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VOLUNTEERS IN OUR CLASSROOMS:

THEIR BELIEFS ABOUT LITERACY AND LITERACY LEARNING

A Dissertation

SUBMITTTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

LINDA LOFARO COURSEY
Norman, Oklahoma
2000

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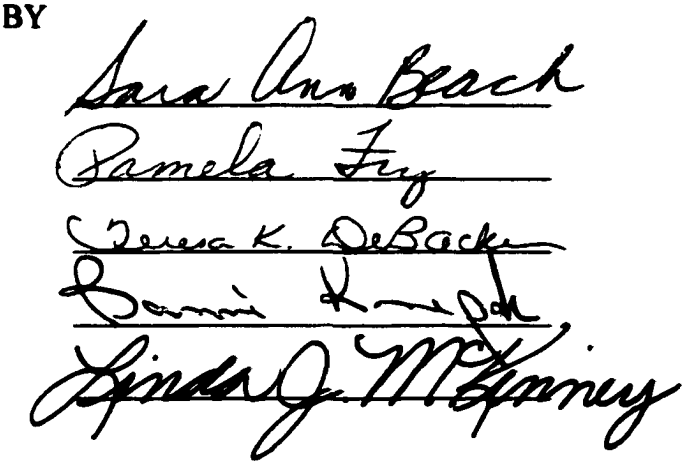
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VOLUNTEERS IN OUR CLASSROOMS:
THEIR BELIEFS ABOUT LITERACY AND LITERACY LEARNING

A dissertation
APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

BY



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There is no way to express my gratitude to my husband and friend, who has encouraged, cajoled, reassured, and supported me.

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Dedication

To my husband, Michael

Whenever I needed encouragement, you were there.
Whenever I needed inspiration, you were there.
Whenever I needed and whatever I needed, when I held out my hand
You were there.

To my children, Kimberlie and Christopher
I am so proud of both of you.

A special dedication to my aunt, Filomena Angela Lofaro Elliott
Many years ago, I confided in you that this was my dream. You told me I could do it and, in fact, if I didn't try, that you would come back to haunt me. Well, Aunt Fan, I wanted you to know that no haunting is necessary because I firmly believe that if anyone, by sheer dent of personality, could will herself back to haunt someone, it would be you.

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Abstract

This study described the literacy beliefs of six work-study tutors. In order to investigate the beliefs of volunteer tutors with respect to literacy and literacy learning, first it was important to recognize how these tutors defined literacy and how they described literacy learning. After developing an understanding of these beliefs, the study then explored how those beliefs were played out in practice.

Data from personal interviews with each tutor, field notes of on-site observations of tutoring sessions, tutors' reflection journals, and tutors' daily logs were used to determine tutors' beliefs and practices. Specifically, the study asked the following questions: (1) What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by adult reading tutors? (2) Can those beliefs be observed as practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary students?

The tutors' interviews revealed that the participants agreed that comprehension was an important component when defining what it means to know how to read. After reviewing stated definitions and comparing those definitions to observed practices, it was evident that even this apparent agreement was suspect. The six participants did not agree on what it means "to comprehend." Participants variously defined comprehension on a continuum from a literal recitation of information to a heterogeneous aggregate of literal information, interpretative behaviors, predictive activities, and creative interactions with text. Definitions of literacy learning ranged from simplistic

(read a book together) to a mosaic of read-alouds, book talks, skills activities, and writing.

The more experienced tutors tended to match their practice to their stated beliefs as evidenced during their interviews. Their definitions of literacy and literacy learning were multifaceted and their choice of tutoring activities reflected the variety that their stated definitions revealed. Those tutors with less experience, both less experience working with students and less training, voiced beliefs that were less complicated. Even with a more simplistic view of what it means to be able to read, these stated beliefs were not always observed in tutoring sessions with their tutees.

This study illustrated a range of beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. Schools, who would make use of volunteers, need to be aware that when they ask an untrained volunteer to complement classroom instruction, there is this range of beliefs that individuals may hold. This range of beliefs may be manifested in a variety of ways during tutoring sessions.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult to imagine a more devastating problem than the large number of people in America who cannot read well enough to successfully navigate modern life. With as many as four in ten children in America at the fourth-grade level unable to show mastery of literacy (Donahue et al, 1999), we need to understand how best to help children succeed in reading as well as understand how best to use the available resources. One of the most important questions is to grasp how children grow into readers. Ancillary to that important question and equally significant is how do we best provide services to implement that growth. To implement reader growth through the use of tutors, a critical question becomes not only what needs to be included in tutor training, but also how previous experiences and perceptions may affect tutors' response to the training provided. Because we are all products of previous learning experiences (Whitehead, 1929/1957; Dewey, 1938/1963; Vygotsky, 1978; James, 1981), we need to understand what beliefs about literacy and literacy learning these volunteer tutors hold.

Due to limited resources, school districts rely more and more on volunteers to augment teaching staff. It is imperative that we know who these people are. By whom I mean not only what skills do they bring to the classrooms they will assist, but also what perceptions do they bring about the process of education itself. We dilute the profession of educator if we allow the conception that a person's own skills in reading are sufficient to the teaching of reading.

Teacher training programs include not only methodology but also insights into theory to practice, how what we believe about learning impacts (or should impact) our classroom practices. Yet we ask volunteers to extend instruction by providing additional literacy learning experiences without knowing what those volunteers believe about literacy and literacy learning.

We are a product not only of our biological heritage but also our lifelong experiences (Whitehead, 1929; Piaget, 1932; Dewey, 1938/1963, James, 1981; Wertsch, 1985/1997; Vygotsky, 1986/1997). Adult volunteers bring many experiences, beliefs, and perceptions with them to their classroom volunteerism. What are those beliefs? What are those experiences? What are those perceptions? In order to provide effective training and ensure that these volunteers are effectual complements to our classrooms, it is essential that those questions be answered. As long as shrinking budgets and finite resources force school districts to seek assistance beyond certified personnel, volunteers will remain a fixture in classrooms. Research into ways to produce capable volunteers is crucial.

My concern and the focus of my study is that there is limited research currently which relates directly to the abilities of the volunteers who are being asked to come into the schools. These volunteers are being asked to bolster current academic programs with little or no training. There is also little understanding of the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning that these volunteers bring to the process of teaching reading. Without consistent and comprehensive training and supervision, there can be no uniformity of services. Without uniformity of services, any conclusions concerning a program's success will be suspect.

The America Reads Challenge Act of 1997 (ARC) makes a national commitment to the goal that every child will read independently and well by the end of the third grade. This is an extremely important goal. The ARC expects to accomplish this goal by calling on the resources of the community through the volunteerism sponsored by school libraries, religious institutions, and universities as well as through the use of parents, college students and senior citizens as volunteers (America Reads Challenge, 1997).

In 1994 over 40% of U.S. children in the fourth grade were reading below the basic level on national reading assessments, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Wasik, 1998). The latest NAEP report shows modest improvements. This report presents the results of the 1998 NAEP reading assessment for the nation and for participating states. The results in 1998 were compared to the 1994 and 1992 results. While the national average reading

scores increased for the three grades tested (fourth, eighth, and twelfth), increases were not observed for all students. The report at grade four found no significant changes in the percentages of students attaining any of the reading achievement levels when compared to the achievement levels of 1994 or 1992 (Donahue et al, 1999).

Placing one million volunteers in schools to tutor children in reading is the ARC's primary means of achieving the goal of producing independent readers by the end of third grade. Still, how existing beliefs are manifested in practices by these tutors has not been addressed in any significant fashion. If the ARC is to achieve this ambitious goal, it is vital that the tutoring programs have research supporting their effectiveness (Wasik, 1998). The role volunteers can play and the beliefs that they bring to the tutorial should be addressed. This study examined the beliefs held by adult reading tutors as they relate to literacy and literacy learning and whether those beliefs are manifested as practices in one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary readers.

Background of Study

Existing programs involving one-on-one tutoring focus on the learning outcomes of the tutees measured by differing methods (Wasik, 1997, Wasik, 1998). Programs, which rely on minimally trained volunteers, have not been researched from the viewpoint of who these volunteers are. Schools do not know what these volunteers believe about literacy and literacy learning. It is important

to be cognizant of the beliefs of these volunteers since we are asking them to complement the literacy learning in our classrooms.

Professional educators are known to be influenced by their beliefs when planning and implementing literacy learning in their classrooms (Armburster et al, 1991, Bednar, 1993, Bird et al, 1993, Daisey & Shroyer, 1993, Davis et al, 1993, Richardson, 1996) and certain teaching models are directly associated with the teachers' belief system (Nespor, 1987, Fosnot, 1989, Bean, 1994, Livingston et al, 1995, Gunderson, 1997, Hayes, 1997, Gibson, 1998).

If professional educators exhibit this belief/practice connection, then there may be a belief/practice connection for tutors in a volunteer literacy tutoring programs such as the work-study reading tutor program at a southwestern comprehensive university which has in place its version of the national program, America Reads. If we begin by looking at the beliefs and perceptions of practicing and preservice teachers, we recognize that understanding the beliefs of volunteers is important as well.

In comparing minimally trained volunteers to the research of practicing and preservice teachers, there are two possible outcomes as it pertains to this study. Professional teachers' practices may reveal unexamined beliefs that are highly resistant to change despite having completed a teacher training/certification curriculum. A mismatch may appear between stated beliefs and classroom practices. Because the tutors in this study are only minimally trained, this mismatch may be even more dramatic. The second possibility of

prime interest to my focus is that volunteers, who do not consider themselves professionals, may be more willing to adopt and adapt to the minimal training presented to them in preparing tutoring activities for the students in their care thereby exhibiting a tacit acceptance of the Program's stated beliefs and goals.

Richardson (1996) stated that in order to understand teachers' thought processes and classroom practices, it is important to understand their beliefs. Developing an understanding of these beliefs is important in understanding how teachers change and how preservice teachers learn to teach. If understanding beliefs of practicing teachers and preservice teachers is important, it is equally important to understand the beliefs of the tutors. Livingston, McClain, and DeSpain (1995) assessed the consistency of teacher's philosophies and educational goals. "Within the practice of every classroom teacher are beliefs which shape educational opportunities for students" (Livingston et al, 1995, p. 124). These authors found that practicing teachers enrolled in graduate studies had a strong identification with specific educational goals but identified less with a particular philosophical orientation. Tutors who are not trained in educational philosophy might tend to be more goals oriented as well. If this is so, it is important to understand what educational outcomes they find important.

Hollingsworth (1989) studied the effect of preservice teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs when learning new skills. Her findings included the importance of understanding preservice teachers' prior beliefs as a platform for teacher education classes. For the tutors in this study, learning to work effectively

with at-risk readers in a one-on-one tutoring session was new. The knowledge and beliefs that they bring with them are vital components of the tutoring process.

What Do We Need to Know?

Most scholars writing in the field today would agree that literacy is a process which involves understanding the written word (Dixon-Krauss, 1999). How that process evolves and exactly how we define understanding is the source of controversy. Since how an educator sees this complex process will affect his/her classroom implementation and since volunteer reading tutors are being asked to implement this reading instruction, it is important to understand how minimally trained tutors view literacy and literacy learning. This study investigates tutor belief systems. Specifically, the study asks the following questions: (1) What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by adult reading tutors? (2) Can those beliefs be observed as practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary students?

This study is important for three reasons. First, this study may provide information about the beliefs held by those who would volunteer in public school classrooms. Barnes (1990) identified two teacher belief systems and described the impact of those beliefs on classroom behaviors, methodologies, and student/teacher interactions. If the influence of personal beliefs are as strong as Barnes and others (Allington & Li, 1990; Alexander & Dochy, 1994; Woods, 1995; Alexander et al, 1998) suggest, then it is important to understand to what

extent the tutor's personal beliefs might be manifested in practices of one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk readers.

Secondly, virtually all studies of tutoring programs focus on the successes of the programs based on exit testing of the elementary students engaged in the program. A second and no less important emphasis of these studies concentrates on the training of the tutors with the most successful, as judged by student exit testing, being those programs utilizing highly trained, certified teachers and/or paraprofessionals (Wasik, 1997; Wasik, 1998). What has not been addressed is the identification of beliefs that may impact training either positively or negatively. While training itself is not the focus of this study, the information from this study could be important in constructing effective tutor training programs. Certainly making the most of minimal training is vital to the successful implementation of reading services for the at-risk elementary students that these programs are meant to serve.

Third, it is essential that we understand the beliefs that these volunteers have about what literacy is and how literacy is achieved. Beliefs to practice matches and mismatches during tutoring sessions make it important to understand those beliefs. Since beliefs concerning children and how they learn will impact the maintenance of the relationship between the tutor and tutee, then understanding those beliefs is an important component in the implementation of services.

Why Do We Need to Know?

The purpose of this study is to examine the beliefs of volunteers in public school classrooms. There is present in education today an oxymoronic view of those who would be responsible for educating America's children. On the one hand are the clarion calls for more standards, stricter standards, higher standards for teacher education and teacher certification. This situation demands highly trained teachers who will meet these standards and be held accountable for the progress of their students. Yet on the other, are the calls for volunteers to come into the classroom to supplement classroom instruction. One obvious implication is that if you are a competent reader yourself, you are capable of teaching reading. These two views are incompatible.

As the limited resources of school districts rely more and more on volunteers to augment teaching staff, it is imperative that we know who these people are. By whom I mean not only what skills do they bring to the classrooms they will assist, but also what beliefs do they bring about the process of education itself. Volunteers in our classrooms can be a vital resource if we as professional educators understand that resource.

Definition of Terms

There are several terms used in this study, which while they may be understood in general ways, have specific meanings within this venue. These terms need to be understood as they relate to this specific study. The following

definitions are meant to place these terms in the perspective of this particular study.

Tutors: In this study, the tutor is a college student. This college student works with elementary students in a private, one-on-one session at least two days per week.

At-Risk Readers: These are elementary students who have been judged by the principal and teachers at their individual schools as readers who are not achieving at grade level. This judgment is made based on standardized test scores and teacher observations.

Work-Study: Work-Study is a federally funded program that determines entitlement based on need. This entitlement is made available to the college student who must work and/or provide a service for those entitlement dollars.

Literacy: For the purposes of this study, literacy is defined as an active, independent engagement with text that recognizes the individual as the source as well as the receptor and assignor of individual interpretations of text. Literacy, then, presupposes not only the ability to read and write in a particular language, but more specifically to a way of thinking about the way reading and writing are used in day-to-day activities. Since this study is limited to elementary students within a classroom environment working with minimally trained tutors, this setting will necessarily limit the working definition of literacy to decoding written text, constructing meaning from written text, and writing. This engagement in

meaning construction can take the form of reading, writing, and/or oral response to text.

Beliefs: A belief implies the mental acceptance of something as true. Beliefs develop over a lifetime and are very resistant to change. They are transmitted across generations and are embedded in the social surroundings of individuals and within the individuals themselves.

Learning: For the purposes of this study, learning is change. This change is observable in behavior as evidenced through practice, instruction, or experience. It also includes any supportive activity that helps a learner complete a task.

Study Intent

The aim of the study is to enrich the knowledge about the beliefs of minimally trained tutors by focusing on their stated expectations and perceptions as determined through personal interviews. A further aim of the study is to focus attention on how those beliefs are manifested during one-on-one tutoring sessions. Of particular interest is whether these stated beliefs are manifested in the activities and materials chosen for the tutoring sessions and whether these beliefs are evident as a part of the working relationship between tutor and tutee.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to investigate what volunteer tutors believe reading is, it was important to recognize how experts define literacy. Since this study investigated beliefs, then another vital aspect was to examine what constitutes a belief, how beliefs relate to knowledge, and how beliefs and knowledge might impact practices. In addition, this review of the literature looked at the beliefs of preservice and practicing teachers, since there is little research into the beliefs and beliefs to practice of volunteer tutors.

What Does It Mean: "Know How to Read?"

Most scholars writing in the field today would agree that reading is a process which involves understanding the written word. How that process evolves and exactly how we define understanding is the source of controversy. Harris & Hodges (1995) in *The Literacy Dictionary*, state that, since reading is a learned process, any definition of reading reflects what is accepted as true about learning. The definitions vary depending on whether the definer is describing reading from the viewpoint of the developmental stage the reader has achieved or whether the definer sees reading as a visual task, a word-recognition task, a thinking task, or part of a social event.

The Harris & Hodges (1995) definition of literacy recognizes the multifaceted aspects of that concept. While any definition of literacy recognizes the ability to read as a first requirement of literacy, literacy, itself, is broader in scope. In fact, they list no fewer than thirty-four literacies. In order to keep the definitions of literacy to the perspective of the classroom, I will limit my examination of definitions to critical literacy, literate listening, writing as literacy, and visual literacy.

Literacy is meaning making: In Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional view, literacy is meaning making. Meaning is constructed by a transaction between author and reader through text. The text is important, but meaning occurs in the context of the reader's knowledge and experience. It is this power of personal experience between reader and text that shapes and defines the literacy experience.

Rosenblatt (1978) expands the definition of literacy by focusing on the outcome of the reading. Rosenblatt's psychological stances recognize that all reading is not for the same purpose. The efferent stance identifies informational reading whose purpose is to seek information and ideas. The aesthetic stance requires an understanding that recreates the textual experience. Whether reading from the efferent stance or the aesthetic stance, literacy is more than literal comprehension and the application of skills (Murphy, 1998). Reading becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

Acknowledging that there is no single correct answer does not, in Rosenblatt's view (1978), mean that she accepts that any answer is a correct one. Text interpretations should never be limited to a single all-encompassing definition unless standards for the validity of the interpretation are established (Rosenblatt, 1993). She emphasizes that personal transaction with text requires an interpretation whose foundation can be justified in the text itself. It is the emotions, experiences, and knowledge that the reader brings to the text that promote associations with words, images, and ideas that exist in the text (Rosenblatt, 1993). The historical, social, and cultural aspects of a reader's identity impact the reader's response to text (Asselin, 2000). A particular reader's initial engagement with a text is a private event with meanings internally experienced, so, while Rosenblatt (1995) encourages personal responses as the starting point, the readers must include evidence from the text.

Critical Literacy: With the explosion of information and information technology, a new emphasis needs to be placed on a different kind of literacy, critical literacy. Critical literacy includes not only gathering information but also assessing, synthesizing, and utilizing information (Simpson, 1996). It includes an awareness of the credibility of information sources as well as making judgments about the information itself. Where before the emphasis was on finding information and information sources, the focus has shifted to what part of the abundance of information is credible (Cunningham, 2000; Many, 2000). Literacy, then, becomes a practice as well as meaning construction.

Critical literacy involves the critical appraisal of what is read. People need to know how to evaluate and make decisions based on what they read and to look beyond a strictly grammatical, structural view of text (Luke, 1995). Critical engagement with text, what Luke (1999) called "critical multiliteracies," must include identifying meaning in text, forming personal interpretations, and developing an awareness of how text can be manipulative (Luke, 1999). Critical literacy is necessary as society recognizes the moral and ideological implications of the value of knowing how to evaluate and make decisions based on what is read (Luke, 1995).

Literate Listening: Good listening skills are recognized as essential for academic success (Thompson et al, 1999). These listening skills imply listening with the intent to understand (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Walker & Brokaw, 1998). Listeners are not passive receivers of information and the listening process is not automatic (Hiebert, 1990). Listening is not just to hear. Listening involves the active construction of meaning from verbal signals (Hennings, 1992) just as reading is the active construction of meaning from visual information (Rosenblatt, 1978). In a longitudinal study, Badian (1999) determined that reading disability could be defined by a discrepancy between listening and reading comprehension test scores. These findings concurred with the 1990 study by Spring & French who also identified specific reading disabilities by identifying deficiencies in listening skills.

In addition to linking listening skills to reading comprehension (Hennings, 1992; Spring & French, 1990; Badian, 1999), new consideration should be given to active listening itself as a form of literacy. Many books are now available as audio, with ever increasing numbers of books and titles both fiction and non-fiction available on cassette (Carver, 2000). "Reading" a book on cassette differs from conversational listening because there are only the verbal cues with no visual cues (Hennings, 1992). Strategic listening should be considered literacy (Hiebert, 1990). Enhanced listening skills can promote the acquisition of higher order thinking skills (Thompson et al, 1999), an essential ingredient to literacy as meaning making.

Writing as Literacy: As children read books, they develop their own literacy by understanding the meaning of the stories instead of learning isolated letters and words (Routman, 1988). As they learn a variety of words, they can express their own feeling and thoughts as they create their own writing (Blackburn, 1985). Literature develops in children not only the ability to create, overcome barriers, and become imaginative, but also positive attitudes toward reading (King, 1989). Motivating children to try to write as well as understanding how children develop as writers should rest on stories developing out of children's personal meaning and experience not on teaching individual words (Hughes & Searle, 1991). In other words and with their own words, children should generate their own ideas to create their own stories.

The dynamics of creating, interpreting, and sharing ideas in written form, then, becomes an integral part of any definition of literacy. A well-written phrase can create the sound and voice of the language (Wolf & Davinroy, 1998). Written text, as a method of sharing ideas, is an important facet of recent theories. These theories, in the area of writing, include the belief that writing creates understanding because it encourages the writer to explore and reexamine ideas. (McGinley, 1992).

Visual Literacy: Visual literacy is a person's ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate visual messages and to use visual language to communicate with others (Giorgis et al, 1999). Reading is reliant upon visual input, that is, deciphering written language. However, literacy is no longer limited to reading and writing. It requires adeptness in responding to new forms of visual images online or in print (Boden & Brodeur, 1999). Print and visual images are everywhere, from magazines to billboards to the Internet. Literacy demands a response to this new visual imagery (Cairney, 1997). "Reading" pictures, images, and words occurs in the context of watching others use auto tellers, writing letters, collecting faxes, reading messages on cellular phones, and playing video games. Literacy can be seen as a social practice taking on many visual forms, each with specific purposes and contexts (Luke, 1993).

Being truly literate obligates one to navigate different media and to respond appropriately to an e-mail message or to convey meaning to others through images as well as text (Cairney, 1995). Children navigate this visual

world, learning from these images as they do from textual experiences (Flood & Lapp, 1997). In addition to narrative texts, literacy integrates the understanding of such media as videos, charts, diagrams, news photos, and mathematical symbols (Cairney, 1997).

How Do We Learn How to Read?

Dixon-Krauss (1996, 1999) proposed a mediation model for literacy learning founded on two Vygotskian principles. First is the idea that the primary function of language is social, for communication. This leads to the view of literacy as a communication form using printed signs as the media for sharing meaning. Second, the zone of proximal development leads to a view of school literacy instruction as sign mediated activity nestled within socially mediated activity. A teacher/tutor mediates shared meaning between the reader and the text. The teacher/tutor, as the knowledgeable other, provides opportunities for the student to build awareness, understanding, and competence through social interaction. "A word in context means both more and less than the same word in isolation" (Vygotsky, 1986/1997, p. 245). Mediation, then, as a model for literacy learning and tutoring is a dynamic framework designed to guide teacher/tutor problem solving. The goal of instructional mediation is to help the learner develop his/her own self-directed mediating system, to become an independent, self-directed reader. The teacher/tutor decision-making process proceeds through

three components of the model: a) the purpose, b) the strategies, and c) the reflection (Dixon-Krauss, 1999).

Students learn by fitting new information together with what they already know (Dewey, 1971; James, 1981). Tutors working one-on-one with elementary students evoke opportunities for the direct involvement of the student. This approach relies on the active involvement of the student in the learning process. An active involvement in the learning process is perfectly suited to one-on-one tutoring. Here there is no escape. The student must interact with the tutor whose responsibility is to present material that is relevant to the individual student needs.

Yopp & Singer (1994) adduce an interactive model for learning to read. This model for reading acquisition recognizes the complex nature of the acquisition process. This complex process involves activating the learner's linguistic awareness and metalinguistic abilities. Yopp's 1985 study supports the relationship between linguistic awareness and successful reading acquisition. This interactive model links the task and reader response that provides for knowledge of results. The instructor controls these components, as well as the interaction itself. The teacher becomes the important third leg of the learning triangle that is composed of the task, the reader, and the teacher. The instructor is the key to the success or failure of beginning readers (Yopp, 1985). Yopp, based on Bruner (1960), asserts that children of any age can be successfully taught the initial steps of reading acquisition assuming the instructional conditions and demands do not exceed the learner's cognitive and linguistic development level

(Yopp, 1985). The goal is for the teacher to assume control of the initial stages of learning to read, with the teacher stepping back from the process as the learner becomes more capable.

The comprehension-process view of literacy acquisition (Ruddell, 1994) focuses on the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension. Comprehension, defined as reader constructed meaning, occurs as prior knowledge, previous experience, textual stance, and text interact. This process links prior knowledge and experience to word knowledge and this greater vocabulary leads to increased comprehension (Ruddell, 1994). This model relies on the teaching of vocabulary as a means of increasing reader comprehension. On a continuum from direct instruction to context learning (Pressley et al, 1987), the methodology seems to be less important that the fact that vocabulary be taught. Students will learn vocabulary if vocabulary is taught. Ruddell (1994) suggests that instead of focusing on a "best" method for vocabulary instruction the concentration should be on how the various approaches can enhance overall vocabulary development.

Based on Vygotsky's socio-historical theory of learning, Baker, Allen, Shockley, Pellegrini, Galda, and Stahl (1996) propose creating parallel home-school literacy practices as a means of improving literacy acquisition. This model relies on an attempt to recreate home activities that reflect the same philosophy as the school activities. Ways to include families in the process might consist of having parents write a biography of their child, keeping a home reading journal,

composing family stories, reading reflections, and creating opportunities for families to communicate with teachers about their child's growth as a reader. The key component to this model is that it relies on the recognition that the home environment is essential to a child's acquisition of literacy. Parent-teacher cooperation means that each discerns the experience and expertise of the other. This model envisions a literate community that encourages the literacy development of the student.

Hiebert (1994) describes the process of literacy acquisition through authentic tasks. Authentic tasks should involve students in opportunities to use literacy both for enjoyment and for communication. Recognizing that literacy, children, teaching, and learning are complex, interrelated entities means that tasks should present opportunities for students to reflect, refine, and adapt. The context of these authentic tasks becomes an interplay between teacher-talk with students and the tasks in which students are engaged. Talk and task should occur within a context (Hiebert & Fisher, 1991). To assist students in developing their ability to respond to and to interpret text, authentic literacy tasks can build on students' existing knowledge and can extend the students' world beyond the classroom (Hiebert, 1994). Literacy acquisition through authentic tasks allows students to take ownership of not only literacy, but also the school experience. These authentic tasks need to include expository text as well.

What is Knowing and Believing?

Authorities do not agree on what constitutes knowing and what constitutes believing. Dewey considered beliefs as a part of knowing. In *How We Think*, Dewey (1910/1993) described beliefs as a hypothesis and knowledge as the product of this inquiry. For Dewey, knowledge signified conviction with beliefs holding the place of the unconfirmed. Conversely, there are those who place beliefs instead of knowledge as holding the dominion of certainty (Alexander & Dochy, 1994). Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1985) defines a belief as a conviction that certain things are true or real. A belief, then, is what we think we know or a belief is what we think about what we know. A belief is an individual's representation of reality. This representation of reality has a personal validity and credibility to guide personal behavior and thought. Beliefs become rules for action and are critical to motivation and to learning (Peirce, 1903/1997).

Dewey (1910/1993) described the knower, the knowing, and the known. Experience is the teacher and an activity becomes an experience when the individual thinks about the activity. For Dewey, knowledge is the product of inquiry (Garrison, 1997). It is created as an aesthetic experience, "a liaison between wisdom and ignorance" (Garrison, 1997, p.87). The knower is the student (the learner), the knowing is the activity, and knowledge is the product of that individual learner and the activity, the known.

Alexander (2000) defined knowledge as a "conceptual scaffold, a foundation for subsequent learning that colors and filters one's school and nonschool experiences" (p. 29). In recognizing that knowledge encompasses everything that one knows and believes, Alexander also admits that the public and political communities associate schooling with amassing knowledge. This quest for evidence to prove educational outcomes converges on ways to show the successful accumulation of that school-based knowledge.

Alexander and Dochy (1995) compared the concepts of knowledge and beliefs of 54 American adults and 66 European adults (primarily in the Netherlands). The participants in this study represented three educational levels: (a) postsecondary students, (b) completing or completed graduate degrees, and (c) acknowledged experts in the area of knowledge or beliefs. The participants were presented with graphic and verbal tasks in order to encourage the self-reflection that the researchers desired and would produce responses that would inform the study concerning literate adults' understandings about the nature of knowledge and beliefs.

The participants of this study, in general, saw knowledge as unchangeable and provable. Beliefs were overwhelmingly (98%) seen as changeable, but many also recognized that there is a resistance to belief change. Factors seen as capable of changing beliefs were new or compelling information, formal instruction, and life experiences (Alexander & Dochy, 1995).

The demographics of the Alexander & Dochy study have similarities to those in this present study (American, post-secondary students, and a graduate student). Since the Alexander & Dochy participants saw knowledge as unchangeable and beliefs as resistant to change, the participants in my study may define reading as a knowledge with very specific (and unchangeable) attributes or they may define reading as a process that changes and grows with the learner. Their beliefs about reading may be circumscribed by their view of this knowledge about what reading is. The purpose of this study is to discover what each of the minimally trained tutors knows and believes about literacy.

Schommer (1994) presented evidence that beliefs affect what is comprehended, how it is interpreted, and the level of persistence that the reader brings to that process. Factors that affected learning both directly and indirectly were background experiences, education, age, and gender. In a follow-on study conducted with high school students, seniors, who had participated in the study as freshmen, the researchers found that learners' perceptions of knowledge and how it was acquired changed over time (Schommer et al, 1997).

Schommer's (1994) study looked at students' epistemological beliefs. Her underlying assumption was that individuals' beliefs system affected what they viewed as knowledge. Schommer surveyed three different groups asking questions such as: "Successful students learn quickly," "Scientists can ultimately get to the truth," and "Most words have one clear meaning." The questionnaire was administered to 260 undergraduates, 400 graduate students, and 1000 high

school students. Four categories emerged. Schommer described these four categories as (a) fixed ability, (b) simple knowledge, (c) certain knowledge, and (d) quick learning. Schommer further defined two categories of learners: naïve and sophisticated.

Individuals whom Schommer described as sophisticated believed that there are few things that were certain, some things that were temporarily uncertain, and some things that were either unknown or constantly evolving. With this epistemological belief, the sophisticated learner by default would be a critical reader, that is, a reader who constantly questioned what was read. When sophisticated learners read newspapers and magazine articles, they were more likely to question both factual articles as well as editorial articles. They were influenced only when enough evidence was accumulated.

Naïve learners, in Schommer's view, believed that knowledge was absolute with some knowledge only temporarily unknown. These learners did not envision a possibility that knowledge could evolve or change. With this epistemological belief, naïve learners by default failed to read critically. Their tendency was to distort information that was presented as tentative whether it was explicitly or implicitly stated as tentative. Naïve learners were more susceptible to advertisements tending to believe the information as factual.

Schommer concluded that an individual's belief system affected how they defined knowledge and how they thought that knowledge was acquired. Schommer's conclusions indicate that understanding an individual's belief system

can be an important piece of information not only about how people think about knowledge but also how they make judgments based on those beliefs. Looking at tutors' beliefs about reading was important to my study. Schommer's conclusions indicate that a teacher who asks a volunteer into his/her classroom should be aware that the individual's belief system would be manifested in how he/she perceives the teacher's directives. A study of these beliefs will provide insight into the variety of beliefs held by volunteers.

Preservice and Practicing Teacher Beliefs

Since there has been little research into beliefs from viewpoint of the tutor, it is important to examine the existing research into the beliefs of preservice teachers and practicing teachers. One way to address tutor beliefs is to begin to look at the beliefs of practicing and preservice teachers.

Practicing teachers: Behar, Pajares, and George (1995) studied the influence of teachers' beliefs on their instructional practices and on student course grades as the result of the implementation of a nontraditional curriculum approach. Quantitative date included course grades for the high school students involved during the two year study which allowed students to self-select whether to be enrolled in honors or regular classes. A control group from a neighboring school, which did not have the self-selection process, was established. Qualitative data was obtained by interviewing fourteen teachers at the beginning and at the end of the second year of the study. Teachers were asked to reflect on the year's

successes and failures. In addition, classes were observed to determine the instructional choices teachers made. Teachers were asked to provide feedback concerning instructing honors and regular students within the same classroom, how the process could be made more effective for both teacher and student, and what materials or support the teacher felt was needed. All of the teachers in this sample had taught for at least five years.

While observing classroom instruction, the researchers noted passive resistance to the innovation. Teachers continued whole group instruction, did not check students' comprehension, and did not actively engage students in the learning process. Teachers tended to ignore students who were noticeably off-task. The school's faculty did not believe in the innovation nor did they believe that it could fulfill its aims. Perhaps as important was the fact that they did not believe that they had the expertise to successfully bring about curriculum change nor did they believe that the students could succeed under this new program.

Only one department's students showed increased student performance. Despite initial misgivings, the teachers in this department engaged in proactive strategies developing a personal and professional sense of efficacy that enabled them to develop teaching strategies not only to complement the innovation but also to increase student performance. The researchers found that the department chair was instrumental in influencing the beliefs of the other department faculty.

Behar et al found that the integral component in the success or non-success of a new program was contingent upon understanding teachers' beliefs.

Those teachers who were willing to modify their practice and rethink their roles were successful based on an analysis of students' increases scores. Those teachers whose beliefs were counter to the program and who were unwilling or unable to alter their practices were unsuccessful based on an analysis of students' decreased scores.

If experienced teachers' beliefs are resistant to change then it is possible that volunteers' beliefs are also resistant to change. Tutors who do not share the philosophy of the classroom teacher for whom they work or who do not share the philosophy of the program which places them in the school (such as the work-study reading tutor program) may follow a similar path as the teachers in this study. Their success or non-success may be based on how closely their beliefs match that of the teacher or school within which they volunteer. A program which places volunteers in classrooms needs to be aware of the beliefs that the tutors bring with them and be prepared to help them modify or rethink those beliefs. Teachers who ask for volunteers to come into their classrooms should also be aware that these volunteers may not share their instructional goals.

In a study of practicing teachers and the relationship between their beliefs and practices, Richardson et al. (1991) demonstrated that the beliefs of teachers related to their classroom practices in teaching reading comprehension. This study dealt with teachers from grades four through six and used interviews based on anthropological studies to determine beliefs. These interviews were then

followed by observations of classroom practices to determine to what extent, if any, beliefs and practices coincided.

This study demonstrated that the beliefs of teachers, as assessed during interviews, related to their classroom practices in the teaching of reading comprehension. Richardson, Anderson, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) were able to predict specific classroom behaviors on the basis of the analyses of these interviews. These researchers found that the interviews revealed the ways these teachers thought about reading and learning and how they practice in the classrooms. This relationship between teachers' stated beliefs about the reading process and their classroom practices allowed the researchers to infer that stated beliefs could predict practices.

While this study's participants were practicing teachers, not minimally trained tutors, the interview and the observations were key sources of data as with the present study. Since the interview findings allowed the Richardson et al researchers to infer a stated beliefs/practice match, the interview/observation methodology could reveal the same beliefs/practice match for the tutor/participants in this study.

Kinzer (1988) conducted a study designed to identify beliefs about how reading takes place and how reading ability develops. The participants in this study represented both preservice teachers (n = 83) and inservice teachers (n = 44). One hundred twenty-seven participants were administered an inventory to determine their beliefs and a set of three lesson plans. Each of the three lesson

plans reflected different explanations about how reading takes place. Participants chose the plan that they thought would be most effective and that they would choose to teach.

While the study did not find significant differences between the beliefs of the preservice teachers and the inservice teachers, one finding was a key indicator of what to look for when studying tutor beliefs. In Kinzer's study, both preservice and inservice teachers with reader-based/holistic explanations for how reading develops tended to choose lessons reflecting their beliefs. Participants holding text-based or interactive or mastery of skills explanations for how reading develops did not choose lessons consistent with their beliefs.

Beliefs are important in the field of education. These preservice and inservice teachers brought beliefs (preconceptions/ predispositions) to instruction, but those beliefs and their instructional choices were not always consistent. Volunteer tutors will also bring their preconceptions/predispositions to their tutoring methodologies. These entering beliefs may color both their subsequent perceptions and their subsequent instruction.

Cahill's 1998 Australian study investigated the differences in how 42 business people, 44 primary school teachers, and 40 secondary school teachers defined literacy. Cahill developed six experimental concepts of literacy refined from both historical and current paradigms of literacy. Her six literacy concepts were classical, functional, intentional, normative, progressive, and technocratic.

The opinionnaire contained nine items: group identification, short-answer definition of literacy, with the remaining seven items as multiple-choice questions in the form of a hypothetical student's literacy profile. The respondents were asked to make judgments about these students by choosing from the multiple-choice answers.

The results revealed that each of the three groups held a different view of what it meant to be literate. The business people held to the classical standards that emphasized correct language usage. Primary school teachers placed literacy as appropriate to the situation with secondary school teachers' beliefs somewhere between these two views. Beliefs varied with the background of experiences of each group.

Generally, volunteers in schools would be laypeople; those not trained in the field of education. Student and tutor actions may be based more on what they believe than on what is objectively the case (Bandura, 1986). If, as Bandura states, beliefs will affect actions, then, what these laypeople/tutors believe about education and the education process could color their interactions with their student-tutees. The results of Cahill's (1998) study indicate that laypeople hold views that are different from those of trained educators. The beliefs of these laypeople, volunteer tutors, should be examined in order to see if their beliefs are congruent with those of the teachers for whom they tutor.

In a study conducted by Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, and Hampton (1998) nine first-grade teachers were interviewed and observed to distinguish

which beliefs and practices produced exemplary teaching results based on student reading and writing achievement and student engagement. One focus was to look for beliefs/practice matches and then to relate those beliefs/practices to exemplary teaching.

While the main focus of the Wharton-McDonald et al study was to relate specific beliefs/practices to exemplary teaching, an additional area of study was to look for those beliefs/practice matches. One important characteristic was that these exemplary teachers shared an awareness of purpose, that is, that these teachers were aware not only of their practices but how their purposes drove those practices. The most successful, based on student achievement, were those teachers whose practices matched their beliefs.

If it is important for trained teachers to be aware of the ways in which their beliefs are manifested in their practices, then is may also be important that volunteers be aware that their practices may mirror their beliefs. Perhaps as important as understanding that beliefs may be manifested in practices, is being able to reflect on and to articulate those beliefs as the teachers in the study did. Since the Wharton-McDonald study suggests that successful practicing teachers exhibited a beliefs/practices match, then, tutors who are going to be successful in their one-on-one sessions with at-risk students may need to exhibit a beliefs/practice match. A study to understand the beliefs of these tutors as well as to see if there is a beliefs/practice match is important.

Preservice teachers: Volunteers may be more like preservice teachers than practicing teachers. Preservice teachers, especially at the beginning of their programs, have little training or experience and have probably not had to verbalize their beliefs. This is likely to be true for untrained and minimally trained volunteers as well. Bandura (1986) suggested that self-reflection provided personal understanding and helped individuals evaluate and modify their own thinking. People are unable to change beliefs they are unaware they possess, and they are unwilling to change those they are aware of unless they see good reason to do so. This requires that teacher educators first help students to identify their beliefs and then provide a curriculum focusing on belief exploration and alteration (Pajares, 1993). Volunteers are being asked to provide instruction without benefit of this opportunity to reflect on their beliefs.

Using the data from a five-year study of teacher education programs, Tatto (1998) questioned the extent to which teacher education students hold shared beliefs about purposes of education and teaching practice as well as the extent to which teacher education students' views change in the direction of their professors/instructors views. These data were drawn from the Teacher Education and Learning to Teach (TELT) study of the National Center for Research on Teacher Education (TCRTE) conducted from 1985-1990. The TELT examined the relationship between teacher education and changes in knowledge, skills, and dispositions of prospective teachers and documented the views of these preservice teachers as they progressed through their certification programs. The data were in

the form of questionnaire data using a 7-point Likert scale, the interviews conducted by the NCRTE, and observations.

Both the faculty and the students were asked to respond. The questions focused attention on the extent to which the students agreed or disagreed to statements about the purposes of education, roles, and teaching practice. The faculty indicated the responses that they would expect from graduates of their program. These sets of responses were analyzed. Teacher educators across programs shared goals relating to values education and education for critical thinking and questioning. However, particular types of teacher education programs seemed to influence graduates' views in the direction of the jointly defined philosophy of the faculty.

The findings of this study suggest that the more the faculty shares a common vision, the more successful programs are at graduating teachers who come to hold those views, but different programs hold different beliefs. If, as the Tatto study suggests, beliefs vary with the background of the preservice teachers and the programs to which they are exposed, then the challenge for teachers utilizing volunteers is to understand tutors' beliefs in order to develop shared understandings about educational purposes and teaching practices.

Richardson (1990) focused on the function of beliefs in learning to teach. First, students bring beliefs to a teacher education program that strongly influence what and how they learn. Second, beliefs form the nucleus of educational progress. In reviewing previous studies, Richardson concluded that how these

teachers adapt or adopt new practices in their classrooms relates to whether their beliefs match the assumptions inherent in the new program or method. If this is true of teachers in training, this same theme might be true for volunteers who are only minimally trained. If the methodologies presented in tutor training sessions do not fit with the tutors' preconceived notions about the reading process, the methodologies may not be implemented. It is important, therefore, to understand what those ideas, notions, and beliefs are.

Worthy and Prater (1998) examined preservice teachers' perspectives of a tutorial experience as part of their course work in preparation for teacher certification. The question examined whether the tutorial experience increased their knowledge base and increased their confidence in their ability to successfully teach reading in the elementary schools. While the research question was concerned with whether teacher training programs could affect change in preservice teachers' beliefs, it was necessary to examine these beliefs at the beginning of the study with the tool for change both classroom and one-on-one tutoring experiences. The current study examines beliefs of the tutors who are also involved in one-on-one tutoring experiences.

As an indication of beliefs upon entering the teacher preparation program, responses to a survey revealed that these preservice teachers had only a nebulous conception of how students struggle with reading and what is necessary in order to help students successfully learn to read (Worthy & Prater, 1998). Exit surveys exposed more reasoned views. All of the preservice teachers reported that actual

experience working with students in combination with their own classroom exposure to methods and materials was invaluable. These tutorial experiences played a vital role in expanding their knowledge about literacy learning as well as increasing their confidence in teaching reading and writing (Worthy & Prater, 1998).

This study included two components that bear on the current study. The initial survey identified incoming beliefs about reading as the preservice teachers began the class in reading methods followed by an exit survey at the course's end. The surveys in the Worthy & Prater study provided those researchers with information similar to the interview protocol for my study. Over the course of a semester, these preservice teachers received training (classroom instruction) and experience through one-on-one tutoring with elementary students. The majority of the college students reported changes in their beliefs and knowledge based on actual experiences working with students as reported on an exit survey. Based on the findings of the Worthy & Prater study and since the work-study tutors in my current study are tutoring one-on-one, it might be expected that those tutors with more experience would evidence beliefs that are different from those of the tutors who are new to the program.

Hollingsworth (1989) studied the effect of preservice teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs when learning new skills. Students arrive at the beginning of a learning situation with an intact knowledge base. This knowledge base determines how they make sense of any new information. Specifically, these

novice teachers will enter a teacher education program with ideas about the teaching/learning process. Even if those ideas can not be articulated at the inception of the program, the ideas do affect the student's learning. Hollingsworth found that preservice programs needed to understand the incoming beliefs of its students in order to affect existing knowledge bases (Hollingsworth, 1989). This study reinforces the necessity of understanding preservice teacher beliefs. If understanding preservice teachers' beliefs is important then understanding tutors' beliefs is equally important, especially since the majority of the tutors do not plan to teach and will have no other associations with the field of education. An understanding of incoming beliefs may be a vital component in recognizing how best to utilize these tutors.

Manna and Misheff (1987) investigated attitudes toward reading and beliefs about reading. The question investigated concerned possible differences between attitudes and beliefs about reading between preservice teachers and practicing teachers. Using writing as a reflective tool, the participants produced a reading autobiography. This autobiography was structured through a series of open-ended questions that directed the participants to remember and examine their development as readers beginning with their earliest memories of experiences with literature. From the 1,000 autobiographies, 50 were analyzed with 25 writers randomly selected from groups of perservice teachers enrolled in a teacher education program and 25 randomly selected from practicing teachers

enrolled in graduate programs. All students were enrolled in a course in children's or adolescent literature.

All students described both positive and negative experiences with reading at home and in school with the most positive statements reflecting nonschool experiences. Interesting differences appeared when comparing these positive and negative experiences. More experienced teachers revealed positive at home experiences than did the preservice teachers (84% to 60%). More preservice teachers revealed negative school experiences than did the experienced teachers (93% to 65%). It was compelling to see that the majority of both groups (83%), who expressed that they felt that reading was a vital skill, felt that it was incumbent upon them as teachers of reading to provide positive experiences (teachers serving as models, personally meaningful experiences, variety of types of reading and writing, balanced experiences between individual reading and collaborative reading, and a variety of responses to interesting materials based on student interests and preferences when possible). This study revealed a commonality of beliefs between both preservice and practicing teachers concerning literacy as a valued and personally meaningful skill.

In a similar way, the current study examined the kinds of experiences that the tutors viewed as important to include in sessions with their tutees. In particular, which skills did they consider the most important to include and what kinds of activities would encourage the development of those skills. The Manna & Misheff study specifically looked into the kinds of literacy experiences the

participants felt were important to the teaching of reading. The majority view of the participants in the Manna & Misheff study was that teachers should provide positive experiences with teachers modeling positive attitudes, make the literacy experience personally meaningful, include a variety of types of reading and writing, balance experiences between individual reading and collaborative reading, as well as encompass a variety of responses to interesting materials based on student interests.

While the participants in the Manna & Misheff study held a complex view of reading acquisition, the participants in the current study did not all share this aggregate perspective. This current study points to an important conundrum faced by schools seeking volunteers to come into classrooms. While the volunteers, usually laypeople, that schools recruit to complement classroom instruction may be ready and willing, it is questionable that they are able. If we define "able" in the narrow sense that they may have beliefs about what literacy is and how it is achieved which are at variance with the school's philosophy and the teachers for whom they are working. As educators, we recognize the many faces of literacy. Working with volunteers to enhance the literacy experiences of at-risk readers must begin with an understanding of how those volunteers define literacy. We need to be able to offer these one-on-one experiences for these at-risk readers, but if we are to make the best advantage of these experiences, we must be aware of the stance taken by these volunteers.

Educational researchers recognize the need to better prepare preservice teachers for the challenges they will face in the classrooms (Goodlad, 1990; Kagan, 1992). Government, both state and national, stresses stricter standards for teacher certification and accountability (1998 Amendments). Government reports identify illiteracy as a national epidemic (Donahue et al, 1999). Within these calls for academic improvement for students and better trained teachers, the America Reads Challenge calls for volunteers to come into classrooms to shore up reading instruction for at-risk readers and provides evidence that one-on-one tutoring works (America Reads Challenge, 1997).

Research into the effectiveness of tutoring programs has focused mainly on one–on-one programs with highly trained personnel providing the tutoring (Wasik & Slavin, 1993; Wasik, 1997; Wasik, 1998; Topping, 1998). Programs utilizing volunteers with minimal or no training have not received the same intensity of research. This study looks closely at one program and how those volunteers supported literacy and literacy learning. These volunteers evidenced a variety of definitions concerning what it means to be able to read and an even greater variety of strategies to implement reading instruction. There is little research that bears directly on volunteers as a group or how these volunteers understand literacy and literacy learning. This study attempts to focus attention on how volunteers define literacy and in what ways they implement instruction based on those beliefs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Literacy learning is a complex process. Since how an educator sees this complex process will affect his/her classroom implementation and since volunteer reading tutors are being asked to carry out this reading instruction, it is important to understand how minimally trained tutors view literacy and literacy learning. This study investigates tutor belief systems. Specifically, the study asked the following questions: (1) What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by adult reading tutors? (2) Can those beliefs be observed as practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary students?

Methodology Choice

In choosing this design, I recognized that my values and beliefs influence first and most importantly, the selection of research questions and subsequently the selection of research design. The choice to conduct qualitative research stems from a desire to provide all participants with an opportunity to provide descriptions and to interpret personal experiences. Qualitative research presents occasions to explore these behaviors and to understand using inquiry. The methodology inherent in inquiry is this exploration of a social or human condition. The researcher can then construct a "complex and holistic picture"

(Creswell, 1998, p. 15). This "complex and holistic picture" is created through analysis of interviews and the virtue of exhaustive participant data collected in a natural setting with the interviewer/researcher as an integral part of the data collected (Seidman, 1998).

Researcher Tools

Interviewing was the focal point of the methodology for this study. The interview process provided powerful insights into educational issues. Interviewing provided an understanding through the experience of others. This method of data collection was also consistent with people's ability to make meaning through language (Vygotsky, 1986/1997) and affirmed the importance of the individual (Seidman, 1998).

Interpretative qualitative research has a history across many disciplines: psychology, medicine, law, and/or political science (Creswell, 1998). Yin (1994) identified six types of information documentation: archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. This study utilized four of Yin's six types of information: interviews, direct observations, participant observations in the form of daily logs and journals, and physical artifacts again using the daily logs and journals.

Data, collected in the form of observations and field notes, were collected throughout the school year. As the recruiter and trainer of these tutors, I knew the information covered during the training sessions and knew what activities were

available in the tutors' repertoire from those training sessions. My observations were used to triangulate views expressed during the interviews with actual tutorial interactions between tutor and elementary student.

Researcher Role

My role as researcher was irrevocably linked to my past experiences during my eighteen years as a classroom teacher, Chapter 1 teacher, and reading specialist. Those experiences have left their practitioner mark. My role as Program Coordinator for the tutoring program provided an additional perspective, that of supervisor. Central to all these roles was and is meeting children's educational needs and helping them to achieve their potential.

My career in education began with idealism (and admittedly, naïveté) which is still largely intact. Experience has taught me (if I may paraphrase) that I can help some of the students most of the time, most of the students some of the time, but not all of the students all of the time. That, perhaps defines my loss of naïveté. When the ink was still wet on my teacher's certification, I was sure that I could "teach" all of the children. There is, however, still idealism. I became a teacher because I wanted to make a contribution. Growing up with an extended, immigrant family, that included first, second, and (me) third generations, provided me with a work ethic and the need to contribute. I guess that makes me a working class "do-gooder." Teaching was that way to contribute. Add wife and parent to

all those personal and professional hats and recognize there were and are numerous, competing voices.

As a Program supervisor, my job was to implement the best possible tutoring for the at-risk students involved in the program. That meant that, beyond researcher, I needed to provide training and supervision that would provide those best opportunities. My role as researcher meant that I needed to observe without interfering. However, that non-interference was a best practice as a supervisor as well. I needed to watch and wait. Stepping into the tutoring session would have made my presence part of the event as well as undermined the tutor's authority.

Since one instrument of data collection was field notes describing tutoring sessions, my dual role of supervisor and researcher/observer needed to be balanced between my neutral researcher role and my responsibilities to the tutor and the elementary student being tutored. A special concern within this study was that dual role. I needed not only to observe but also make judgments as a supervisor. As researcher, my field notes needed to be descriptive, analytic, accurate, and non-judgmental (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). I realized that I would need to be careful not to prejudge events based on my supervisory role as well. As a consequence, my researcher role provided additional ways to look at the tutoring sessions. While observing the tutoring sessions, my viewpoint was that of an outside observer since I did not interfere or contribute in any way to the tutoring sessions. I, the researcher, transcribed my field notes at the end of the day. I eliminated adjectives which might imply judgment. For example, instead

of the phrase, "the tutor appeared bored," a more accurate description was, "the tutor leaned her head on her hand, yawned, and listened to the student read without asking questions." I, the supervisor, discussed the sessions with the tutor outside the elementary school setting.

The third face of my multifaceted personality surfaced as I coded the data. With this phase, the words on the page were separated from the real setting and the real people. In order to focus on the statements in the interviews, I placed the answers to the interview questions on 5 X 8 cards with a color-coded dot on the card so that I could go back later and match the words to the tutor. In this way, since I had not done the interview nor transcribed the tapes of the interview, I could code without reference to the actual person making the statements.

I feel that I was able to adequately disengage the researcher from the supervisor and make judgments there were only minimally biased by those roles. As a researcher, I was open to looking at the data, reading and rereading, from more than one perspective. Any researcher's interpretations will be tied to all his/her personal past experiences and roles. My background was central to my way of making sense of what I saw and what I did as researcher. However, the most important aspect of my researcher's role was the willingness to be guided by the data.

Participants and Setting

Participants: The participants for this study were drawn from the Federal Work-Study Program at a comprehensive southwestern university. These tutors were full-time students at the university who qualified for federally funded work-study awards, who had been identified through the personnel office of that university, and who had been hired as part of the work-study reading tutor program. The other main qualifications for consideration as a tutor were that students must evidence an interest in helping at-risk readers learn to read and that students must provide their own transportation.

Selection of Tutors for Program: Once the personnel office identified the applicant as eligible for a work-study award and the supervisor confirmed that he/she had transportation to the elementary school, an interview was scheduled. During this interview, the prospective tutor discussed background experiences working with young children, reasons for applying for the position, major, class schedules, and willingness to participate in training sessions to prepare for working with at-risk readers. In addition, the college students were asked why each thought that he/she should be hired for this position.

Tutor Training: When hired, all tutors attended two, three-hour training sessions before reporting to the school to be assigned to work with individual students. These initial training sessions covered professionalism (dress, punctuality, responsibility), preparation (session format), materials (books, common word families, Dolch word list), and activities (word games, questioning

techniques). Positive reinforcement was also emphasized, with discussions about ways to praise.

The college students were then placed in elementary classrooms to tutor students in grades one through three in reading and reading related activities. They worked with at-risk elementary students identified by school personnel. The tutoring occurred in one-on-one sessions with occasional small group instruction with no more than three students per group.

Materials and activities to implement sessions were addressed in subsequent training sessions. These training sessions occurred in one three-hour session held each month. Tutors were encouraged to discuss and share effective instructional techniques or any ongoing problems encountered during the tutoring sessions. Collaboration with principals and teachers at each school was encouraged.

Participants: A purposeful sample was drawn from those currently working as reading tutors in the work-study reading tutor program. The tutor population ranged in age from 18 to 38 and included both graduate and undergraduate students. Their fields of study included education, zoology/pre-med, journalism, business, social work, interior design, counseling, and pre-law. Those chosen represented both traditional and nontraditional students (age), education majors and non-education majors, experienced and novice tutors. School context was considered as the participants' assignments included three different schools.

This current tutor cadre consisted of twenty-six college students, the majority of whom track with the characteristics of elementary teachers nation-wide. That is, they were white, middle-class, and female. Out of the twenty-six tutors there was only one male, one African-American female, one Southwest Asian female, and three Native American females.

Criteria for Choice of Participants: The participant sample choice began with a choice of schools. Six local schools provided the student population to be tutored for the work-study reading tutor program. The schools included two urban, inner city schools, two suburban schools, and two rural schools. The school contexts ranged on a continuum from little support to specific direction. Four schools presented a desirable atmosphere for the tutoring sessions. This desirable atmosphere included principal and teachers who were supportive of the program, providing the tutors with information about the needs of the elementary students, but allowing the tutors to plan and implement the activities that they included in their sessions. These schools, in addition to the context of teacher and principal participation, provided the optimum environment for the tutors to work. The tutors at these schools worked within a library setting or a hallway where there was limited student traffic. This library/hallway setting presented a reasonably quiet environment for the sessions with a minimum of distractions such as student traffic, teacher instruction to other groups, or general noise. These four schools included one urban, two suburban, and one rural school.

The tutors at these four schools were recruited to participate in the study. The tutors were asked if they were willing to participate in a research project designed to investigate the beliefs of adult volunteers toward reading and their beliefs of how reading proficiency is acquired. They were informed of additional data collection procedures and that this additional data would be collected and considered with the interview responses. There were fourteen volunteers out of a possible twenty tutors assigned to these four schools.

Six tutors were chosen from this group of volunteers. Factors in choosing this purposeful sample were that tutors' assignments represented at least two different school sites and the tutors were representative of characteristics of the tutor cadre as a whole. Tutors were chosen who represented both traditional and nontraditional students (age), experienced versus novice tutors (had worked in the program for two years, one year, and one semester), as well as education majors and non-education majors. One tutor was chosen because she tutored at two different schools in order to look for possible differences based on school context. All participants were apprised of the study purposes and the procedures for the research. Each signed an informed consent (See Appendix A for a copy of the informed consent). After being selected, each participant was asked to suggest her own pseudonym.

Participants: Sarah,* a 24-year-old, white female, was a graduate student in Community Counseling. Sarah was a product of a suburban school on the

* All participant names are pseudonyms as are the names of the school sites.

outskirts of a large, southwestern metropolitan area. She was in her second year in the program as a tutor and was working at Woodland Hills Elementary. This was the same school at which she tutored during the school year 1998-1999. Her previous work experience included working at a daycare center and as a waitress.

Gillian, a 19-year-old, white female, was a freshman hoping to major in elementary education. Gillian attended a large urban high school in a southwestern city. This was her first year in the program and she tutored at two different schools. The schools at which she tutored were Woodland Hills Elementary and Garfield Elementary. Her previous work experience included working as an infant room teacher in a daycare and as a waitress.

Jill was a white, 36 year old, non-traditional student, and was a senior elementary education major. As a child, Jill's family moved frequently. Her personal school experience included a variety of suburban, urban and rural schools in the south and southwest. She was completing her first year as a work-study tutor at Harding Elementary. Her previous work experience included secretary/receptionist and data entry clerk/ trainer.

Shari, a 19-year-old, white female, was a freshman who hoped to major in Interior Design. Shari attended a rural elementary and high school. She joined the reading tutor program at the beginning of the second semester and was completing her first semester as a work-study tutor. She tutored at Woodland Hills Elementary. She had no previous paid work experience, however, as a high school cheerleader, she participated in a mentoring program that placed high

school athletes in elementary schools. As part of this program, Shari worked with fourth, fifth, and sixth graders, both one-on-one and in small groups. She also was a teacher assistant in a preschool Sunday school class.

Katie was the other non-traditional student who at 38 years old was completing her second year as a work-study tutor. Katie's early education was in the Department of Defense Dependent Schools. Her family moved to a suburban, southwestern city where she completed high school. A white female, Katie was a junior majoring in Social Work. This was her second year tutoring at Harding Elementary. For ten years, Katie, a mother of four, considered herself a homemaker. Her most recent work experience in addition to the current program as a work-study tutor was to work as a training specialist working with special-needs adults helping them acquire skills for independent living. She was also trained in American Sign Language.

Emrys was a sophomore, English major. Emrys attended a small school in a community of 1500 citizens. She attended the same school with the same classmates from kindergarten through graduation. Her senior class had twenty-one graduating students. Emrys, a 20-year-old, white female completing her first semester as a tutor, was assigned to Woodland Hills Elementary. This experience as a reading tutor was Emrys' first work experience other than baby-sitting jobs while she was in high school. During the summer between the completion of her high school senior year and beginning as a college freshman, she provided full-time childcare for two preschoolers while their parents worked.

School Context for Tutoring: The schools that were the sites for the tutoring sessions were Woodland Hills Elementary, Harding Elementary, and Garfield Elementary. These schools represented a rural school, a suburban school, and an urban school.

Schools: Woodland Hills was a suburban public school, but was located in the countryside near a large lake. It was a small school with a rural atmosphere. The majority of the school population was Caucasian with less than 1% African American and 1% Native American students. Approximately 50% of the students were on free or reduced price lunch. Those students with IEP's represented approximately 7% of the student population.

The library was the main venue for the tutoring sessions. The library was divided into several sections. The back of the library housed the school's computer lab. While bookcases delineated the boundaries of the "lab," this did not block the noise when there was a class in session. Another section was designed around a large easy chair with small rugs on which students could sit while listening to storytime. If there was a special program speaker, this area was used so that one or two classes could attend a session. Two other sections contained tables and chairs at which students could read and work. It was in these sections that the tutoring sessions usually occurred.

The teachers and principal were supportive of the program. They were especially appreciative of the tutors working with their students. Teachers might sometimes send work from class that they wanted the tutor to work with the

student toward finishing. However, for the most part, tutors were given guidelines about skills that each student needed. Within that framework of guidelines, the tutors planned and organized the tutoring sessions, choosing the literature, skills, and writing activities. On more than one occasion, teachers spoke to me in the hallway as I came to observe. They expressed to me how exciting it was to see the growth in the students being tutored. One teacher in particular made a point that the one-on-one relationship was a "plus" and pointed to one tutor, Sarah, as being especially good with her students.

Harding Elementary, an urban, inner city school, was not a large school. Its enrollment did include a high percentage of at-risk students. The area surrounding the school was lower income, single family housing. This school's ethnic makeup was more diverse than was Woodland Hills. Here the ethnicity was 55% Caucasian, 15% African American, 20% Hispanic, 9% Native American, and 1% Asian American. The percentage of children learning to speak English was 13% and those students who had IEP's represented 15% of the student population. Approximately 98% of the students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

Most of the tutoring sessions occurred in the library. One exit from the library gave access to a wing of the school that housed four third grade classes. On occasion the tutors worked with students sitting at a table in this hallway. There were tables and chairs filling the empty spaces between bookshelves. These small, round tables had four to six chairs each. Usually it was at these

tables that the tutors worked with their students. One section of the library was separated from the main floor space with high bookcases. This created an alcove where ESL students were tutored, usually three or four students per group. This small group activity could sometimes create additional distractions. The majority of the time, the library and hallway provided a quiet place for the tutoring sessions.

The teachers, principal, and assistant principal were supportive of the program. The teachers and assistant principal all expressed their appreciation for the help the tutors gave their students. Teachers sometimes sent work from class that they wanted the tutor to work with the student toward finishing. In general, within that framework of classroom assignments to complete, the tutors planned and organized the tutoring sessions, choosing the literature, skills, and writing activities. Whenever possible, the tutor used the classroom assignments as that day's skills lesson.

Garfield Elementary was a suburban elementary school. It was located in a middle income neighborhood surrounded by single family homes. The school's ethnic demographics were 60% Caucasian, 23% African American, 4% Hispanic, 12% Native American, and less than 1% Asian American. Those who were eligible for free or reduced price lunch comprised approximately 64%. Only 1% of the students was learning to speak English and 12% of the student population had IEP's.

Garfield Elementary was a school without walls. The instructional area was a large, open space which housed the classes, library, and "meeting place". The teachers created walls using bookcases, chart stands, and moveable chalkboards. "Halls" were narrow walkways between bookcases. The tutors worked in an open area created between the "classrooms." They were at all times visible to other teachers working with their own students.

The "Meeting Place" was actually two distinct areas. Long tables with chairs defined one area, with chalkboards on two sides separating it from the two adjacent classrooms. The other area was called "Harold's Hideaway." Tables with bookshelves, rugs, bean bag chairs bounded this area. There were pillows, a "Rugrats" tent, and a sleeping bag as well. The tutoring sessions were conducted in either the "Meeting Place" or in "Harold's Hideaway." These areas were isolated from classroom traffic.

The teachers, principal, and assistant principal were supportive of the program. The principal had expressed his appreciation for the help the tutors provided to Garfield's students. The school counselor took the time to comment on the positive results that she had seen with the students involved in the program. The teachers usually sent a work folder from class that they wanted the tutor to work with the student toward finishing. This work included worksheets or other classwork and might include a reading assignment from reading basal or content area textbook. Within the restrictions placed on them by the teachers' expectations of completed classwork, the tutors planned and organized the

tutoring sessions, choosing the literature, skills, and writing activities. In general, the classroom assignments became that day's skills lesson.

Data Sources and Analysis

Data Sources

This study included three data sources. The first source was an interview that was used to ascertain tutor beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. A second source was field notes that described tutoring sessions and the activities presented as part of the tutoring sessions. The final source was the journal entries and daily logs of the tutors themselves. These written artifacts were kept as part of their personal record keeping and described tutoring sessions that had been observed as well as ones that had not been observed.

Interviews: The primary data source used to identify the tutors' beliefs about literacy learning was an in-depth interview. Since I was the Program Coordinator, I felt that I should not conduct these interviews personally. As the supervisor of the Program, it was possible that the interviews might have been biased because of the supervisor/employee relationship. The participants might have felt obligated to provide answers based on their perceptions of my expectations. Therefore, the interviews were conducted by one doctoral student midway through her doctoral studies and one recent Ph.D. Both were experienced teachers with many years of public school teaching experience. Both have been involved in other research projects studying students and literacy. Each

participant was assured that I would not look at the interview results until the work term had been completed. These interviews were conducted during the second semester.

The interviewers and I met to discuss the interview protocol. We met in a university classroom where we discussed the research question as well as the questions to be addressed during the interview. (See Appendix B). The questions were designed to elicit information concerning tutor beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. I explained what I hoped to learn from the interview questions. At this point, probes were addressed, in particular, as they pertained to the research question. With any qualitative research interview, the establishment of a rapport with the interviewee was extremely important. Since rapport was tantamount to trust, and trust was the basis for creating the possibility for the most accurate disclosure by the interviewee, we discussed how the interviewers might establish this rapport. Showing interest, verbal, and nonverbal behaviors were suggested as ways to establish this working rapport with the college students. We discussed the importance of making the participants feel at ease and comfortable with the interview setting. This training provided the best opportunity to insure a consistency of information from all interviewees.

During our training session, the interviewers and I suggested possible probes to use during the interviews. The interviewer was asked to keep a record of which probes were actually used, since it was expected that only those probes needed to clarify responses would to be used. In addition, if the interviewer felt

that the interviewee exhibited any behaviors that were significant, these, too, would be recorded. Examples of possible behaviors discussed were fidgeting and loss of eye contact. As experienced educators, it was expected that the interviewers had the background and expertise to make appropriate judgments about behaviors that should be recorded.

Categories of questions to be used as a starting point for tutors' stories/interview included how the participant defined literacy and how the participant saw the relationship between reading and writing. Other categories of questions attempted to understand how the participant saw the role of decoding, phonemic awareness, meaning construction, and listening skills in literacy learning. Additional categories inquired into activities that the participant saw as effective in promoting these skills in their tutoring sessions.

The question categories were modeled on questions developed by DeFord (1985), Leu & Kinzer, (1987), and Lenski et al (1998). The DeFord Theoretical Orientation Reading Profile (TORP) used a Likert scale to rate responses to questions designed to determine teacher beliefs about practices in reading instruction. Leu & Kinzer developed questionnaires aimed at discovering beliefs regarding how one reads (text-based, reader-based, interactive) and how reading ability develops (mastery of skills, holistic, differential acquisition), Lenski, Wham, and Griffey (1998) developed a literacy orientation survey to assess teachers' beliefs about literacy learning as it related to classroom practices. These categories suggested ways to elicit definitions of literacy, the role of writing and

listening in the literacy process, and appropriate activities for teaching those literacy skills.

The interview questions were used during a pilot study conducted during spring, 1999. Three questions dealing with tutors' remembrances of how they personally learned to read were eliminated, since they did not bear directly on beliefs about "what is reading." During the pilot interviews, two questions required explanation. This meant that answers were responses to the explanatory prompts. One question was changed and another added in order to provide the tutor with an opportunity to consider a different viewpoint. The original question was "what skills do students need to be competent readers." The question was changed to "what skills are important for students to acquire on their way to becoming competent readers." The second original question was "what is the purpose of reading instruction." The question that was added was " how do students learn to read." The changed or added questions were not meant to be perfectly synonymous with the original, but to provide a different perspective.

Each interview was designed to last from 45 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes and was audiotaped and transcribed. The interviews were conducted in an empty classroom at the university. The classroom provided a quiet and private environment within which the interviews could be conducted. The tape recorder was placed so that both interviewer and interviewee were taped without intrusion into the interview process. The interview was considered complete when all

questions had been addressed or when the participant had no further observations or clarifications.

Field Notes: To look for theory/practice matches, I conducted on-site observations of the tutors at work in the elementary schools. These on-site observations were conducted on a regular, on-going basis as part of the tutor's routine job experience. The observations were conducted in the public elementary schools where each tutor worked with the elementary students. I sat as closely as possible to the tutors as they worked with their tutee during one-on-one instruction, but not so close as to create a distraction to the tutoring process. I did not interfere with the tutoring sessions. Field notes documented what occurred during the sessions. Activities were described and the tutor's conversations/instructions to the student as well as the ways the tutor responded to the student were documented. The focus of these observations was to record and investigate tutor activities and responses.

Each observation was designed to view sessions with three different elementary students. This permitted me to observe the tutor with students who varied demographically (sex, age, grade level, and ethnicity). More importantly, this allowed me to observe how the tutor adjusted activities and materials based on the needs of different students. Research documents that tutoring sessions of approximately 30 minutes as the optimum for one-on-one instruction (Clay, 1991), therefore, each session lasted approximately thirty minutes. Observing

three sessions meant that each observation was approximately ninety minutes in length.

The number of observations was a minimum of eight observations per tutor and a maximum of eleven observations per tutor over a three-month period. These observations were conducted weekly. Because of school schedule changes (assemblies, school photos, etc.) and flu season (either tutor illness or student illness), the number of observations was not the same for all tutors. Several observations were made but not used as part of the data because the sessions did not include three students.

Written Artifacts: Additional information about the sessions was collected from the tutors themselves. Each tutor was required as a part of their job to keep a daily log of activities and a weekly journal. The daily log was a record of each student tutored and the activities and materials utilized with each child. The weekly journal tracked the plans that the tutor made for the week, how those plans actually manifested themselves during the session, and the tutor's reflections on the lesson. These logs and journals provided information about sessions not observed as well as provided information to compare with the field notes that I took as I observed the sessions. These logs and journals also provided triangulation for the interviews and observations by revealing comparisons between what the tutor detailed from the sessions and what I observed as the actual session progressed. (See Appendix C and Appendix D for examples of a weekly journal and a daily log from one tutor documenting one week in March).

Data Analysis

Interviews: Each taped interview with the participants was transcribed so that the ideas could be highlighted and used as the raw data for analysis. The procedural steps used to analyze data were based on Creswell (1998) and Miles & Huberman (1994). Miles & Huberman (1994) list the analytic moves as a sequence from affixing codes to field notes, noting reflections in margins, sorting and sifting materials to identify similarities, isolating commonalties and differences, elaborating generalizations, and confronting those generalizations in the form of constructs or theories.

Procedural Steps for Question 1: What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by adult reading tutors?: The participants' responses were read to create codes. Two interviews were picked at random. From these interviews, codes were developed which described the tutors' beliefs as they related to literacy and literacy learning. Interviews were analyzed in a search for patterns, themes, and categories. General categories of codes were developed from the interview questions. For example, one interview question asked the participant to define "reading," therefore one category of code described definitions of "reading." Another question addressed how children learn to read. An example of a perception of how literacy is achieved would be through the use of phonics, so that any phrase that referred to phonics, sounding out, etc. was grouped as similar in content.

Each interview question provided a category for the coding. From the two randomly chosen interviews, each question was read and a code assigned to their responses. In a line-by-line analysis of the response to each question, I read each answer to code belief statements with a color being assigned to each code. Each individual answer to each interview question was placed on a 5 X 8 card and coded. In this way, all tutors' answers to each question could be compared.

A reliability audit for the codes was conducted. The principal researcher and the recent PhD, who also conducted three of the interviews, coded the same data set, the two randomly chosen interviews. Any difficulties or disagreements were discussed. No codes were expanded or amended. Intercoder reliability was determined using the formula: reliability = number of agreements/total number of agreements + disagreements. The disagreements focused on quantity rather than quality. On the two occasions where there were disagreements, the question focused on whether or not a response should be counted as one statement or two. The intercoder reliability was determined to be 94.7%. Table 1 describes the coding categories for beliefs about literacy and literacy learning as they were evidenced during the interview.

Table 1:

Summary of Coding Categories for Literacy Beliefs

Category	Codes	Examples
1. Meaning of "know how to read"	Phonics	"At least being able to sound out a word by sight or by letter sounds"
	Word recognition	"Being able to recognize the words"
	Comprehension	"Describe in their own words that they've understood"
2. what do skilled/beginning readers do/ not do	Phonics	"Sound it out, know consonant clusters like 'ch'"
	Word recognition	"Just go along reading without having to figure out the word"
	Comprehension	"They can retell the story"
	Fluency	"They pay attention to punctuation and sentences and things like that"

(table continues)

Table 1 continued:

Category	Codes	Examples
3. how to encourage listening skills	Involvement	"Ask them questions to get them involved"
	Interest	"Let students have a choice in what books to read"
4. how do students learn to read	Desire	" The wanting to learn how to read"
	Experiences	"Pick different books① to get their imaginations going"
	Practice	"Lots of chances to read and be read to"
	Phonics	"Learn letter sounds"
	Word recognition	"Explain what the word is"
5. role of feedback between tutor and student	Encouragement	"It helps to say, 'wow' you did 10 words this week"
	Corrective	"Say something like, 'let's try that word again'"
6. purpose of reading instruction	Improvement	"You want to help them to learn more words and to understand what they read"
	Enjoyment	"You want them to realize that they can read other places besides school"

(table continues)

Table 1 continued:

Category	Codes	Examples
7. what kinds of questions do you ask	Literal	"What happened in the story"
	Interpretative	"If you were writing this story, how would you change it"
8. how would introduce new vocabulary	Literature	"Using the words from the stories we read together"
	Games	"Games like WORDO help students to focus"
	Discussion	"I try to give them hints to make them understand the word"
	Flash cards	"Use pictures with the word underneath"
9. role of writing	Comprehension	"If they can write about it you know they understand"
	Involvement	"It helps them to be part of the story"
	Complementary	"Writing helps them to think about what they are reading"
10. what skills do students need to be competent readers	Phonics	"Really need to be able to sound out the word, to be able to spell it"
	Word recognition	"Just know lots of words"
	Comprehension	"To understand"
11. role of listening	Attention	"Can pay attention better"
	Comprehension	"listening is a good way to help them see if they understand"

Procedural steps for Question 2: Can those beliefs be observed as practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at risk elementary students?:

The information for this question came from observations of tutoring sessions augmented by the tutors' weekly reflective journals and daily logs. Four observations were chosen at random to look for descriptions of activities. Each activity was coded to describe each activity in more detail. For example, one activity which appeared frequently in sessions was a read-aloud from books. The category of a read-aloud activity was further divided to describe the type of read-aloud. The codes, then described the types of books utilized during the activity (literature, texts, and basals). Another category of activity was tutor talk. Within that category, codes were developed to describe the types of conversations that occurred. Table 2 summarizes the coding for the activities that occurred during tutoring sessions.

Four daily logs and four journal entries were randomly chosen to look for descriptions of activities. The codes for each activity were based on the codes developed for the observations. Since both the daily log and the journals were designed to document session activities, the codes for the daily logs and the journals fit well into the categories developed from the observations of the sessions. No new codes were added.

Table 2:

Summary of Coding for the Activities Occurring during One-on-One Tutoring Sessions

Category	Code	Example/Definition
Read Aloud	**Solo** – student read material	Literature/ Library book Basal/ Student's basal reader Textbook/ Content area text
	Shared- student read one page or section, then tutor read one page or section	Literature/ Library book Basal/ Student's basal reader Textbook/ Content area text
	Paired – student and tutor read the same passage at the same time	Literature/ Library book Basal/ Student's basal reader Textbook/ Content area text
	Echo – tutor read passage then student repeated the same passage	Literature/ Library book Basal/ Student's basal reader Textbook/ Content area text

(table continues)

Table 2 continued:

Category	Code	Example/Definition
Tutor talk	Literal	What happened on this page?
	Interpretative	If you were the author, how would you tell the story differently?
Skills	Phonics	Worksheets Word families Rhyming words Consonant digraphs
	Word Recognition	Flash cards Word games
	Comprehension	Discussion
Writing	Story related/ Write about story	Write me a sentence about your favorite part of the story
	Creative writing /Creative	Write a story about what you did this weekend
Feedback	Verbal/ Positive	I like the way you did that
	Verbal/ Corrective	No, try again Ph makes the /f/
	Non-verbal/ Positive	Leans forward and smiles
	Non-verbal/ Negative	Shakes head no Yawns and leans head on hand

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study's intention was to contribute to the knowledge concerning the beliefs of minimally trained tutors by focusing on their stated expectations and perceptions as determined through personal interviews. A further aim of the study was to focus attention on how those beliefs were manifested during one-on-one tutoring sessions. Of particular interest was whether these stated beliefs appeared in the activities and materials chosen for the tutoring sessions. The two research questions were addressed in turn, with the findings for each question.

Question 1: What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by adult reading tutors?

The six tutor participants came to the reading tutor program with existing beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. These beliefs might not have been ones that they could articulate as a "belief," but through interview and observation, their concepts about what it meant to be a reader and how one learned to read emerged. Beliefs affect our perceptions, our interpretations, and our behaviors (Pajares & Bengston, 1995). If beliefs are rules for action (Bandura, 1986), then what these tutors believed would be guideposts for their actions within the one-on-one tutoring sessions with their at-risk students.

Beliefs about Literacy

Three major statements emerged that described the tutor beliefs about what they meant by "to be able to read". The first definition reflected automaticity. The second definition reported that knowing and using phonics was the key to reading. Finally, understanding was recognized as the key ingredient to reading. None of the stated definitions was mutually exclusive. All six tutors agreed with at least two of these criteria that defined "to be able to read." This agreement revealed an awareness of literacy as a multifaceted concept. Differences appeared in the value each tutor placed on each skill. Some of the tutors were better able to describe and clarify their beliefs.

Word Recognition: The first definition focused on sight word recognition and might be called the "see and say" definition. The tutors who defined reading in this way described reading as pronouncing the words quickly and correctly. For example, Jill described being able to read as, "like be able to look at a word, know what that word is." While Katie said that someone knew how to read when they "would be able to see the printed word and be able to vocalize it."

Sight word recognition (automaticity) was part of the definitions voiced by Sarah, Emrys, Katie, and Jill. Both Emrys and Katie came back to the automatic recognition of words during their description of "know how to read" by restating the importance of recognizing words without decoding. When asked to describe what skilled readers could do that beginning readers could not, Katie again stated,

"know a lot of sight words, they don't have to sound them out," and "it starts with sight words." Emrys said that to be able to read meant to "be able to recognize a very wide array of words," and "being able to put together words without having to stop and figure anything out." Neither Shari nor Gillian specifically described word recognition a necessary component for knowing how to read.

Phonics: The second key component mentioned was being able to pronounce words correctly and knowing how to put the sounds of language together to recognize the words. This definition of reading was voiced by Gillian who said, "knowing how to read means at least being able to sound out a word by sight or by letter sounds and make out the word." Other tutors who identified letter/sound correspondence as important used phrases such as " how to put sounds together to make new words," and "actually takes the time to look at the word and sound it out."

Only Jill and Gillian reported that phonics skills were an integral part of knowing how to read. However, when asked what skilled readers could do that beginning readers could not, Sarah, Katie and Shari described phonics as important. Only Emrys was ambivalent about phonics as part of the definition of the competent reader. She was the only tutor to question the utility of phonics as a hallmark of knowing how to read. Emrys states, "Basically phonetic skills may not be right some of the time, but they're useful," and "two times out of ten the rule does not apply." She did recognize its utility as a tool to enable students to write and to learn to spell correctly.

Comprehension: The third belief category described understanding as the characteristic that defined reading. When asked to describe what it meant to know how to read, Emrys stated, "to be able to figure out the meanings of words even though one might not recognize them." Shari's ideas were not quite as well stated, but agreed in principal that comprehension was an important part of knowing how to read. She stated, " Like when you're actually like reading a word when you understand and comprehend what you're saying." Katie, Sarah, and Shari all placed comprehension in the forefront of their personal definitions for literacy. All three used phrases to describe competent readers as being able to "tell me the overall meaning" and "to be able to have an understanding of what the words mean." Gillian mentioned comprehension after phonics in her definition of "know how to read." She thought reading was "to be able to understand what the story ...is trying to tell you." Jill mentioned word recognition first, then stated, "being able to comprehend what you've read" as her definition for knowing how to read.

All six tutors used comprehension as important as an indicator for knowing how to read. It was an extremely important factor for Sarah, who returned to the idea using three different statements to describe the importance of comprehension. She stated, "not just being able to recognize the words, but also understanding that meaning," "be able to describe in their own words what they've just read," and "they can tell you the overall meaning behind the different stories." Katie expressed her beliefs clearly when describing comprehension as

part of her definition of knowing how to read when she stated, "to have an understanding of what the words mean, to know what its saying."

Beliefs about Literacy Learning

How do students learn to read? When asked how students learn to read, five categories emerged. Two categories were reiterated from the beliefs about what it is to know how to read: phonics and word recognition. Three more ideas were added when the question became how do students learn to read: desire, experiences, and practice.

Jill identified phonics as the starting point for learning to read with "learn the letters of the alphabet" and "begin to learn the sounds the letters make." Gillian, Shari, and Sarah also described the use of phonics as part of the process of learning to read with the statements: "by sounding the word out," "like the sounds of words like the vowel sounds," and "how different letters sound together." Neither Emrys nor Katie identified letter/sound correspondence as a component of learning to read.

Katie catalogued word recognition as an important way students learn to read with her statement, "know the sight words." Sarah said that students should "memorize some of the words," while Emrys thought that "general vocabulary should be stressed first." Gillian agreed with Katie and Emrys by saying, "recognizing words" and "learn more sight words," but Jill stated "letting them

constantly see words." While Jill's statements identified word recognition as a way to learn to read, her emphasis seemed to be on the practice as well.

Jill mentioned practice and repetition as important components in the process of learning to read. She stated, "just having lots of experiences," and then later repeats the phrase again. Shari and Sarah both thought that practice and repetition were key to learning how to read with the statements, "by repetition...they see the word so many times in its context and stuff," and "practice over and over again." Katie was emphatic in describing the repetition as a process of reading and rereading a text, "read a book over and over...point to each word." Emrys also agreed that practice was important, with Gillian as the only one who did not specify practice as key to learning how to read.

The influence of parents and home was mentioned as important by three of the tutors. In answer to the question how do students learn to read, these three made the connection to home experiences. Jill described the impact as "it starts at home...just having a lot of experiences with language through reading." Katie attributed success in learning to read as beginning at home because interest and desire to read were created in the home environment. She said, "The desire is a big part of it." Emrys said, "The parents have a large part to do with it because they encourage them to read."

Katie was most effusive when describing desire as the key component of learning to read. She was the only one of the tutors to specifically describe desire as part of learning to read. She kept coming back to the idea that wanting to learn

to read was as important as any of the skills. She stated that students needed to "be excited themselves about it," "be relaxed," "they need to have the desire to even want to read," and "the desire is a big part of it."

What is the purpose of reading instruction?: All six tutors described the purposes of reading instruction in terms of improvement of skills. The tutors mentioned helping students to acquire the basic skills and modeling good reading skills. Also mentioned as important purposes for reading instruction were to improve reading ability by improving reading comprehension. The description of what skills should be emphasized fell in line with each tutor's definition for knowing how to read.

A new category emerged when reading instruction was addressed which did not surface as part of "knowing how to read," although it was discussed as part of learning to read, that was enjoyment. Jill stated that she thought it was important "to help kids enjoy literature and literacy activities...to find enjoyment in it." Emrys thought that enjoyment was the vital ingredient, "If children don't like to read then .....it's like if you don't love art you are not very tempted to go to an art museum." Katie, who had been so insistent that desire was key to learning how to read, did not repeat this sentiment as a purpose for reading instruction. Perhaps she felt that she had already covered the topic in the earlier question. It was also possible that she felt that enjoyment was something that could be fostered in an educational setting, but perhaps not created there, that it was the home environment that nourished that desire. It was also possible that

she did not define the desire to read in the same way as to read for enjoyment. She stated children who are read to at home are "very excited about the prospect of being able to go to school and learn to read." Gillian, Shari, and Sarah did not voice the sentiment that enjoyment was a purpose for reading instruction. They focused on the improvement of skills.

What kinds of questions do you ask? The types of questions the tutors thought it was important to ask fell into two main categories: literal and interpretative. Jill, Katie, and Sarah all described their personal questioning techniques as a way to check comprehension and engage students in the text. Both Jill and Sarah described prediction as an appropriate way to engage students in the text, with literal questions used to assess comprehension. Katie described questions that addressed why a character behaved as he did in the story, or how the reader might change the story if he/she were the author. Emrys thought that students "should be prompted and encouraged to use their imaginations a lot when they are learning to read." However, when asked what kinds of questions she would employ, she stated that she would "ask them about words that they might not have recognized...(and would) tell them what it means." Shari said that she would ask questions that addressed story sequence, story events, and factual information like "colors." Gillian seemed to have no idea that she could (should) initiate any conversation about the stories that were read. She stated, "If the teachers send the reading book, we normally just answer the questions at the end of the story."

What is the role of writing in teaching reading?: As a tutor of first graders, Emrys did not see a value in writing as part of the reading process. In response to trying to have her students write one sentence, she said, "because they just absolutely refused to write or try to...I mean...it's understandable since they're first graders." Gillian, also, did not recognize writing as having a role in teaching reading. For her, writing was something that teachers do. "When teachers write on the board, then they explain."

The other four tutors saw an integral connection between writing and the teaching of reading. Shari stated that writing was "just another form of recognizing the word" and "writing about it also helps understand what you're reading." Sarah related writing to comprehension with "the words they can write is a good indicator of how well they can read" and "if they can write about it you know that they understand." Both Jill and Katie made similar statements indicating that they recognized a close relationship between writing and reading.

How would you introduce new vocabulary? Jill, Sarah, and Katie shared many ideas that they might use to introduce new vocabulary. Discussing new vocabulary that would appear in the story they were about to read with their student, word games, and flash cards were mentioned as possible activities. Gillian thought, "maybe a worksheet," while Emrys and Shari thought that they would tell the student the word if he/she couldn't "figure it out."

What is the role of listening in learning to read? Only one of the tutors saw listening as a literacy skill. The other five tutors defined listening in terms of

behaviors. For them, listening was "paying attention" and " following along." Only Gillian described persons who know how to read as good listeners. "Better readers listen and ask questions when they do not understand." For Gillian, the questioning illustrated an engagement with text not a lack of knowledge.

What is the role of feedback when a child is learning to read? Feedback was noted as serving two purposes to encourage or to correct. Each tutor made suggestions of possible ways to praise students, such as, "I like the way you did that," and "You worked really well today." These tutors who emphasized positive feedback with the individual students stated that their students were eager to attempt new activities. Emrys, who spoke in glowing terms about how important it was to foster the desire to read, did not identify feedback as an important factor in fostering engagement with text or task.

Fluency: Although fluency was not specifically addressed in the interview questions, all the tutors described fluency as a hallmark of the skilled reader, however, not in the same way. Both Jill and Sarah equated reading fast with skilled reading ("they read at a good pace where it's easy to understand and ...listen to"), but Gillian thought slow and methodical defined the skilled reader ("follow along with their finger underneath the word...they don't read too fast). Katie, Emrys, and Shari defined fluency by describing it as related to miscues. Katie described the process best with "they read right along without missing many words."

Question 2: Are tutors' beliefs manifested in practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary students?

Lesson Activities

The activities that were observed during the one-on-one tutoring sessions fell into two broad categories: lesson activities and tutor talk. Lesson activities were read aloud activities, skills lessons, and writing. Tutor talk included direction giving and social talk. These categories were further sub-divided to more clearly describe the type of activity. The read alouds used three sources as material: literature, the student's basal reader, and content area texts and also described the type of read aloud (student to tutor, tutor to student, shared and echo). The skills lessons covered phonics skills, word recognition exercises, or comprehension activities. Comprehension activities usually occurred as questioning conversations after read alouds and covered material from the read alouds or skills lessons. These questions fell into two broad categories. They either reflected literal information from the stories or required interpretation. When the questions addressed the skills lessons they were invariably literal. Writing activities were related either to a story that was read or were a separate creative endeavor. Examples of a creative writing activity were to have the child write his/her autobiography or to relate what was done over a holiday weekend.

Read Alouds:

Type and Sources: All the tutors engaged in read alouds on a regular basis. These read alouds included student reading to tutor, tutor reading to student, shared readings, and echo reading. These choices were most often from literature books chosen by the tutor or chosen by the student either through individual choice from the library or from several choices provided by the tutor. The exceptions occurred when students were required to bring either their basal text to reread the classroom selection or when they brought content area text, again to have the tutor help them through the classroom assignment.

Both Harding and Garfield used a literature-based program called the Accelerated Reader. As part of this program, students read from a preselected series of books and then took a computerized test over the material. The students' literature choices at these schools were often proscribed by the child's "need" to complete a certain number of books from this list. Therefore, on numerous occasions, the tutors read books from this list with their students.

Skills Lessons:

Phonics: Phonics was described in the belief statements as well as in statements describing what skilled readers were able to do and how students learned to read. While only Jill and Gillian used phonics to define knowing how to read, Katie and Sarah used activities that included working with onsets and rimes. Neither Katie or Sarah used phonics to define knowing how to read, but both did describe skilled readers as being able to decode and that students learned

to read through their knowledge of phonics. In addition, Katie employed games that required that students find their place on a board by finding rhyming words, synonyms, antonyms, or matching onsets thereby incorporating phonics, word recognition, and meaning. Jill also utilized activities that reinforced letter/sound correspondences. Jill, Katie, and Sarah's choice of activities to teach and reinforce phonic knowledge were entirely consistent with their stated beliefs. Only Gillian, whose stated beliefs included phonics, did not employ activities to teach that skill. Emrys, who did not see phonics as an effective tool did not teach this skill. Since she did not see it as important, her non-inclusion of these types of activities was consistent with stated beliefs.

Word Recognition: Word recognition appeared in definitions of knowing how to read, what skilled readers do, and how students learn to read. Tutors used the vocabulary from the stories as skills activities to teach and reinforce sight vocabulary. Conversations about the words included placing the words on flash cards to reinforce later, using the words in words games, and writing the words in sentences telling about the story. Katie, Sarah, and Jill, all of whom indicated that automaticity was important in defining reading, used word recognition activities often in their skills lessons. (Jill's emphasis on word recognition was not as strong as the other two. She states, "to first be able to identify the words," then she continues to describe knowing how to read by describing comprehension and phonics. " Being able to comprehend what you've read, being able to do the phonics part of it, sound out words...understand and comprehend what they've

read.") A commonality among the three was that they frequently used words from the stories that were read. In addition, they used word lists such as the Dolch to create skills activities and reinforce recognition skills for these words. Only Emrys, whose stated beliefs indicated that word recognition was important did not include word recognition skills in her session activities. Neither Shari nor Gillian included word recognition skills during sessions, but neither did they indicate that they thought that this skill was important.

Comprehension: Comprehension was one of the criteria used by all the tutors to describe what it meant to know how to read and again when describing skilled readers. All six tutors described the purposes of reading instruction in terms of improvement of skills, including improvement in comprehension. Jill, Katie, and Sarah used activities that fostered comprehension through read aloud activities. Their conversations with students were consistent with their stated views about the importance of comprehension as part of their individual definition of knowing how to read and their ideas about the purpose of reading instruction. Gillian and Emrys stated the importance of comprehension, but included no specific activities that addressed comprehension in their sessions. Gillian, who had equated engagement with text as being demonstrated by student questions, presented no opportunities for students to ask those questions. Shari used conversations based on her read aloud activities to assess comprehension, but since she asked only literal questions, her conversations suggested that she defined comprehension as literal information.

Katie, Jill, and Sarah consistently addressed comprehension in the tutoring sessions. Employing a variety of read aloud activities and a variety of materials, these tutors used questions about the story, background discussions about the story setting, and writing activities. All these activities related to the tutor's recognition of comprehension as a key component to becoming skilled in reading. While all the tutors engaged in literal questions with their tutees, Katie, Jill, and Sarah expanded the conversations to include interpretative activities as well. These included predictive conversations about what might happen next, changing endings, writing letters to a character in the story, and conversations about why a character behaved as he did. (Appendix C is an example of Jill's weekly journal for the week of March 26 – March 30 and Appendix D is an example of Jill's daily log for that same week. Appendices E and F are copies of the running record and word test to which she refers in her journal and log. These artifacts document the variety of activities that Jill included regularly in her tutoring sessions.)

Neither Emrys nor Shari engaged in interpretive questioning. Even though Emrys had stated that students "should be prompted and encouraged to use their imaginations a lot when they are learning to read," she rarely asked questions or engaged the student in "book talk." Based on stated beliefs about comprehension, Emrys activity choices were not consistent with those beliefs. Shari invariably asked who, what, and where questions or addressed story sequence. These were the types of questions that she described during her

interview, so her tutor talk was consistent with her definition of questioning and question content.

Writing:

Shari stated that writing was an important part of learning to read. "Writing about it also helps understand what you're reading" and "write down the word, then say the word." Despite this stated belief, she rarely addressed writing during her tutoring sessions. There was some consistency, however, when she did include writing activities, these activities were "write down the word, then say the word."

Sarah had a lot to say about writing and its importance. "A lot of kids if they write down the words they are able to learn a lot quicker," "the words they can write is a good indicator of how well they can read," and "if they can write about it you know that they understand." Sarah's students wrote about the stories that they read, played word games that required writing words, and demonstrated creative writing, such as writing about a weekend activity. Sarah emphasized the importance of writing in her interview and reinforced that view with the activities that she employed during tutoring sessions.

Jill and Katie emphasized the complementary nature of reading and writing. Each saw her students two or three times each week. Based on my observations and their journal and log entries, writing was often included in sessions each week. Sometimes it was a continuation of an earlier lesson and sometimes a stand-alone piece of creative writing. Katie usually focused on

students writing about their favorite part of the story or perhaps creating a new ending to a story. Both Katie's and Jill's choices for writing activities were a varied sample from writing letters to authors, to book reviews (Reading Rainbow style), to predictions about the story, and responses to the stories read.

Gillian and Emrys did not use writing during sessions. Gillian had described writing as something that teachers do, while Emrys thought that her first graders were incapable of writing. Since neither thought that writing was important to reading instruction, their non-use of writing activities during tutoring sessions was consistent with their stated beliefs.

Tutor Talk:

When not discussing the read aloud stories, the tutors engaged in both direction giving and social talk. For Emrys and Shari, the social talk was little more than an initial greeting (hello, how are you), while the other four tutors spent two or three minutes of each session employing conversation about their school day, special programs, weekend activities, etc. This social talk would usually begin during the walk from the classroom to the session location and culminate as the tutor and student sat down to begin work. All tutors engaged in direction giving in some form. Those who employed skills activities would describe the activity, rules for the game, writing procedures, what would be read and who would read.

As the only tutor who worked at two schools, the school context may have influenced Gillian's tutor talk. One school provided her with a folder for

each child that she tutored. This work folder was the focal point of her tutoring sessions. For part of the session, she and the student did read, but the centerpiece of the session was the work that was to be completed, most often a worksheet. Within the confines of this school's expectations, Gillian had little opportunity to engage in any conversation that was not directly related to the task at hand. Therefore, Gillian's tutor talk was dominated by direction giving and corrective feedback.

The second school gave Gillian less guidance and therefore more flexibility in planning her sessions. At this school, she chose the read aloud as the focus of her tutoring sessions. Her sessions were almost exclusively read alouds with discussions about the story minimal, if at all. Given the opportunity to engage the student in conversation, she chose not to do so. Since her interview revealed that she did not view questioning as a way to involve students in conversations about the story, this was entirely consistent with her beliefs about how students learn to read.

Feedback

All tutors felt that feedback was important to student learning and improvement. Their use of feedback was both verbal and non-verbal. Verbal feedback fell into two categories, positive and corrective. Positive was usually in the form of a praise statement, "good job," or "I like the way you did that." Corrective refocused attention on the current task, " let's try that again," or "the letters ph make the /f/ sound." Nonverbal feedback included (positive) smiling,

leaning forward, making eye contact, and nodding yes. Nonverbal feedback (negative) included shaking head no or leaning head on hand and yawning.

Jill, Katie, Sarah, Gillian, and Shari were consistent in providing feedback to their tutees. Their feedback ranged the gamut from positive to corrective and was both verbal and nonverbal. Their feedback was appropriate to the activity and the student responses.

Only Emrys gave limited feedback. Students would often look to her to see how she was reacting to what they said, but they received few verbal cues. However, during the interview she defined feedback as student to teacher not teacher to student. Students "just blurt it out like...conversation even if we've moved on to a different subject." So her limited interaction with students was not entirely inconsistent with her description of interaction. Her limited conversations with students produced a lack of engagement both with her students and with the text being read. Since she had stated that this engagement was important, her activities did not match her stated beliefs.

Beliefs to Practice

All six tutors employed some variety of comprehension activity ranging from frequently to rarely during tutoring sessions. However, Shari did not appear to define comprehension in the same way that other tutors did. As a freshman who planned to major in interior design, she had little background in the teaching of reading other than the training sessions she attended as part of the reading tutor

program. Since she had only been tutoring for a few weeks when the interview was held, she had only six hours of training when she was interviewed. Although she talked about understanding and comprehension, her questions during tutoring sessions revealed that she defined understanding and comprehension as literal not interpretative. Her questions called for who, what, and when (story order). She rarely monitored comprehension throughout the story, but invariably waited until the end of the story to ask questions. These occurrences indicated that, although she verbally agreed with the other tutors, her meaning was not consistent with theirs.

Emrys also displayed inconsistencies between her stated beliefs and the activities which she chose to pursue during tutoring sessions. As a sophomore English major, she like Shari, had little background in the teaching of reading other than the training sessions she attended as part of the reading tutor program. At the time of the interview, she had only six hours of training and had been tutoring for only two weeks.. Emrys strongly emphasized comprehension and word recognition as important hallmarks of knowing how to read. However, she rarely monitored comprehension throughout the story, but invariably waited until the end of the story to ask questions, if she asked questions at all. Many sessions did not include questions or any activity to monitor comprehension. She did not report in her journal or log that questions were used during sessions that were not observed. If she included word recognition activities in her sessions, they did not

appear in sessions I observed nor were they described in her journal and daily log entries.

Gillian identified phonics and comprehension as important to knowing how to read and included word recognition when she described how students learn to read. She included a minimal number of activities that could be described as comprehension activities. Many times these included completion of worksheets provided by the classroom teacher. Her journal entries and daily logs were invariably a list of books read and notes about classwork that students completed. She did not employ writing activities during sessions, but she also did not identify writing as a component of either knowing or learning to read. She also did not include letter/sound correspondence activities even though she identified phonics as important both in knowing and learning to read.

Gillian tutored for the entire school year. She had, at the time of the interview, fifteen training hours. Considering the amount of time she had spent working with students and the number of hours spent training, her definition of knowing and learning how to read was simplistic and inconsistently implemented.

Three tutors consistently based their tutoring sessions on activities that matched their stated beliefs. Of the three, Jill, who described word recognition as important but who focused her definition on comprehension, included word recognition activities in almost every session. While these activities were not inconsistent with her stated beliefs, it indicated an emphasis which she did not state in her interview. Since Jill was a senior, elementary education major, it

might have been that she had more of these types of activities in her repertoire. Since she had access to these activities, she might have used them despite stated preferences to comprehension. Another possible interpretation could be that her interview responses did not adequately convey her strong beliefs that word recognition was essential to knowing how to read.

Only Katie and Sarah employed activities and techniques that were consistent, not only with their stated beliefs but with their stated emphasis on those beliefs. Both Katie and Sarah were the veterans of the reading tutor program. Each completed her second year working as a tutor and had returned to the same school to tutor the second year. Katie tutored at Harding Elementary and Sarah tutored at Woodland Hills Elementary. While neither was an education major, both had chosen majors that involved working closely with people: social work, and community counseling. Katie, as a nontraditional student, and Sarah, as a graduate student, were both older than all but one of the other tutors (Jill). This greater experience working with students in an educational setting as well as life experience may be a common thread. The number of training hours could also be an important factor. Both Katie and Sarah, completing their second year, had twice the number of training hours as did Jill and Gillian and more than four times the number of training hours as did Shari and Emrys. Jill was the anomaly for this group, since as a senior education major, she had experience (training) from her course work at the university in addition to the training provided as part of the reading tutor program.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The America Reads Challenge is a grassroots national campaign that challenges Americans to help all the nation's children learn to read. This call for volunteerism joins with existing volunteer programs such as the Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Project Read (Tzortzis, July 31,1998), and others to marshal volunteers to come into classrooms to battle illiteracy (Randall, 1997). One shared goal for these groups is to work with classroom teachers throughout the country to ensure that every child can read independently by the end of third grade. These calls for volunteers come at the same time government passed legislation calling for stricter teacher certification standards and accountability for teacher education programs (1998 Amendments to Higher Education Act of 1965). This situation presents a paradox. One side argues that students need more highly trained and skilled teachers to teach reading. The other side seems to argue that anyone who can read can teach others to read. Both arguments cannot be true.

Schools pressed by ever decreasing resources can ill afford to ignore offers of volunteers who are willing to come into schools to complement literacy instruction. However, school administrators and classroom teachers need to understand that minimally trained tutors may bring beliefs about literacy and

literacy learning that do not complement the philosophy of a particular classroom/school or follow accepted practices used to teach reading and reinforce reading skills. If schools are to use volunteers effectively, schools need to know about those beliefs and how those beliefs may be manifested in the practice of these volunteers.

This study described the literacy beliefs of six work-study tutors. In order to investigate the beliefs of volunteer tutors with respect to literacy and literacy learning, first, it was important to recognize how these tutors defined literacy and described literacy learning. Second, it was important to develop an understanding of how those beliefs about literacy and literacy learning were played out in practice during one-on-one tutoring sessions. The findings indicate a variety of beliefs and practices.

Studies involving tutors, in particular one-on-one tutoring, have focused on two key factors. The studies focus on the outcome of the tutoring as evidenced by the exit tests of the students or on the training of the tutors (Wasik & Slavin, 1993; Wasik, 1997; Wasik, 1998; Topping, 1998). While these studies have shown the effectiveness of one-on-one tutoring, they did not address tutoring accomplished by minimally or untrained volunteers. The programs investigated by these studies concentrated on those programs utilizing well-trained professionals and paraprofessionals. None of these studies addressed the tutors' beliefs about what it means to be able to read or how people learn to read. The tutors' perceptions of how they personally learned to read may manifest

themselves in their beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. These beliefs, in turn, may influence what they believe it takes to teach someone how to read.

I believe that we should not ignore the contributions that volunteer tutors' beliefs about literacy make to student development, motivation, learning, and thinking. There has been documentation in support of this concern in that teachers hold experiential beliefs that color their perceptions of knowledge, including beliefs about what constitutes knowledge (Schommer, 1994; Behar et al, 1995; Alexander, 2000; Pajares & Bengston, 1995). Moreover, these beliefs, which are highly resistant to change, influence the way teachers teach and students learn. Beliefs are reflected in teachers' decisions and teachers' beliefs about literacy and influence classroom practices (Armburster et al, 1991; Bednar, 1993; Bird et al, 1993; Daisey & Shroyer, 1993; Davis et al, 1993; Richardson, 1996). Further, individuals' beliefs are related to their research orientation (Dole & Sinatra, 1994) educational experiences (Schommer, 1994), and pedagogical training (Pajares & Bengston, 1995). All these are important considerations when considering how best to utilize the untrained volunteer.

Preparing teachers begins with an understanding of the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning that underlie teacher decision making (Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Specifically, beliefs about literacy should be examined within the context of individuals' beliefs about themselves (Bandura, 1986) and their beliefs about the world and how it works (Vygotsky, 1978). We filter all of our experiences and understandings through many layers (Dewey, 1971; James, 1981;

Alexander, 2000). If we understand that knowledge of beliefs about literacy and literacy learning can help preservice educators to better prepare the teachers of the future, we should not ignore these same constructs when inviting volunteers into the classroom. Future research will need to take a more extensive and systemic look at the impact that the beliefs of the volunteers have on learning and instructing.

The review of the literature for this study, since the investigation focused on the beliefs of tutors, began with studies of preservice and practicing teachers' beliefs. These studies suggested that what preservice teachers and practicing teachers believed about teaching and learning, and about literacy and literacy learning had implications not only for their personal learning but also for their classroom behaviors. Just as in the findings of these studies with preservice and practicing teachers, one might infer that the beliefs of the volunteer tutors could also influence what and how the training they received was assimilated and how this information was utilized in their tutoring practices.

This study diverges from the literature reviewed since preservice teachers have chosen teaching as a career and are involved in classroom instruction to accomplish this goal. Of the participants in this study, only one was a preservice teacher. The only training these non-preservice teachers received was that training acquired as part of the reading tutor program and their career goal did not include teaching. Another divergence concerns practicing teachers who are already working with students in their own classrooms. As certified personnel,

practicing teachers had completed a program of coursework and had experience working with children. The participants in this study had varying experiences working with children in an academic setting and no formal training in understanding learners and learning as do teachers in training and trained teachers (Pajares & Bengston, 1995).

Further, universities in every state have become part of the America Reads Challenge. The goal of these programs is to place work-study students into classrooms solely for the purpose of teaching at-risk elementary students to read. Principals and teachers are trusting the universities who are administering these programs to provide schools with adequately trained and/or suitable volunteers to complement their classroom instruction for these at-risk readers. Not all universities provide training as part of their work-study program (Edmondson, 1999) so that it could be said that the only commodity that these work-study students bring to the tutoring table is their beliefs about literacy and literacy learning.

What are the Beliefs about Literacy and Literacy Learning Held by Adult Reading Tutors?

The participants' belief statements were elicited through personal interviews. Even though the stated beliefs about what it means to know how to read and how one learns to read were similar, the implications of the beliefs were not always the same. For example, the participants in this study agreed that

comprehension was important when defining what it means to know how to read. After comparing stated definitions and tutoring practices, it was evident that even this agreement was suspect. The comparison of stated definitions and tutoring practices suggested that the six participants did not agree on what it meant, "to comprehend". Some thought a demonstration of understanding was a recitation of literal information from the text. Other participants saw comprehension as a heterogeneous mix of literal information, interpretative behaviors, predictive activities, and creative interactions with text. This study's participants' underlying beliefs may have influenced their understanding of what comprehension means (Schommer, 1994; Gibson, 1998) or, as someone untrained in the field, they did not have the knowledge to explain what they meant by comprehension (Armbruster et al, 1991; Cochran et al, 1993) or they had not thought about the concept sufficiently to explain what they meant by comprehension (Bird et al, 1993; Pajares, 1993). Determining the participants' beliefs was the researcher's pursuit.

Garner and Alexander (1994) suggest, in their preface to *Beliefs about Text and Instruction with Text*, that beliefs are dynamic. We need to place the demonstrated and reported beliefs of volunteers about reading and learning to read in the context of their one-on-one tutoring experiences. Tutors arriving at a school to begin working with students have conceptions about what students can/should be able to do. Without experiences working with students in an academic environment and/or without training in methods and materials, these

tutors may not be ready to alter their beliefs to fit this new experience because they have nothing on which to base this change. Alexander and Dochy (1994) found that a number of students resisted new information that might conflict with their existing beliefs. The ramifications of such personal resistance when applied to tutors may also have serious consequences for trying to change their conceptions. It is possible that, even with experience, tutors may resist change or they may not recognize that they might need to change.

In addition to being resistant to change, beliefs are also difficult to quantify (Alexander & Dochy, 1994). Looking at the questionnaire for the Alexander and Dochy task, I was reminded of just how difficult it is to talk about beliefs. Individuals may not even be aware that they are framing their responses in socially desirable ways that may not accurately reflect their true beliefs. Even well constructed questions might still suggest a desirable response which would be evident to a reasonably intelligent, socially attuned individual.

Despite this difficulty in determining beliefs, the classroom teacher needs to find a methodology to explore the beliefs of the volunteers in their classrooms. In order to assure that their students achieve the best results from these tutoring opportunities, classroom teachers should employ questionnaires and/or interviews to apprise themselves of the tutor's beliefs. Because beliefs influence practice (Bednar, 1993; Bird et al, 1993; Daisey & Shroyer, 1993; Davis et al, 1993; Richardson, 1996), the classroom teacher might expect that tutors' beliefs may be manifested in their practices during tutoring sessions. When these beliefs are

understood, they can be addressed directly when necessary to assure high quality tutoring.

Finally, whenever we attempt to investigate a phenomenon as elusive as beliefs about literacy and literacy learning, we must remember that independent measures of reality do not exist. In an experimental sense, you cannot control or hold constant beliefs (Weinstein, 1994). Therefore, we must attempt to theoretically and philosophically separate beliefs from other interrelated constructs, such as knowledge or motivation, even though the authoritative definitions of beliefs and knowledge seem confusing and conflicting in themselves (Dewey, 1910/1993; Piaget, 1970; Alexander & Dochy, 1994). As researchers, we can seek to understand and explain beliefs concerning what it means to know how to read and how students learn to read.

By utilizing the interview as the methodology to understand and explain the beliefs of the participants in the current study, the conversational process allowed the participants to interpret their beliefs and experiences. The very process of putting these beliefs and experiences into language was a meaning-making experience (Vygotsky, 1986/1997). Asking participants to reconstruct details of their experiences and select examples to describe their beliefs allowed the participants to impart meaning to these beliefs and experiences (Seidman, 1998). An important characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher can be responsive to the context, be sensitive to nonverbal cues, and ask participants to clarify and summarize (Merriam, 1998).

Are Tutors' Beliefs Manifested in Practices During One-on-One Tutoring Sessions with At-Risk Elementary Students?

The participants' beliefs about literacy learning ranged from simplistic (read a book together) to a mosaic of read alouds, book talks, and writing. Some demonstrated that they viewed their role in the literacy learning of these at risk elementary students as providing an opportunity to read aloud. Interaction with the tutor could be limited or almost non-existent. Others established literacy learning routines that included a variety of activities. Richardson et al (1991), in a study of practicing teachers, demonstrated that the beliefs of teachers impacted their classroom practices in teaching reading comprehension. The simplicity or the complexity of the tutors' beliefs about literacy learning was represented in the simplicity or complexity of their tutoring practices.

The more experienced tutors tended to match their stated beliefs as evidenced during their interviews. Since their interview definitions were multifaceted, their choice of tutor session activities reflected the variety that their stated definitions revealed. Those tutors with less experience, both working with students and with training, voiced beliefs that were not routinely observed as practices during their tutoring sessions with their tutees. Their definitions of what it means to be able to read were less cogent. As college students, none of these tutors could remember having difficulty learning to read, so their personal literacy acquisition did not provide them with an experiential road map for teaching

literacy. We might look to the literature on the beliefs to practice matches of practicing teachers and preservice teachers to place into context similar behaviors of untrained tutors. These tutors, whose beliefs about literacy and literacy learning were garnered over a lifetime of literacy experiences, might now implement those beliefs as tutoring behaviors.

The literature supports beliefs/practice matches among practicing teachers. Richardson et al (1991) utilized stated beliefs to predict classroom behaviors. They found that, for practicing teachers, beliefs were an accurate barometer for classroom practices. That was not always the case for the tutors in the current study. However, those tutors with the clearest definition of what it means to know how to read and who, through their beliefs' statements, exhibited an awareness of the multifaceted character of literacy were more likely to match beliefs to practice.

Wharton-McDonald et al (1998) found that successful teachers matched beliefs to practice. These exemplary teachers shared an awareness of purpose and those purposeful beliefs guided their practices. Those tutors whose stated beliefs did not match practice evidenced a less clearly defined idea of what it means to know how to read. Without a clear idea of what literacy is, it might not have been possible for these tutors to consistently implement its instruction.

Kinzer (1988) found belief/practice matches among the practicing teachers he studied. There was a difference between Kinzer's findings and that of Richardson et al and Wharton-Mcdonald et al. The difference Kinzer observed

was that certain belief systems were better predictors of belief/practice matches. Those with holistic/reader based beliefs matched practices to beliefs, while those with mastery of skills beliefs were inconsistent in matching beliefs to practice. The tutors in this current study who saw reading instruction as engagement with text, desire, and practice as well as skills development were more likely to employ a wider variety of activities to implement instruction.

Studying preservice teachers, Richardson (1990) and Hollingsworth (1989) found that beliefs influence what and how preservice teachers learned. These preservice teachers were more likely to adopt practices that matched their preconceived ideas. When Worthy & Prater (1998) recorded the incoming beliefs of their literacy students, they found that after classroom instruction and experience tutoring elementary students, these preservice teachers had modified their belief systems. Pajares (1993) stated that teacher educators needed to help preservice teachers explore their beliefs.

Some of the tutors in this study shared similarities with the inservice teachers in these studies (Hollingsworth, 1989; Richardson, 1990; Pajares, 1993). The experienced tutors had worked with students and attended training sessions for two years. While the experience level and the training were not equal to that of a certified teacher, they shared similarities. Those similarities were experience working with students in a classroom setting and training in methods and materials. These may have enabled them to define more clearly what they meant by "know how to read." The less experienced tutors shared more similarities with

the preservice teachers. That is, they had less experience working with students and less training. Their incoming beliefs may have influenced what and how they utilized information from training sessions. Certainly their definitions of "know how to read" were less complex and less well defined.

As educators we are committed to the personal growth of our students through good educational practices. If we are also committed to the effective use of volunteers, we need to offer training and support to help build the skills and abilities that enable volunteers to grow and succeed as literacy tutors. The tutors in this study whose beliefs most closely matched their stated beliefs were the ones with the most training and the most experience. To ensure every child can read by the end of the third grade using volunteers as complements to classroom instruction, it would seem that volunteers need training and mentoring. Effective volunteer reading tutors need opportunities to attend training sessions, to have access to materials to augment instruction, and to establish contact between tutors, teachers, and reading specialists who would be available to mentor tutors throughout their tutoring experiences. Because of time, budget, and program constraints, many times such training is just not possible. Classroom teachers should be prepared to monitor volunteer tutors if beliefs are to be changed, modified, and manifested in tutoring practices.

Pajares (1993) argued that preservice teacher were insiders in the field of education. The college classroom, which would prepare them as professional educators, is familiar, not unlike classrooms they have known since the beginning

of their academic careers. The process of belief change is difficult and threatening for insiders because they are committed to their past experiences and the beliefs associated with those experiences. Volunteers would also feel like an insider in a classroom situation. They have been there before as students, but the student/teacher circumstances were different and the experiences were separated by time. Accommodating new information and adjusting existing beliefs under familiar circumstances was difficult for Pajares' preservice teachers. It would be even more difficult for volunteer tutors if they receive no training or inculcation. Without training or inculcation to cause them to evolve their preconceived beliefs, they would most likely see no need to accommodate or adjust and may be less effective with their guidance, feedback, and assistance. Just as it was important to consider the beliefs of preservice teachers when planning instruction (Hollingsworth, 1989; Richardson, 1990; Pajares, 1993), so it would seem that developing some knowledge of tutors' beliefs (understanding that it may be hard for them to adjust) should be the first step in planning their indoctrination, training, or utilization in the classroom.

Perhaps we should not expect a beliefs/practices match from untrained or minimally trained volunteers. The participants in this study with the least experience and least training were also the least likely to exhibit a close beliefs/practice match. An important factor in developing opportunities for beliefs to practice matches among volunteer tutors may be training. Tatto (1998) found that successful teacher education programs developed a shared

understanding not only among faculty but also between faculty and student. Among teacher educators, the development of a shared theoretical stance to guide their preservice programs was important to creating learning opportunities that matched their teaching and learning philosophies (Cochran et al, 1993). The challenge for teachers who wish to utilize volunteers effectively, should be to understand tutors' beliefs in order to develop shared understandings about educational purposes and teaching practices.

Wharton-McDonald (1998) found that exemplary teachers shared an awareness of purpose and an awareness of how that purpose impacted their practices. Volunteer tutors may have only a goal oriented purpose (help children learn to read) without the knowledge to implement that goal. Training and mentoring appears necessary to provide volunteer tutors with the knowledge essential to the realization of that purpose.

Reflections

My personal development in the area of learning and study strategies led me to recognize the importance that individuals' beliefs, motivation, attitudes toward learning, and self-regulation play in learning, which can either complement or hinder general cognitive abilities and skills. These dimensions do not operate in isolation, but interact in critical ways. It is often these interactions, as opposed to any unidimensional effects, that offer some of the greatest insights into the learning process. Now, as we move forward to consider more completely

the variable of beliefs about literacy and literacy learning in our formulas for learning and instruction, it is essential that beliefs be considered interactive and multidimensional. Thus, literacy beliefs (practicing teacher, preservice teacher, tutor) and the influence of those beliefs about literacy and literacy learning on the learning and instruction of elementary students must be embedded in models that stress interactions among skill, will, and self-regulation dimensions.

As Dole and Sinatra (1994) point out, social context has a major role to play in the development of one's beliefs, and the more that we can understand the nature of that role, the more that the work on beliefs can inform educational practice. My own interest in improving schooling makes me especially interested in knowledge about how the beliefs of role models or others in power relations with students (e.g., teachers, tutors, parents, peers) shape or alter learners' beliefs. Since all of learning is contextual (Dewey, 1938/1963; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985/1997; Rogoff, 1990), it is essential that future research on beliefs consider the impact of contextual norms on the individual's system of beliefs. I can recognize in my own system of beliefs, for example, the impact that my family, my faith, and my mentors have had on me. Future research might further examine ways to assess the influence of these social contextual factors on the individual's beliefs about literacy, literacy learning, and learning in general.

We are still left with pieces of a very complex puzzle, and with only hints as to what the assembled structure may resemble. There should be a model that weighs the interplay between, as well as the unique influences of, learners'

beliefs, strategic abilities, desire to learn, and their monitoring and regulation of those processes. It is these influences on both the tutor and the elementary student that should be considered.

Implications

School districts faced with the responsibility of producing students who can show a mastery of reading by the end of third grade and faced with limited resources rely on volunteers to augment teaching staff. These volunteers, who are asked to work with students, generally have minimal or no training.

The range of beliefs about literacy and literacy learning held by the volunteer tutors in this study, were on a continuum from simplistic and ill defined to multifaceted, and well considered. Volunteers from a larger community could hold even more divergent views of what it means to "know how to read." Schools who would make use of these volunteers need to be aware that when they ask an untrained volunteer to complement classroom instruction for their at-risk students, a wide range of beliefs, experiences, as well as expertise may be evidenced. What those beliefs are and how those experiences are manifested in the activities utilized during tutor sessions could vary widely as well.

For example, when a teacher asks a volunteer to read a story with a student, this directed activity can take many different forms depending on how the volunteer understands "read a story." The activity could range from having the student sound out every word to the tutor scaffolding the reader by helping with

unknown words to the tutor reading the entire story. Conversations about the story could vary from questions to which the student will exhibit his literal knowledge of what happened in the story to questions which encourage the student to explore the possibilities of a different story ending.

This study also illustrated the need to provide training with an understanding that the tutors' previously held beliefs would provide the foundation for that training. The participants in this study, with the exception of the one senior education major, were laypeople without any formal training other than that provided as part of the reading tutor program. At the time of the interview, this training ranged from six hours for those tutors who were new to the program to eighteen - twenty-one hours of training for those completing their first year as tutors to thirty-six – forty-two hours for those completing their second year as tutors. Volunteers from the community, unless the school has provided a training seminar, would not have even the minimum number of training hours as did the least trained of the study participants. It was the least trained of the participants who were the least articulate in describing what they meant by "know how to read" and who were the most inconsistent in matching stated beliefs to practices.

Schools wishing to take the best possible advantage of these volunteers should consider providing a training program. The participants in this study who had the most experience and the most training were the ones who were the most consistent in matching their activities to their beliefs. It is also possible, that those

who had the most training had modified their beliefs to match the premise of the training sessions and/or to match the realities of working with at-risk elementary students. Another possibility might be that those tutors whose beliefs and practices matched most closely were those tutors who were the most comfortable with the complexities of reading instruction. Further study, comparing incoming beliefs to the beliefs after training and experience, should be done to test this possibility.

Further Research

The results of this study suggest that volunteer tutors with training and experience view literacy and literacy learning as a complex network of skills and understandings. Viewed from the platform of understanding and shored up by word recognition and phonics skills, literacy becomes a practice and practice, experiences, and desire support literacy learning. With limited training and experience, literacy had a more simplistic description. Literacy resolved into comprehension and word recognition drills or phonics exercises. One support for literacy learning became a read aloud activity with limited conversation.

An experimental study that would include an investigation of incoming beliefs and beliefs held after training and tutoring experience should be conducted. Three participant groups could be investigated: one volunteer group would receive training and tutor, a second control group of volunteers who do not tutor, and a third control group who tutor but receive no training. This study

could probe whether or not experience alone or training plus experience can make a change in volunteers' beliefs about literacy and literacy learning. Another interesting study might include a comparison of volunteers' beliefs and preservice teachers' beliefs before and after tutoring throughout a school year. A larger and more diverse participant sample than this study provided would present a clearer view of a possible volunteer population.

Further, a study that includes more participants and encompasses other volunteer demographics could more clearly define and refine the knowledge of the beliefs that volunteers bring to the elementary classroom. Finally, a longitudinal study with interviews both at the beginning of the study and at the culmination of the study could illustrate not only differences in beliefs but also changes in beliefs.

Limitations

The major limitation for this and any study of this type is the nongeneralizability of the findings to other tutors in the America Reads Challenge Programs and to volunteer tutors in any other programs. The consumer of this research will construct and interpret findings as it relates to their particular circumstance.

This study was restricted by certain conditions. The voluntary nature of the sampling has potentially limited the results of the study. It is possible that the beliefs of the individuals not choosing to participate in the study differ

significantly from those choosing to participate. This factor will restrict the generalizability of the study results.

This study has also been restricted with regard to the characteristics of the individual participants. Since these data were collected over a relatively short period of time, there is no method within the procedures to measure how beliefs may have recently changed or may change in the near future. These static descriptions may not be reliable descriptions of a similarly chosen sample at another given time.

The instrument limits any qualitative study. For this study, the two interviewers become one instrument. It is important to recognize the importance of the instrument, the human interviewer (Seidman, 1998). "Data are mediated through this instrument, the researcher, rather than through some inanimate inventory, questionnaire, or computer" (Merriam, 1998, p.7). Meaning making is a function of the participants' interaction with the interviewer. The second instrument is the principal researcher as observer. Field notes recorded tutor/student interactions, activities engaged in, and conversations with or instructions to the student from the tutor. Any observer will bring past experiences to the observation. The researcher remained aware that those past experiences might color how the tutoring sessions were viewed and analyzed.

The scope of the study has been delimited in a number of ways. First the study has been limited to only those college students who are currently working in the work-study reading tutor program at a comprehensive university in the

southwest. Therefore, the results of this study may not be descriptive of other similar populations.

This study is further delimited by the ages of the available participants. Since the age range is from 18 – 36, the results may not describe volunteers in other programs, for example the Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) which provides similar services utilizing only senior citizens as volunteers. Also, the results from this study will not describe volunteer programs that utilize peer tutoring in middle school and high school.

Finally, since the participants were selected not only from one university but also from one program and the fact that all these students are work-study eligible may imply a select sub-population. It is possible that different results may have been obtained with a less select group.

Conclusion

Future programs of research on beliefs should consider the exploration of beliefs as a central component of learning and instruction. Insights into beliefs about literacy and literacy learning promises possibilities. For Bateson (1994), learning is change. Continuity results because people improvise and adapt, that is, they learn. Growth and development in our understanding of human learning should embrace the role that beliefs about literacy and literacy learning play in the instruction and acquisition of literacy.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

The University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus

Consent to Participate in a Research Project

Being Conducted Under the Auspices of the

University of Oklahoma

What are the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning of adult reading tutors and are those beliefs manifested in practices during one-on-one tutoring sessions with at-risk elementary students?

Linda Lofaro Coursey, M.Ed., Principal Investigator

I would like to investigate the beliefs about literacy and literacy learning of adult reading tutors and how those beliefs are manifested in practices during one-on-one tutoring as part of the research for my doctoral dissertation at the University of Oklahoma. Schools are making greater use of volunteers to reinforce reading instruction for at-risk readers. This project is designed to help educators understand how to use the existing beliefs of volunteers to present effective methods of reading instruction in an educational setting.

If you decide to participate in this project, you will be asked to participate in an interview session that will last approximately one hour. The interview will be audiotaped to ensure the information is gathered as accurately as possible and I

will observe you in your work setting. The principal researcher will not read the transcription of this interview until the end of the work term. In addition, your weekly journal records and daily logs will be reviewed as part of the research project. The required training for this project will be paid at the rate of $10.00 per hour of training. These training sessions will take place once each month for three hours each session.

I see no foreseeable risks of participation in this project for you. Your participation will greatly help educators provide the best instructional atmosphere and gain insight into the best training procedures for volunteers working with students in an educational setting.

Your participation in this project is strictly voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty in school or otherwise. You may withdraw at any time without penalty as well. All information from this project, including interviews, audiotapes, and observations will be kept in a locked file cabinet by the principal investigator, and will remain confidential within limits of the law. A pseudonym will be given for you and your current setting so real names and locations will not be known. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at:

(405) 325-1627

or my University supervisor Dr. Sally Beach at (405) 325-3590.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please call the Office of Research Administration at (405) 325-4757.

Linda Lofaro Coursey, M.Ed.

Doctoral Candidate, ILAC

CONSENT STATEMENT

I agree to take part in this research project. I know what I will be asked to do and that I can stop at any time. I give my permission to audiotape and observe me.

Signature Date

APPENDIX B

The following questions were designed to elicit information about tutor beliefs. The probes were intended to follow up to the original questions or encourage introspection. Only those probes needed to clarify responses were used. The interviewer recorded any divergent probes.

1. Describe what you mean by " know how to read."
2. What do skilled readers do that beginning readers do not do?
3. What can be done to encourage listening skills?
4. How do students learn to read? Possible probes:
    a. What do you think the role of learner participation has in the learning experience?
    b. How does frequency (repetition) play a part in the acquisition of skills?
    c. How might you encourage a student to explore understandings or create new solutions to problems?
    d. What role does background knowledge play in literacy acquisition?
    e. What can be done to encourage self-esteem?
5. What part do you think that feedback plays when a child is learning to read?

6. What is the purpose of reading instruction? (Does decoding, phonemic awareness, or meaning construction play a role in reading instruction?)
7. When students read to you, what kinds of questions do you ask?
8. How would you introduce new vocabulary?

9. What role does writing play in the teaching of reading? Possible probes:
    a. Describe some of the writing activities that you employ in your tutoring sessions.
    b. How do you encourage your students to write? Sentences? Stories? Fill in the blank?
10. What skills are important for students to acquire on their way to becoming competent readers?
11. What is the role of listening skills in literacy acquisition?

APPENDIX C

Tutoring Journal

3/29/00 Jill

Today, J. chose two books to read. She first read The Lunch Box Surprise while I did a running record on her. Before reading the book, she predicted that the boy may not have a sandwich or drink in his lunch box. She read the book independently and we checked her prediction after reading the book. She predicted very well!! I asked her to write her favorite part of the story. She wrote "he had nothing to eat." I asked her if she wanted to add a word to her "book of words." She added the word "surprise" to her book and then wrote one sentence to go with the word. She wrote, 'Did you get a surprise?". I thought that was a very good question sentence and told her so. I then wrote my sentence in her book. She enjoys this book.

We then read I'm a Caterpillar. We took turns reading pages at Jessica's request She predicted on this book before we read it also. After reading it, I asked her to write something she remembered from the story and she wrote, "They trun (turn) into a buterfly"

I did one column of the 'Word Test Score Sheet" from our packet with J. today. She only wanted to do one column today. I told her we could do some more tomorrow. She didn't miss any words from the first column. (I'll enclose a copy of this when she completes it tomorrow.)

The final activity for today was writing the word "sat" on the dry-erase board and asking J. to write all the words she could think of that rhymed with it. She had to think a bit before writing anything. She wrote "cat, lat, pat, and mat." She did not want to believe me when I told her "lat" wasn't a word. She said, "Yes, it is." I asked her where she had heard it before. She couldn't remember, but she knows it is a word. She asked me if "mitten" rhymed. She also asked me about another word that did not rhyme. I can't remember what the word was though, sorry. I do remember that it didn't come close to rhyming with "sat,"

She seemed bored today and uninterested. Her teacher was absent today and she was in another teacher's class and not happy about that. She did not like her teacher being gone!

B. did the "Word Test Score Sheet" for me. She missed two words on it. For "with" she said, "which" and for "were" she said, "where." (I enclosed a copy.) She was nervous as she read the words.

She chose to read I'm a Caterpillar . She read independently while f did a running record on her. Next, she decided she would like for me to just read a book to her. I haven't done that in a very long time. She chose Zomo The Rabbit. She liked the story. I asked her to write a sentence or two about her favorite part of the story and then write something else she remembered from the story. She wrote two sentences in all. 1. My fafrite part is wen Zomo got the tooth. 2. I rememder wen the fish danst. (danced) She listens well and comprehends well most of the time.

The last thing we did together was write all the words she could think of that rhymed with sat." She wrote, "'cat, pat, mat, and rat." That is all we had time for today.

T. is part Cherokee Indian and quickly chose a book I brought called How Turtle's Back Was Cracked. This book is a traditional Cherokee tale. She predicted that the turtle cracked his shell by a bow & arrow or he fell on it. I did a running record on her while she read in this book. We took turns reading the pages because it was a longer book and took a good amount of time to read. When we finished, I asked her to write about her favorite part of the story. She took forever to begin writing anything. She started looking at all the other kids in the library who were searching for books. I told her twice to turn around and think about what she wants to write. She still didn't write anything, so I began talking to her about the book. She could easily tell me things. I told her to write exactly what she had just told me. Her two sentences were as follows: 1. Were the turd craced his shell. (Where the turtle cracked his shell) 2. The turd mad walf era spoons. (The turtle made wolf-ear spoons.) She did enjoy the story. We also checked her prediction.

T. did the "Word Test Score Sheet" for me. She missed two words on it. For "were" she said, "where" and for "now" she said, "no." (Enclosed copy)

She wants to finish her fold-out book tomorrow!

F., Jr, and D were all absent today

Fri. 3/30/00 J. completed the Word Test Score Sheet. (Copy enclosed) She wrote two more sentences on her fold-out book and then said she was done with it and didn't want to write anymore. She drew a picture also for her book. She chose to read Pajama Party. She read it by herself. I had her predict what she thought would happen. She predicted a pillow fight, which ended up being correct, and she noticed that herself. In the story, she missed the word "quickly" so after she finished the book I wrote the word "quick" on the dry erase board and asked her to write all the words she could think of that rhymed with "quick." She wrote "mulk" pronounced "munk." She wrote "luick, pronounced lunk and "cuick, pronounced "crunch" When I asked her if "munk" and "lunk" were words, she said, "Yes." Needless to say, she does not seem to have a clue about the rhyming thing. I wrote "kick, lick, Dick, and pick" on the board for her to see and say. She did not seem to realize that her words did not rhyme.

J. was once again in a very bad, unresponsive mood I asked her if she did not want to be with me today. I told her she could go on back to her classroom if she wanted. She did not want to go back to her classroom. I asked her to please. sit up and read for me!

B. finished her fold-out book story today. She brought her library book There's Nightmare In My Closet and read it very well. She has read it previously. I asked her to write 1-2 sentences of her favorite part of the story. I also asked her to write as many words as she could that rhymed with "quick." She wrote, "ckick

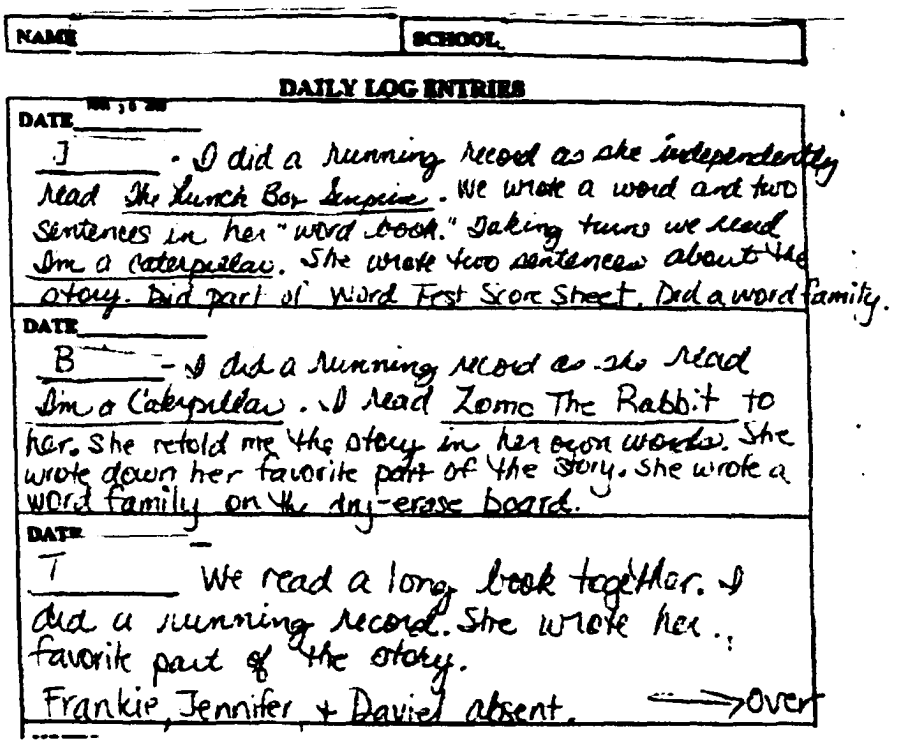
(kick), pick and Nick." She still gets nervous when she reads but did very well today reading.

T. always wants to write on the dry-erase board so today we began by her writing some word fan-files on the board. I wrote the word "cow" and later "say." She couldn't come up with any for "cow" until I gave her the first one. She had first written "shour' (shall) and then "foul." I asked her if "cow" ended in "I". But, I did also say that the "ou" does sometimes have the "ow" sound. She did a little better on the "ay" fist. She read I'm a Caterpillar. After reading this book, she completed writing her fold-out book on butterflies. Even though we had just done the "how, cow, wow, etc." word family prior to reading, she was unable to correctly read "now and wow" in the story.

Jr. chose to read Zomo The Rabbit. I did a running record as she read. I had her predict before she began reading. I had her write one sentence about her favorite part of the story. She missed "slid" and "hid" in the story so we did that word family after reading. She did the Word Test Score Sheet also today.

Frankie and Daviel were absent today.

APPENDIX D



NAME SCHOOL

DAILY LOG ENTRIES

DATE

J - I did a running record as she independently read The Lunch Box Surprise. We wrote a word and two sentences in her "word book." Taking turns we read I'm a Caterpillar. She wrote two sentences about the story. Did part of Word Fest Scott Street. Did a word family.

DATE

B - I did a running record as she read I'm a Caterpillar. I read Zomo The Rabbit to her. She retold me the story in her own words. She wrote down her favorite part of the story. She wrote a word family on the dry-erase board.

DATE

T We read a long book together. I did a running record. She wrote her favorite part of the story.

Frankie, Jennifer + Daniel absent. ⟹over

Fri. 3-31-00

J ____ · Wrote two more sentences to complete her fold-out book story. Furnished the Word Test Score Sheet. She drew a picture for her story Did a rhyming activity.

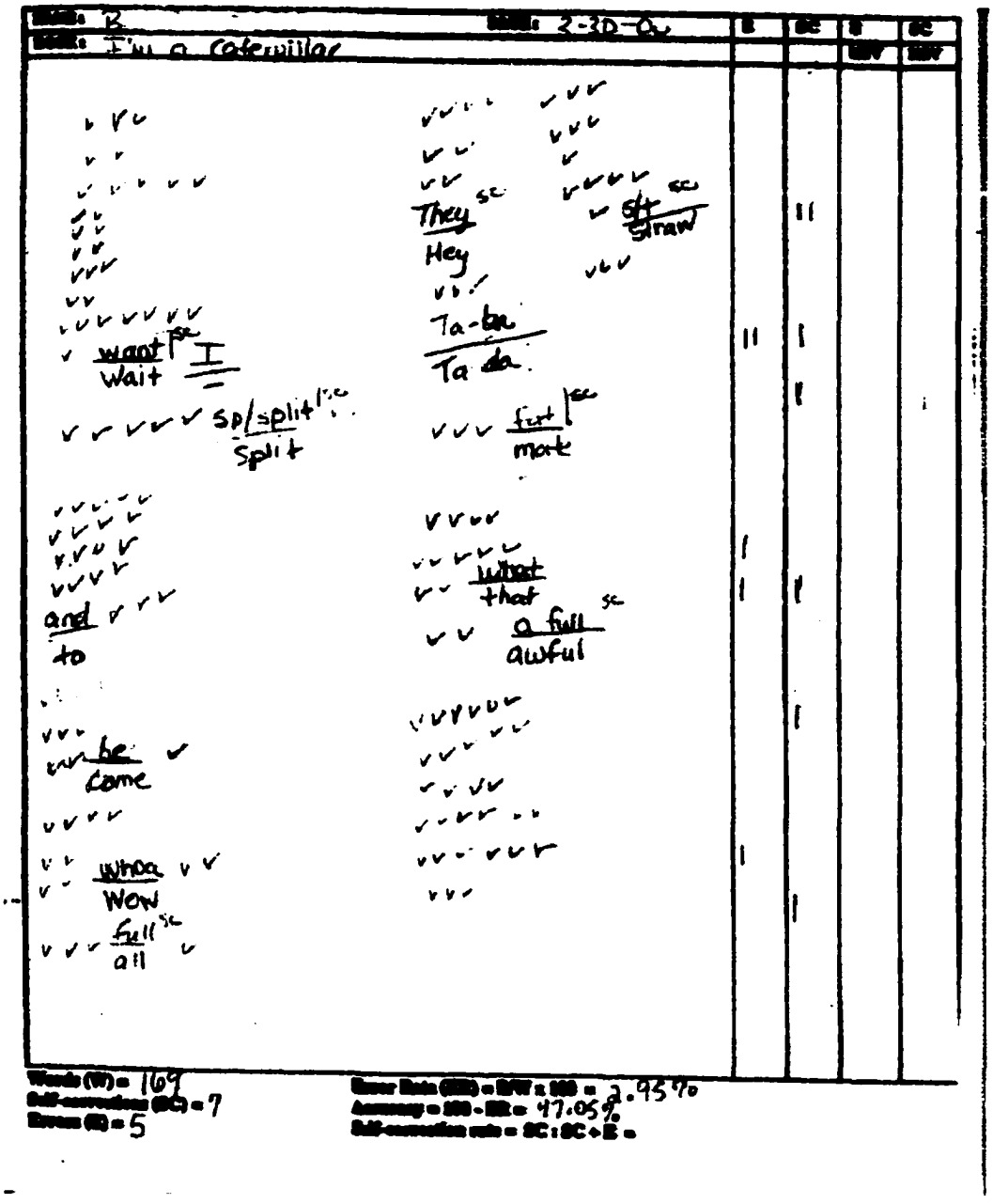
B ____ · Finished writing her fold-out book story. She read her library book. Wrote 1-2 sentences. Did a word family.

T ____ Completed her fold-out book story. She read one book to me. Did 2 word families

J ____r - She read one book to me. I did a running record. She wrote one sentence. Did two word families

Frankie + David absent.

APPENDIX E


I'm a Caterpillar
They
Hey
Ta-ba
Ta da
want
Wait
I
sp/split
Split
fort
mark
and
to
what
that
a full
awful
be
come
Whoa
Wow
full
all
Words (W) = 169
Error Rate (ER) = SW ÷ 169 = 2.95%
Self-corrections (SC) = 7
Accuracy = 100 - ER = 97.05%
Errors (E) = 5
Self-correction rate = SC ÷ SC + E =

APPENDIX F

WORD TEST SCORE SHEET

Name: B Date: 3-30-00

Age: 8

Recorder:

TEST SCORE 70/72

1
the ✓
and ✓
a ✓
I ✓
to ✓
said ✓
you ✓
he ✓
it ✓
in ✓
was ✓
she ✓
for ✓
that ✓

2
is ✓
his ✓
but ✓
they ✓
my ✓
of ✓
on ✓
me ✓

3
all ✓
be ✓
go ✓
can ✓
with which
one ✓
her ✓
what ✓
we ✓
him ✓
no ✓
so ✓

4
out ✓
up ✓
are ✓
will ✓
look ✓
some ✓
day ✓
at ✓
have ✓
your ✓

5
good ✓
this ✓
don't ✓
little ✓
if ✓
just ✓
baby ✓
way ✓
there ✓
every ✓

6
went ✓
father ✓
had ✓
see ✓
dog ✓
home ✓
down ✓
got ✓
would ✓
time ✓

7
love ✓
walk ✓
came ✓
were where
ask ✓
back
now
friend