teachers read, including reading to escape, reading to grow and having a connection to reading. The realities of reading included categories regarding the dangers of reading, the difficulties of reading, and required reading (see table 14).

Table 14: Data analysis for Photovoice activity two

Family	Category	Sample codes
Reading purposes		

The Realities of Reading	To escape	Reading as an escape; Reading to heal; Reading as peaceful
	To grow	Reading to become a better reader; reading for knowledge; reading to grow as a person
	Connection to reading	Always been a reader; connected to reading; will always be a reader
	Dangers of reading	Reading too much; reading as addictive; Reading as a crutch
	Reading is difficult	Reading is hard work; Becoming a better reader is difficult; will always have to improve reading skills
	Required reading	Pleasure reading versus require reading; dislike of textbook reading; required reading a necessary evil

Just as I did with the first Photovoice activity, I will highlight four narratives that represent the general findings from this project for research question two (table 15).

Table 15: Highlighted cases for research question two

Family	Photo	Categories highlighted
Reading purposes	Heather's ship	To escape, to grow, connection to reading
	Cynthia's medicine bottle	To escape, connection to reading
The realities of reading	Jared's shovel	Reading is difficult, required reading
	Victoria's cat	Dangers of read, required reading

Highlighted narratives: Reading purposes. Participants discussed the purposes for reading and the realities of reading when they were asked to describe themselves as readers.

Heather and Cynthia's narratives highlight the findings for participants' beliefs about reading purposes. Jared and Mary's pictures highlight the findings for participant beliefs about the realities of reading.

Heather's photo of a ship (figure 16) on the grass represented her beliefs about the purpose reading serves in her life. She, like many other participants, noted that reading allowed her to go on a journey and escape reality, represented by the ship. She wrote:

The ideas of adventure and escape have always strongly appealed to me. I have been reading since I was a young child, and in books I found myself aboard a ship. Here was everything I had dreamed of, mine to follow at leisure.

Heather and other participants noted that the events in books allowed her to gain knowledge through the experiences of the characters without having to experience themselves. Heather felt there was a contradiction between going on the journeys in her books and never really going anywhere and having the experiences. She was able to go on journeys and learn without having to go anywhere or have the experiences. She represented this with the ship on the grass.

Heather also made note of the age of the ship (an older ship) to note that she has been a reader since she was young and felt she will always be a reading. As such she felt that she would be connected to reading for the rest of her life. Seven other participants expressed this sentiment and believed that reading was a part of who they were.



Figure 16: Heather's photo

Cynthia's picture of a medicine bottle highlights participants' beliefs about reading as an escape and as a way to heal. Cynthia noted that she uses reading to escape from life and to heal from the realities of life. In particular, Cynthia noted that she used reading to help her cope with her parent's divorce. Reading was a way for Cynthia to escape the harsh realities of life. Other participants noted how reading was more than just an escape, but also as a way to heal and get away from the harsh realities of life.

Highlighted narratives: The realities of reading. Cynthia's (figure 17) picture also highlights participants' beliefs about the realities of reading, in particular the dangers of reading. Cynthia explained that while she used reading to heal, that just like medicine, reading could be addictive and keep her from doing what she should be doing (i.e. homework for her classes). Participants noted that being immersed in a book could keep them from doing school work or hanging out with friends.

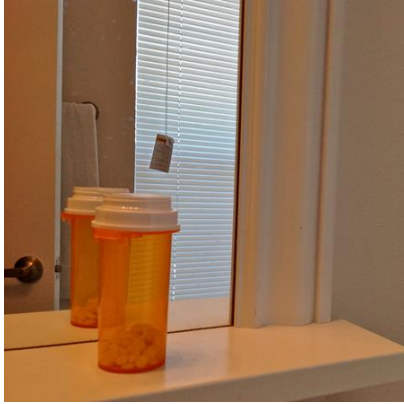


Figure 17: Cynthia's photo

In addition to the dangers of reading, participants also saw reading as difficult. Jared's picture of a shovel and a mound of mulch highlighted participants' beliefs about the difficulty of reading (see figure 18). While many participants noted that they were strong or good readers (including Jared), many noted that reading is not always easy and it can be difficult. Jared wrote, "The shovel appears to be of a grim nature. It is harsh and old; it is a tool. ... It perfectly gave off the picture that I am trying to portray: reading is not always an easy task..." However, participants did not note what in particular was challenging about reading, only that it could be difficult at times.



Figure 18: Jared's photo

Victoria's picture (figure 19) of her new cat highlights participants' beliefs about the dangers of reading and required reading. Victoria took her picture to represent how she likes to be "fed" by a novel through emotionally connecting to the book. Like Cynthia, she noted that being immersed in a book that she will, "consume a book in a matter of days because I get so engrossed that I don't want to put it down."



Figure 19: Victoria's photo

Victoria noted in her narrative that group discussions in class made her reconsider who she was as a reader because she had not thought about required reading. Victoria wanted to have emotional connections to books she noted that doesn't happen with required reading. She wrote, "While having a connection to the fictional text I am reading is one of the things that captures my attention as a reader, that unfortunately doesn't usually happen with informational texts." Five other participants also noted their dislike of required reading with some even noting the skim or don't read required reading. Below, I expand on the findings for the Photovoice two activity.

Reading Purposes. Participants discussed three purposes for why they read: to escape, to grow, and to connect with books. Reading to escape includes codes regarding participants' beliefs about using reading as an escape from the sometimes harsh realities of life. Reading to grow includes codes regarding participants' beliefs about using reading to grow their knowledge and to grow as a person. Connection to reading includes codes regarding participants' histories with reading and the importance of having a connection to a text.

To escape. For most of the participants, reading is used to escape from reality and even heal. Jane described how she used reading to escape from the banalities of life. She wrote: Often times, life can become boring and redundant. Reading a book is then an escape for me into a world unknown. I feel drawn to reading because it is how I live my life when my reality becomes dull.

Heather also used reading to escape from everyday life. She wrote, "I finally could see the adventure in everyday, which was something I desperately needed as a young teenager who was crushed by the mundane." Heather took a picture of a toy ship in a field of grass (figure 16). She continued:

My final picture I chose a model ship. I place it in a field of grass and I kind of had it angled so it looks as though it was heading towards the trees in the background and that was meant to convey movement and going somewhere and so that was really representing the journey that reading is for and also the kind of sense of fantasy you know a ship in a field of grass that doesn't happen in everyday life, but because of reading I was always attached to fantasy it was an escape for me and on all journeys I've learned so much.

Cassie's life wanted to escape her boring life as well (figure 20). She wrote:

The picture is of a boring white hallway, with an EXIT sign leading around the corner. The light gets darker as your eyes follow the exit signs lead. The boring white hallway represents the boringness I found my life to be. It lacked colour (sic); it lacked happiness. The exit sign represents the way I saw books. It was almost calling me, leading me away from the “boring, white hallway” that was my life. Books were my escape; they were my exit.

However, for Cassie it wasn't just escaping the boring parts of her life. She wrote:

Growing up, like most people, I didn't have a fairy tale life. I grew up in a very lonely situation. I grew up in a very dark situation. Because of this, I turned to reading at a young age. Reading was an escape for me. Reading was a way that I could leave the sad place I was in and go...well....anywhere. I could be anything and everything I wanted—which was anything and everything but myself.

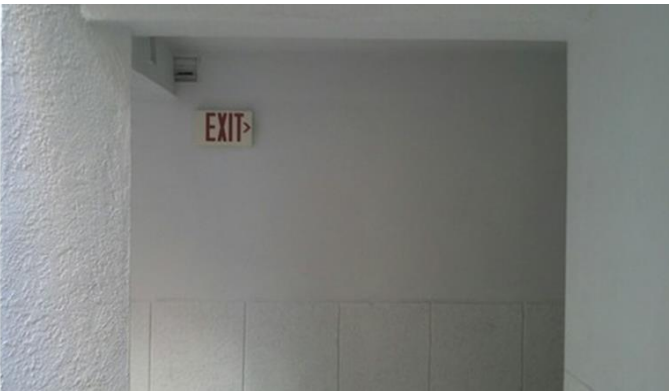


Figure 20: Cassie's photo

Cassie continued explaining what she would change about her picture, “I also would have changed the lighting: I would want the light behind the door to be brighter and the light on the

camera's side of the door darker to show that my life was a dark place and books took me to a lighter, happier place.”

Cynthia saw reading as a form of medicine through which she could not just escape, but to heal as well. Cynthia took a picture of her medicine cabinet filled with prescription medicine bottles (figure 17). She wrote:

I chose this picture because I see reading as medicine. When I have been in difficult situations and experience difficult periods of time in my life, such as my parents constantly fighting before they eventually divorced, I used to find solace in reading. I used to curl up with a good book, like the Nancy Drew mysteries, and read for hours and get so engrossed that I went into a fantasy world. The books and the process of reading and the enjoyment after accomplishing and enjoying a book acts like medicine to subdue the harsh realities of life.

Cynthia found another metaphor showing the healing of reading in her picture while writing the narrative. She wrote, “Additionally, an element that I did not even mean to include was the white towel. It can also symbolize the purity of reading and how reading can cleanse and rejuvenate you just like medicine can.”

For Edith reading provides an escape where she can be at peace with herself. She took a picture of the location where her friend had passed away in a car accident (figure 26). She discussed her picture:

This place in the picture is right next to the road. It's a popular place for people to run and work out, and boats coast along the bay all day. I like to come to this spot and read. With all the commotion of life around me, reading helps me focus, find peace, and be still. ...At night the ocean is the most calm. It's nice to relax and appreciate the beauty of

the world. This is my favorite time to read. I came to take this picture at sunset, but ended up reading until nighttime. I wanted to reflect on how I felt as a reader at this particular spot, since it is special to me.

Nichole also discussed her preferred reading environment. She wrote of her picture of a highway barricade, “There is a barricade that separates me and the traffic. It separates me from the daily confusion, noise and distraction that daily commuters endure. This is ultimately who I am as a reader. I like to be able to have peace and quiet when I read so that I am able to fully indulge into the book.”

To Grow. For twelve of the participants, reading was used to help them learn more about the world and grow as a person. Jared noted the power of knowledge from books and how it changed his life. He wrote:

The text gives knowledge and therefore, strength to its reader. With knowledge diseases are eradicated, social injustices are ended and financial gain is achieved. I see the way that books have changed my life. They have made me an entirely different individual and I am not in any way exaggerating. I have lost previous biases and religious beliefs that truly hampered my life.

Avery used plants as a metaphor to show how books helped her grow. She wrote, “With enough water and sunlight I can continue growing my whole life. Similarly, as a reader I will continue to grow and get better as a reader. There is no point to stop at, I can always improve my reading and I will not stop growing.” Adam also used plants to represent the knowledge he gains by reading. He wrote, “The trees are also different heights representing my growth and knowledge in different areas. The taller the trees the more developed my knowledge of that topic has been

developed. Heather felt she gained knowledge and experience by going on the journeys books take her on (figure 16). She wrote:

I prefer to think reading might as well be a traveling on a ship. I find exploring any sort of text, but it anything from non-fiction to fantast, to be a journey. And as with all journeys, you've gained knowledge and experience by the end. You finish your journey changed. Ushered along by a wayward wind, I read whatever I am directed towards.

Participants noted they wanted to grow as readers as well. Jared strives to become a better reader by reading more. He wrote, "My goal as a reader is to never be a passive one, reading without truly learning. I strive to work hard and learn as much as humanly possible when reading. Tom believes his love of reading will help him continue to grow as a reader. Tom wrote of his picture of his pantry (figure 21), "I love to read almost anything, just as I like to eat almost anything. I am at least willing to give it a try. I am definitely better at reading than I am at cooking, but I continue to work at both."



Figure 21: Tom's photo

Mary also noted that she will continue to work on becoming a better reader by reading more. Mary took a picture of a hubcap she was in the process of painting (figure 25). She wrote, “I am still working on other sections of the hubcap, just as I am still working on reading more of the classics and more young adult literature that will appeal to my students. My painting of reading and my library of colors are still being painted.”

Connection with reading. Twelve participants discussed how they are and have been connected to reading and because of this connection they will continue to read. Heather wrote about how she has been a reader her entire life. She wrote of her picture of a toy ship on the grass, “This picture is also meant to represent a certain age, as this type of ship is from centuries past. I have been reading since I was very young. I remember more books that I read as a child than toys I played with.” William also has had a connection to reading since he was young. His interest in heroes led him to the world of reading (figure 22). He wrote of photograph of a silhouette of a super hero action figure:

Ever since I was young, I have loved stories about heroes. Many different kinds of people can be heroes, whether they be knights with swords or detectives in search of the truth, or even just a kid, like I was, going to school. It was who the people were, what they did and why they did it, that made them heroes, and I wanted to learn about as many of them as I could. Eventually, that love of heroes shaped my interests in other ways, leading me to shows about heroes like Batman, and games with rich stories filled with a variety of different heroes, and even games like Dungeons and Dragons, where I could invent my own hero and live through them in a fantasy world. But even as I grew and my interests widened, I never stopped looking for heroes in stories, as that’s where I knew I could find the best ones.



Figure 22: William's photo

Ashley discussed how she loves reading and will always continue to read (figure 23). She wrote, "As a reader I am an octopus ring. I, like the ring, am a never ending loop. I will always be reading. Just as a ring represents eternity, so do I when it comes to reading." She explained that reading had just become a part of who she was. She wrote:

You wear a ring on your finger. Sometimes you wear it so often that it becomes a part of you and without it you feel naked and as if you are missing something. That is how I feel without reading. I chose this ring and picture because of all the circles that the ring had. I felt as though it emphasized my metaphor that I am, like a ring, constantly continuing.



Figure 23: Ashley's photo

Others discussed the importance of forming a connection with a book. Jane saw the importance of connecting her life to the books she reads. She wrote (figure 24):

The flower in the picture has a thick and strong stem that connects it to life support. My strong stem is my connection between the books I read and my life.



Figure 24: Jane's photo

Adam discussed the personal nature of reading when he wrote, “I know others can do this, but when I read I feel I am the only one that can experience this art at a particular moment.” Lisa wrote, “When I read I am completely connected to the characters and their journey what they go through physically and emotionally.” Victoria compares her want to connect to a book to hunger. Describing her photo of her new cat begging for food she wrote (figure 19), “in the same way, as a reader, I want to be ‘fed’ by a novel; I want to feel connected to anything and everything that I choose to pick up and read.” While participants wrote about the benefit reading has had on their lives, they also believe there are cons to their love of reading, reading can be more difficult and their struggles with required reading.

The Realities of Reading. While participants noted their uses for and importance of reading, they also acknowledged there were aspects of reading that were potentially not pleasant. Three categories were included in this family. Dangers of reading includes participants beliefs about the dangers of getting lost in a book and/or reading too much. Reading is difficult includes codes regarding participants acknowledging the difficulty of the reading process. Finally, required reading includes codes regarding the struggles of required and informational reading as compared to pleasure reading.

Dangers of reading. While participants saw reading as an important and integral part of their lives, they also saw their love of reading could cause problems. Cynthia feels reading can be addictive and could prevent her from doing work for her classes (figure 17). She wrote: Medicine can definitely be healing, especially if I read literature that helps me connect to the author, but can also become like a habit and can be addictive. Sometimes I become so entangled in a book that I might neglect other needed activities, such as doing other schoolwork. ... It cannot really be called an addiction in the sense that it is overly destructive or harmful, but it can shift priorities and may make it harder to concentrate on books not for pleasure.

Lisa also discussed the dangers of getting lost in books. She wrote:

For me reading is much like a journey; one that consumes me completely and pretty much takes over my life. I forget to eat at times because I hate being distracted from the story I am in. I barely sleep trying to get one more chapter in or because I NEED to know what happens next. I type the word “need” in capital letters to stress the fact that it is an all-consuming need that drives me insane. And when I am done with the journey I feel like an addict thinking about my next fix. Thinking about the next journey I will embark on.

Heather saw her reliance on reading as a potential crutch. In explaining that she would add an ocean or sea to her picture of a ship on grass (figure 16), she wrote, “I would also write about the reliance the ship has on the water to support it. In a lot of ways, I find books to be a crutch. They are as present in my life as water is to the life of a ship.”

Others noted that reading was a lonely experience. Edith worried about the social implications of enjoying reading. She wrote, “Sometimes I get made fun of by my friends because I rather stay in and relax while reading a book than go to a loud club or party I feel like this is what makes me different from a lot of people I know.” Heather noted that reading was an individual and lonely experience and has since tried to become more social. She wrote, “However, just as sailing is a lonely experience for those on the ship, relatively isolated from the rest of the world, reading was an activity I did a lone for a long part of my life. I’ve only recently joined a book club, and I’m still adjusting to sharing what had always been a quiet, individual, and personal experience”

Reading is difficult. While participants enjoyed reading, ten acknowledged reading can be difficult and is hard work. Mary compared reading to working hard on her artwork (figure 25) wrote:

This hubcap had taken a long time to paint and sometimes was a lot of hard work, just like reading isn’t always easy. Sometimes reading textbooks or philosophy can be very difficult for me and may take longer than others. Just like some sections of the hubcap have been harder to paint.



Figure 25: Mary's photo

Edith believed becoming a better reader was a never ending journey (figure 26). She wrote:

I took this picture looking straight down the guardrail, so it looks like it has no end.

...The angles represent the long way it takes to become a good reader and the never-ending road of reading. Someone looking at this picture might think the walk down this road is too long or exhausting. The reality is that they need a little motivation to discover how exciting, beautiful, and rewarding it will be.

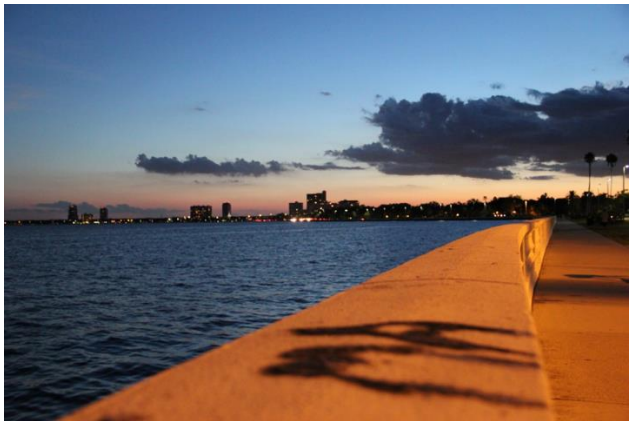


Figure 26: Edith's photo

Jared took a picture of a shovel to represent the work a reader has to do, but noted that enjoys the struggle (figure 18). He wrote:

It perfectly gave off the picture I am trying to portray: reading is not always an easy task, though an emphasis must be made on the fact that arduous tasks can be fun; they often are. The viewer sees such an image with a feeling of dread if he or she is a struggling reader. However, this picture represents myself as a struggling reader and brings no such feelings to mind.

Required reading. Participants noted a reality of reading was required reading for classes that they would not necessarily have read on their own. Required reading was seen as a necessary evil. Jason noted he skims or doesn't read textbooks. He wrote, "I like to read but I don't like to read just about every textbook I have ever read in my life. That's why I don't read them. I skim them. I fake read textbooks generally speaking." Tom also noted that he doesn't spend too much time with textbooks. He wrote, "I do not really take the time to organize what I am reading, I usually just read what I am told to read and throw it back on the shelf."

Cynthia saw value of required reading if it helped her grow as a reader or as a person. But this did not change the fact that it wouldn't be fun reading for her. She discussed this describing what she would change about her photograph (figure 17). She wrote:

The only change I would make is maybe if I included two different types of medicine in the picture and compared the effects of taking on medicine when reading books I enjoy versus medicine when reading books required for school, I could accurately compare how medicine is both bitter and sweet at the same time. ... Sometimes, though if you read a book that is uninteresting, it is like tasting bitter medicine and you want to spit it out. If it is a required book for school, I might automatically be disengaged just because I could not pick the book or subject

matter myself. However, if I know that the bitter medicine or the book will help me become a better reader or help me learn then I will probably keep reading. I know that I will be able to wash the bitter taste down with more sweet medicine when I can read for pleasure later.

Edith saw required reading as important, but it kept her from digging deeper in her own reading, “I find myself reading more for academic than for pleasure lately. This is not a bad thing, but I know it’s stopping me from diving down deeper to discover the literature I connect most with.” Participants discussed many of the same ideas in the voluntary focus group.

Focus Group Data for Research Question Two. Participants in the focus group were asked to describe their pictures and narratives for the Photovoice two activity as well as asked to discuss their beliefs about how they were as a reader and what they learned from the project (see appendix F for interview protocol). Focus group data largely mirrored the discussions in the Photovoice narratives. Participants discussed the difficulties of expressing themselves as readers and what they hoped to convey. Heathers picture of a ship in the grass was meant to show the complexities of her identity as a reader. She stated:

...I wanted to show the history of me as a reader because in a lot of ways I’ve been reading my entire life and it’s been one of the strongest influences in my life and so saying where I was now was find and represents a lot. I also wanted to show that reading is where I had been and what got me through a lot of things and how I explored a lot of things and really characterizes almost everything that I had done and I recognized that other readers aren’t necessarily that way.

Jared discussed how his connection to reading since an early age kept him from understanding struggling readers until recently. He stated, “I’ve been a good reader since I was young. I’ve

never really struggled with reading. I never really understood it until this class struggling with reading or until the spring when I started tutoring students.”

After discussing their final narratives in small groups in class, participants in the focus group noted their classmates made them think about a new aspect of themselves as readers that they had not considered before. This is highlighted in the following exchange in the focus group:

Interviewer: I think that’s interesting. Truly I think the world is filled with way more things that are not pleasure reading and those of us that love reading are happy to read those things we love reading, but we are sort of surrounded by you know all sorts of reading that’s

Mary: emails and textbooks books and

Interviewer: not just for the joy of reading

Victoria: I’ll go next just to jump off what you were saying when we were doing the in class discussion earlier we both had that thing about textbooks so for my Photovoice the idea of textbooks didn’t even cross my mind oh me as a reader, okay, and I just focused on novels because that’s what I like to read

Interviewer: because that’s what you like

Victoria: exactly

Interviewer: but you probably do read textbooks

Victoria: oh I do absolutely and some of them are better than others

Interviewer: sure (laughs)

Victoria: but I thought that was cool because of how different people approached the assignment because we had literally one person in our group that incorporated textbooks

into their original three photos versus everyone else in our group that went like I did straight to the novels, but for me my picture was

Interviewer: was that telling? A little bit about this particular population of people as we think about readers that we might be tunnel vision-ed in that way and this you know what I mean I just think it's very interesting.

Mary: I have to read like I'm learning to kind of enjoy reading textbooks that are about education actually going to use it but there are still some things that I just can't like we had to read the philosophy thing you just can't make myself enjoy it. I hate it, but I can struggle through it more than I could so I feel like there are different pieces of my journey in reading that could have been represented in different ways

While participants discussed many of the same ideas as their narratives, they discussed their struggles with required in more depth in the focus group.

Summary of the findings for Photovoice activity two. Participants' discussions about who they are as readers centered on why they read and the realities of being a lover of reading. Participants noted they read to escape from the realities of life. Reading was a way to escape from the harshness or banality of life in which this form of escape also served as a way for them to heal. Participants also read to grow their knowledge about different subjects and to grow as a person. However, few noted details about the ways in which reading helped them grow. Finally, participants noted the connection they have had to reading including having a long history with reading and being connected to the characters and plot of a story. Many noted this connection was an important reason for their love of reading.

Participants also noted that there were realities of reading. The first of which was the dangers of reading too much. They noted problems with putting off work, endangering their

social life and other issues that were a direct result of becoming immersed in a book.

Participants also believed reading was not an easy task. They acknowledged that reading was difficult, but they did not specifically state what was difficult about reading. Finally, participants felt they understood the importance of required reading, particularly from their college coursework, but it wasn't what they enjoyed about reading and part of their reading identities.

Research Question Three: In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection?

After the completion of the two photovoice projects, participants wrote narratives reflecting on their experiences with Photovoice. Since Photovoice has not been used as a tool to understand pre-service teachers' beliefs, a goal of this study was to examine the ways, if any, that the participants felt Photovoice helped them to reflect more deeply and make their beliefs explicit. Participants discussed what they learned and what they valued through the Photovoice activities. They also discussed their beliefs about the activity as an instructional tool (see table 16).

Table 16: Data analysis for Photovoice reflection narratives

Family	Category	Sample codes
What was learned from Photovoice	Self	Learned about self; Discovered self as struggling reader; Know self better
	Struggling readers	Learned to teach struggling readers; Learned methods to teach struggling readers
	Sympathy	Sympathize with struggling readers; Understood struggling readers better; Relating to struggling readers
	Did not learn	Did not learn; already knew self
What was valued from		

Photovoice

Discussions	Valued discussions; Valued other's opinions; Valued discussing photos
Reflections	Valued reflections; Valued reflecting on photo; valued writing reflections
Photography and metaphors	Valued photos; valued metaphors; difficult to communicate through photography

The Assignment

Initial thoughts on the assignment	Did not initially see value in photovoice; thought photovoice would be easy; Does not like photography
Future use of Photovoice	Photovoice to teach content; Photovoice to get to know students; photovoice to engage students
What they would change about Photovoice	Less secondary discussions; want more discussions; want to respond differently;

What was learned from Photovoice. Many participants believed they learned about themselves and struggling readers from this project. Four categories were included in this family: learned about self, learned about struggling readers, sympathy, and did not learn.

Learned about self. Fifteen participants felt they learned about themselves as a teacher and as a reader through the Photovoice activities. Some discovered they have not thought about themselves as readers or thought about struggling readers before participating in these activities. Edith wrote, "I never took the time to think about myself as a reader, I got to know myself better." Mary also admitted that she hadn't thought about herself as a reader. She wrote, "I also

learned a lot about myself as a reader when we did the second photovoice. I had a really hard time at first because I had never thought about it.” By discovering who she was as a reader, Heather believed she was able to understand other readers better. She wrote, “By appreciating where I’m at as a reader, I learned to respect where other readers are at too. Overall I learned that there is always more to be discovered.”

Participants became more aware of their own reading habits and why they read. Nina recognized that she neglects reading for fun. She wrote, “I also learned that reading for fun is a definite must that I often neglect; thus making it hard for me to engage in other texts.” Heather also learned to think about what kind of reader she is. She wrote, “I don’t think of how I read, I think of *why* I read. I think about what reading is and does for me. I think that now I am more conscious of these things.” Mary became more conscious about herself by the discussions with her group members. She wrote, “I also learned a lot about what other future teachers feel about struggling readers. ... I learned a lot about myself by learning about other person’s thoughts about struggling readers.”

Edith analyzed her own thoughts and discovered a pattern in her responses. She wrote: After reflecting I discovered something very interesting. When discussing common themes with my group members we found themes like growth and patience. I personally found a common theme throughout my pictures. When asked about how I view struggling readers I took pictures of nature. When asked about how I view myself as a reader I took pictures of things I have control of. The connection that I made is nature versus nurture. Nature represents the outside environment that is out of my control. Nurture represents the growth and development of my skills reading combines individuals’ innate qualities and personal experiences. Caroline discovered that she was once a struggling reader herself. She wrote:

I learned a lot about myself as a reader. I never realized that I was a struggling reader in grade school. ...I have only recently realized that I was probably a struggling reader for most of my grade school career. I have to come to terms with that, since I have always considered myself a good reader. Throughout this semester I have learned something new about myself.

Learned about struggling readers. Participants also believe they learned about struggling readers by completing the Photovoice assignments. Avery feels she learned about teaching reading and tempering her expectations for her students. She wrote:

Taking pictures showed me that I still have many areas I need to work on in reading and that it is a process that should be taken by steps, not leaps. I should not expect these readers to grasp everything from the beginning and run with it, because as their teacher I am still learning myself.

Mary discovered that she had fears about teaching struggling readers. She wrote, "Especially during the process of the first Photovoice, I realized that I have a lot more fears about teaching struggling readers than I thought."

Alice saw that her beliefs changed. She wrote, "my beliefs about reading have changed based on this project due to the fact that my ideas that a struggling reader is always noticeable." She discovered that struggling readers will hide from her in class based on where they sit and how they approach the text. Cynthia noted she has discovered what population of students she would ideally like to teach. She wrote:

I have realized that I really want to teach English language learners after completing this photovoice activity. Although, I probably could have discovered this by myself, this activity forced me to take my beliefs and actually put pen to paper and write down what I believe.

Tom summarized a number what he learned at the end of his narrative. He wrote:

I think the project is good for illuminating any pre conceived notions that we as future educators are carrying. It also allows us to unpack the baggage of worrying about teaching struggling readers, and understanding ourselves as readers. This project helped to bring to the forefront, thoughts that were always there but hiding in the back of my mind.

Sympathy. Participants believed they learned to sympathize with struggling readers after completing this project. Avery wrote, “This approach helped me understand and sympathize with those students who have been just ‘getting by’ in reading all their lives.” Cynthia felt she learned how to sympathize with struggling readers through her struggles to learn Korean. She wrote:

I understand that although I have never been a struggling reader growing up, I am a struggling reader when reading political, medical, or legal texts. ... I can see myself sympathizing more with my ELLs because I have been to Korea and struggled in a country where my mother tongue was not the dominate language and was not widely spoken. I had to struggle on a daily basis just to make it there and survive.

Jared also felt that he learned to better empathize with struggling readers through the thinking he had to do to complete the Photovoice projects. He felt he had to think like a struggling reader to complete this project. He wrote:

I learned the following about struggling readers: just as experienced detective thinks like a criminal when needed, I thought like a struggling reader. I have had past experiences with struggling readers and have read a decent amount of literature on the subject, yet feeling what they feel created a sense of empathy during the creating of Photovoice I. In order to create the picture, I had to think as they do, and feel as they do. I believe that I,

to a certain extent, feel the pain of a struggling reader. I will forever carry empathy throughout my profession for struggling readers.

Tom also felt that going through the Photovoice process allowed him to relate to struggling readers. He believed he learned more about struggling readers and beliefs about them through the project and as such was better able to understand struggling readers and their needs. He wrote:

This project helped to bring to the forefront, thoughts that were always there, but hiding in the back of my mind. I do not relish the opportunity to teach struggling readers, however, I think this activity has allowed me to connect with them on a deeper plane. I always thought of the struggling readers as someone who didn't care. But I think this activity and hearing other peoples perspectives on reading has allowed me to see that effort is not the only factor that goes into learning how to read and comprehend. I will take this information into the classroom and have an open mind towards struggling readers. I will be able to look at them and understand that not everyone functions the same way I do, and reading is not always enjoyable for everyone. I think that is the largest thing I learned, or rather, remembered during this process: not everyone finds reading fun.

While many participants felt they learned through the Photovoice activities and found them valuable, some participants believed they did not learn anything from the projects.

Did not learn from the Photovoice activity. Three participants felt they did not learn anything from the Photovoice activity. Adam wrote, "I felt this assignment was more of a regurgitation of what I already knew and thought. I learned more about struggling readers through readings in the course and other coursework and discussions." Jared also believed that

he knew himself well enough and thus did not learn anything new through the activity. He wrote:

At the beginning of the semester, I analyzed myself as a reader after reading the material given in the class. I learned to read, for some reason, with seemingly no effort growing up without formally learning a single reading strategy. . . . But the time the second Photovoice came along I had already been analyzing myself for the entire semester. Therefore, what I learned about myself as a reader from the Photovoice II assignment was limited: I gained a deeper knowledge of the manner in which I arduously make text to text connections and I learned that I may need to take a breath, at times, and enjoy what I am reading without constantly overanalyzing every sentence.

Lisa also felt she didn't learn much in the project. She wrote, "I really didn't learn anything new about myself from this project. I have always loved reading; it has been part of my life." In addition to many participants feeling as though they learned about themselves and struggling readers through this project, participants also valued aspects of the Photovoice process.

What pre-service teachers valued about Photovoice. Many participants found aspects of the Photovoice process valuable to their own learning and to their future students. Three categories were included in this family: discussions, reflections and reflecting, and photography and metaphors.

Discussions. Eighteen participants valued the discussion aspect of the Photovoice process. Cynthia wrote extensively on her experiences with discussions. She was initially worried about discussing her pictures in with the other three members of her small group learning community (LC), but discovered how rewarding group work could be. She wrote:

One of the most helpful aspects of the entire project was actually the discussions we had concerning what we found to be common themes among our pictures. Although I do not usually like to participate and prefer to simply listen during discussions, I found myself more comfortable participating once I realized that someone else had taken pictures that revolved around a similar theme. I wanted to share once I found that others validated my opinions by listening to me. I came to understand just how important the idea of collaboration is, as well as the notion of community building that most education classes seemed, to me, to senselessly reiterate over and over again. I found myself enjoying discussing my opinion and views on why I chose my pictures. In my life I was never comfortable discussing anything with others, especially people I am not extremely close with and hardly know beyond our class time together. It was a big step for me to go out of my comfort zone and actually discuss my work with others. I was always afraid that someone would say my picture was stupid or was worried that someone would come up with a “better” metaphor than I did. However, once I became comfortable with my LC group, I was more easily able to discuss my work and even started to more comfortably talk to them about general matters. This sense of belonging and increasingly comfort in social situations helped me in my other classes as well and has helped me to become more open minded.

Cassie also had not initially seen the value in small group work before this project. She wrote: I have always been the student that hated group work and preferred to do everything on my own. Through this experience, my peers have made me think about things that I would have never have come up with on my own without their interaction. I learned the value in discussion. This

is perhaps the biggest impact I had from this experience, and it is one that I am so grateful for receiving.

Avery saw the value of using group work to learn and to build community in her own future classroom. She wrote:

To see another person's point of view helped me become more open-minded and really appreciate the diverse thinking every individual has. This realization impacted me the most because it made me respect and admire those around me and see how an assignment like this could help my students build a better classroom community. The more comfortable the students are with one another, like we have become in my discussion group, the more they can express their opinion and build greater thinking.

Victoria described how the discussion finalized her thinking when she wrote:

...I came into the group discussion with my somewhat vague ideas and opinions about struggling readers, but through our conversation I solidified those. Between having to articulate my own feelings and listen to others thoughts on the subject, by the time I got to the final narrative, I chose one my pictures and metaphors that allowed me to discuss my thoughts on struggling readers in as broad a sense as possible.

However, Heather and Edith noted that sharing personal information in groups could be uncomfortable. Edith noted the vulnerability each group member needs to discuss personal matters when she wrote, "This assignment does call for some vulnerability from the participator. We are forced to be honest with ourselves" Heather saw this vulnerability as potentially uncomfortable. She wrote:

However the group component was also kind of difficult. As an introvert, my first response is to not share what I feel is personal. I feel that to a certain extent I did put a

lot of myself into my responses. But it was difficult for me if/when other group members had default responses. I don't feel I necessarily learned more about some of my group members, which is fine. But I didn't want them to know more about me than I knew about them and I was disinclined to give my thoughts to them. This is not to say that I didn't get anything out of their responses. I actually got a lot out of our discussions and believe the group component is absolutely essential to this project. I also enjoyed our time together as a group and had fun with my peers. They really had great responses of their own. I just feel mine were out of place.

Reflections and reflecting. Several participants (13) also saw the value of reflecting on their photographs and writing the final Photovoice narratives. Cynthia, describing the Photovoice process, wrote:

Having us look through our pictures again and pick the one that we thought best represented what we were trying to symbolize and reflecting on it actually helped me further understand my perceptions towards myself and others. I never really considered how simply reflecting on a matter could be so helpful in revealing connections between the world around us and ourselves. Although I always heard the phrase 'text to self, text to text, and text to world' I never really understood how it could possibly benefit us in the sense of truly understanding ourselves.

Victoria was also surprised to see the value in reflecting. She wrote, "One of the reasons I was so impressed with this project was that it actually 'worked' for me: both in the sense of helping me understand the usefulness of reflections and in the face that the process helped me define my thoughts on certain questions." William also felt reflecting was valuable. He wrote, "Overall, I think writing both of my final narratives was a valuable experience for me as it gave

me a chance to reflect on my beliefs and to recognize the value, as a reader and a teacher, that the nerdy hobbies that I'd generally taken for granted might offer in the future."

Some commented about how they continued reflecting long after the assignment was over. Kathy wrote, "I noticed that even after I would write about my Photovoice for the paper portion of the project, I would continue to think of new ways my image reflected my views. It was a nonstop learning experience for me." Heather wrote, "This project still didn't seem finished even after both sets of pictures had been submitted. I'm still reflecting on them even now. I have a feeling that this assignment has tinted and tainted how I will approach the rest of the semester, and I believe I'm grateful for that." Edith also saw value in writing the narrative. She wrote, "I really liked having the chance to write more about my picture because the more I thought about my picture, the more connections I was making. I didn't even submit my assignment until the last day it was due because I constantly kept thinking of more things I could write. "

Photography and metaphors. Participants saw the value photography and metaphors in the Photovoice project. Cynthia felt she now has a deeper understanding of metaphors and how it could add a creative element to her classroom. She wrote, "After completing this activity I feel I more deeply understand the usefulness of metaphors and how I can help my students become more analytical by helping them think outside the box." Kathy also enjoyed the creative element to the project. She wrote, "I found this assignment very valuable because it helps get your creativity flowing. I liked how instead of just strictly writing down metaphors for the two separate prompts, we were told to take a picture that will say it all. This was a fun way to use your imagination." Cassie wrote, "I loved that this was a new and unique way to answer a prompt rather than just discussion or writing our answer." Jason enjoyed being able to

communicate in a novel way. He wrote, “I thoroughly enjoyed my experience with Photovoice. The reason I liked this activity so much was because it allowed me the opportunity to express myself through pictures. It gave me the ability to describe myself without using any words.”

Nichole saw value in using photography to communicate clearly. She wrote:

My experience with this Photovoice project was interesting. I really enjoyed being able to take photos of things that actually represented meaning. Sometimes it can be hard to say exactly what you mean. With this project, I feel that it eliminated this possibility considering we were describing our ideas and thoughts in relation to pictures that we had taken. The pictures kind of spoke for us.

This creativity also helped pre-service teachers to reflect deeper and use higher order thinking. Mary felt the project promoted deeper thinking. She wrote, “I thought the project was very valuable because of the cognitive benefits of the assignment. Students are able to use higher level thinking by creating the photo and explaining their own metaphor.” William felt that photography helped him reflect deeper. He wrote:

My final narrative would have been a page in length, tops. But by selecting the picture for my ‘hero’ metaphor, which was far less self-explanatory, I had to reflect much deeper to explain it and in doing so, I came to understand myself as a reader and as a future teacher much better than if I’d been freed from the restrictions of photography and metaphor.

Participants found forming metaphors as a difficult, but worthy task. Heather noted that similes are “safer’ and “gentler” while metaphors are “insistent.” She wrote that a metaphor, “demands two items be the same for one moment, and suggests that every aspect between the two is alike. I knew this was going to be difficult for me.” On the other hand, Caroline initially

thought finding metaphors would be easy, only to find it much more challenging than she thought. She wrote, “At first I was apprehensive about this activity because it seemed too simple, I thought there had to be a catch ... The process of creating a metaphor through a picture of our real life and comparing it to the real struggle of students was very humbling. The catch was this realization.”

Many found photography to be challenging as well. Kathy was surprised by the difficulty she had composing images for the activity. She wrote, “I was surprised at how challenging it was to find images that could really capture what I was trying to say.... I loved the challenge though because it allowed me to think outside of the box.” Avery compared her struggles with photography to how struggling readers must feel. She wrote:

Each time we were proposed with a prompt I took pictures accordingly and that part seemed simple at first. Then, when I had to use a metaphor about the picture and put it into words describing the significance of the picture’s shape, position, length, etc. I started to stumble. I literally sat in front of my computer with a blank word document page for over an hour. This made me realize what struggling readers can go through on a daily basis, whether it is reading a book, a street sign, or text on a computer they are frustrated when they cannot make sense of the words in front of them. I felt this way while taking pictures. Sometimes it was hard to fit the metaphor with every aspect in the picture and I would have to stop and take a breather before continuing on.

Jason was also surprised by the difficulty to find the right picture. He wrote, “What surprised me about this activity was that it was sometimes difficult to think of the right image to describe the topics. It was interesting trying to make an image speak for you; it wasn’t easy until the picture

spoke first instead of making the picture speak for you.” In addition to what they valued, participants also discussed their beliefs about the overall assignment.

Assignment. Participants discussed their initial reactions to the project, how they would plan on using Photovoice in the future, and what they would change about the Photovoice process.

Initial Reactions. Twelve participants were not initially excited after learning about the Photovoice activity. William was skeptical about his ability to complete the project well. He wrote, “In the beginning I was very skeptical about photovoice due to a combination of my inexperience and incompetence at both photography and poetry.” Heather was also worried about her photography skills. She wrote, “I wasn’t thrilled to hear that one of my assignments this semester involved picture taking. Many of my family members love photography and are quite good at it. I’m the odd one who ends up taking pictures of the ceiling when I’m trying to capture something at eye level.” Victoria was worried about the reflection aspect of the project: I will confess that when we were handed this assignment, I was very skeptical about its value. In general, writing reflections had never seemed to be particularly conducive to learning, and I don’t think I have ever truly taken them seriously.

Cassie did not initially think she was going to enjoy the Photovoice activity. She wrote, “I was surprised to find myself not only having fun with the project, but also looking forward to the next question we would have to answer through the eyes of our cameras.” Mary was caught off guard by the complexity of the activity. She wrote:

When we were first given the project Photovoice, I was very intrigued because of the uniqueness of this process compared to our normal assignments in many of my classes.

... When we were first given the assignment I thought it would be simple like a free-write

and did not realize the cognitive complexity of this assignment. I enjoyed the process of taking the picture and figuring out the metaphor.

Cynthia thought the project would be a waste of time. She wrote:

My first impressions going into the photovoice activity was that this was honestly going to be an activity that would waste my time and not really benefit me in any way. ...

However, I am glad to say that my initial expectations in fact never came to fruition and actually the complete opposite ended up happening.

Future use of Photovoice. Eleven participants felt Photovoice would be a great instructional tool in their classrooms. Cassie wanted to know more about how to implement Photovoice. Heather saw photovoice as another way students can communicate. She wrote, “I think it teaches students to work around their perceived handicaps in a certain medium, as I had to do with photography.” Jane felt Photovoice allowed students to share their thoughts in a new medium. She wrote, “Sometimes students do not know how to put things into words and for those students this assignment is a great opportunity. Being able to share photos with other students in class was good for learning about classroom and life skills.” Kathy also felt Photovoice can help students succeed by allowing them to use their creativity. She wrote:

I will apply this lesson plan into my classroom because I feel like it is a great too to use to teach metaphors. It helps students tap into their creative side they might not have known existed before. Also, it engages all different level learning students because it is visually appealing, hands on, and easy to talk about with your peers. As a future educator my number one goal is my students’ success. This project allows students to succeed with learning!

Cynthia felt the creative and metaphor aspects of Photovoice can help her students become critical thinkers. She wrote, “After completing this activity I feel I more deeply understand the usefulness of metaphors and how I can help my students become more analytical by helping them think outside the box.”

Cassie felt students would be more motivated completing a Photovoice assignment. She wrote, “I think that struggling readers (and perhaps even really great readers) will really respond to this project, because it feels more like a fun and relaxed project than a possible intimidating wordy project.” Jason saw Photovoice as a way to get his students to participate in group work and give them a voice in the classroom He wrote:

I will implement this activity in my classroom because it is fun and interactive and gets all of the students involved. It also gives students who don't like working in groups the opportunity to open up slowly, they aren't being forced to read anything that they won't feel comfortable with so it will be interactive group work at their own pace and about something that they have deemed important. The photo voice assignment lets the student use their voice and students will always like to participate in something if they feel as though their voice is being heard.

William wants to use Photovoice as a way to way to get to know his students and for his students to get to know him. He wrote:

I may incorporate the project itself and have them do a variant of it in order to learn what they think about reading and how they view themselves as readers, or just to learn a little more about themselves as readers. ... I will also use Photovoice to connect with my students by sharing the pictures that I took for this assignment and maybe more that I may take in the future in order to help them get to know me a little better. By showing

them these pictures, they may be more willing to connect with me since they'll know I'm just a big dumb kid at heart who loves games about fantasy worlds and action-packed Japanese super hero shows, rather than a stuffy professor who just wants to make them read.

Mary also saw Photovoice as a way to get to know her students, but she also saw it as useful as a way to report information. She wrote, "Students do not have to have to an understanding of research to complete this assignment, which makes it great for learning about struggling readers and great as an expression from struggling readers about a topic."

Participants also saw Photovoice as a way to teach content or skills. Adam saw Photovoice as a way to teach writing. He wrote, "I would use this to help reinforce what children are learning in the classroom. It could also be used as a teaching tool for writing."

Ashley saw value in Photovoice as a reading activity. She wrote:

I could see using this activity for an after reading activity or unit project with students. They could take a picture of something that represents a central theme of a narrative we have read. They could then explain their findings to the class and why they chose that the one they did. Overall, I enjoyed the Photovoice experience and would be willing to use it in my future classroom.

Cassie saw numerous applications for Photovoice as an instructional tool. She wrote:

I will apply this in numerous ways in my own classroom. This can be done in a way to allow the students to explore themselves and their own beliefs as well as explore the material gone over in class. It is a new and refreshing way to get students to relate to the material taught. ... There are endless opportunities in which to use this project with my students.

Mary also saw Photovoice as an instructional tool and saw it as useful even outside of the language arts classroom. She wrote:

This would be a great project to use to have students who their perspectives about different themes in books they have read. It would also be great to get them to talk about how they feel about reading. I have also thought about teaching history, and this could be used in social sciences to show how students feel about different historical events in a way that involves higher thinking. It also seems more accessible to a student than writing a paper or making a metaphor, even though those processes are used in this assignment.

What they would change. While participants believe the assignment was helpful and valuable, there were aspects of the process they would change. Some pre-service teachers would have liked more freedom in the photovoice process. Cynthia would have liked to change how many pictures they could use in the final narrative. She wrote:

if I were to maybe tweak one aspect of the project, I would consider allowing my students to choose two pictures for their extended narrative, ...I feel like I would have been able to more fully and more deeply explain myself as reader if I were allowed to choose not just one, but two pictures. The aspects that I felt that there lacking in the picture I ended up choosing could have been remedied by allowing me to choose two pictures.

Ashley wanted more options for responding to the photos. She wrote:

Another thing I would change about Photovoice is the use of an extended narrative. I think that sometimes fewer words used, the better, as long as the point gets across. For example, I think that just a poem would have sufficed for explain my thoughts. In fact, I

think that it would have better expressed my thoughts. I struggled to put all of my thoughts into words when trying to explain my reasoning.

Others would like to have changed how discussions are structured. Victoria wanted a discussion between the first and second Photovoice activities. She wrote, “It would have been a good way to debrief and make sure that everyone was on the same page in terms of approaching the second half.” Tom felt the second discussion should have been eliminated altogether. He wrote, “I think way too much time was spent in class on this project. I think after the first few classes we were just ‘beating the dead horse’ if you will.” Kathy also felt the second discussion was repetitive. She wrote, “The only portion of the project that I would change is the portion where we discuss in our LC groups about our final choice we used for our paper. We had already spent a lot of time talking about our three images beforehand and it almost seemed repetitive.” Cassie agreed. She explained, “I felt I was only repeating myself as I wrote the extended response. When we would return to talk about our extended response, we basically looked at one another and said ‘well, I already told you about the photo last week’”

Some participants wanted to change the small discussion groups so they could talk with other students in the class. Nina wanted more feedback. She wrote, “One thing I would change about this project, something my group discussed was going around to different groups to receive feedback and to see their pictures. This builds a stronger community as well as helps the individual receive critique to help with their final piece.” Heather wanted to see more of her classmate’s pictures. She wrote:

I desperately wanted to see what everyone else in the class had created. I even considered looking at the discussion board posts, but realized that it’s not the same as having them explain it directly to me. I would have loved to keep my group and then after we shared

our photos, branched out into another group, if only to see what they had answered. I wouldn't suggest having a different group every time, because then I would have been disinclined to share anything with anyone. I needed the solidity of a home group. But perhaps, after we had gotten feedback from our home group on the original three pictures, the next class meeting could have us discussing our final photos with a different group. Or, maybe, we could have come together in larger, mixed groups for the second review. This would have given us ample time to prepare and think about our pictures, putting as much of our thoughts and the contributions of our home group in as we wanted. But we would also have the benefit of hearing from another team of fresh eyes. In addition to increasing the feedback on our pictures and expanding the number of responses we get to see, it makes the second sharing more meaningful. The second round always seemed repetitive, as many of us didn't have much more to say than we had in the first meeting.

Some participants did not like that they were not allowed to use people in their photographs. Caroline wrote, "I think people are ideal for this project, especially a whole group. The human face can portray numerous emotions in a short period of time. I think the human element is important, especially for the second prompt which was a lot more personal." Alice liked the idea of using people, but only from a distance. She noted that having a close up a person would only serve as a "poster child" for literacy. She wrote, "I do kind of like the idea to include people, by people I mean having a 'living' figure in the distance of the picture. I know by having a close up and personal picture of someone for Photovoice is a simple common 'poster child' for reading and literacy." Cynthia initially thought it would be too hard to complete the project without using people, but found the restriction of not using people made think more deeply. She wrote:

I originally thought that it would be too hard to find something that accurately described the general topics given without the use of people; however, I am glad that we could not use people. Looking back, I feel as though if I were allowed to use people then my metaphor would not actually be a metaphor and I would in fact be trying to mold a person to fit my metaphor. It would have not been helpful for me to use people because it would actually be harder to go really in-depth if you use people.

Participants highlighted many of the same findings from their narratives in the final focus group.

Focus Group Data for Research Question Three. Participants were asked to discuss their narratives, their experiences with both photovoice projects, what they learned and valued about the project, and if they had any future uses for the method (see appendix F for the interview protocol). Pre-service teachers felt they learned about themselves through this project. Alice felt she learned that she is a struggling reader too and that could help her relate to struggling readers in her classroom. She stated:

for the longest time I didn't know who I was as a reader and even now in college I know that I'm not the struggling reader that I was. I'm a lot better and that's what I feel like I can take in the field with my student for them to understand that if you are struggling so am I theoretically and we can get through this together.

Alice believes the Photovoice project helped her discover another part of her identity. I had Alice as a student in a previous class. The class, which was an English education practicum, had a Photovoice assignment where students were asked to describe their ideal classroom. In this exchange during the focus group, Alice recounts completing this Photovoice activity and its relation to the Photovoice assignment she just completed.

Alice: When I did it [the previous Photovoice project] with him two semesters ago I just was like this assignment is unnecessary, I'm just going to Christmas tree it (laughs) and then I actually yesterday I looked back at my Photovoice I did for him and I was like I probably should have worked a lot harder on that because he was asking who I was as a person and then I compared to what I wrote for who I am as a reader and there was a disconnect.

Interviewer: Wow!

Alice: And then I even wrote in my reflection, of course, my personality represents who I am, but it doesn't necessarily represent my personality as a reader because the way I read is different than how I am.

Interviewer: So you would say that this helped you access another dimension of yourself.

Alice: yes.

Heather discussed how writing about the photograph helped her dig deeper. She said: ...the picture was something I used as a foundation and then I could keep going deeper and as time passed and I reflected more I could find new things or I'd hear new things so it was really when I brought that to the picture after I had already set that down that I could say 'Oh I can say I learned something here' and so the picture framed it and I think that's what helped me most in the process.

Alice saw Photovoice as an activity to get to know her students and for her students to take risks in her classroom:

Interviewer: So you think photovoice is a way of approaching that individuality, the individual needs and representing?

Alice: I think it is also a way to get your students to be vulnerable with each other without putting pressure on saying okay stand in front of the entire class and talk about yourself.

Interviewer: So like encouraging them to take some risks?

Alice: Yes. I've had a teacher do that and like I'm very conversational, but there are other people who are like I don't know what to say like students don't, but Photovoice definitely there's voice in it

Interviewer: There's voice in Photovoice ha! (group laughs).

Pre-service teachers also discussed the challenges of Photovoice and what they would change. Mary would have liked to respond to the narratives in a different way. She stated, "...I don't do well with representing my thoughts through pictures, but if I would have been able to make like a collage of the things that to me mean this I might have been able to have a better process because that's the way my brain works..." Alice agreed as well. She stated, "I'm open to do different ways to do photovoice because I'm not much of a like describe it in a picture kind of way I could recreate it through collage..."

One of the restrictions of the project was that pre-service teachers could not take pictures of people. This restriction was put into place so pre-service teachers would think more deeply about their metaphors and would use visual metaphor rather than representative photography. Participants in the focus group were split on whether or not this restriction was helpful. Alice also did not like that they couldn't use pictures. She felt a picture of her niece surrounded by books would have conveyed her picture of literacy. She started to tear up during the interview when she was discussing her one year old niece surrounded by books. She stated:

I didn't like that we couldn't use people although I know the point the reason for not having someone be the poster child for struggling reader was kind of the whole point behind that, but I had I want to use people because the other day I was babysitting my niece I peeked in the room to see what she was doing and she is a one year old and she in all these books and she is just sitting there surrounded by them obviously she can't tell you what the words are she can barely talk, but just the pictures and like the face that at that age it makes me cry just thinking about it she has a value just no just reading, but knowledge so I guess that was something I'm sorry I'm emotional.

On the other hand some found value in not using human subjects in their photographs. Mary stated:

it was very much like one idea were as a lot of your pictures were multi-faceted and you were able to see lots of different things like I only one I can remember is yours [Edith] is the wall you talked about four or five things it could mean or a person can only mean one thing in a picture and you like taking apart of them you know or the one you are showing me right now has lots of plants but you know it shows lots of different things and you are able to see all of the things...that's why I said I liked that we could have used people because it would have been way too limiting and just one face one just focusing too much on the person and not on the idea.

One idea that was discussed in the focus group, but not in the narratives, was participants desire to know the purpose of the project. Many felt that knowing the purpose of the project would have affected their answers. The following exchanged highlighted their concerns:

Mary:...He [the researcher] was like the purpose was to really learn about yourselves than how to use this in a classroom and I feel like I would have done it a little bit differently if I knew the purpose that kind of just doing it you know?

Interviewer: Do you think you may have been more invested in it?

Mary: Yeah because I just like took a bunch of picture and then through a lot about myself and wrote but I feel like if he would have told us like what it meant and not like how he was talking today like you have to understand how you feel about struggling readers and how you feel about yourself as a reader to teach like if you would have told me that when I started the project I probably would have cared more. (group laughs) you know like college is hard and I put more effort into things I find more valuable.

Interviewer: so you need help in seeing the value in the front end? Mary, yea because there will be some assignments that gets pushed to the back burner because you don't have time to do all of them and it wasn't on the back burner it wasn't one of the ones that I felt was stupid but I feel like it would have been more important to my mind I would have through abot it more of my empty through time if I understood why I was doing it."

Caroline: I completely agree and Cynthia does too and we are shaking our heads like totally like why didn't you tell us the purpose beforehand. Thank you Mike (group laughs). No I just want to say I completely agree because when he told us that today in class we were like are you kidding that was the purpose mind blowing like really for me

Interviewer: so was that the surprise then or the surprising thing

Caroline: I think it's something we all learned

...

Caroline: but that's something we learned that as teachers we should give our students the purpose beforehand

On the other hand, Alice saw an advantage to not knowing the purpose. She stated in the focus group, "...because he didn't tell me the purpose before I felt like I could do anything in a way with this, but I feel like if he would have told me the purpose first I would have been like okay I need to find something that is specific to what he said." This final focus group supported many of findings from the narratives, but a discussion emerged where participants felt they did not know the purpose of the Photovoice projects and felt knowing the purpose would have altered their responses.

Summary of the findings of Photovoice reflections. Participants overall felt the photovoice assignment was one they learned from and had a number of features they found valuable. They noted their initial reactions to the project as well as their plans for using Photovoice in their classroom and what they would change. Participants felt they learned about themselves as readers and as teachers. In particular they felt they had never thought about themselves as readers. They also felt they learned a lot about struggling readers by putting themselves into struggling readers' shoes for the assignment.

Participants found value in a number of parts of the Photovoice process. In particular, participants found the class discussions as they valued hearing other points of view. They also valued reflecting on the pictures and metaphors as many mentioned that this reflecting was more meaningful than reflections they have completed in other classes. Participants also found the photography and metaphors to not only be a novel way of responding to prompts, but also a valuable way to help reflect deeper and more thoroughly.

Participants noted their initial reactions to the project in their narratives. Most admitted that they thought the assignment would be a waste of time or easy. However, they also noted that they were wrong and enjoyed the project as well as were challenged by the project. Participants noted that they would use Photovoice in their classrooms in a number of ways including as a novel way to do books reports or as a way to get to know students in the beginning of the year. Participants noted changes they would make to the Photovoice process. In particular, some discussions went on too long and they wanted to talk with other members of the class in small group discussions. Participants also discussed the virtues and vices of being able to take pictures of people and responding in different mediums for the project.

Notes From the Reflective Journal: What I Have Learned

My reflective journal gave me the space to make meaning from the data as I collected and analyzed the data from this study. In my journal, I noted the surprises and what I learned as a researcher and teacher educator. In this section I present those surprises and discuss what I have learned (see Appendix X for excerpts).

Surprises. One of the biggest surprises for me was the blame of the other teacher from the participants. In the pilot study, blaming other teachers was not a key element to the findings. Not only did the participants in the study blame the teachers, they felt the other teachers abandoned the struggling readers, which was surprising not because they blamed other teachers, but because of the perceived severity of the blame. They didn't see past teachers and simply not providing instruction, they felt past teachers abandoned struggling readers. After the reading the first set of narratives I noted that this idea felt like a confidence on their part. It was as if they were saying they knew what was right for struggling readers and in-service teachers did not. It was surprising for me for the participants to note with confidence that they truly felt that

struggling readers could go through their entire academic lives without a single teacher who cared and spent the time to give them instruction. I felt that this had to do with their apprenticeship of observation. Perhaps these students did not have teachers that supported them or perhaps their inability to understand that someone can get that far in their schooling without being able to read well. Either way I learned that my pre-service teachers were much more removed from the school system than I thought. I learned how detached an apprenticeship of observation could be. I knew it could supply beliefs that were different, but I did not think it could create wide spreading/covering beliefs such as this.

The pilot for this study was conducted mid-way through the semester. By the time participants were completing the assignments, we had discussed skills and strategies needed for struggling readers to succeed. As a result many of the narratives for those Photovoice projects noted the importance of strategies and skills and used phrasing and terminology from class and our texts. The aim of this study was to capture pre-service teachers' beliefs before they learned the information in this class to see what their beliefs about teaching struggling readers really were. Perhaps unsurprisingly only a few participants noted the importance of strategies and skills to teaching struggling readers. They noted affective things they could do for struggling readers, namely finding them and spending time to find and mentor them. I realized that these pre-service teachers thought teaching struggling readers was mostly common sense and it was just a matter of spending time with them.

What I learned as a teacher educator. I had been a reluctant reader when I was in high school. Part of that reluctance, looking back on it now had to do with not being confident with my reading abilities. So I may have been a struggling reader myself. I just avoided dealing with it by refusing to read. I was surprised by how much reading was part of the participants'

identities. I thought they would discuss how they enjoyed reading and read a lot, but I was not expecting them to discuss how reading was used for them to heal and deal with difficult parts of their lives. I did not think the second questions would be as personal as it ended up being. I expected participants to discuss their reading histories and what they enjoyed to read. So, I learned that my students didn't just enjoy reading; reading was part of who they are. As a teacher educator that is an important piece of information because it lets me know that reading is more than likely an invisible process for many of them. They saw reading as this experience that they had and I knew as a teacher educator I had to break down the reading process for them so they could see the mechanics of how reading happens. In my reflective journal I compared it to movie watchers and knowing what it takes to make a movie. Movie watchers have the experience while watching the movie, however there is a mechanical process of shooting a movie so that experience can happen (i.e. writing the screen play, shooting the scenes, hiring actors, etc.).

I learned participants didn't see required reading as part of their identities. While I think this highlighted that participants didn't include required reading as part of their reading identities, I was surprised by their admission that they didn't read or only skimmed their textbooks. This not only showed that they didn't like required reading, but that they didn't value it at all. I learned that not only did I, as a teacher educator, have to convince them that this course was important, but I had to convince them that the texts for the class would be worth their time. Many noted that time was an issue and they prioritized their assignments based on what they felt was most important. I raised the question in my reflective journal whether or not participants were taking too many classes to gain anything meaningful out of them.

Photovoice was modified for this study to help participants make their beliefs about teaching struggling readers and themselves as readers explicit. Photovoice was originally developed as a method to give marginalized populations a voice in their health needs (Wang & Burris, 1997), but I saw this method as potentially useful for all groups. Photovoice in this study was used as a research method and an instructional method. I learned through this study that it succeeded in both. The photography and metaphor were challenging for participants, I think mostly because a lot of them thought it would be easy for them to complete. I wondered in my reflection journal whether or not they found this challenging because it was genuinely challenging or because they had to work harder at a reflection assignment than they ever had before.

Going into the project I felt the photography and metaphors would be the most effective in getting participants to think about their beliefs. While I felt the discussions would be helpful, I did not think participants would find them one of the most valuable aspects of the study. Discussions in class were on topic and students were engaged. Talking about their beliefs in the small group setting, which were much more in depth than full class discussions seemed to shape, solidify, and challenge their beliefs. When I think about other reflection methods that are largely individual (i.e. autobiographies) I see the importance of making those beliefs public and discussing ideas with each other. It may be the case that pre-service teacher have not developed beliefs at all and the social discussion will help them develop those beliefs. It could be the case that having reflections as a more public activity places more responsibility on the student since they will have to discuss them to their friends or peers in class. Beliefs are tied to self-identity and as such participants don't want to express silly beliefs to their peers. There is the difficulty of

participants saying what they feel like others want them to say, but as I explained above, I'm not sure that can be avoided in any class setting.

Learning about photography was very helpful. I noticed participants would use photography terms in their narratives and discussed lighting, framing, rule of threes, etc in their narratives to help communicate their beliefs. While it may not be the case that participants had a full understanding of photography, it allowed them to communicate more effectively with photography. Photography was a new language for many of the participants and having to think about how they communicated their beliefs helped them communicate those ideas and think through their ideas.

An interesting concept for this study for me was the order in which participants responded to the prompt. For some participants they thought about and framed the picture before actually taking the picture. They knew what they wanted to take before they took the picture. This was the original idea for this study in that participants would think about their responses before responding in much the same way one would think about what she would write before she wrote it. However, this was not always the case for participants in this study. In fact, I would guess that many participants took the picture first and then responded. At first, I noted how I was worried about this. They noted it in their first focus groups when they were discussing how they took their photos and how the discussion had them see more in their pictures. As I reflected on this I came to the conclusion that either way they responded would give a picture of their beliefs because even for those who took the photos and then reflected on them still pulled from their beliefs to make meaning from the photo. They were still pulling from their prior experiences, knowledge, and beliefs to create the narrative and what to discuss in class. Framing before they took the picture did allow participants to have their ideas framed before they came to

class which I would have thought would allow them to revise less, but thinking about Heather, she did frame it in this way and still found herself revising after class discussions, so I'm not sure either way is particularly better than the other.

As a teacher educator more about my students and what their beliefs are about reading instruction and them as readers. I learned that they had not thought about struggling readers before this class and that reading is not just a skill for many of these pre-service teachers, it is part of who they are. As a teacher educator, I saw that my job was to first convince pre-service teachers about the importance of teaching struggling readers and help them see the complexities of the reading process. I learned that I needed to have participants examine their beliefs about their role as an English teacher. I learned participants didn't have experience or knowledge of struggling readers and reading instruction. In particular they had difficulties drawing from their apprenticeship of observation, prior experiences, and formal knowledge to discuss teaching struggling readers.

Participants got a lot out of completing the photovoice activities. While they were vocal about what changes they would make, nearly all participants noted that they felt they got valuable reflection and experience from the project. However, I noted how difficult it would have been to teach this course or assignment if participants still believed the task or the class was not worth their time, too easy, or a waste of time.

I learned how important the role of education plays in pre-service teachers beliefs in teacher education programs. Again participants didn't think of struggling readers as part of their classrooms. Some noted, agreeing with research, that students should already know how to read by the time they get to secondary school. This is like content area teachers, but as future English

teachers tasked with specific instruction on literacy as part of their job, the stakes are higher for English teacher educators.

Summary of Chapter

In this chapter I presented the findings from the current study. Data from this study included narratives from two photovoice activities, reflection narratives on the Photovoice process, and focus group transcripts. Data were presented by Photovoice activity. To answer the research question, what are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers, participants discussed beliefs about struggling readers and beliefs about teaching struggling readers. Participants believed struggling readers have to overcome challenges and/or obstacles in order to become better readers. They believed struggling readers have low self-esteem and low self-confidence makes struggling readers try to hide in the classroom. The low self-esteem and low self-confidence may stem from past teachers abandoning and neglecting struggling readers throughout their academic careers according to participants. However, participants believed struggling readers have potential to succeed. Participants believed teaching struggling readers is going to be difficult and challenging. They noted the importance of support, in particular the importance of teachers to success of struggling readers. Teachers must provide struggling readers with affective support such as helping struggling readers gain confidence and self-esteem. Participants also noted the importance of providing "correct" instruction and skills and strategies to struggling readers.

Photovoice activity two was used to answer the research question, "what are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?" Participants discussed their purposes for reading and their beliefs about the realities of reading. Participants explained they often read to escape from their realities and this escape often helped them heal. Reading to

grow their knowledge and to grow as people was another reason participants read. Finally, participants noted they have and always have had a connection to reading and considered themselves life time readers. Participants also noted the realities of reading, including the dangers of reading too much, which could include putting off other important tasks such as school work and being with friend. Reading is a difficult task and requires a lot of effort according to participants. Finally, participants discussed their love/hate relationship with required reading, noting that they do not enjoy required reading, they understand that it can help them gain knowledge and grow as people.

Participants also reflected on participating in the Photovoice projects by writing narratives. There were used to answer the third and final research question, in what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on reading instruction? Participants discussed what they learned about Photovoice include what they learned about themselves and struggling readers. They also noted that they learned to have sympathy for struggling readers, while a few felt they didn't learn anything from the project. Participants discussed that they valued the in class discussions, reflecting on their beliefs, and the use of photography and metaphor as mediums to express their beliefs. Participants discussed their initial perceptions of the assignment and how those changed and how they plan on using Photovoice in the future. Finally, participants explained what changes they would make to the Photovoice process. I ended this chapter with a discussion using my reflective journal as a guide, of what I learned and how I have changed.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The aim of this current study was to describe and explain English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers through a modified version of Photovoice method. Additionally, this study examined the ways in which Photovoice helped facilitate reflection. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling adolescent readers?
2. What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?
3. In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?

Analysis for research question one revealed English education pre-service teachers' had beliefs about: (a) struggling readers, including how struggling readers struggle, the characteristics of struggling readers, struggling readers' histories, and struggling readers' potential, and (b) beliefs about teaching struggling readers including the challenges teaching struggling readers, the importance of support for struggling reader success, the teacher's role as support, and the teacher's role as instructor (see table 17).

Table 17: Data analysis for Photovoice activity one

Family	Category	Sample codes
Beliefs about struggling readers (SR)	Student challenges	SR will face obstacles; SR will be challenged
	Characteristics of struggling readers	SR have low self-esteem; SR have low self-confidence; SR try to hide
	Struggling readers' histories	SR have been left behind; SR have been yelled at; SR have not received support
	Struggling readers have potential	SR have potential; SR can succeed; SR can grow as readers
Beliefs about Teaching Struggling Readers	Teaching challenges	Teaching SR is challenging; Many SR in a classroom; Teaching reading is complex
	Importance of support	SR need support; Importance of support; Teachers as necessary
	Teacher as supporter	Teacher as supporter; teacher as motivator; teacher as guide
	Teacher as instructor	Proper instruction; Teacher as provider of tools; Teachers must provide practice

For research question two, examining participants beliefs about themselves as readers, analysis revealed beliefs about: (a) the purposes of reading, including reading to escape, reading for growth, and being connected to reading and (b) the realities of reading, including the dangers of reading, the difficulties of reading, and required reading (see table 18).

Table 18: Data analysis for Photovoice activity two

Family	Category	Sample codes
Reading purposes	To escape	Reading as an escape; Reading to heal; Reading as peaceful
	To grow	Reading to become a better reader; reading for knowledge; reading to grow as a person
	Connection to reading	Always been a reader; connected to reading; will always be a reader
The Realities of Reading	Dangers of reading	Reading too much; reading as addictive; Reading as a crutch
	Reading is difficult	Reading is hard work; Becoming a better reader is difficult; will always have to improve reading skills
	Required reading	Pleasure reading versus require reading; dislike of textbook reading; required reading a necessary evil

Analysis for research question three, in what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection, revealed beliefs about (a) what pre-service teachers learned from Photovoice, including learning about themselves, learning about struggling readers, learning to have sympathy for struggling readers, and not learning in the project, (b) beliefs about the value of Photovoice, including discussion, reflections, and photography and metaphor, and (c) the Photovoice assignment including their initial thoughts on Photovoice, how they would use Photovoice in the future, and what they would change about Photovoice (table 19). The findings for this research question are discussed next. I discuss the implications of this research and suggest directions for further research. I end with a discussion of how I have changed as a researcher.

Table 19: Data analysis for Photovoice reflection narratives

Family	Category	Sample codes
What was learned from Photovoice	Self	Learned about self; Discovered self as struggling reader; Know self better
	Struggling readers	Learned to teach struggling readers; Learned methods to teach struggling readers
	Sympathy	Sympathize with struggling readers; Understood struggling readers better; Relating to struggling readers
	Did not learn	Did not learn; already knew self
What was valued from Photovoice	Discussions	Valued discussions; Valued other's opinions; Valued discussing photos
	Reflections	Valued reflections; Valued reflecting on photo; valued writing reflections
	Photography and metaphors	Valued photos; valued metaphors; difficult to communicate through photography
The Assignment	Initial thoughts on the assignment	Did not initially see value in photovoice; thought photovoice would be easy; Does not like photography
	Future use of Photovoice	Photovoice to teach content; Photovoice to get to know students; photovoice to engage students
	What they would change about Photovoice	Less secondary discussions; want more discussions; want to respond differently;

For this discussion, I feel it is important to first remind the reader of the development of beliefs and the importance of the examination of beliefs in teacher education. The findings and

implications discussed in this chapter will refer to this literature. Beliefs develop from three sources, personal experiences, the apprenticeship of observation (experiences with K-12 schooling), and from formal knowledge (education/academic programs) (Kagan, 1992; Nespor 1987; Pajares, 1992). Beliefs influence how pre-service teachers accept information in teacher education programs and the instructional decisions of in-service teachers (Pajares, 1992).

Teachers will spend more time on practices they believe are more beneficial for their students and their perceptions of students affect how they interact with particular student populations.

Beliefs and knowledge are similar and can be difficult to differentiate.

Participants in this study were in their junior or senior years and had completed 30-50 field experience hours. The course they were enrolled in was the only dedicated reading course in their program as reading instruction was embedded throughout other courses. The Photovoice activities were deliberately completed at the beginning of the semester to gain participants' beliefs before being influenced by instruction in the course. The purpose of having participants complete the Photovoice activities early in the course was to gain an understanding of English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers before they have completed the program. As such, it is expected that they would have limited knowledge about struggling readers and teaching struggling readers. Beliefs, however, influence how pre-service teachers accept (or decline) information in their teacher education programs and influences their instruction decisions as classroom teachers. Examining beliefs about teaching struggling readers and constructed those beliefs play a role in how these participants took in information in this class and will impact the instructional decisions as classroom teachers. As such, findings from research question one and two relate to each other. By examining participants beliefs about

themselves as readers, I was able gain a deeper understanding of their beliefs about reading instruction.

Findings

Eight findings emerged from this study (table 20).

Table 20: *Findings*

Research question	Finding
What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers?	<p>Many participants had not considered struggling readers as part of their classrooms</p> <p>Many participants held a deficit view of struggling readers</p> <p>Participants assumed a teacher's identity</p>
What are English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers?	<p>Reading was an event/experience for participants</p> <p>Participants did not understand the complexities of the reading process</p>
In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection on beliefs about reading instruction?	<p>Discussions were an integral part of the Photovoice process</p> <p>Many challenges with teacher reflection were addressed with Photovoice</p> <p>Photovoice helped develop beliefs (as well as showcasing them)</p>

Many participants had not considered struggling readers as part of their classroom.

Many participants had not thought about struggling readers or teaching struggling readers before this class and activity. While the prompt of the Photovoice activity was specific to the teaching of struggling readers, many participants wrote about the characteristics of struggling readers in their narratives. Participants noted they learned about themselves while discussing struggling readers with other participants. Edith wrote, "I never took the time to think about myself as a

reader, I got to know myself better.” For many participants, just thinking about struggling readers allowed them to feel as though they understood struggling readers better than they had before participating in the Photovoice activities. Cynthia stated in the final focus group, “before this class, I never really thought of struggling readers at the high school level because I thought you’re in high school you should know by that point.”

While this highlights the usefulness of the Photovoice process for reflection, it also highlights how little participants thought about struggling readers and teaching struggling readers. This suggests when participants are thinking about teaching English they are not thinking about teaching struggling readers, who will likely make up a large percentage of their student population. For example, Alice noted in her first narrative that she was so unsure of what a struggling reader looked like that she used the textbook to get an idea of what to talk about. She wrote, “before I actually took this picture I hesitated because I couldn’t imagine what an actual struggling reader looked like. After reading Beers chapter 2/3 and Tovani 4/5, I realized that we as teachers (in the beginning) are clueless as to who our struggling readers are.” Teaching secondary students to read was not part of that role as secondary language arts teacher.

Furthermore, participants noted struggling readers will have to overcome challenges and obstacles to become better readers. Ashley used driftwood to represent the obstacles, while Kathy used weights to show the challenge of working to get better at reading, Jared took a picture of trash and a shovel to represent the work a struggling reader has to do to become a better reader, Lisa’s picture of the Grand Canyon was taken to create an analogy comparing the difficulty of climbing the Grand Canyon and the difficulty becoming a good reader and Victoria’s picture of looking up at bookshelf were all meant to represent the struggle and obstacles that face struggling readers in their journey’s to become better readers. However,

Ashley was the only one who noted what those struggles are. Ashley notes the obstacles facing struggling readers are their fear of reading in front of the class and comprehending the texts needed for their classes, but others just note that struggling readers will have challenges.

Participants believe teaching struggling readers would be difficult and challenging. Heather noted this complexity when she wrote of her picture of knitting lace, “Teaching struggling readers is knitting lace. Though in the end, when all is said and done, the result is beautiful, it is a difficult and time-consuming process.” However, few noted what those challenges would be, but participants’ thought those challenges would be difficult enough to feel like they might fail in teaching struggling readers. However, given many participants had not thought about teaching struggling readers before this class, it could suggest participants defaulted to what they thought would be best practice for content instruction. Participants might have felt that by attending to struggling readers emotional/affective needs students would be more confident and encouraged to read and thus would read more on their own. This suggests participants believed that reading more often is the best reading instruction.

Perhaps because they had not thought about struggling readers before, participants may not have been sure what the struggles or obstacles struggling readers face. The very phrase struggling reader suggests that there is a struggle or challenge, so it may have been a case of participants simply acknowledging that struggling readers have difficulties in school. While this may have been a case of simply responding in a way they thought was socially appropriate, it does highlight the lack of knowledge participants had about struggling readers. Participants were able to recognize that struggling readers would have difficulties in school, but the participants were not able to identify what would constitute the struggling readers’ struggles. While the lack of knowledge may not be surprising since participants have had minimal field experiences and

had not taken a dedicated reading course before, this does suggest that participants had not thought about struggling readers as a population they would be teaching as English teachers. It may be the case, that participants do not see struggling readers as part of their role as secondary English teacher.

Participants felt their experiences with Photovoice helped them connect to and have sympathy for struggling readers. Many noted that by completing the Photovoice project they were able to put themselves in the shoes of struggling readers. For example, Victoria took a picture of a book shelf full of computer books to represent a struggling reader. She took this picture to represent that struggling readers must feel like she feels when she has to read a technical or computer book that she is not interested in and has no background knowledge on. Cynthia believed she felt like a struggling reader when she was learning Korean. She compared struggling readers to learning a new language. Both noted that thinking about themselves in those situations is what a struggling reader would feel like, giving them sympathy for struggling readers, understanding struggling readers better and thus being able to teach struggling reader better.

Participants struggled to understand who struggling readers are and as a result tried to put themselves in the “shoes” of struggling readers. For Cynthia it was being a language learner. For Victoria it was reading complex computer books. In these cases, participants had to go out of their way to “feel” like struggling readers, which resulted in participants believing they now know what struggling readers have gone through which enabled them to have sympathy for struggling readers. Heather noted that she had not considered that other English pre-service teachers would have been struggling readers themselves.

However, while they did not expect struggling readers in their classroom, they saw struggling readers as victims who had been abandoned by other teachers. Participants often noted struggling readers were “diamonds in the rough” and were able to see the beauty in struggling readers. Participants stated that other teachers did not take the time or effort to look for and help struggling readers. For example, Cassie wrote explaining her beliefs on struggling readers, “And I am sure that many people-especially past teachers- who could have helped these students read better just passed him/her by.” In addition to placing blame on other teachers for struggling readers, this sentiment expressed by participants in this study gives some insight into participant’s views about the current educational system and the teaching profession.

Participants suggested struggling readers have completed at least five grades without having a teacher who has not been willing to spend time or effort on students who are struggling, particularly at the elementary level. More likely, since participants had noted during the class that they were interesting in teaching high school only, this sentiment could be extended for all the teachers in middle school as well. Participants had a confidence in their education and the impact they will have once they enter the classroom. It also suggests perhaps a lack of confidence in the teaching profession as a whole. Furthermore, if pre-service teachers do not have a respect for the teaching profession as a whole, it begs the question of what they think of the knowledge they are gaining in their education programs. Participants in this study hint at their beliefs about the assignments in their education program including collaborative group work and reflections, by noting before participating in the Photovoice activities, they saw little value in group work and reflections.

Participants held a deficit view of struggling readers. Many participants took a deficit view of struggling readers. Participants described struggling readers as unmotivated,

embarrassed, having low self-esteem, and little confidence in their reading and academic abilities. Struggling readers were described as trash (Jared), a rundown car (Cassie), and as sickly or dying leaves on a bush (Edith). These characteristics largely align with previous research on beliefs about struggling readers and learners (Daisey, 2009; Hall, 2011; Sweet, Guntrie, and Ng, 1998) where participants described struggling readers as lazy, unmotivated, not interested at getting better at reading, and getting poor grades. However, there were some key differences. Participants noted that struggling readers wanted to get better at reading and wanted to enjoy school, but because of their past experiences they became unmotivated and disinterested in school. Unlike previous literature, pre-service teachers viewed struggling readers as unmotivated by extrinsic motivations (Sweet, Guntrie, NG, 1998). They felt it was their responsibility to teach struggling readers, unlike Niertheimer, et al.'s (2000) study.

As a result of the negative feelings, many participants noted struggling readers will hide in the classroom particularly during reading time or attempt to hide their reading problems. Caroline used the moss branches to represent how struggling readers (branches) try to hide from instruction. She wrote of the branches:

These branches have a thick coating called bark similar to the hardness that many struggling readers develop; they hide behind that hardness and pretend like there's nothing wrong. Indeed they develop many different strategies in order to trick everyone around them...

Participants largely noted that spotting struggling readers in the classroom took some time and effort, although others noted that it would be more difficult than just looking for them.

Participants largely felt struggling readers had a certain look that was meant for the struggling reader to blend in and not be noticed in class. This concept of hiding reinforces what participants

noted about struggling readers being embarrassed about not being able to read. This suggests participants believe struggling readers are aware they are struggling readers and self-conscious about it. Participants saw struggling readers as victims through which the characteristics of not enjoying school, not doing well in class, and feeling embarrassed were symptoms and the logical results of not getting the correct instruction.

Despite the challenges and negative affect struggling readers must tackle, participants believed that struggling readers could overcome their deficits with the right help and motivation as well as with hard work. Participants noted struggling readers must want to try and will struggle to become better readers. Nina's picture of pom-pom highlights this notion. She explained while a teacher is important to her struggling reader's success, the students are the ones doing the learning. She notes that while she is there to help the student at all points while they "play the game," she cannot "play the game" for them. Other participants noted this as well. In Nina's metaphor it is interesting that she does not see herself as a coach. A coach also does not play the game, but a coach does help train and give strategy to play the game so the players can succeed in the game. This concept of struggling readers needing to work hard suggests that participants see the learner as an important part of the learning process, but the lack of the teacher's direct involvement with instruction (i.e. cheerleader instead of coach) suggests participants are not sure how to specifically help struggling readers. The participants note help is needed for struggling readers, but they are unsure about the type of help to give, so they default to spending additional time with the struggling students and giving more support to those students.

Participants assumed a teacher's identity. For both Photovoice activities, participants wrote from the perspective of a current teacher. Many of the narratives used "we" referring to

the larger professional community. For example in Edith's narrative on the importance of recognizing individuality of students in schools using a bush as a metaphor she wrote, "Much like looking at a bush, when we look at a school we think of a unit. Disregarding that each leaf is a separate entity, we may assume that this bush is healthy." She uses we in this context to discuss the perspective of all teachers, including herself. Jane describes herself as a practicing teacher. Describing her pictures, Jane wrote, "As teachers, we sometimes pull off to the side of the road...." and "We are able to see the bigger picture often times that our students don't always see at the time..." Nina also used this phrasing, "As teachers, we play a significant role in each student that comes into our rooms, and that is to support and cheer them on with every step..." Jason also used this terminology, "We as educators must remind these child that you can read at your own pace, and take your time and be just as successful."

This finding suggests participants view themselves as part of the professional community. It may be the case that participants believed entry into the professional community is based on something other than teaching students. Perhaps the knowledge about teaching or working to obtain the degree and license itself, is enough to warrant inclusion to the teaching professional community. This is also suggests participants saw their opinions and beliefs just as valid as in-service teachers. This is concerning if we consider their beliefs about past teachers of struggling readers. It may be the case that participants believed their beliefs were more valid than in-service teachers. This is particularly disconcerting if we consider those participants who noted that they had not considered struggling readers as part of their classrooms before participating in the Photovoice activity.

Reading was an event/experience for participants. Many participants felt they had not struggled with reading in their own lives and believed they were good readers. For all

participants, reading was an important aspect of their lives. In fact, for many, reading was a coping mechanism through which they dealt with problems in their lives. Cynthia, for example, wrote reading was medicine to help her heal. Reading, then, was more than an exercise or process to be completed, it was part of their identities and how they lived their lives. Many participants wrote they had been readers since they were young. Heather noted that she remembers books from her youth more than toys. They also noted having a connection to reading and always being readers. This again points to reading being an integral part of their lives and their identities.

The reading identities of these pre-service teachers were focused on pleasurable reading. After discussions in class, many realized they had left out instructional reading including reading for class and other required reading. For the most part their feelings on instructional reading were negative and many admitted they only skimmed or did not read required reading. These results mirror Normal and Spencer's (2005) study examining writing beliefs at the secondary level. Teachers saw more value in creative writing than expository and analytical writing. These findings suggest English education pre-service teachers have strong beliefs about what is valuable in teaching reading and writing. Their personal experiences, which help develop their beliefs (Lortie, 1975; Pajares, 1992) are such that their beliefs about reading experiences may impact their teaching decisions. Pre-service teachers felt struggling readers needed to be found and provided motivation to read. Many pre-service teachers noted that struggling readers needed to find the love of books and enjoy reading. It was simply a matter of getting students to enjoy reading. These beliefs stem from their own experiences enjoying reading and reading being an integral part of their lives. Participants in this study seemed to want to teach struggling readers not how to read per se, but how to experience reading like they have in their lives. They

were looking to show struggling readers the same experiences they had with reading including the psychological benefits. They have been good readers for so long that the mechanical aspect of reading is unimportant and the complexities of reading are invisible.

Participants did not include required reading a part of their reading identities. They did not consider informational reading as part of their identities, further suggesting they view reading as not as an act, but as an experience. They did not enjoy the act of reading; they enjoyed the experience of reading. They wanted to attempt to teach struggling readers and maybe students in general, the experience of reading rather than the act of reading. This leads to pre-service teachers focusing not on reading strategies and skills, but on affective aspects of reading such as enjoyment and motivation. Hence teaching struggling readers involves building their confidence and motivation so that they read more. The more they read, the more they will experience.

If we take the Peter Effect (Applegate and Applegate, 2004) into account, pre-service teachers may have the Peter Effect for informational texts. The Peter Effect was developed to conceptualize a teachers' perception of reading as it relates to their pleasure reading and their ability to teach the love of reading. In short, if the teacher did not love reading, how can they teach the love of reading to their students? While it is clear in this study that participants enjoyed reading and should be able to help students develop a love of reading fiction texts, it is not clear whether participants will teach reading informational texts. If pre-service teachers do not enjoy or like informational texts and openly state they skim or do not read information and/or required reading, can they teach that to struggling readers or any of their students? Jason wrote, "I like to read, but I don't like to read just about every textbook I have ever read in my life. That's why I don't read them. I skim them. I fake read textbooks generally speaking." Teachers will spend more time on instructional practices they see as more valid or more important

(Powers, Zippay, & Butler, 2006) suggesting participants in this study may not see strategies or skills to read informational texts as important to valid. Additionally, if participants do not read textbooks themselves, how will they be able to teach their students to read informational texts, which are a key aspect of informational texts and English standards (Core standards, 2013; NCTE, 2013)

Participants noted required reading helped them gain knowledge and grow as people, but they did not include that as part of their reading identity. When participants discussed growing as a reader, they discussed what they had learned from characters and experiences in fiction. Many noted that they did not enjoy required reading and often skipped or skimmed textbook reading for classes. This suggests participants see reading fiction in particular as a way of gaining knowledge and seeing the reading experience as not just an event to escape or heal, but as a way to learn. However, for most participants, this learning did not come from informational texts.

Participants did not understand the complexities of the reading process. When discussing struggling readers, participants blamed struggling readers' past teachers for not helping struggling readers earlier. This blaming of past teachers also aligns with the previous literature such as Nierstheimer et al's., (2000) study of elementary pre-service teachers beliefs about literacy instruction. Participants in their study felt readers struggled because they did not get the support they needed from home, did not get instruction from past teachers, and were not able to use reading skills and strategies. Participants in this study did mention the importance of support for struggling readers' success (see Caroline's first Photovoice activity), but attributed most of struggling readers problems with not getting instruction and support from prior teachers.

It should be noted that in Nierstheimer et al's (2000) study, the participants were pre-service elementary students, who received early literacy courses in their program. However, in this study's pilot conducted later in the semester, participants noted that struggling readers needed skills and strategies that were missing from past academic experiences, more closely aligning with Nierstheimer et al's (2000) study. Few participants in the current study mentioned skills and strategies. They noted the lack of support stemmed from past teachers not spending the time and effort to help struggling readers. However, I attribute this to the pilot study being conducted in the middle of the semester and students in that class already receiving instruction on reading skills and strategies. A weakness of the pilot study, was that participants were clearly influenced by the content in the course as they used phrases and terminology from the course texts and class discussions. As such, I do not feel that study was able to capture participants' true beliefs.

Participants described past teachers as abandoning struggling readers, referring to struggling readers as trash (Jared) and a run-down car (Cassie). Participants saw struggling readers as rejects of the school system in which they had been left behind or seen as a project that is too big to take on. Heather and others noted that teaching struggling readers was a big and complex job. She stated of her picture of knitting needles and lace, "I chose to shoot from this angle because I wanted to show how big of a project lace knitting and teaching a struggling reader, happens to be." While participants noted that teaching struggling readers would be difficult and challenging, unlike previous literature they still felt like it was their job to teach struggling readers. Hall (2011), Ness (2009), and Sweet, Guntrie, and Ng (1998) all note that content area teachers felt that it was not their job to teach struggling readers because they didn't

have the time and felt it wasn't their job to teach reading. Participants in this study noted the time and effort needed to teach struggling readers, but took on the responsibility.

While participants took on the responsibility of teaching struggling readers, as discussed above, they did not think about struggling readers as part of their classrooms. Cynthia stated in the final focus group, "before this class, I never really thought of struggling readers at the high school level because I thought you're in high school you should know by that point." This mirrors literature on the beliefs of content area teachers on reading instruction at the secondary level. In Ness' (2009) study, examining content area teachers' beliefs about literacy instruction one participant noted, "The role of the secondary teacher should be to improve reading but not have to teach reading comprehension at the high school level" (p. 156).

O'Brien and Stewart (1990) also examined the literacy beliefs of content area teachers and also found content area teachers felt students should know how to read by the time they reach the secondary level. Hall (2011) noted that English education teachers often expect secondary students to be able to read complex materials when they enter secondary school. Participants suggest, agreeing with the literature, that secondary students should know how to read and comprehend complex materials. This is partly shown by their explanation for why struggling readers struggle. They were quick to blame other teachers, but not the school system itself. Participants suggested if struggling readers had competent teachers in their years of schooling then there would be no struggling readers.

According to participants the role of the teacher is to support and/or motivate struggling readers. Participants listed many of the same characteristics as Mallette's (2000) multiple case study of seven elementary in-service teachers including, beliefs that struggling readers struggle because of a lack of support, including parental involvement, lack of opportunity to practice, and

that struggling readers were not able to make connections. Participants in this study noted the importance of support from family, schools, and in particular teachers.

Participants felt that teachers were an integral part of the success of struggling readers. Participants referred to teachers as angelic, key, and integral to the support and success of struggling readers. Even participants who noted that the teachers' role for struggling readers is to support them, participants pointed out how that support and teacher is necessary to the success of struggling readers. For example, in her narrative describing teachers as cheerleaders, Nina notes that cheerleaders are essential to the game being played. These beliefs align with literature that looking at how beginning teachers and pre-service teachers see themselves in reflection (Tannehill & MacPhail, 2012; Calderhead & Robson, 2001). This finding aligns with Tannehill & MacPhail's (2012) study which found a majority of pre-service teachers saw themselves as the most important part of student learning. However, this study followed pre-service teachers over the course of the semester and found pre-service teachers at the end of the semester changed their views to focus their instruction on the individual differences in the student. Interestingly participants in the current study felt they are an integral part of struggling reader's academic success, but at the same time noted that it was important for teachers including themselves to be aware of individual differences in student learning. Furthermore, participants blame of prior teachers also suggests participants believe in the importance of teachers in the success of struggling readers.

Participants noted teaching struggling readers was just a matter of finding and paying attention to struggling readers. For example, Nichole stated that struggling readers just needed a little TLC. As mentioned above, past teachers had abandoned and did not take the time and effort to find struggling readers. Participants noted that teaching struggling readers is just a

matter of finding struggling readers and helping them gain back their self-confidence. As a result, participants noted that teaching struggling readers is just taking the time and effort to find and help struggling reader. While some participants did mention reading instruction as teaching skills and strategies, reading instruction for many was simply giving struggling readers some TLC. This could suggest that participants, like content area teachers (Ness, 2009) believe reading instruction is common sense and just involves time and effort.

Discussions were an integral part of the Photovoice process. An aim of this project was to examine Photovoice, a method that has not been used to examine beliefs of pre-service teachers, as a method of reflection would facilitate reflection as it had done in research in other contexts (e.g., Chonody, Ferman, Amtrani & Martin, 2013; Zenkov & Harmon, 2009).

Participants were asked to reflect on their experiences using Photovoice to see if they felt Photovoice facilitated reflection. Participants felt Photovoice helped them reflect and for some even challenge their beliefs about struggling readers. Participants noted thinking deeply about themselves and struggling readers and thinking about themselves as readers and struggling readers for the first time.

An important aspect of the theoretical framework and assumption of this paper was that metaphor would be the most appropriate medium to reflect because as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) suggest, it is the way we think. Pre-service teachers noted difficulty with metaphor, but did attribute them to framing their thoughts and making them think deeper about their own beliefs. Reflecting on the metaphor process in Photovoice, Heather wrote that metaphors are more difficult because metaphor, “demands two items be the same for one moment, and suggests that every aspect between the two is alike.” Participants’ discussion about allowing photographs

of people for the project highlighted these beliefs as most pre-services teachers saw that using people would be “too easy” and would not have made them think as much. Cynthia wrote:

My first impression going into the photovoice activity was that this was honestly going to be an activity that would waste my time and not really benefit me in any way. ..

However, I am glad to say that my initial expectations in fact never came to fruition and actually the complete opposite ended up happening.

However, most participants pointed to the discussion groups as the most helpful. So much so that the major complaint for the project was that they were not able to discuss more with the rest of the class. Sharing their beliefs was what helped them form or solidify their own beliefs. They enjoyed talking with each other and hearing other points of views. The photos and the narratives served as a strong frame to their discussions in class. Metaphors, then served as a common ground of communication through which pre-service teachers could communicate with others about their beliefs, but also mediate how much they wanted to reveal during the discussion. Heather and Edith noted the vulnerability of sharing with a group suggesting that they only shared what they were comfortable with and while they were comfortable with their group, they were not that comfortable to share everything.

Additionally, the mentioning of lingering effects of the assignment suggests deeper reflection as well. Some pre-service teachers mentioned that the assignment made them think long after the assignment was due, as they wanted to change and keep writing about the pictures. The pictures themselves helped them to think more about themselves as they used the pictures to frame their writing and their thinking. Participants noted that they kept finding more and more in their pictures once they had taken them. This suggests they are making their beliefs more and more explicit.

Almost all pre-service teachers saw value in the project and felt it was a useful project for the class, but for different reasons. For some, they saw Photovoice as a way to engage students and as applied to struggling readers a way to engage them and allow them to communicate in a medium that they would be more comfortable in. Others saw it as a way for students to get to know each other and themselves. This aligned a little more with the purposes of the assignment suggesting these students understood the purpose of the assignment. In fact, many were surprised that the purpose of the assignment was to examine their own beliefs at the end, even though the purpose was clearly stated at the beginning of the projects and reinforced throughout discussions. I was apparently not clear enough in my statement of the objectives. Regardless, using this as a tool to motivate and engage students suggests that these pre-service teachers saw the value of this assignment as a modeled strategy to be used in the classroom.

How pre-service teachers plan to use Photovoice in their classroom gave some insight into what they got out of and valued about the assignment. It helps to see if students got the point of Photovoice in general. I made the assumption that the participants would not have had prior experience with Photovoice. However, a fellow doctoral student had used a version of Photovoice in a methods course that some of my students had taken. The process presented in this study focused on understanding English education pre-service teacher beliefs, while Photovoice was presented as a secondary instructional strategy in my colleague's class. However, I feel this led to the confusion some of the students noted in the focus group about the purpose of assignment. I will note that the purpose of the project was clearly stated from the beginning and I attempted to wrap up each conversation with the purpose of the project. In any case, some in the focus group felt their answers would have been different. However, I'm not sure in what ways since the questions were focused on their own beliefs.

Many challenges to pre-service teacher reflection were addressed with Photovoice.

A major goal of reflection in teacher education is for students to make explicit their beliefs and possibly challenge some of their beliefs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Participants noted, in some cases to their own surprise, beliefs they had not thought about or considered before. Previous research (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Rath, et al., 2006; Richardson, 2003) has noted some challenges to reflecting in teacher education, some of which may have been addressed with Photovoice. I will discuss some of those challenges and how they relate to Photovoice in this section.

Beliefs are tied to self-identity so students may be wary of sharing beliefs that are revealing or sensitive (Richardson, 2003). Edith and Heather noted they felt a bit vulnerable with sharing with their group. While they were willing to share a lot about themselves, Edith shared a story about her friend's death, they both felt they were uncomfortable sharing more. This may have been the case for others who did not mention it in the focus groups or their narratives. That the class knew each other fairly well before the class started and after the team building exercises in the beginning of class, set up this class to be a close knit community. Students shared stories about their parent's divorces, a friend's death, and being made fun of in grade school, so some students were definitely comfortable sharing. However, in a class as large as nearly 30 students, it may always be difficult to share intimate details of one's life in a classroom setting. While I could guess that asking participants to discuss their reading identities would have them discuss their self-identities, I was not expecting answers to be so personal and perceived as vulnerable. I think this highlights how important and personal the reading experience is for these students and how intertwined it will be with their beliefs about teaching

reading. It also highlights how Photovoice allowed participants to make their beliefs explicit and share their beliefs with their peers.

Another challenge with reflection in teacher education is participants providing answers they think the instructor will want to hear (Richardson, 2006) or what they think is socially acceptable (Cunningham, Zibulsky, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2009). The activities for this study are no exception to this as students were sharing their beliefs with each other and the instructor. I feel like this may have been the case, to some extent, for many participants in the first activity. While I do believe based on my interactions with the class that they would have been forthright with their answers, I think for a majority of the students, they didn't have any initial beliefs about teaching struggling readers because they had not thought about them being in their classroom. Their responses, especially those that tend to be clichés (e.g. Adam's picture of a rainbow to signify hope) highlight the participants' inability to formulate in-depth beliefs about struggling readers and this suggests that many of these English education pre-service teachers have not considered teaching struggling readers when they think about teaching language arts.

Another consideration about reflection activities is that without proper follow through after beliefs are made explicit, those beliefs remain undeveloped and unchallenged (Darling-Hammon, 2005; Kagan, 1992). Photovoice allowed them to hone and develop their beliefs with the rest of the class. Participants noted others' ideas and noted how others' ideas influenced their own. Cynthia wrote, "I wanted to share once I found that others validated my opinions by listening to me. I came to understand just how important the idea of collaboration is, as well as the notion of community building." Cassie wrote, "Through this experience, my peers have made me think about things that I would have never have come up with on my own without their interaction." Discussions helped some participants develop their own ideas. She stated in the

focus group, “....I came into the group discussions with my somewhat vague ideas and opinions about struggling readers, but through conversation I solidified those.” Tom wrote that he wasn’t too keen on teaching struggling readers and perhaps is still not, but he understands them better. Caroline realized that she was a struggling reader herself. Heather discovered that her classmates were not like her when it came to reading. Beliefs were challenged and developed through Photovoice. Participants in this study not only made their beliefs explicit, they were able to challenge and solidify those ideas through discussion and reflection.

Florio-Runane (2002) argues personal reflection activities, such as autobiographies may overemphasize the role of the teacher, isolating the teacher from the context. While Photovoice is more social than autobiographies, the second project (who are you as a reader?) had participants focus on themselves. The first project (what do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers) focused the student population, but participants did discuss the role of the teacher and the context. Participants discussed the school environment (Nichole, Caroline) and the ingredients for student growth, although a part of that was the importance of the teacher. In particular, participants noted how they could use Photovoice with their classrooms and what they learned about struggling readers, showing that participants may not have overemphasized the role of the teacher.

There are also ethical considerations with asking students to share sensitive or intimate details of their lives and this project is no different. Again participants noted sensitive topics such as death and divorce in their narratives. Participants chose what to say in their narratives and what to say in their small group discussion. The prompts did not specifically ask for personal information. As Heather and Edith noted, while they felt they could share, they didn’t feel like they had to share and Heather noted that she wouldn’t share with people who were not her close

friends. Sharing personal information was not required for this assignment, although some chose to share anyway.

Photovoice helped develop beliefs (instead of showcasing them). With Photovoice participants, who are pre-service teachers, had to go beyond their apprenticeship of observation and personal experience to discuss their beliefs and feelings on teaching on struggling readers. An important finding for this study is that participants had not thought about struggling readers in their classroom before these activities. It may be the case that participants in this study did not have beliefs about teaching struggling readers before completing the Photovoice activities. That is to say that while the goal of this project may have been to capture existing beliefs, it may have forced participants to develop and create beliefs instead. Many participants tried to put themselves in struggling reader's shoes in order to complete the project. For example, Cynthia thought about her experience trying to speak Korean in Korea and Victoria thought about reading computer and technical books. Without prior experiences with being a struggling reader and apparently had few experiences from their apprenticeship of observation to draw on, so participants created their beliefs about teaching struggling readers and their identities as reader through the assignment. This highlights an issue in beliefs research and teacher education on whether or not beliefs are being made explicit or simply being made.

Implications for English Education Teacher Education

Table 21: *Implications*

Implications	
1.	The Need to Highlight the Complexities of the Reading Process
2.	Defining the role of the profession

3. Photovoice helped pre-service teachers reflect
 4. Developing beliefs in education programs
 5. Photovoice helped capture beliefs and values of participants
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The need to highlight the complexities of the reading process. Many participants in this study did not see the complexities of the reading process. Many participants view reading as an experience or an event that helped them cope with the realities of life and was an important part of their self-identity. Many had been reading since they were young and a number mentioned that they would always be readers. As such, they did not see the teaching of reading as teaching students to read. That was largely the job of elementary educators. They wanted to teach the experience of reading, which requires advanced reading skills.

For many of the participants in this study, the reading process seemed like a natural and easy task. Just as Judith Langer suggests for teaching struggling readers, English education pre-service teachers need to have the invisible process of reading become visible. To better understand struggling readers' struggles English education pre-service teachers need to have a thorough understanding of the complexities of the reading comprehension and reading development for young adolescents. Secondary English education programs need to put an emphasis on the complexities of reading comprehension and learning to read.

Defining the role of the profession. In addition to highlighting the complexities of the reading process in secondary English programs, teacher educators may be well served explicitly defining the roles and responsibilities of English teachers and the teaching profession in general. Many participants had not thought about struggling readers in their classrooms before completing the Photovoice activities, suggesting participants do not see struggling readers as

part of their ideal classroom and possibly as their role as a secondary language arts teacher. Many participants wrote their narratives as if they were part of the teaching profession already. Furthermore, participants largely blamed prior teachers for not helping struggling readers earlier in their academic lives. This blame points to a lack of knowledge about struggling readers and perhaps to participants having few experiences with struggling readers in their K-12 schooling. The blaming of past teachers highlights their belief that all necessary reading skills should have been developed at the elementary level.

Many participants also held a deficit view of struggling readers, believing struggling readers have low self-esteem, were abandoned, and did poorly in school. While in many ways this finding mirrors other research examining content area teachers and elementary teachers beliefs about teaching struggling readers and learners (Daisey, 2004; Hall, 2011; Niesterimer, et al, 2000; Sweet, et al., 1998), participants in this study differed in their belief that it was their job to teach struggling readers and viewing struggling readers as victims.

This finding suggests the need to examine pre-service teachers' beliefs about the role of the language arts teacher and the role of education. How they view and value the education system as a whole and how they view their role as language arts teacher will play an influential role in how they view themselves in the profession. However, it also suggests the need for teacher education programs to make explicit the role of the teacher, perhaps through extended guided field experiences. The instructional implication for this finding is to address beliefs about the role of the language arts teacher and the role of the teacher in education programs through reflective activities such as Photovoice or reflective journals. Having participants make their beliefs explicit and discussing them will help them further develop, challenge, or solidify their beliefs. Teacher educators can use these beliefs to plan for instruction.

Photovoice helped pre-service teachers to reflect. Participants largely saw Photovoice as helpful in examining their own beliefs. In particular, they noted the ability to share and hear others opinions in small group discussions as the most helpful in crafting their own responses and beliefs. Participants also noted the challenge and difficulty, but helpfulness of responding to the prompts with metaphor and photography. The metaphor and photography helped participants frame their responses when they completed the assignments and then the photography and metaphor helped to guide and enrich the class discussions. Metaphor helped participants communicate their own beliefs, while the photographs allowed the participants to point to what they were trying to communicate. This lead to discussions focused on the beliefs themselves, rather than spending time trying to communicate their beliefs.

There are a number of challenges with reflection in teacher education. While Photovoice does not address all of these challenges, it did address enough of them to consider Photovoice as a helpful instructional tool for reflection in teacher education programs. The version of Photovoice used in this study seems to be an excellent instructional strategy for pre-service teachers to reflect on their beliefs and to examine those beliefs comfortably in an educational setting. Photovoice seems like an effective strategy for any teacher educator looking for their students to examine their beliefs as a way to begin a course.

The findings of this study suggest many participants did not have beliefs about teaching struggling readers and beliefs about themselves as readers. Some participants noted they had not thought about those topics. It is possible that participants developed their beliefs while completing the Photovoice activities. If this is the case, then it could be the case their beliefs about teaching are continually being developed throughout the program. This finding suggests the need for teacher education programs to allow the space for pre-service teachers to develop

those beliefs. Pre-service teachers need to fully develop their beliefs about foundational issues, such as the role of the language arts teacher and the role of education.. Without these beliefs develop, pre-service teachers may continue through their programs with partially developed beliefs influencing what information they accept from their program and the instructional decisions in their classroom. Photovoice, in this study, allowed participants to develop beliefs about their role as a language arts teacher in a way they had not done previously. They felt they understood their role of language arts teacher better and struggling readers as a population better.

Impact of Developing Beliefs in Education Programs. One source of the development of beliefs is through formal knowledge (Richardson, 2003). Many participants may have developed their beliefs during the Photovoice activities. Without having their “apprenticeship of observation” or personal experiences to draw on, participants relied on what they have learned in classes and discussions with their peers. When addressing beliefs in teacher education programs it is assumed pre-service teachers have beliefs about a topic to make explicit. It may be the case pre-service teachers are actually developing beliefs rather than making existing beliefs explicit during these activities. If this is the case, teacher educators need to be cognizant of this and help pre-service teachers develop beliefs best suited for effective teaching.

Photovoice helped capture beliefs and values of participants. Photovoice, as used in this study allowed participants to make explicit and discuss their beliefs about teaching struggling readers and themselves as readers. To discuss their beliefs for the first round of discussions, participants had think metaphorically, take the picture and then describe the picture in writing. As such, they had come to class and thus their discussions having already verbalized their beliefs and were ready to describe them to their peers. These rich discussions led to participants revising and honing their beliefs. Participants noted gaining new ideas and

perspectives about their own beliefs and including them in their final narratives. The final narratives then became documents of participants' beliefs that had been revised, reconsidered, and representative.

The photography and metaphor challenged participants to dig deeper in thinking about their beliefs and served as a visual prompt to help communicate those beliefs to others. Participants initially felt the photography and metaphor would be easy or even worthless, but many saw the challenges and some even noted their narratives would be much shorter if the activity did not include photography and metaphor. While photo-elicitation (Harper, 2002) method uses photos (or any visual data) as a visual discussion point, Photovoice as it was used here allowed participants to come to the discussion having already considered and responded to the prompt, thus allowing them to possibly communicate their ideas more clearly. This Photovoice process also allowed them to revise their answers as they reflected on the conversation. Again this points to responses to the prompt that may be more representational.

Suggestions for further research

Future research should further examine English education pre-service teachers beliefs as well as the beliefs of all secondary content area teachers. As stated at the beginning of this document (the dissertation), "we are our beliefs. They direct everything that happens in or out of our classroom" (Watson, 1994, p. 606). Without knowing the beliefs of our pre-service teachers, teacher educators may be fighting an uphill battle to preparing secondary educators. Further research should examine English education pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers and literacy instruction. This study happened in one class in one university. Additional qualitative research on other populations will add to the findings of this study to gain a better understanding of this population. While there are some similarities to content area

teacher beliefs this study highlights that there is a difference between English educators beliefs and content area teachers' beliefs that needs to be explored further for the same reasons as put for the for the reasons for conducting this study.

Furthermore, by examining their beliefs about their role as secondary language arts teacher, teacher educators could get an understanding of pre-service teaches beliefs about the teaching profession as well what populations they believe they will be teaching. For example, it was clear that many participants had not thought about teaching struggling readers before taking part in the Photovoice activities. Their beliefs about the role of the language arts teacher did not include struggling readers. It would be interesting to see what populations and instructional practices they did envision as being part of the role of teacher educators.

This study used Photovoice method to examine the beliefs of pre-service teachers. This method has been used rarely to examine beliefs of teachers. Participants in the study found that Photovoice allowed them to reflect on themselves and struggling readers and helped them clarify their thoughts. Further research should examine Photovoice as a reflection method for teacher education and further research should examine Photovoice as a research method to examine beliefs. While the version of Photovoice used in this study was modified as compared to Wang and Burris' original model, the version used in this study seemed to be effective at gaining participants' beliefs as well as serving as a reflection tool for participants.

Following calls from researchers (Calderhead & Robson, 1992; Shaw, et al., 2008; Tanhill & MacPhil, 2012) metaphors allowed participants to frame and think about their beliefs and provided a medium through which to express their beliefs both in writing and in discussion, which suggests further research on using metaphors to capture beliefs is needed. In particular, metaphor used in this qualitative study allowed participants to explain and revise their metaphors

based on their discussions and reflections. Metaphor research on pre-service teacher beliefs has been quantitative and has not allowed participants to discuss in depth their metaphors or discuss with others their participants.

Future research should examine belief development and examining existing beliefs in education programs. This study highlights a development in beliefs research in that participants in this study may not have had beliefs about teaching struggling readers before being asked to discuss their beliefs through the Photovoice activities. The goal of this study was to examine beliefs of English education pre-service teachers through a method that would help participants make explicit their beliefs about teaching struggling readers. However, participants noted they had not thought about teaching struggling readers before the activities, suggesting they had developed their beliefs for this project. Instead of examining existing beliefs, this study may have examined newly developed beliefs. Further research examining beliefs of pre-service teachers at different time points would help make the difference between newly developed beliefs and existing beliefs more clear.

Reflecting on the study: What this study meant to me and how I have changed

As a teacher educator. Participants in this study were not the only ones to have their beliefs change. As a teacher educator I was very much interested in the outcomes of this study and as I graded narratives and reflections, I started putting together what I was learning. While I discussed what I learned in chapter 4, here I discuss what this study has meant for me as a teacher educator and researcher.

As a teacher educator, this study has shown me the importance of knowing my students' beliefs and expectations. While I have always found it important to get to know my students, this project has highlighted the need for me to understand what my students are expecting to gain

from the education program as a whole and from the profession. While beliefs about the course and the student population (i.e. struggling readers) are important to uncover, the findings of this study suggest these beliefs are at least partially rooted in their beliefs about the role of the secondary English educator and the role of teachers in general. The teaching profession as a whole has a horrendous track record for keeping teachers in the field (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006). It's important that teacher educators not only teach pre-service teachers how to become effective teachers, but also to prepare them for the "realities" of teaching. By keeping up with recent research and working closely with schools, teacher educators can help prepare pre-service teachers with the "realities" of teaching.

This study highlighted for me the severe disconnect between the "apprenticeship of observation" and the realities of classroom. I think about my pre-service teachers and their beliefs about what it means to be a language arts teacher and I can see if they don't understand they will be teaching struggling readers and the mechanical aspects of English that they may end up being another number in teacher attrition statistics. By understanding these beliefs and addressing them in class, perhaps that will help adjust expectations or help some realize the career is not for them. So in many ways this study helped me solidify my own beliefs that beliefs and expectations are key to instruction. In the same way that secondary teachers need to know their students to know their needs, teacher educators need to know their students.

Just like their beliefs about teaching struggling readers, I wonder how many of these pre-service teachers have thought about their role as a language arts teacher. Do they know what they want to accomplish by being English teachers? Do they want to help students enjoy literature? Do they want to teach students to complete literary analysis for classic literature? Few in this study mentioned writing, but that is probably a function of the focus of the class and

the Photovoice activities. This study has highlighted how important it is for pre-service teachers to think about their role as a language art's teacher and for me as a teacher educator to know those beliefs. If they believe teaching reading is discussing literary analysis of classical literature, it is easy to see that they may develop beliefs about how far behind their students are (again reinforcing their beliefs of past teachers not doing their job) and resenting that they have to teach "basic" reading skills.

As a teacher educator, I found I need to be aware of the crucial role reading plays in the lives of these participants. While I guessed that the participants would enjoy reading and read often, I was not expecting reading to be an integral part of their identities. These participants have a strong love of reading, have always read, use reading in their daily lives, and cherish the reading experience. These may be the worst characteristics for a teacher of struggling readers. Few participants know what it feels like to struggle with reading, to dislike reading, and to not have that reading experience they described in their narratives. For many participants, just considering the concept of struggling with reading for the Photovoice activity was enough to get them to feel like they can sympathize with struggling readers. As a teacher educator, this highlights the importance of focusing on the complexities and mechanics of reading at the secondary level.

Finally, while I have used Photovoice as a reflection activity in other classes for other topics, this study reinforced my belief that Photovoice may be used with selected pre-service teachers to discover their own beliefs about teaching and learning. On other projects, I focused on the written narrative hoping a more in-depth narrative would lead to more fruitful and deep discussions in class. However, this study has highlighted the importance of discussions on the formation and development of their beliefs. Participants want to include more small group

discussions with the rest of the class showed me that they wanted to discuss their beliefs and felt they gained knowledge discussing with other students in the class. Writing the narratives, it seems, was used to solidify and make their beliefs concrete. A surprise for me was Heather and Edith's mention of the residual reflection after turning in the assignment. I'm not sure if this was unique to them or was the case for all students in the class, but for those two at least, reflection on their own beliefs lasted past the assignment itself, suggesting that the Photovoice activity did result in reflecting about themselves that was not required by the assignment. I have also changed as a researcher.

As a researcher. As a research method, the version of Photovoice I used in this study seemed to work well to capture (develop?) beliefs. As discussed in Chapter 3, Photovoice used in this study differed from Wang and Burris' (1997) original model in three key ways. First, Photovoice was originally developed to capture the beliefs of marginalized communities. Seeing the value in this method, I believed this method could be used with all populations. In this study, it is used with a undergraduate students at a large urban university in the Southeast. Second, I modified Photovoice for a classroom setting. In a classroom setting there are time limitations, not just in how long the class sessions are, but for the amount of time an instructor can spend on a particular topic and still cover all class content. Finally, I added visual metaphor as an additional component to their photography. Using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conception of metaphors, visual metaphor was added to aid pre-service teachers in communicating and thinking deeply about their beliefs.

While I have used Photovoice in similar ways in classes before, this study helped me see that Photovoice enabled participants to reflect, revise and express their beliefs for each project. While I expected the discussions to be an important factor in their reflections, I did not think they

would see the discussions as the most helpful aspect of the Photovoice process. It showed me that the photography and metaphor helped participants frame their thoughts and prepare for the small group discussions. With that frame, participants were able to modify and develop their own beliefs during the discussions.

Participants found the small group discussions as the most helpful. No participant mentioned the whole group discussions. I think this was because they were more willing to share in their small group and only willing to share the basic for the entire class. But they still wanted to discuss with the rest of the class, just not in the whole group format. This is not surprising since beliefs are tied to self-identity (Kagan, 1992) and sharing them in front of the class would have made them vulnerable. However, I still believe the whole group discussions were helpful because they allowed the rest of the class to hear many of the group's work they would not have heard otherwise.

I discovered the pros and cons of collecting data consisting of a course assignment. All participants went through the entire Photovoice process and turned in their assignments. Talking with students in class, I saw that they had been reflecting, put in a lot of work into their photos and discussions, and had the intentions of including that in their narratives. However, this deep thought and hard work did not always show up in the narratives. While I allowed participants to revise their narratives, few did. Participants had other assignments in the course and in their other classes. Particularly toward the middle of the semester, participants' quality of work slid. However, as the activity was part of the course they were taking, they had interest in completing the activity in the context of their educational goals as opposed to participating in the study in addition to their classes.

Had the assignment been extra, I may have had the same attrition as I did in the focus group interviews. The focus groups were helpful in triangulating data in addition to revealing some new findings (i.e. required reading) , but I was hoping for more participants to participate. At first, I wanted to lead the focus groups because I knew the narratives and the students, so I guessed I would be able to have the students reflect a little deeper. However, because I was the instructor for the class and could not know who participated in the study until after final grades had been submitted, I could not lead the focus groups. I think having the students explain their ideas again to someone new in the focus group leader was helpful in solidifying and clarifying their own beliefs. It was as if the class was teaching someone new about their beliefs, which I think helped highlight what they felt was important to report to the focus group leader.

I saw the role photography and metaphor played in setting up the discussions, but I also saw the learning curve for participants in learning to communicate visually. While many thought taking pictures would be easy, many participants found it more difficult than they thought, although part of this may have had to do with metaphor as well. However, the new language of photography may have allowed them to add more depth to their beliefs. Many referred to lighting and framing as additional meanings in their photos. This showed me that photography was a new language for them and just like any language; new students of that language need practice. In future projects where I use Photovoice, I will spend more time training participants in the basics of photography and Photovoice. Richer data may have resulted if participants had been trained in photography.

Summary of Chapter

In this chapter I discussed the findings of the study. I discussed the findings from Photovoice activity one, noting pre-service teachers' beliefs about the challenges struggling readers will face, characteristics of struggling readers, struggling readers' histories with past teachers and beliefs about the potential of struggling readers. I then discussed the findings of Photovoice activity two, including discussing pre-service teachers' beliefs about themselves as readers and require reading. Next, I discussed the findings from the Photovoice reflection narratives, noting I discussed the findings of the first Photovoice project, noting participants' beliefs about the value of Photovoice, future use of Photovoice, and Photovoice and the challenges of reflection in teacher education. I discussed implications and future directions for research before ending the chapter reflecting on what I have learned and how I have grown as a researcher.

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APPENDIX A

Photovoice Project Lesson Plan

Week 1

1. Introduce class to the project
2. Go over consent forms
3. Leave room while colleague collects any consent forms
4. Introduction to Photography, visual metaphor and Photovoice---ppt
5. Practice Photovoice
 - a. Split class into groups of 3-4
 - b. As a whole group we discuss practice prompt: What is the goal of education?
 - c. Once the question has been clarified, pre-service teachers discuss the prompt in their groups
 - d. Give 15 minutes to go take pictures to answer the prompt and break (they will either use cell phones or digital cameras I have provided)
 - e. When they return they share the three pictures they took with their group
 - f. Have one person from each group share
6. Discuss and review the Photovoice process
7. Reveal prompt 1: "What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers?"
8. HW: Take as many pictures as they want to answer the prompt. Bring in three pictures that best represent your answer. Write a paragraph for each explaining how that picture answers the prompt.

Week 2

1. In their groups, each member will discuss their pictures and how they answer the prompt. They will identify any themes that emerge from their discussion
2. As a whole group we will discuss the themes that emerged and allow time for anyone who would like to share.
3. HW: decide on one picture that best represents your answer. Write an extended narrative explaining how that picture best represents your answer and why you chose that picture over the others.

Week 3

1. In their groups, each member will share their final picture and explain why they chose it as their final picture. They will identify any themes in their discussion.

2. As a whole group we will discuss the themes that emerged and the Photovoice process itself.
3. Reveal prompt 2: Who are you as a reader?
4. HW: Take as many pictures as they want to answer the prompt. Bring in three pictures that best represent your answer. Write a paragraph for each explaining how that picture answers the prompt.

Week 4

1. In their groups, each member will discuss their pictures and how they answer the prompt. They will identify any themes that emerge from their discussion.
2. As a whole group we will discuss the themes that emerged and allow time for anyone who would like to share.
3. HW: Decide on one picture that best represents your answer. Write an extended narrative explaining how that picture best represents your answer and why you chose that picture over the others.

Week 5

1. In their groups, each member will share their final picture and explain why they chose it as their final picture. They will identify any themes in their discussion.
2. As a whole group we will discuss the themes that emerged in their discussion and the Photovoice process itself
3. HW: Each student will be asked to write a final reflection on the photovoice process answering the following prompts: describe your experience with Photovoice. What surprised you? What did you find valuable about the project? Explain. What would you change about the project? Explain. What did you learn about yourself as a reader and your beliefs about teaching struggling readers? How will you apply what you have learned in your practice?

Week 6

1. Final reflections are turned in.

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Interview Protocols

Focus group for question 1: What do you think of when you think of teaching struggling readers?

1. Please describe your final pictures and how they show your beliefs about teaching struggling readers.
2. Why did you pick this picture over the others?
3. If you could do it all over again, would you take the same picture? Explain
4. What are your beliefs about teaching struggling readers in your classroom?
5. What did you learn from this project?

Focus group for question 2: Who are you as a reader?



1. Please describe your final picture and how it shows your beliefs about yourself as a reader.
2. Why did you pick this picture over the others?
3. If you could do it all over again, would take the same picture? Explain
4. Who are you as a reader?
5. What did you learn from this project?

Focus group for question 3: In what ways, if any, did Photovoice facilitate reflection?



1. Describe your experience with Photovoice
2. What did you like about the project? What would you change?
3. What surprised you?
4. What did you learn about your beliefs about teaching struggling readers?
5. What did you learn about yourself as a reader?
6. Do you feel that going through the Photovoice projects allowed you to examine your beliefs? Explain.
7. How will you apply what you learned in these projects to your classroom?



APPENDIX C




Participant Descriptions and Photos



Participant	Description	Major statement/quote	Photovoice 1 Photo (top) Photovoice 2 Photo (bottom)
Adam	<p>Adam, 23, was a quiet student, who had a low voice. The senior rarely talked in whole group discussions and seemed to do the minimum in small group discussions as well. He would come to class with his motorcycle helmet. Adam did not participate in any focus group interviews.</p>	<p>SR: "I feel that this photo represents struggling readers. It shows that there is always hope for struggling readers as there is a rainbow which signifies hope and good luck"</p> <p>Self: "In words, I can describe this picture but only I can interpret the meaning between the lines. I could say there are trees and a dark cloud in the sky, but only I can read between the lines and interpret the impending doom feeling that this picture seems to say. I know others can do this byt when I read I feel I am the only one that can experiences this art at a particular moment."</p>	 




<p>Alice</p>	<p>Alice, 25, was an outspoken, driven student. I have had her in a course before. She participated often in whole group discussions and was not afraid to voice her opinion. She was good friends with Mary and Caroline. Alice was often upbeat in class. The senior participated in two focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: "...I realized that we as teachers (in the beginning) are clueless as to who our struggling readers are. Although students have their head down, slump posture hiding in the mid-back or back of the classroom is a dead giveaway, all struggling readers don't expose themselves"</p> <p>Self: "Just like reading, life in a car is a journey. As we travel through the streets and highways, we don't take the time to enjoy the ride. Reading is the ride!"</p>	 
<p>Ashley</p>	<p>Ashely, 22, was a driven, motivated junior who did not participate much in whole group discussion, but was active in small group discussions. Ashley did not participate in any focus</p>	<p>SR: "A struggling reader faces many obstacles, such as the driftwood in the foreground of the picture. Some students will refuse to step over and defeat the obstacles and remain stuck on the shore, never able to see the beauty and vividness of the sea"</p> <p>Self: "As a reader I am an octopus ring."</p>	




	<p>group interviews.</p>	<p>I, like the ring, am a never ending loop. I will always be reading. .. You wear a ring on your finger. Sometimes, you wear it so often that it becomes a part of you and without it you feel naked and as if you are missing something. That is how I feel without reader.”</p>	
<p>Avery</p>	<p>Avery, 21, was a quiet student who sat in the front of the class, but rarely chimed in for whole group discussions. Avery, a senior, did not participant in any focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: Teaching struggling readers is climbing stairs. It is a process and with one step at a time if can be achieved. Patience is a key and with every step they get close to becoming readers”</p> <p>Self: “With enough water and sunlight I can continue growing my whole life. Similarly, as a reader I will continue to grow and get better as a reader. There is no point to stop at, I can always improve my reading and I will not stop growing.”</p>	



<p>Caroline</p>	<p>Caroline, 30, was an outspoken senior who had lots of energy in class and enjoyed participating in any class discussions. She was friends with Alice and Mary. I have had Caroline in class before. Caroline participated in two focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “Struggling readers will not easily admit to anyone that they have difficulty with reading comprehension. The more these students hide their disability the less the teacher can help them”</p> <p>Self: “This plant would represent when I first started reading around the age of four or five. I recall that once I started reading, I didn’t know how to stop. I loved reading everything and anything I could get my hands on. Knowledge really is power!”</p>	 
<p>Cassie</p>	<p>Cassie, 22, was a hard working senior determined to get high grades. She was active in small group discussions as her group members were her</p>	<p>SR: “Any teacher/adult could have taken the time and effort to help these students read better – or very least of all taken the student somewhere with the resources to help these students learn to read better. But no one did. And now</p>	


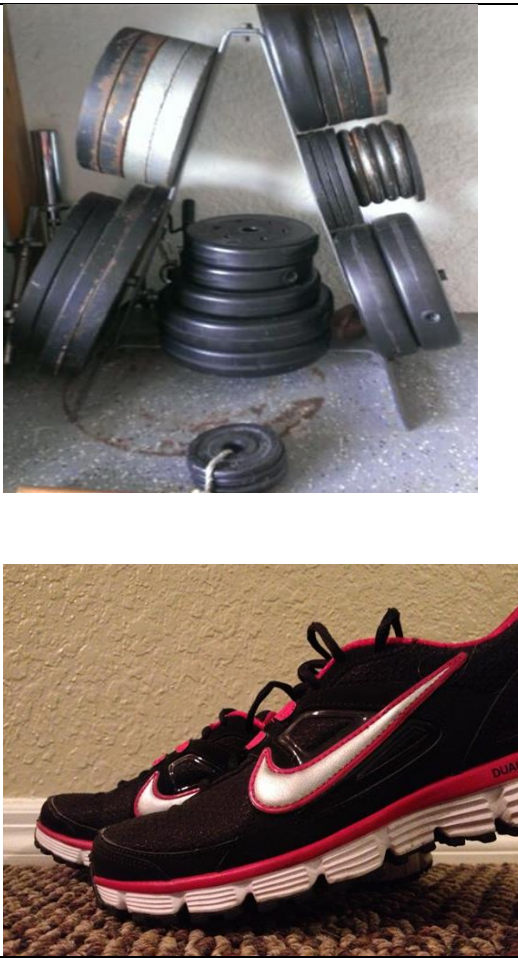
	<p>good friends, but did not participate as much in whole group discussions. She was good friends with Jane. Cassie participated in the first focus group.</p>	<p>the student is sitting there with all their potential being used.”</p> <p>Self: “Growing up, like most people, I did not have a fairytale life. I grew up in a very lonely situation. I grew up in a very dark situation. Because of this, I turned to reading at a young age. Reading was an escape for me. Reading was a way that I could leave the sad place I was in and go...well...anywhere.”</p>	 
<p>Cynthia</p>	<p>Cynthia, 28, was very quiet in both small group and whole group discussions. The senior told me at the beginning of the semester that she was uncomfortable with group work. However, by the end of</p>	<p>SR: “In the case of the struggling reader, however, the glass is not even half filled. If students are really struggling readers, then they will be so discouraged that they will only see the glass or their hope as partially there” (of her picture of a jar half-filled with water).</p> <p>Self: “I chose this picture because I</p>	



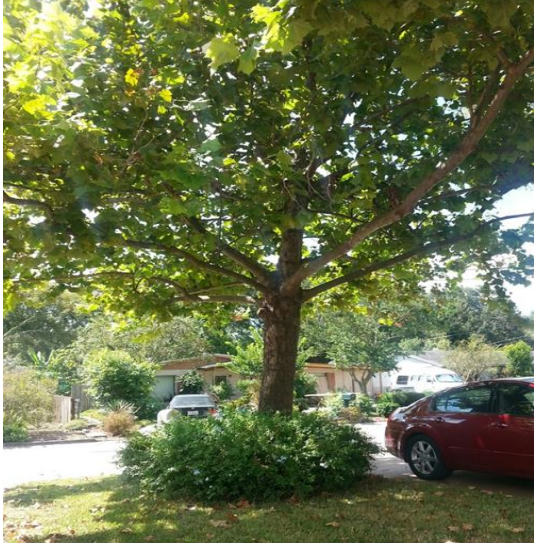
	<p>the semester she was participating more in her small group. She was very conscious of her grade and worked to make sure she got an A. She would become frustrated with assignments that did not have very clear directions. Cynthia participated in all three focus groups.</p>	<p>see reading as medicine. When I have been in difficult situations and experience difficult periods of time in my life, such as my parent constantly fighting before they eventually divorced, I used to find solace in reading.”</p>	
<p>Edith</p>	<p>Edith, 22, was an active member of the class, often talking with Mary, Alice, and Caroline. She was hard working and participated in both whole and small group discussions. Edith was often upbeat in class. Edith, a senior, participated in the first focus group. She told me</p>	<p>SR: “When I think of teaching struggling readers, I think of the leaves that have been overlooked for the sake of the whole bush.”</p> <p>Self: “I feel like reading helps me make wise decisions, and stay out of trouble. ... I like to come to this spot and read. With all the commotion of life around me, reading helps me focus, find peace, and be still.”</p>	


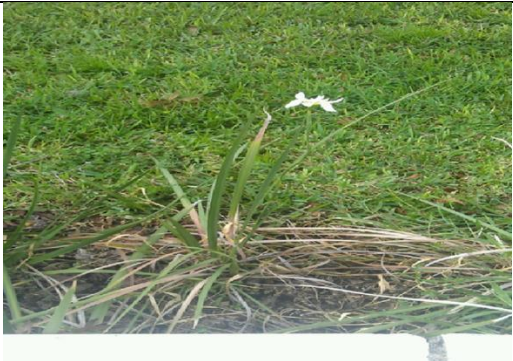
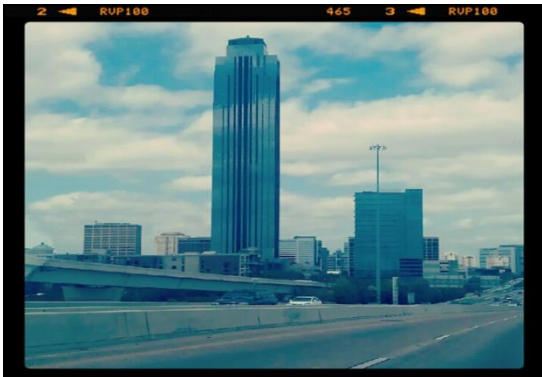
	<p>after the class was over that she planned on attending the third focus group, but was not able to make it because of a family emergency.</p>		
<p>Heather</p>	<p>Heather, 24, was a strong student who worked hard in class and participated in small and whole group discussions. Heather, a junior, had a strong English background and had a strong love of literature. Heather participated in the last two focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: "Teaching struggling readers is knitting lace. Though in the end, when all is said and done, the results is beautiful, it is a difficulty and time consuming process."</p> <p>Self: "Because of books, I eventually began to see the world more richly. I finally could see the adventure in everyday, which was something I desperately needed as a young teenager who was crushed by the mundane. Everyday life provided a hard contrast to worlds I explored in novels, and I struggled to resolve them for a very long time. It was extremely difficult for me to 'wake up' from a book."</p>	 



<p>Jane</p>	<p>Jane, 21, was a strong senior who only missed class to attend a professional conference. While she was quite during whole group discussions, she was talkative during small group discussion with her friends including participant Cassie. The group had taken a number of classes together and were very close. Jane did not participate in any focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: "I chose this picture because teaching struggling readers will most likely be a struggling. ... There will be obstacles and uneven lanes that the students and teacher will both have to face if they hope to continue building and moving forward."</p> <p>Self: "Reading books is what helps me grow and bloom into something colorful and bright. Often times, life can become boring and redundant. Reading a book is then as escape for me into the world unknown."</p>	 
<p>Jared</p>	<p>Jared, 24, was vocal in both small and whole group discussions. Jared, a junior, had strong opinions about topics and would discuss them in class. I</p>	<p>SR: "The trailer, full of trash, is a metaphor for the outlook many struggling readers have of themselves; they feel like trash. Years of being laughed at, making poor grades, falling behind in classes ... and much more abuse has led countless to this</p>	




	<p>have had Jared as a student before in another class. He was in his junior year. He often expressed the desire to complete more research papers in his education courses. Jared participated in the first two focus groups.</p>	<p>conclusion.”</p> <p>Self: “This picture is a metaphor for the hard work I put into being a good reader. My goal as a reader is to never be a passive one, reading without truly learning.”</p>	
<p>Jason</p>	<p>Jason, 23, mostly kept quiet during whole group discussions, but talked quite a bit during small group discussions. Jason, a senior, had some issues turning in work on time, but generally turned in good work. He performed as a rapper many nights. Jason did not participate in any of the</p>	<p>SR: “The first thing I think about when I think about a struggling reader is patience. We must show them patience. We must make sure these struggling readers understand that reading is not a race, but moving at your own pace will help you reach your goal”</p> <p>Self: “I chose to take a picture of my feet to show that I like to read at my own pace. It is very important for me to be comfortable readers, once I am comfortable then I am able to retain what I need to from</p>	



	<p>focus groups.</p>	<p>the reading and I am able to thoroughly connect with it.”</p>	
<p>Kathy</p>	<p>Kathy, 21, was an energetic student who was on top of her studies. The junior turned in her work on time and participated in whole group and small group discussions. Kathy participated in the first two focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “Teaching a struggling reader is diet and exercise. It can be challenging at first, but if you continue to try, and never give up, the end results are amazing!”</p> <p>Self: “Just like sneakers, I know how to pace myself for lengthier material. I can speed up when I have to, but I also know how to slow down when needed. I support myself to push through any obstacle I may encounter, and it takes a lot to wear me out.”</p>	

<p>Lisa</p>	<p>I have had Lisa, 33, in a class before where she showed she could be an excellent student. Lisa, a senior, had a number of concerns over the course of the semester including the death of a relative, which resulted in her work and participation to be of a lesser quality than I have seen from her in the past. Lisa did not participate in any of the focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “For struggling readers, reading can be like a canyon; a vast expanse of unknown scary places. It’s hard for them to see the beauty in it because they tend to stop at their first fear and first obstacle.”</p> <p>Self: “Each character, each theme, and plot connect to create a new world. This world then takes the reader, me, away from this world and connects me to other worlds, other lives.”</p>	 
<p>Mary</p>	<p>Mary, 21, was an outspoken student who was good friends with Alice and Edith. Mary, a senior, would often participate in small and whole group discussions. She would often speak</p>	<p>SR: “I think it is important for students to understand that I don’t need them to be literary scholars, I just want to see them grow so they can read important information and decode important information in life.”</p> <p>Self: “Reading is probably one of the central points of my</p>	

	<p>of her experiences and what she thought was wrong with education. Mary participated in all three focus groups</p>	<p>life because it is needed for all of the activities I partake in.”</p>	
<p>Nichole</p>	<p>Nichole, 25, did not participate in whole group discussions often and was largely quiet in small group discussions as well. Nichole, a senior, did not participate in any of the focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “I do believe that struggling readers may feel alone at times. They may feel as though they are the only one in the class that can’t read as good as others or that they will never be able to read. Many probably use the statement ‘I can’t’ so much that they have begun to believe just that.”</p> <p>Self: “I immediately saw the empty road ahead of me and the middle barricade. I felt they completely described who I am as a reader. This barricade is like a blocking mechanism which is keeping me away from distraction and noise of everyday life. This is how I am when I read. I need to be</p>	 

		away from everybody...”	
Nina	<p>Nina, 22, was a hard working student who would often participate in small and whole group discussions. The senior worked two jobs before heading to class, so she was often tired in class. Nina was constantly upbeat and positive in class. Nina participated in the first focus group.</p>	<p>SR: “When I see this cheerleading pom-pom, I think of struggling readers. I chose this image because it reminds me of the supports that are needed with struggling readers, which most lack, but this shows me our jobs as teachers to be cheerleaders for struggling readers in the game of reader.”</p> <p>Self: “Throughout my life span of reading, I would say it has been a long process, much like that of the jelly beans we ate, to get to where I am now. I started as a slow reader, barely comprehending, yet willing to get through because I saw the finish line. Over time, I began to read more fluently and comprehend texts more deeply.”</p>	 

<p>Tom</p>	<p>Tom, 27, was in his senior year. He had very strong opinions during discussions, but he would only chime in once in a while. He did talk in small group discussions, but his group was often not there or had not completed their work. Tom did not participate in any focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “The wooden desk, on which they [toy blocks] sit, is the necessary foundation required to learn how to read. A strong support system only benefits a struggling reader. Without the foundation of family, friends, and teachers, the building blocks of reading would have nowhere to sit.”</p> <p>Self: “I love to read almost anything, just as I like to eat almost anything. I am at least willing to give it a try.”</p>	 
<p>Victoria</p>	<p>Victoria, 22, is a hard working student who I have had in two other courses. The senior loves literature and is an avid reader. Victoria participated often in whole group and small group discussions.</p>	<p>SR: “ In the same way that a technological layperson would probably find the contents of this bookshelf indecipherable, a struggling reader might feel overwhelmed when faced with a novel or reading list during the school year. I wanted to try and imagine what a struggling reader might go through by</p>	

	<p>Moreso than I remember her participated in past classes. She is not afraid to speak her mind, but is very polite about it. She was in her senior year. Victoria participated in the first two focus groups.</p>	<p>placing myself out of my normal literary comfort zone.”</p> <p>Self: “...as a reader, I want ot be ‘fed’ by a novel; I want to feel connected to anything and everything that I choose to pick up and read.”</p>	
<p>William</p>	<p>William, 22, was active in his small group conversations, but did not share much in whole group discussions. I have had William before in a class. He was a senior. William did not participate in any focus groups.</p>	<p>SR: “When I thought of struggling readers, my focus immediately went to ideas about what students would miss out on should they grow up without the ability to read, let alone a love for it.”</p> <p>Self: “To me this photography presents one of my favorite aspects of myself as a reader, and answers the prompt line like so, ‘I am a seeker of heroes.’... Ever since I was young, I have loved stories about heroes”</p>	 

APPENDIX D

Code Lists

Photovoice 1

SR let down
SR overwhelmed
SR ridiculed
SR seen as worthless
SR viewed as troublesome
Support did not help reader
Teacher demans SR
Teachers didn't look for SR
Teacher ignores individuality
Obstacles
Overcoming
Challenges
SR lacked support
Difficulty decoding
Problems with the reading process
Overlooked
Past support actions
Past teacher actions
Past teacher beliefs
SR left behind
SR yelled at
SR have not received support
SR given warning
SR laughed at
SR told won't amount to anything
SR told will not succeed
SR give up
SR missing reading strats
SR missing reading skills
SR view themselves as trash
SR unable to read
SR uninterested in books
SR fragile
SR emotional baggage
SR disability

SR little hope
SR poor self worth
SR hiding
SR lost
SR makes poor grades
SR low self-confidence
SR have potential
SR can succeed
SR can grow as readers
Hope for SR
SR can overcome
SR hidden treasure
SR neglected
SR passed off to another teacher
SR viewed as worthless
SR viewed as troublesome
Support did not help SR
Teacher overlooked students
SR viewed as trash
Overwhelming teaching SR
Overcoming-teaching
Teaching SR is difficult
Many SR in classroom
Teaching reading is complex
Realities of teaching SR
Teaching SR takes time
Teaching SR takes patience
SR need support
Importance of support
Teachers as necessary
SR need support system
SR need to be recognized by support
Teacher as supporter

Teacher as motivator
Teacher as guide
Need to concentrate on individuals
Teacher needs to find SR
SR need attention
SR need tlc
Teacher as mentor
Teacher as life force
Teacher as necessary
Teach the love of reading
Teachers should relate to students
Proper instruction
Teacher as provider of tools
Teachers must provide practice
Class environment is important for SR
Deliberate instruction
SR needs to be active in reading
SR need to learn to decode
SR need to use schema
Teaching reading is a process

Photovoice 2

Becoming better reader
books changed life
Called to books
Connecting to books
Difficultly with assignment
Emotional reader
Engaged as reader
excitement of books
Experiences help in classroom
future reader
Good reader
Hard working reader
love reading
Method: afraid to share certain ideas
Method: comparing PV1 and PV2
Method: difficult to relate to struggling readers
Method: enjoying reflection
Method: hadn't thought about it before
method: liked talking in group
Method: not liking reflections
Method: reflections v research papers
Method: used groups to come up with idea
Method: usng photos with reflection
Method: value of assignment
mystery of books
Never struggled with reading
not a good reader
Open minded reader
quick reader
Reader equals being different
Reader of content
Reader since young
Reading academic texts
Reading and reflection
Reading as a journey
Reading as a social event
Reading as addictive
Reading as an event
Reading as competition
Reading as distraction
reading as emotional
Reading as escape

Reading as essential
Reading as exciting
Reading as growth
Reading as lonely
Reading as medicine
Reading as peaceful
Reading changed life
reading for fun
Reading for school v reading for pleasure
reading part of identity
Reading to heal
reading to learn
reading to meet reading needs
Required reading
Still becoming as a reader
using schema
wasn't able to encompass self in picture
Will always like reading

Photovoice Reflection Narratives

Valued discussions
Valued others opinions
Valued discussing photos
Different interpretation
Too personal
Valued reflections
Valued reflecting on photos
Valued writing reflections
Continued thinking after project
Deeper reflection
Valued photos
Valued metaphors
Difficult to communicate through photos
Enjoyed creativity
Role of metaphors
Role of photographs
Initially did not see value
Thought Photovoice would be easy
Does not like photography
Previous experiences with Photovoice
Surprised by assignment
Photovoice to teach content
PV to get to know students
PV to engage students
Secondary conversations
Want more discussions
Want to respond differently
Saw value in no people rule
Want to know purpose
Learned about self
Discovered self as SR
Know self better
Beliefs have changed
Learned to teach SR
Learned methods to teach SR
Difficulty relating to SR
Learned struggle
Sympathy to SR
Understand SR better
Related to SR
Connected to SR
Did not learn
Already knew self

APPENDIX E

Reflective Journal Selections

Oct. 13th –Written after grading the Photovoice projects

Starting to see more and more patterns being established. Definitely grow as they relate to plants and trees and leaves. I'm seeing a lot of worry about missing struggling readers and how they blend into the background. I'm also seeing a lot of teaching reading being difficult and challenging journey. I think Dominique's metaphor pretty much sums it up when she mentions trash and finding treasure in trash. Many are on the same track. There is a theme of hard work and getting students to work and the teacher being there to motivate and support them. That is stuck out the most with this crew. They are much less about the teacher as savior and more about teacher as support and cheerleader. A lot of call for patience and the need for teachers to pinpoint struggling readers. Also I'm noticing not a lot struggling readers wanting to grow and being motivated themselves. I wonder why there is such a difference in that sense from the first time I've done this. All in all they were pretty good, but I am going to ask some of them to rework and clarify their thoughts. I'm going to start looking at metaphor analysis in the near future. I think that might be the way to go. I'm also seeing a lot about choosing pictures, why they chose this one and camera techniques that will be interesting when I answer the final question. I'm interested in what the focus group on the final reflection says tonight. Just thinking about it, it would have been a good idea to have the focus group in the middle of class so everyone had to stay around. Mean, but a good idea nonetheless. Although as informative as the focus groups are I'm not sure how much I am going to pull from them.

December 30th—analysis

Trash is definitely a theme. They seem to be focusing on how struggling readers look (i.e. junked car, pile of trash, trash heap, etc.). I think they are trying to figure out what to look for when they think about teaching struggling readers, but they are focusing on their current state and in a way that really isn't describing what they would look like in class...or are they? Do they think struggling readers will look disheveled and like trash in the classroom. Is this in some way a representation of their beliefs about the physical appearance of struggling readers? I jotted this down later in the day, but this trash speak also seems to suggest that struggling readers are invisible. They use the trash as a reason for why people do not look at struggling readers. The key point then is that struggling readers are invisible or being passed by. Teachers, according to them need to look for them. The trash is the normal, but it's abnormal as well. The trash (or car or trailer) is part of that scene of the picture, but it is not the focus. They seem to be saying that teachers look at other parts of that scene instead of focusing on the trash. Teachers need to stop focusing on the normal or stop ignoring the problems in the scene.

January 3rd—analysis

Some issues of perspective are showing up. I had to look back at my presentation materials because I was worried I had accidentally gave them a different prompt. Many of them discussed what others believed about struggling readers. They seem to be discussing what other teachers think about struggling readers rather than what they believe. I'm not sure why they are approaching it this way. It's almost as if they think there is a right answer for this prompt.

It's also interesting that many of them are using "we" to describe their beliefs as if they are already in-service teachers and have an inside track. I find it really interesting with how certain they seem to be about how struggling readers are.

January 20th -analysis

Look, I knew reading would be important to these students, but I didn't realize how integral reading is for their identity and how they cope with life. It shows how ingrained reading is in their beliefs and that will definitely play a role in their teaching. The easy assumption is that they think reading is easy and see reading as invisible. I thought their love of reading would be the development of their beliefs, but they don't just love reading, they seem to need it. Cynthia comes perilously close to stating reading is an addiction, but she clearly states that she uses reading to heal from the harsh realities of life. The escape from the realities of life has come up quite a bit. I was tempted to start coding some of these as reading as a journey, but it doesn't seem to be the journey that is important...it is the overall escape...it's a coping mechanism. The journey is just what they use to escape. Reading provides the journey, but they read to escape.

March 2nd -analysis

I'm very excited about starting to read the Photovoice reflection papers because these are the narratives I am most unfamiliar with. While I graded them during the semester, I didn't get a chance to take my time with them like I did with the first two projects. Based on their comments in class, I expect them to be fairly critical. A number of students talked about not liking the second discussions and how they felt the projects took longer than they needed. When we had whole group discussion they started discussing a number of ways in which they would use

Photovoice in their classrooms. This was interesting and we discussed the number of ways they would use Photovoice (mostly as a content instructional strategy). I mentioned the purpose of the assignment was for them to examine their beliefs and they acted shocked and I was shocked that they were shocked. This makes me a little nervous for their reflections

--later in the day--

It's very interesting to see the difference between what occurred in class and what is on their narratives. They did mention their concern in the narratives, but most of the them discussed how they actually enjoyed the Photovoice process and saw it as helpful. They felt they learned a lot from Photovoice. I was surprised by the number of mentions of discussion being helpful since so many of them said they didn't like discussions in class. They liked the initial discussions; just not the secondary ones and I see their point. Next time I do Photovoice in a class I will definitely switch the groups after the initial discussion. I'm really surprised at how much they enjoyed sharing. Reading Cynthia's narrative was very eye opening. She was explicit about her initial reluctance for this assignment and what she learned. For all the discussion about using Photovoice in their classrooms, I wonder how many actually will. I'd love to follow up on that.

Appendix F

Participant Information

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Classification
Adam	M	23	White	Senior
Alice	F	25	African-American	Senior
Ashley	F	22	White	Junior
Avery	F	21	White	Senior
Caroline	F	30	Hispanic	Senior
Cassie	F	22	White	Senior
Edith	F	22	White	Senior
Heather	F	24	White	Junior
Jason	M	23	Hispanic	Senior
Jane	F	21	White	Senior
Jared	M	24	White	Junior
Kathy	F	21	White	Junior
Lisa	F	33	Hispanic	Senior
Mary	F	21	White	Senior
Nina	F	22	African-American	Senior
Nancy	F	25	African-American	Senior
Tom	M	27	White	Senior
Victoria	F	22	White	Senior
William	M	22	Hispanic	Senior