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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

CONVERSATIONS AMONG MULTIPLE VOICES
MERGING AND EMERGING STORIES OF BEGINNING LITERACY
TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONAL DECISION-MAKERS

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

LINDA J. RICHARDSON McELROY

Norman, Oklahoma

2000

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

BY

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With grateful appreciation,

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Abstract

This study examined the development of beginning teachers of literacy as professional decision-makers during a one-semester undergraduate literacy methods course, in which preservice teachers engaged in one-on-one tutoring of a specific elementary child. It was framed by sociocultural views of learning and literacy, focused on the social nature of learning, and included components such as collaboration and reflection.

Two interrelated foci guided the study. Two research questions related to the first focus, which was the preservice teachers' sense of self as a teacher of literacy: (1) How do the preservice teachers conceptualize themselves as teachers of literacy? (2) How do the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of themselves as a teacher of literacy develop or change, if at all, over the semester-long teaching experiences? Two additional research questions related to the second focus, which was their decisions and decision-making processes related to literacy teaching: (3) What types of decisions and decision-making processes do the preservice teachers employ during the semester? (4) How do these decisions and decision-making processes relate to their concept of self as a teacher of literacy? The research questions addressed each focus as well as interactions between the two.

Participants included one male and ten female undergraduate students majoring in elementary and/or early childhood education. Data sources included the preservice teachers' responses to two types of pre-and-post survey instruments, information about the tutoring sessions, student-generated writing, peer-collaborative information, interview data, and field notes. A typology developed from the data and from previous research was used for data analysis. Triangulation was provided by comparing the multiple sources of data.

Three overarching themes were used as the organizational framework

(1) Conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy is multidimensional. Five dimensions were described: personal literacy history, sense of self-efficacy, understandings of literacy instruction, thinking about complexity, interactions in a social context.

(2) Conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy interacts with decisions and decision-making processes. Three types of decision-making were identified in this context: types of interpersonal interactions, assessment decisions, curricular decisions. Five descriptive continua were developed as a way of explaining the interactions between the decision-making and the dimensions of self as a teacher of literacy.

(3) Development of conceptualization of self is multidirectional along each dimension and interrelated among the dimensions.

For these preservice teachers, the interactions between their decisions and their conceptualizations of self were complex and varied. The research added to the ways that teacher educators can understand these processes, and, therefore, helped to describe components of teacher education programs that support the positive development of novice teachers of literacy. The implications included that reflection, collaboration, and on-going supportive mentoring are important for novice literacy teachers, and that longitudinal studies are needed to understand ways that this support will be helpful in other social contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background and Significance of the Study

Education has been defined as a process of change (Sikula, 1996). It has also been described as “that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience” (Dewey, 1916, p. 76). Professional development of prospective teachers is also a process of change, of “taking a novice in the field to the developmental point of being an expert, one open to new ideas, fresh approaches, and emerging challenges” (Sikula, 1996, p. xiii).

The “process of becoming” a teacher is a complex, multifaceted endeavor, in which the “becoming” is probably never completed and the “process” is forever evolving. This process of development as a professional decision-maker within the role of being a teacher of literacy, which is the focus of this research study, is quite complex. It includes a process of merging some of the “experiences” (Dewey, 1916) that prospective teachers bring to their initial teaching experiences with children. The merging stories of their own personal literacy histories include, but are not limited to, their childhood school literacy experiences, home literacy experiences, experiences in discourse communities outside of their roles as students, concepts from their teacher preparation program, influences of the political climate of the larger community, their own views of literacy, and their knowledge of

literacy strategies

In addition to this “merging” of their past and the present, the process of professional development includes a second component, a type of “emerging” view of self as a teacher of literacy, supported by an on-going awareness of their own characteristics and beliefs, as well as an emerging awareness of diversity in students, contexts, and influences on their professional options. Through this emerging process, preservice teachers may explore their own perceptions about many factors as they are attempting to make sense of the diverse concepts and experiences that have been framed by and ultimately shape their own beliefs and perceptions of themselves as teachers of literacy and of their literacy practices. Both the merging and the emerging components may influence and be influenced by the decisions and decision-making processes the preservice teachers employ.

The context of a teacher preparation program may influence this emerging process. Pearson and Stephens (1994), in explaining perspectives of literacy, stated that “It matters whether the norms in classroom discussions privilege single versus multiple interpretations. In the one case, we see recitations in which a single voice dominates the discussion, in the other, we see conversations among multiple voices.” Professional development can be supported by “interwoven conversations” (Newman, 1991) among these multiple voices. The voices include those of prospective teachers who are now learning with teacher educators and who are, at the same time, expanding teacher educators’ perspectives on literacy. They include both past and present voices of others who have influenced the participants. Additionally, the voices include those of future generations of children who will

learn from and with the future teachers. Thus, the process becomes one of “conversations among multiple voices” based on the “merging and emerging stories of beginning literacy teachers as professional decision-makers.”

This study explored one phase of the process of “becoming a teacher.” It was framed by sociocultural views of learning and literacy. Therefore, it focused on the social nature of learning and included components such as collaboration, reflection, and support during interpsychological tasks as a mediating force for success with intrapsychological tasks (Vygotsky, 1978; Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

The study examined the development of beginning teachers of literacy as professional decision-makers during the time that they participated in an undergraduate teacher education program. It focused on the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of themselves as teachers of literacy and the ways that these conceptualizations influenced and were influenced by their understandings of literacy, including the process of professional decision making related to literacy teaching. It included examinations of their emerging sense of self as a teacher of literacy and their reflective inquiry process as they made professional decisions over the course of a semester when they were engaged in one-on-one tutoring of a specific elementary child. For most of the students, this was the first extended teaching experience where they were responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating literacy experiences. Data sources were developed to help identify their own questions or decision points as a process of problem-posing (Wink, 1997), and to examine how they utilized problem-solving strategies and resources in making their professional decisions. Data also documented their personal reflective process

and their collaborative reflections with their peers in the teacher education program. The research added to the ways that teacher educators can understand these processes, and, therefore, helped to describe components of teacher education programs that support the positive development of novice teachers of literacy.

Research Questions

Two interrelated foci guided the study. The first was the preservice teachers' sense of self as a teacher of literacy. The second was their decisions and decision-making processes related to literacy teaching. The research questions addressed each focus as well as interactions between the two.

Concept of self as a teacher of literacy

1. How do the preservice teachers conceptualize themselves as teachers of literacy?
2. How do the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of themselves as a teacher of literacy develop or change, if at all, over the semester-long teaching experiences?

Professional decisions and decision-making processes as a teacher of literacy

3. What types of decisions and decision-making processes do the preservice teachers employ during the semester?
4. How do these decisions and decision-making processes relate to their concept of self as a teacher of literacy?

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The following discussions review the research literature that is relevant to my study. I have organized the discussion into four sections. First, I describe the theoretical perspectives of learning and teaching that framed the study, and then I describe the theoretical perspectives about literacy that are important to my research and that are assumptions of the course in which the research was conducted. Next, I review literature that is related to the professional development of preservice literacy teachers. I talk about research that relates to the concept of self as a teacher of literacy, including the role of socially constructed conceptualizations of self, the role of self-efficacy, and the role of personal narrative and life history in learning to teach. Finally, I talk about research that relates to professional development of preservice literacy teachers in regard to their professional decisions and decision-making processes, including the role of dilemmas, inquiry, and reflective thinking, the role of collaboration, and the role of narratives and of case methods in teacher education.

Theoretical Perspectives of Learning and Teaching

The proposed study is aligned with progressive traditions for assumptions about learning and about learning to teach and how the process should be studied (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). This view attempts to shift from determining what beginning teachers should know and how they should be trained

to attempting to understand what they actually do know and how that knowledge is acquired. Studies in this tradition sometimes provide rich accounts of experiences and voices of beginning teachers, and interventions sometimes support the importance of having beginning teachers examine their beliefs as a first step in the process of learning how to teach. These innovative programs seemed to provide a “form of shelter” for students within which they could examine their beliefs (Graber, 1996)

The concept of an emerging, dynamic sense of one's own literateness aligns with theoretical perspectives that have been described by various theorists as sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978), as a process of social construction (Berger & Luckman, 1966), or as a process of appropriation whereby one's own understandings are mediated by the process of participating in joint activities with others (Rogoff, 1990). The construction of literacy in classrooms is a dynamic process in which definitions of literate actions (“literacies” instead of “literacy”) are constructed and reconstructed as social accomplishment, emphasizing the complexity and dynamic nature of everyday life in classrooms. Transformations of teacher knowledge through the dynamics of interactions with other teachers and researchers are socially-constructed patterns of actions (Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group, 1994)

Learning to teach is a highly complex matter, and so Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of higher mental processes illuminates important principles for understanding the development of these processes. Vygotsky utilized components of dialectical and historical materialism in higher mental processes by explaining

that every phenomenon has a history, which is characterized by both qualitative (changes in form and structure and basic characteristics) and quantitative changes, so these phenomena cannot be examined in an experimental fashion, but can be investigated, instead, by historical studies of cultural products such as folktales, customs, and language. They should be studied as processes in motion and change (Vygotsky, 1978). I see parallels in teacher development, in that teachers' thinking is influenced so heavily by their literate history. In spite of the influence of lived experiences, however, teachers' perspectives need not be considered stagnant or fixed, but rather can be seen as dynamic and open to change if proper support of change is available. Indeed, definitions of identity development are rooted in responses to cognitive dissonance and change (Marcia, 1987).

Central tenets of Vygotsky's cognitive theory include the concept of a zone of proximal development, where a more knowledgeable other helps to facilitate understandings of a novice, first by experiences done in an interpersonal fashion before the novice begins to internalize the concepts on an intrapersonal plane. Other concepts include the notion of speech as a tool for cognition and the notion of transformations, which are linked like stages of a single process and are historical in nature so that each stage provides the conditions for the next stage and is itself conditioned by the preceding one. Implications include the transformation of an interpersonal (social) process to an intrapersonal one, the stages of internalization, and the role of experienced learners. This notion may be especially powerful for teacher educators in facilitating preservice teachers' development. Notions of collaboration and interaction with peers and with experts are as powerful for teacher

educators as for teachers of small children

An important factor that researchers need to consider is the notion that a human observer cannot observe or measure anything without affecting its very nature (Weaver, 1994, Smagorinsky, 1995) Cole & Scribner (in Vygotsky, 1978, p 13-14) explained Vygotsky's notion of "mediation"--that "in higher forms of human behavior, the individual actively modifies the stimulus situation as a part of the process of responding to it " Transactive theory would indicate that not only is the observed affected by the process, but the observer will also be shaped or changed Applications in the current study included the ways that the preservice teachers' views are developed--views of their student(s) as well as views of themselves as teachers of literacy

Vygotsky's notion of differences between simple and complex forms of the same behavior may provide insight into the processes that preservice teachers encounter as novices who are sometimes overwhelmed with the responsibility of coping with all of the complexities of teaching from their very first times to attempt the tasks The notion of auxiliary sign systems may describe concepts that help mediate and restructure the psychological process of beginning teaching decisions Speech, in a Vygotskian definitional perspective, serves as a tool and plays an essential role in the organization of higher psychological functions Perhaps we might also view the processes of reflection (as internalized speech) and collaboration (interpersonal speech) as auxiliary sign systems, and therefore lend theoretical credence to their support of novice teacher development In numerous ways, the use of signs as auxiliary means of problem-solving (to remember,

compare something, report, choose, and so on) will be important in supporting novice teachers' understandings

From the perspective of beginning teachers whose understandings of classroom interactions are based more on their past experiences than on the ideas they have simply heard someone talk about in their preservice programs, we might draw a parallel between Vygotsky's notion that all human perceptions consist of categorized rather than isolated perceptions. Therefore, the connection to prior experiences helps shape perceptions, while the "isolated perceptions" from educational concepts that have not been situated in an authentic context are less meaningful. From Vygotsky's historical-cultural approach, that as human beings we actively realize and change ourselves in the varied contexts of culture and history, comes a notion that can have significant implications for educators working daily in the highly contextualized and tradition-oriented environments of schools. From his idea of fossilized behavior, which he described as processes that have already died away, that is, processes that have gone through a very long stage of historical development and have become fossilized, one can examine automated or mechanized psychological processes which, owing to their ancient origins, are now being repeated for the millionth time and have become mechanized. Two parallels could possibly be drawn to preservice teachers. First, they may exhibit apparently involuntary responses to experiences, based on their experiences as students (fossilized behaviors based on years of experience in classrooms as students). Secondly, as they begin to cope with the complexities of teaching interactions, they may feel frustrated by the ease with which more experienced teachers manage the

myriad of tasks that feel so overwhelming to them. Perhaps they would benefit from understanding the sequence of forms of attention and realizing that the focused voluntary attention during initial teaching experiences, when they are working so diligently to accomplish what expert teachers may find routine, is evidence of the forms of thinking. Perhaps they can benefit from the support of others (cooperating teachers, university faculty members, their peers, even the children they are “teaching” and who, in a transactive way, are “teaching” them) during this stage of their own developing understandings. These interpersonal components of learning may help to facilitate the internalization of understandings so that later in their careers, it may become again more automated, but at this stage, automated at the highest level of thinking.

Spiro's cognitive flexibility theory (Pearson & Stephens, 1992) may be a way of examining learning in dynamic, ill-structured domains. This theory is sometimes used to explain such complex, diverse, and dynamic events as learning to read, learning to teach, and learning to diagnose medical problems. Components of this theory which are important for preservice teachers to understand include avoidance of oversimplification and overregularization, multiple representations, centrality of cases, conceptual knowledge as knowledge in use, schema assembly (from rigidity to flexibility), noncompartmentalization of concepts and cases (multiple interconnectedness), and active participation, tutorial guidance, and adjunct support for the management of complexity.

One type of adjunct support for managing complexity in initial teaching situations can come from collaborative thinking and planning with peers. The

impact of collaborative group interactions on learning can be powerful. For example, one study by Kaufmann, Short, Crawford, Kahn, & Kaser (1996), stressed the importance of opportunities for learners to reflect on the content and the process of group discussions, as a means of support in their current thinking as well as to challenge them to consider new possibilities. These types of interactions are supported by the work of Vygotsky (1978) who argued that meanings created in social interactions are internalized in the form of thought. These internalized interactions are used in subsequent interactions, influencing the dialogue which occurs within the minds of the learners and between participants. Gee (1990) described the notion of Discourse (with an intentional capital "D") as social interactions that include literate behaviors appropriate for particular roles by specific groups of people. Literacy and language are both integrated with and relative to social practices. These social practices constitute the "Discourses" that Gee described. Petrosky (1994) described Foucault's view of "Discourses" as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Teachers, then, according to Petrosky, "create knowledge with language and within a particular educational discourse in response to the various kinds of open-ended problems they solve, and they are created as teachers and thinkers by the language they use within that particular educational discourse" (p. 25). Ill-structured tasks, for which there are most likely many approaches and a range of possible solutions, can serve as "occasions for individuals to create knowledge and to reflect on what they have created in a recursive process that privileges creation and interpretation with language in a particular discourse as central to the understanding of individual

performances" (p. 26). Learning thus has its roots in a social dialectic or dialogue. These dialogues provide the foundations of learning.

Theoretical Perspectives of Literacy

The theoretical perspectives about literacy that frame the study are centered in constructivist and sociocultural philosophy. The reading process is a meaning-construction process, a state of dynamic change and interchange, influenced by classroom contexts, by both affective and cognitive components, and by the influence of life experiences (Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). It is "a complex, orchestrated, constructive process through which individuals make meaning. Reading, so defined, is acknowledged as linguistic, cognitive, social, and political" (Pearson & Stephens, 1994, p. 35). It is a social process embedded in multiple contexts. Success with reading at school, according to the sociolinguistic perspective, is not so much an indication of reading ability as of the child's use of appropriate language in educational settings as they learn the process of doing school.

The transactional view of Louise Rosenblatt (1994) explained reading as a process where meaning arises in transaction between the words and the person reading them. The reader brings to the text his or her schemata, the reader's lifetime of knowledge and experience. From this perspective, data do not exist "out there," ready to be compiled; rather, data constitute the results of a transaction which occurs between a teacher or researcher and a child. The observer inevitably affects what is observed. In a reciprocal fashion, the observer is also affected by the observation. Clearly, then, meaning arises through the process of transaction. In a sense,

meaning is that transaction, that process

Reader response theory (Squire, 1994) also holds a basic constructivist perspective on knowledge, emphasizing that education must go beyond the collection of knowledge. Pearson & Stephens (1994, p. 40), explained the importance of this expanded view of education

... knowledge alone is not enough to make schools better. What is needed is a continuing self-consciousness about the decisions we make, about the kinds of futures we want for ourselves, our students, our educational system, our community. We need to make informed, careful decisions about the role literacy will play in our lives and about the role we want literacy to have in the lives of our students. We must somehow learn to live with the tension that comes from knowing that there is no longer one right answer to any question worth asking.

Theoretical Perspectives of Professional Development of Preservice Literacy Teachers

Frequently, in contrast to the theoretical assumptions of this study, traditional teacher education programs have been based on transmission models of learning (Lortie, 1975). These traditional programs have assumed that teacher educators and researchers possess a body of knowledge which must be transmitted to prospective teachers, and some preservice teachers come into teacher preparation programs as passive consumers of knowledge, expecting the traditional transmission model for their professional coursework (Herrman & Sarracino, 1993). The effectiveness of traditional programs, especially for passive students, is questionable.

(Lortie, 1975), and teacher educators continually seek more effective ways to support the preparation of future teachers. Even though preparatory programs are expected to be supportive, educational reform efforts in America are often disjointed, uncoordinated, and contradictory (Sikula, 1996), and changes in schools happen slowly, as if part of an “elephantine enterprise” of enormous size and slow movement (Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995).

In our democratic society where demographic changes literally have transformed the nature of the population in educational institutions (Sikula, 1996), and where individualism and diversity are purportedly valued, no single role of teacher education is appropriate or possible. In this context, widely divergent views of teaching influence teacher education. In a review of ninety-three teacher education studies, Wideen et al. (1998) examined what is currently known about how people learn to teach, and concluded that successful programs were typically built on beliefs of preservice teachers and featured systematic and consistent long-term support in a collaborative setting. There is no final solution or packageable remedy to the many questions about teacher education (Greene, 1991). Because the process of becoming a teacher is so complex, an appropriate role for teacher education research may be to critically narrate the tensions, contradictions, and dilemmas that make the world of preservice teacher education so persistently problematic (Britzman, 1991).

Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy

Some research has indicated that preservice teachers' beliefs are stable and resistant to change and that preservice educational experiences have little impact on

changing the perspectives with which students enter their teacher preparation program (Lortie, 1975, Nespor, 1987) Many preservice teachers enter these programs expecting the instructors to be the dispensers of knowledge and to tell the students which components of the course content are most important, which specific aspects the students should learn, and in what ways to demonstrate their understandings The teacher-roles that were modeled for them while they were children continue to shape their images of teaching along lines similar to the ones they experienced as children, so that often, in spite of intentions to do otherwise, beginning teachers teach as they have been taught (Kennedy, 1991)

From a sociocultural perspective, a coherent sense of self as a teacher is vital if preservice teachers are going to be able to teach in an effective manner over the course of their profession and not be buffeted by changing views of instruction, curriculum, technology, contextual issues of schools, political issues related to education, and numerous other factors Grossman and Shulman (1994) believed that a crisis of identity and persistent ambiguity characterize education as a profession, and that because the potential for individual autonomy in teaching places greater demands on teachers' understanding, teachers must have explicit knowledge about their own theoretical orientations

Maxine Greene (1991) has described the process of constructing one's conceptualization of self as a drama marked by tension between assumptions that may be seen as given and perceptions of new possibilities Interactions with teacher educators and support in both instructional and personal realms are vital (Bruneau, 1992) Gold (1996) identified four central areas that need to be addressed in

considering instructional support, including (1) the understanding of the structure of knowledge and how it is transformed into content knowledge and understanding of the structures of the content matter, (2) process or pedagogical content knowledge, (3) adjustments for specific levels or for using a variety of instructional materials, and (4) learning to think reflectively and critically about their practice so they will be able to continue to acquire knowledge about teaching and about their academic area. Research that examines the development of these professional ways of thinking is needed, because prospective teachers need to be supported in ways that will facilitate increased cognitive engagement if they are to be able to become critically reflective decision-makers (Bayles, 1997)

Allington (1997) stated that we know very little about teachers who are enormously successful, and I think, from my review of the research that his observation is especially true of preservice teachers. Many of the studies have focused on novice teachers who have had great difficulty with their initial teaching experiences. Allington also mentioned that research frequently seems to be searching for an instructional vaccine, a one-shot-cure-all dosage, and that we seem much more concerned about students' achieving than their living, so we rarely talk to them about their lives in school. These issues are also relevant for preservice teacher education. By focusing on the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy and by examining their conversations and decision-making processes, this research will add to the knowledge base about the complexities of their lives as teachers and of their process of developing professional understandings. We know, according to Allington, that teachers need

to be able to take risks and to talk with each other to develop their potential and sustain their professional growth, but little of the professional preparation we offer establishes or fosters the professional support networks that might provide such opportunities for teachers. My research added information about peer support networks, beginning in their initial teaching experience during one-on-one tutoring, to define this type of support more clearly.

Ayers and Schubert (1994) described the value of ongoing studies as contributing a dimension to the evolving image of teaching. Wideen et al. (1998) pointed out that very little research documents data in a longitudinal manner for the same students from preservice teaching on into the first years of teaching. The research described in the current study collected data in anticipation of longitudinal studies. Previous studies of interventions in one semester have had questionable results in terms of changing students' prior beliefs (Ullrich, 1992). The current study examined the results in a one-semester course, not to anticipate "change" in beliefs so much as to record the process of "microgenesis--that is, the development within an observable period" (Forman & Cazden, 1994) within the preservice teachers' perceptions as they describe their process of inquiry, of problem-posing (Wink, 1997) and of problem solving and to consider how changes, if they occur, are related to this school context or to activities situated in the university coursework. These descriptions may be helpful in designing more effective support and interventions in the future, and they may also provide baseline evidence for those participants who may be followed into their subsequent teaching experiences.

Initial Sense of Self as a Challenge Facing Teacher Education Programs

Some of the challenges confronting teacher education programs which seek to facilitate the professional development of prospective teachers may stem from the fact that every new member comes to the profession with “years of experience,” based on the fact that prospective teachers bring with them a lifetime of varied roles in schools and in other learning situations and of experiences that have shaped their beliefs, assumptions, and expectations. These experiences help shape the ways prospective teachers formulate meaning constructs for sense making in the world of school (Rodgers & Dunn, 1997, Stone, 1992). Prospective teachers approach the entrance into the profession of teaching with a set of beliefs and ideas about classroom interactions and with their own ideas of what it means to be a teacher, developed during their own years of experience in the reciprocal role of a student. They have participated in numerous classroom experiences and in relationships with a number of teachers who may have had quite varied personalities and teaching styles. Lortie (1975) described being a student as serving an apprenticeship in the occupation of teaching, an “apprenticeship of observation,” which he explained as one component of beginning teachers’ complex and personal definitions of teachers’ professional roles.

Many preservice teachers also bring other background experiences, such as serving as volunteers or paid assistants in schools, parenthood, or experience in other community roles. Because they have been involved in varied types of educational settings and types of instruction, they use whatever previous experiences they have had to help them formulate their own beliefs and perceptions

of the roles and responsibilities of teachers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, Hollingsworth, 1989, Kagan, 1992, Lortie, 1975) These attitudes and beliefs can be important considerations in helping prospective teachers develop their thinking and practices (Pajares, 1993, Jones & Vesiland, 1996, Richardson, 1996a, 1996b) In fact, these factors are so powerful for some beginning teachers that they move away from ideas introduced in their teacher preparation programs and revert to their own experiences or to the ways of teaching that are predominant in the school (Britzman, 1991, Bullough, 1989, Grossman, 1991) The beginning teacher's transition from being a student to being a teacher may involve a great deal of stress as they struggle with personal life and professional requirements, with a lack of self-confidence, and with a still-evolving sense of identity as a teacher (Britzman, 1991)

The influences of their lived experiences may be especially powerful for teachers of literacy, because experiences with literacy have been lifelong and have been intertwined with learning experiences in other curriculum areas as well as in simply learning to read and to write The process of forming perceptions of school, of teaching, and of learning begins in early childhood experiences, where definitions of literacy are first conceived (Beach, 1995) These perceptions are further shaped in early school experiences as children develop a sense of being literate at school (Young, 1996, Young & Beach, 1997), and as both their home definitions and school definitions of literacy intersect with the expectations of the particular school climate of their elementary school and the influence of diverse views of literacy in their cultures (Heath, 1983, Delpit, 1995) Throughout later school experiences of childhood and adolescence, definitions of what is valued as literate activity continue

to be influenced and refined. These typical experiences mean that by the time a person enters teacher education, he or she has spent 13,000 hours observing teachers (Britzman, 1991).

The influence of these life experiences is powerful in shaping preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching. However, teacher preparation programs can sometimes effectively support changes in the beliefs espoused by the preservice teachers. The induction process for the student teacher, if it is to be effective, needs to include recognition of numerous factors and to provide support in a variety of areas including pedagogical, curricular, psychological, logistical, and classroom management issues (Gold, 1996). For example, Britzman (1991) described a study that took into account specific beliefs held by prospective teachers and examined how those beliefs interact and filter program experience. Herrmann & Sarracino (1993) restructured a preservice literacy methods course that emphasized reflective inquiry and practice, joint construction of conceptual understandings through dialectical discourse, authentic literacy teaching experiences, and collegiality and collaboration. The results indicated that the preservice teachers learned how to think about literacy teaching from a variety of theoretical perspectives. The analysis suggested that one possible alternative to attempting to change preservice teachers' existing beliefs is to build on the beliefs that already exist. The process involves recognizing and incorporating past experiences into new situations and unique contexts. This process becomes an important part of constructing one's conceptualization of self.

Identity Theories as Frameworks for Conceptualizations of Self

The construction of one's conceptualization of self can be framed by the concepts of identity theories. I will briefly review the general identity theories and theories of professional identity. I will then discuss theories of identity or conceptualization of self as a teacher, most specifically as a teacher of literacy. General identity theories consider stages of identity development as resolutions to developmental crises (Erickson, 1974), as a series of stages based on age and transitions as one encounters changes in life structure (Levinson, 1978), and as identity stages or modes of resolution to a crisis, or a period of identity development when the individual is choosing among meaningful alternatives (Marcia, 1987).

Marcia's four stages of identity development were directed toward general identity development, not specifically toward development of a professional identity as a literacy teacher. There seem to be parallels, however, in the development of a teacher's professional identity. "Identity diffusion," says Marcia, is used to describe individuals who have not yet experienced a crisis or explored meaningful alternatives. Some preservice teachers could be described as "identity diffused" as they enter teacher education programs without yet understanding clear theoretical frameworks and consequently using their own experiences as their way of knowing the world of literacy teaching. As they learn about theoretical frameworks in their coursework, they attempt to make sense of new theoretical positions. At this point in their careers, the description of "identity foreclosed" (have made a commitment but have not experienced a crisis) is appropriate as they perceive themselves to be committed to a particular theoretical stance but have not yet had an opportunity to

“experience a crisis” where they can test the theories with real children. Those first teaching experiences may bring the preservice teachers to the point of being in “identity moratorium” as they encounter real-world situations where varied contextual issues challenge the theoretical stances they have taken, while their own sense of identity is still tenuous and developing, not clearly established or defined. Finally, beginning teachers may reach the stage of “identity achievement” as they have experienced a crisis--an actual teaching situation--and have made a commitment--a personal investment in what they are going to do. The development of identity--both personal identity and professional identity--is recognized to be a long, ongoing, extremely complex process. In a similar way, using the definitions of identity development as attempts to resolve conflicts or crises, teachers' professional identities may develop through conflicts related to the “problematics” of teaching,--a conceptual structure that can be identified “both by the questions it raises and the questions it is incapable of raising” (Britzman, 1991, p. 16).

Nias (1987) contended that teachers have “a personal identity that precedes and transcends their assumption of an occupational identity, and that the preservation of this sense of self is, for many of them, an overwhelming priority in their choice of career and conduct at work” (p. 7). In an attempt to “be themselves,” they use this self-image to negotiate relationships with their classes and their colleagues and to order their careers. Nias explained the self as a social product shaped by responses of others, yet capable of innovations such as initiating actions and reflecting on them. The contexts which determine these social identities change with time, place, and role, so symbolic interactionists have evolved the notion of

"multiple selves" which reflect individuals' perceptions of themselves in relation to the different groups in which they participate. These multiple selves include "ideal selves," "real selves," the way they seem to themselves ("self as ego") and how they think others see them ("self as alter"). Together, these multiple "selves" add up to a set of relatively impermeable assumptions that one holds about oneself.

Explanations of the importance to individuals of maintaining a stable self-image come from the notion of "cognitive dissonance," which maintains that it is psychologically uncomfortable to hold views that are incompatible or to act in ways that are inconsistent with any of the views. Redefinitions of self may be very uncomfortable and stressful. Schon (1983) described this process of dealing with the discomfort of cognitive dissonance as passing through zones of uncertainty. Through these types of processes, preservice teachers resolve such dissonance by modifying views to bring them into alignment. During this alignment, a preservice teacher is more likely to defend the views that form part of his or her self-image. Thus, teachers are likely to try to avoid holding views or taking actions that are dissonant with their idea of themselves as a teacher.

As teachers are dealing with this process of aligning their views, the beliefs and behaviors of "reference groups" can be a mediating factor. These reference groups provide support which individuals use for self-evaluation and as a source of personal goals and values (Nias, 1987). Nias' study found that in-school reference groups were an important means of sustaining personal identity. Teachers who failed to find referential support within their schools--that is, who had no one to whom they felt they could talk--frequently left the profession. Job satisfaction

reportedly is related to the presence of a reference group within a school. Those who found confirming responses from even one other person felt confident in behaving consistently with their self-image. Acceptance of multiple realities and openness to change depends on the existence of a reference group that will not simply confirm members' existing views, but instead will help them see self-examination and change as desirable. Individuals cannot, by definition, be their own reference group. A basic condition for professional change is for individuals to become aware of their own assumptions and how these differ from those of other people. A necessary component is an atmosphere in which they feel free to try new ideas and to discuss them with their peers. Even a single "critical friend" may provide necessary stimulation, discussion, and encouragement. Given that many basic assumptions are unconsciously held, discussion that facilitates seeing different reactions to the same situation and listening to alternative explanations may be necessary for any redefinition of self. This redefinition process is important in developing a conceptualization of self as a teacher.

Teacher Development as a Process of Developing a Conceptualization of Self

Bullough (1989) pointed out that first year teachers enter the teaching profession with an internalized role identity and a teacher common sense, based upon which they react intuitively to their environment and the problems they face. Teacher educators face the challenge of helping preservice teachers launch their career-long professional learning, and the most appropriate approach is to focus on the transition to professionalism (Rosean & Gere, 1996). Bullough and Gitlin (1996) suggested that resistance is often grounded in private theory and in beliefs

about self as teacher. Potentially, then, teacher education could play a part in school transformation, so long as it is seen in relation to the private theories held by students.

Britzman (1994) presented this process of transition as a poststructuralist view of construction of teacher identity. She said that poststructuralist theories are "concerned with the inherited and constructed meanings that position and regulate how social life is narrated and lived" (p. 56). She argued that the problem of constructing a teaching identity is a problem of language and of fabrication. It is the work "of carving out one's own territory within preestablished borders, or desiring to be different while negotiating institutional mandates for conformity, and of constructing one's teaching voice from the stuff of the past, that is, student experience" (p. 54). She contended our identities are "overdetermined by history, place, and sociality, are lived and imagined through the discourses or knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not, and who we can become" (p. 58), as part of "the authorial process whereby one becomes a teacher" (p. 60). In this view, identities are shifting, colliding with, and being displaced by realities of new experiences, and are dialogic, set among tensions and contradictions. This dialogue is especially clear in negotiating the conceptualization of self as "teacher." It is a sense of self that is at the same time familiar and strange--familiarity based on experiences as a student, yet very different once one steps into the teacher's role. In this new position, "role and identity are not synonymous...role speaks to public function, whereas identity voices subjective investments and commitments" (p. 59).

The construction of self is closely aligned to language, which, according to

Britzman (1994), "inscribes experience as it positions the self" (p. 62). Especially in a profession such as teaching, where a monolithic definition of a teacher's role is suggested by tradition, constructing one's professional conceptualization of self might be perceived as a "struggle for voice and thought amidst voices that are not our own" (p. 62). Interactions with language may facilitate the constructive process. For example, selecting the narratives to share, as representative of the experience of teaching, may shape the preservice teacher's perceptions and, thereby, help to shape the actual experience as well as the expression of the experience. The process of participating in interviews or in collaborative conversations about teaching experiences may provide a significant safe space for reflections. Documentation of these interactions, however, needs to be considered simply evidence of one moment in time, partial and incomplete, influenced by context, and not evidence of a unitary unchanging identity. Constructing one's conceptualization of self as a teacher is a "process of becoming, a process that requires dialogue with the past and the present, with other people, and with the contexts and histories that coalesce in our process of coming to know" (p. 69). Self-identity is not a singular term and is never completed, but is instead negotiated with others, within situational and historical constraints, and by particular orientations to knowledge. All of the other layers of a teacher's life and experience (i.e., race, class, gender, and age) impact their conceptualization of self as a teacher.

Britzman stated that understanding conceptualization of self is concerned with words and their meanings, with the problem of language. A word such as "teacher" has multiple meanings that cannot be isolated from the speaker, the

listener, or the situation (Britzman, 1994) Negotiation among conflicting visions of a teacher's identity is, therefore, part of the hidden work of learning to teach

Descriptions of Teachers' Conceptualizations of Self

This important process of negotiating one's sense of self as a teacher has been described in various ways I will explain some of the ways that the process can be described, beginning with Heath's discussion of developing a "sense of being literate" (Heath, 1991) Following the discussion of Heath's perspective, other ways of describing the process of developing a conceptualization of self will be explained

"Sense of being literate."

Shirley Brice Heath described a "'separate sense' that enables individuals both to feel and to create harmony within their daily world " (Heath, 1991, p 3) This sense is a core component of the concept that Heath explained as a "sense of being literate " This separate sense "comes in different forms and works in different ways," and the resulting harmony "comes most readily for those who can call on their literateness to help them stabilize and control their world" (Heath, 1991, p 3) A sense of being literate, Heath asserted, is exhibited by a person who has gone beyond simply having literacy skills to a broader definition of literacy, demonstrated by exhibiting literate attributes or behaviors. Individuals who exhibit literate behaviors, Heath explained, can formulate responses in which communication, reflection, and interpretation are grounded Heath stated that, "the literateness of any individual is also only somewhat stable, it is dynamic, iterative, and sometimes erratic and daring in its representations" (p 5) Therefore, teachers, and especially

preservice teachers, may be continually developing and revising their own sense of self both as a literate individual and as a teacher of literacy

Heath's definition of a sense of being literate could be expanded to describe the perceptions of teachers of literacy about their own literate attributes—their conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy—and how those perceptions mediate and are mediated by their experiences as a beginning teacher of literacy. Their emerging sense of self as a literacy teacher may be supported by their self-efficacy so that they feel confident in going beyond teaching discreet skills of reading and writing, to exhibiting literate behaviors as a teacher. Expanded or well-developed conceptualizations of self as a professional enable the teachers to recognize “that their capabilities extend beyond recognizing and recreating to include presentation of self-in-revision interdependent with other speakers and readers” (Heath, 1991, p. 5). Understanding what factors contribute to preservice teachers' feeling, or not feeling, the “sense of harmony” that Heath described, as they participate in their first literacy teaching experiences, what factors they perceive as contributing to their own ability to “create a sense of harmony” for the children with whom they share literacy experiences and instruction, and what problem-solving strategies the novice teachers use as they attempt to both feel and create harmony in their own teaching situations are important objectives for teacher educators to consider.

If teachers of literacy are indeed going to be literate in the sense that Heath described (1991), to be able to both feel and to create a sense of harmony through the literacy activities in their classrooms, further examination of the complexities of

their roles is warranted. For example, Heath pointed out that the patterns of learning and of use of language are quite diverse across cultural contexts. The diverse experiences of teachers (both preservice and experienced teachers) and of teacher educators will influence their perceptions of literacy and of appropriate literacy interactions with children. The process of a teacher's development of voice and professional identity can be mediated by the experiences they encounter in their preservice teacher education programs and in their later interactions with others (students, parents, other teachers, administrators, etc.) in actual school contexts.

A process of "resonance "

All of these interactions influence prospective teachers as they are engaged in the process of beginning to construct their perceptions of school and of themselves in the multiple roles of a teacher. Conle (1996) described this process as a phenomenon of "resonance"—a way of seeing one experience in terms of another, as an echoing or resounding process in which something is produced in reaction and in response to an event. Using definitions from physics and chemistry, she pointed out that resonance implies amplification and enhancement of natural qualities through interaction with an "other." She uses this concept as a metaphor for the process of "resonance" in preservice teacher inquiry, an educational process of "development of self through interaction with others at an intimate level" (p. 299). She says that preservice teachers are exploring issues such as what it is that teachers know and how good teaching relates to what we have learned years ago as youngsters in classrooms—"how various areas of practical knowledge are connected."

In addition, Conle asserted that it is not so important for researchers to know what teachers know as it is for teachers to know what they know. She maintained that the way someone's knowledge changes is unpredictable but that the process of change is unavoidable. Furthermore, the process of resonance permits teachers to engage in various ways with what they know tacitly and to "move" that knowledge without having to make it explicit. She used a process of narrative story-telling to support teachers in generating data on tacit knowledge and in this way to begin "to know what they know," that is, what they know tacitly and practically through prior experience. Connelly and Clandinin (1988) have called this tacit knowing "personal and practical knowledge." Developing this tacit knowledge is one important component in developing a strong sense of professionalism.

"A fragile nexus."

Facilitating the development of this strong sense of professionalism is one role of teacher education. Barone, et al. (1996) described a unifying vision of supporting new teachers in developing educational professionalism. They defined educational professionalism in terms of three critical elements--the articulative, the operational, and the political dimensions of teaching. The articulative dimension (an ability to articulate a personal perspective on educational matters) is exemplified by professionals who can explain what they believe to be beneficial and effective and who engage in a dialectical process of critical reflection that enables them to make and express informed judgments about curricular and educational issues. Such informed judgments are based on a "curriculum platform" composed of understandings of realities as well as visions of possibilities. This type of

curriculum platform recognizes the apprenticeship of observation that Lortie (1975) described, but includes as well “a fragile nexus of often vague attitudes, tentative beliefs, complex dispositions, and incomplete understandings” (Barone, et al., p 1111). This integrated system of beliefs constitutes “who one is as an educator. The professing of that dearly held, carefully considered nexus of beliefs constitutes the articulation of an educational identity, the creation of a professional self” (Barone, et al., p 1111).

The second component, the operational dimension of professionalism, involves students in the process of implementing their platform within a classroom setting, and includes knowing how to plan, how to teach, and how to inquire (Barone et al., 1996). This component is influenced by external factors such as the structure of schools--the egg-crate classroom arrangements and fragmented schedules described by Lortie (1975), the requirements of mandated curriculum (textbooks and teaching materials, examinations, curriculum guides, and mandated program goals and aims), and pressures from top-down bureaucratic organizations. A strong professional is aware of the need for congruence between ideology and practice, is able to design and administer effective planning and teaching approaches, and values and can defend their preferred form of practice over other approaches.

The third component, the political dimension, supports professionals as they strive to cope with what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) described as “critical dissonance”--an incongruity between their own professional perspectives and the realities of constraints on their professional practice.

In discussing appropriate ways to educate future teachers who will possess a strong professional identity, Barone (1996) identified five key dimensions of teacher preparation programs. These dimensions included goals for teachers to “(1) develop an educational ideology for interpreting curricula, (2) acquire teaching methods, (3) understand the general pedagogical knowledge base, (4) be responsive to a multicultural student body, and (5) understand technology” (p. 1110). Students who participate in such a program of study may use critical reflectivity to make sense of educational issues and to construct an educational platform that rests on an “educational ideology—a set of organized, ethically, and politically relevant beliefs about the practice of curriculum and teaching, including what is worth teaching to whom and how it should be taught” (Barone, p. 1110). The “texts” of actual classroom life are valued, along with case studies and texts of educational theory which are important in the process of examining varied types of educational ideologies (Barone et al., 1996). Programs such as the one that Barone described may help to facilitate the development of a unified professional sense of self as a teacher.

“Holons”

This process of developing a conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy can be viewed as parallel to a process of literacy development described by Weaver (1994). She compared reading and literacy theories to a paradigm which is emerging in the sciences. Some tenets of the paradigm include a view of the basic nature of reality as process, and one of the basic processes as transaction, so that reality consists of transactive events in space-time. The notion of transaction was

defined by Dewey and Bartlett (1948--cited in Weaver, 1994) as an event in which participating entities are in some way defined or transformed through the act of relating to one another. The events are not linear but instead are simultaneous and synchronous (wherein cause and effect are inseparable and indeterminate), and the interrelationships and transactions blur the distinctions between self and other, between separately identifiable parts, between cause and effect, so that the transactive processes shape and define views of "others" as well as views of "self."

Weaver explained the concept of "holons" as units within an exceedingly complex, multidirectional and multidimensional communication system--a "holarchy"--with countless feedback loops and flexible strategies. The holons have both the autonomous properties of wholes and the dependent properties of parts. Weaver also explained the notion of a "system"--an entity maintained by the transaction of its parts, thus the fundamental reality is the organized relationship of parts, not the parts themselves. Therefore, Weaver continued, each level of language and language processing is a system, so that systems operate within systems (which operate within even more complex systems) holarchically and multidirectionally interrelated. In this sense, Weaver (p. 1199) viewed "meaning" as

an ever-fluctuating dance that occurs more or less simultaneously on and across various levels: letters, words, sentences, schemata, writer, text, and reader; text/reader and context, the present reader with other readers, past and present, and so forth, all connected in a multidimensional holarchy, an interlocking network or web of meaning, a synchronous dance in which there is no clear distinction between what is and what happens.

These features of holons can metaphorically represent the complexities of professional identity of literacy teachers

"A Process of Inquiry "

When the processes of teaching and of becoming a teacher are situated in sociocultural perspectives instead of in a transmission model of learning, education may be described as a process of inquiry Bissex (1994) pointed out that teachers develop understandings and insights into student learning and their own instructional practices by being researchers Therefore, the inquiring teacher learns "with dignity" (p 88) Ayers and Schubert (1994) cited Dewey (1933) as saying that philosophy begins in wonder and ends in understanding Harste and Leland (1998) believed that when education is an inquiry process, participants have an opportunity to live a different reality Curriculum can become a metaphor for the lives we want to live and the people we want to become A model of this conception of curriculum as inquiry situates personal and social knowing at the center, disciplines in a surrounding concentric circle, and sign systems as the encompassing circle Inquiry is the overarching concept that cuts across all of the other components

Practical inquiry takes several forms (Rosean & Gere, 1996) One form is reflective activity, based on Dewey's (1933) notion of reflection in practice and on Schon's (1983) ideas of understanding the relationship between one's actions and their consequences when he described reflection as a process that occurs both "in action" (during the actual teaching process) and "on action" (after the instructional interactions are completed) Action research helps practitioners systematically

collect data that can offer insight into local problems of professional practice

Critical inquiry goes beyond addressing local problems to support questioning,

analyzing, and considering multiple alternatives to complex problems

Socially Constructed Conceptualizations of Self as a Professional

Mitchell (1997) described teacher identity as a possible key to increased professional collaboration. This study used excerpts from teacher narratives to explore three aspects of professional identity: representation--underlying assumptions and implicit understandings that the teachers held in relation to their professional decorum and what that represented, preparation--their teacher preparation and induction experiences, and their perceived levels of dedication and commitment. Mitchell's focus on collaboration was in contrast to Lortie's views (1975) which described teaching as marked by separation both physically and intellectually and as characterized by the individual nature of the work, having professional norms of isolation and privacy. Lortie identified barriers to increased collaboration, including the tradition of individualism ("I just go in my classroom and close my door"), structural conditions in schools (egg-crate arrangements of classrooms, and fragmented schedules), and teachers' differing pedagogical orientations (conservative traditional viewpoint that presupposes that there is a body of knowledge and this body of knowledge must be funneled into a student in the course of a school year vs. developmental child-centered approaches to teaching and learning). Another barrier to increased collaboration, from Lortie's perspective, is the absence of a shared professional identity among teachers, an identity in which teachers hold common beliefs about themselves as teachers and common

expectations of their colleagues. In the absence of this professional identity, advanced forms of collaboration usually fail to occur. Although there is little research that explores how teachers define and interpret various aspects of professional identity, according to Mitchell (1997), differences in teacher identity can be barriers to teacher collaboration.

Individual views of self as a literate person are inextricably connected to social meanings of literacy, according to Mahiri and Godley (1998). Their study of a young Latina woman illustrated the transformation of practices of literacy and perceptions of self which can result from intricate, reciprocal, and often conflicting connections between societal views of academic literacies and an individual's view and value of herself as a literate person. The young woman had "accepted and reflected many of the dominant culture's values and standards for education and literacy" and perceived herself to be a good student, but "significant aspects of her socially constructed identity were challenged and changed" when academic expectations differed from her accepted ways. Her experiences are parallels to the disjoint that many new teachers encounter when they begin their careers in traditional school sites after beginning to develop theories of literacy practice that do not align with the commonly held views in their initial teaching experiences.

Role of Self-Efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy, "a personal judgment of performance capability within a given domain of activity that serves either to motivate or inhibit learning" (Bandura, 1982, and Schunk, 1984, cited in Henk & Melnick, 1992, p. 111), exerts diverse effects on achievement such as influencing choice of activities, task

avoidance, effort expenditure, and goal persistence. Some influential factors might include past personal literacy experiences, the difficulty or ease and perceived personal progress in literacy tasks, the relative performance of peers, feedback from credible sources, and situational circumstances (Henck & Melnick, 1992). Beliefs are mediated by the teacher's age and prior experience and by school practices such as opportunities for new teachers to collaborate with colleagues, supervisor attention to instruction, and the level of resources available in the school (Chester & Beaudin, 1996). Preservice teachers sometimes are quite optimistic, even unrealistically, about their own efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). However, encountering the world of schools as a teacher may offer significant challenges to some preservice teachers, using a definition of reciprocal determinism to propose that personal factors and environmental factors interact to influence one's self-efficacy. For preservice teachers, this can mean that school contexts play a powerful role in shaping their self-efficacy and their sense of professional identity as a teacher, and that their level of comfort frequently fluctuates. A sense of community (collaboration) in the school was the greatest single predictor of teachers' self-efficacy (Kasten & Ferraro, 1995).

Role of Personal Narrative and Life History in Learning to Teach

Use of personal narratives, life histories, or autobiographies can help teachers recognize the influence of their own background experiences in the development of their own identity as a teacher (Mulcahy-Ernt, 1997, Olson & Singer, 1994, Beattie, 1995, Ringler & Rhodes, 1997). Following in the tradition of biographical research (Smith, 1994) and narrative research (Casey, 1996), various

descriptions have been given of the concept of investigating teaching from the personal perspective of the teachers. Some have called the concept "teacher lore" (Schubert & Ayers, 1992). Others have described a process of "finding a voice" (Featherstone, Munby, & Russell, 1997). Gomez (1996) conducted a study that described telling stories of one's teaching as a way of reflecting on one's practices, based on a seminar with preservice teachers. Willis (1998) described narrative research as a way to document "the interconnectedness of life, teaching, and research" (p. 487). Narrative research, she says, helps one construct and reconstruct multiple identities, better understand ourselves and others, and understand our experiences in selected cultures. We are shaped and reshaped by the process of selecting, telling, retelling, living, and reliving our stories. Whether the stories are short personal essays which are selected to convey relevant portions of one's life, or autobiographies attempting to provide a contextualized story of one's experiences from childhood to the present, the process of selecting and telling the stories can educate the self and others (Ayers and Schubert, 1994; Bean, 1994; Clandinin and Connelly, 1994). To understand the learning of teachers, one must listen to the voices of teachers. "Imaging" is a process of picturing images in one's mind and having a dialogue or conversation with oneself about the possibilities of what could happen. Teacher lore is storytelling--a work-in-progress--which is by its nature unfinished, provisional, partial (Carter & Doyle, 1996).

Professional Decisions and Decision-Making Processes as a Teacher of Literacy

Research related to teachers' planning processes remains obscure, and information about constructivist perspectives in planning, especially for planning by

novice teachers, is even more limited (Roskos, 1996) Preservice teachers have traditionally depended on teacher educators and on cooperating teachers to serve as their reference groups (Nias, 1987) and to guide their decisions and decision-making processes This apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) supports the conservatism of teaching, so that traditional ways of doing school are reinforced Doing collaborative reflection in preservice programs may help preservice teachers envision their peers as appropriate reference groups and thereby become less dependent on authorities for their self-identity In this sense, the research may provide evidence of a way for preservice teachers to replace one apprenticeship of observation with another (Grossman, 1991)

Preservice teachers tend to assume that all children view school and learn in the same way they did when they were in school (Grossman, 1991) The use of teaching cases, reflective analysis of their emerging concepts of self and of their decisions and decision-making processes in journals, and conversations with their peers may help them broaden their definitions of learning and of reference groups and expand their assumptions beyond their own experiential ideas Research about the value of using journals and of cases is relatively limited (Roskos, 1996), and the current study added to this piece of the knowledge base Grossman (1991) described the value of support and collaboration for novice teachers, but she also pointed out the importance of transfer of control to the new teachers themselves The current research study provided information about components of peer collaboration that may help preservice teachers feel more confident about assuming control and responsibility for decisions related to their teaching Longitudinal

research studies will provide evidence for whether the students internalize the value of peer support systems and use similar systems as support during their initial year of teaching, which is frequently a time of struggling and feeling inadequate (Bullough, 1989) Data collected for the current study will be used as initial sources for longitudinal studies that will examine some of the participants' transitions into their initial teaching experiences

Understanding this transition process is an important part of developing effective support for new teachers Chester and Beaudin (1996) stated that "New teachers' experiences in their induction year, in many cases, determine the direction of their career " Initial experiences of teaching embed perceptions and behaviors regarding teaching, students, the school environment, and their role as a teacher Teachers are more likely to leave the profession during their early years in teaching, with the first year being most risky For new teachers, especially for ones for whom practice does not lead easily to competence and who become more uncertain the longer they teach, the process of inventing an identity can be very painful They may, therefore, simply assume an identity that aligns with their life experiences and with the contexts of their schools

New teachers who find themselves in situations where the context of school in their initial teaching experiences is very different from the student's own ideas about effective instruction--where the newly emerging sense of professional identity is challenged--may retreat into a "private" self This retreat may create a particular separation that precludes the critical elaboration of what identity feels like in the context of teaching Teaching may feel like a case of mistaken identity to these

novice teachers (Britzman, 1994) The decisions they make and the decision-making processes they use may be based on external factors such as the context of the school more than on their own sense of professional identity

Role of Dilemmas, Inquiry, Reflective Thinking and Decision-Making as a Teacher

A myriad of dilemmas face beginning teachers (Bullough, 1989) Some teaching dilemmas are related to integrity in teaching, in the sense that respecting and involving students deepens the challenge of teachers' work (Ball & Wilson, 1996) Teachers are fundamentally responsible for providing access to knowledge, to cultural capital that provides power and access (Delpit, 1995) Dilemmas may also be related to professional identity and group membership, interpersonal relationships, teacher status, planning, and curriculum (Ben-Perez & Kremer-Hayon, 1988)

Planning instructional activities is an important component of teachers' decision-making processes, and there are differences in planning by novice teachers and by expert teachers (Roskos, 1996) Student teachers, for example, focused on short-term goals, characterized their planning as time consuming, and struggled with decisions about what content to cover They experienced difficulty in making predictions about students' responses, and during the implementation of their plans with the students, they had difficulty making adjustments for student responses as they attempted to carry out the instruction according to their plans They tended to describe instructional problems in a literal way, and to look for quick solutions They struggled with classroom discipline problems Planning for integrated instruction was even more challenging, as planning shifted from following a

prescribed plan, such as that in a teacher's guide, to formulating a plan for a specific child or group of children in a specific instructional setting at a specific point in time. Planning for this type of instruction was characterized as an ill-structured problem, requiring the novice teachers to go beyond given information to make a workable plan while dealing with multiple variables and constraints. Roskos (1996) drew a parallel between this kind of decision-making task and what Schon (1987) referred to as "professional artistry in a situation of practice" the need to use one's abilities to frame problems and shape solutions that fit existing understandings and circumstances" (p. 122). Novice teachers encounter "anomalies," or conflicts between their naive ideas about teaching and learning and the experiences they encounter in actual teaching of children. This perception of conflict or sense of anomalies may be a precursor to cognitive growth (Jones & Vesilind, 1996).

A growing body of research about teacher knowledge and teacher thought processes addresses the importance of the critical and analytical thinking of teachers (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1993). Schon (1983, 1987) described a "reflective practitioner" as participating in both "reflection in action," during the time an event happens and as "reflection on action" when an event is finished. The concept of a reflective practitioner can be extended to examinations of teacher education in ways that will help to scaffold and support beginning teachers as they develop varied instructional strategies and as they examine their own identities as teachers (Beyer, Feinberg, Pagano, & Whitson, 1989, Liston & Zeichner, 1987, Roskos, 1996, Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1993, Wolf, Mieras, & Carey, 1996, Valli, 1992, Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Pape (1992) described reflection as the mental process at which

reorganization takes place. This reorganization, Pape explained, happens because reflectivity encourages transformation, or change in an individual's belief system as a result of assimilating new experiences. Rudney and Guillaume (1990) cited Dewey as describing reflective teaching as a process where routine practices and experiences are questioned with open-mindedness, responsibility, and wholeheartedness. Beginning teachers' development as reflective practitioners requires a philosophy of teaching that embraces both the metacognitive process: "How do I know what I know?" (epistemology), and the process of applying thought to action: "How do I use what I know?" (axiology). It includes analyzing values and behaviors to see if morality and ethics are reflected in actions (Kasten & Ferraro, 1995).

Several strategies may help preservice teachers in the process of becoming more reflective about teaching practices and the contexts in which teaching occurs. One of the strategies is the use of action research, as a type of reflective practice, to help develop a view of teaching as experimental, always in search of better teaching (Ayers & Schubert, 1994). Another strategy is the use of teaching cases within preservice coursework (Richards & Gipe, 1997; Shulman & Colbert, 1992). An additional strategy, when preservice teachers make the transition from examining cases in which they are not a participant to experiencing a teaching case where they are actually the teacher situated within the case, is the use of discussion and collaboration with peers as a mediating step (Birchak, Connor, Crawford, Kahn, Kaser, Short, & Turner, 1997; Rozendal, 1997). Further support for preservice teachers' reflections may include dialogue journals (Anderson & Reid, 1994) and conversations with peers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors.

Role of Collaboration

A large body of research is based on learning as a collaborative, critical process of problem-posing (Wink, 1997) and problem-solving (Kasten & Ferraro, 1995, Klassen & Short, 1992, Short, Crawford, Kah, Kaser, Klassen, & Sherman, 1992, Bullion-Mears, 1994, Wink, 1997). Reflective practice, according to these researchers, is grounded in inquiry, initiated through the continual posing and reformulating of questions by teachers and researchers in a collaborative process that recognizes and values multiple voices.

Collaboration is at the heart of learning (Newman, 1991, Rogoff, 1990). According to these views, learning is social, and people learn as members of learning communities. While we each construct an individual interpretation of an event or situation, our understanding is shaped by contact with other peoples' perceptions of what is taking or has taken place. Collaboration may be defined as a mutual task in which partners work together to accomplish a task that neither could have achieved alone, and the cognitive value of this type of peer interaction (Forman & Cazden, 1994) is centered in Vygotskian perspectives, including the notion of internalization of social interactions and of the means (especially speech) used in the interactions. Forman and Cazden explained the statements of Levina, a pupil of Vygotsky, about possible cognitive benefits from the use of instrumental speech, the need to communicate verbally to others, as one attempts to break up something unitary into its components in an attempt at verbal representation. Collaboration and instruction of peers could, therefore, be "an intermediate step between being receptively directed by the speech of another and productively and

covertly directing one's own mental processes via inner speech" (p 157)

Collaboration can be a powerful mediating force for preservice teachers (Mitchell, 1997, Rodgers & Dunn, 1997) Frank Smith (1988) described learning situations based on collaboration as "enterprises," authentic learning experiences, with no grades, restrictions, coercion, or status, so that the lines between teachers and learners are erased, so that everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher The conversations are often shaped by an undercurrent of conflict as contradictions are explored (Newman, 1991) Bullough and Gitlin (1995) cited the work of Jurgen Habermas (1971,1975) because, they said, they liked his vigorous critique of instrumental reason, the kind that reduced human beings to numbers, the universe to a giant, grinding machine, and education to training Habermas, they said, moved beyond critique and recognized the innate ability and desire of humans to relate to one another through language as a means for generating a social and political ideal worth striving for communication without domination With this notion in mind, they sharpened their awareness of the negative influence of the assumptions of training on students, began to explore ways to minimize domination through dialogue, and began to think of learning to teach in terms of engaging students in the critical and communal study of their own thinking and practice and of linking this study to public theories about institutional power and education

Rudney and Guillaume (1990) suggested that teacher collaboration is an important component in supporting reflective thinking as teachers share their ideas and extend them by listening to others This collaboration may be in written format For example, many teacher education programs emphasize reflection on practice by

asking student teachers to write reflective journals about their teaching, but these kinds of solitary "reflection on action" activities can become routinized and stale. Thoughtful conversation with a peer has the potential to serve as a tool of inquiry and to revitalize practice (Clark, Moss, Goering, Herter, Lamar, Leonard, Robbins, Russell, Templin, & Wascha, 1996, Ward & Darling, 1996). An added benefit can be the value of reflection on reflection--looking back on past journal entries, student teachers recognized changes in attitude and other signs of growth. Other researchers have described the value of collective reflection, so that the sharing of stories and insights will help others reflect upon and possibly reconstruct their own teaching and conception of teaching (Nias, 1987, Hollingsworth, 1992, Hunsaker & Johnston, 1992, Ayers & Shubert, 1994, Ladson-Billings, 1995, Rosean & Gere, 1996). Peterson & Phelps (1990) suggested a supervisory technique to promote reflection, where a type of dialogue journal is used, not as simply unstructured two-way communication, but where the supervisor reads and responds to the student journal entries with a series of written, individualized questions based on the particular teaching context. Peterson and Phelps asserted that writing responses to the supervisor's questions helps the pre-service teacher engage in higher levels of analysis. This type of written dialogue provides support for development of reflective thinking through on-going collaboration with a knowledgeable other.

Role of Narratives of Experience and of Case Methods in Teacher Education

Narratives of experience, or using storytelling as a way of describing experiences with children, supports preservice teachers' observations and interpretations of their experiences with children (Moore & Lalik, 1992). Case

methods have been implemented as one effective way to prepare teachers to deal with the complexities of the classroom (Grossman & Shulman, 1994). By providing a specific instance of “the messy world of actual practice” (p. 14), cases offer opportunities for discussion and analysis that support integration of knowledge about areas of teaching such as classroom management, school context, student diversity, and the ethics of teaching. In addition to studying cases of other peoples’ teaching, prospective teachers can write cases of their own teaching. Writing about their initial teaching experiences in narrative form can serve as a vehicle for reflection and provide an opportunity to select and analyze a particular episode of one’s teaching. The knowledge and practical knowledge that teachers act upon is less likely to be principles derived from research than to be composed of a repertoire of cases, of what happened in specific classes with specific children. Therefore, using case methods in preservice teacher education classes can initiate beginning teachers into explicit pedagogical reasoning (Grossman & Shulman, 1994, Metcalf & Kahlich, 1998).

Kasten and Ferraro (1995) found that the process of constructing case studies in collaboration with one another helped interns find additional insight and strategies for problem solving in a variety of situations in meeting individual needs of students. Although the individual case studies focused on differing grade levels and learning environments, the interns were able to transfer shared learnings to their own experiences and expand their repertoire for accommodating individual special needs. The structured opportunities for reflection assisted the interns in remaining focused and being able to engage in shared dialogues and collegial problem-solving

even during periods of intense stress. The interns were able to establish their own system of support and encouragement, seeing each other as a valuable resource. They were able to construct together their understanding of the role of teacher and, in fact, became a community of learners. The cases that the preservice teachers in my study wrote during the semester they tutored an individual child were supportive of this type of reasoning.

CHAPTER THREE

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

The description of the research study begins with an explanation of the methodological approaches utilized. The context of the study will be framed by an explanation of the university where the research was conducted and of my dual roles as both instructor for the course and researcher for the study. A brief description of the course in which the data were collected is given, followed by a brief description of the eleven preservice teachers who were participants, an explanation of the procedures for informed consent, and a description of the children they were tutoring. In the following section, the data sources will be described and data collection and analysis will be explained. In the final section, the social context of the study will be framed by an explanation of the procedures in the course. Then, a more detailed description of the preservice teachers who were participants will serve as an introduction to the eleven people whose interactions in the course will become exemplars of the findings of the study. As the last piece of the social context, the literacy frameworks and activities are described.

Methodology

The study was a grounded theory participant-observer study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), situated in phenomenological and social interactionist theories. Bogdan and Biklin (1992) explain these theories as compatible approaches. Researchers in the phenomenological mode attempt to understand the meaning of

events and interactions to ordinary people in particular circumstances. Symbolic interactionists accept the basic assumption that human experience is mediated by interpretation, which is not an individual act but is completed through interactions with others. From these perspectives, therefore, the definition of self is constructed through interactions with others (Bogdan & Biklin, 1992)

This study was an examination of the process of development over one semester early in the preservice teachers' careers. Wideen et al (p. 148) explained that "the process of change may be very subtle and evident only through a detailed interpretive analysis of individual writing and interviews. Comparisons using statistical techniques often mask such effects." The design of the study, therefore, is that of interpretive analysis and is closely aligned with a Vygotskian approach where the method is described as "experimental-developmental in the sense that it artificially provokes or creates a process of psychological development" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 63). This approach is a type of dynamic analysis, focusing on process analysis. The basic task of research becomes "a reconstruction of each stage in the development of the process. the process must be turned back to its initial stages" (p. 63)

Context

University Context

The research was conducted at a state-supported four-year liberal arts university in the southwest part of the United States. The seventy-five acre campus of the university is situated in a small city, located approximately fifty miles from the major metropolitan area of the state. The university has approximately 1,500

students, and the education division is the largest division on campus. A large number of students are commuters, and non-traditional age students are the majority among education majors.

The university utilizes a trimester system, so that the yearly calendar is divided into 15-week sessions. The summer trimester includes a five-week independent study term, and a ten-week summer term, during which this study was conducted. General education courses at the university are part of an Interdisciplinary Studies sequence, a team-taught program which allows the student an opportunity to enrich his or her major field through creative comparison of the various disciplines. General education courses extend throughout the four-year degree program and are designed to complement and enrich the students' professional preparation. The theoretical framework of the teacher education program at the university focuses on the role of liberal arts and of interdisciplinary studies in the process of becoming an accomplished teacher. All education students complete a required core of professional education courses, as well as a required group of courses for their chosen specialty area. The elementary education and early childhood education programs include a series of literacy methods courses, including language arts, literature for young people, and three literacy methods courses, Foundations of Literacy Instruction, Materials and Methods for Literacy Instruction, and Assessment and Instruction of Literacy. The first two literacy courses, along with the language arts and children's literature course, are designed to help the preservice teachers understand a broad view of various frameworks and theoretical perspectives about literacy and to help the prospective teachers develop

an understanding of a wide range of instructional strategies and materials

My Dual Roles as Researcher and Instructor

I have been a full-time member of the university's faculty in the division of education for the past five years, and I was both the researcher and the instructor for the course in which the study was completed. The study was, therefore, squarely situated "in my own backyard" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), that is, situated in my own university classroom. The perceptions that I brought into the university classroom were influenced by my own professional experiences, including my roles as a regular classroom teacher and as a reading specialist in a Title I program in the public schools, as a private tutor in literacy, and as an adjunct instructor and graduate teaching assistant in a parallel course at the comprehensive research university where my graduate work was being done

Course Context

This study was conducted during one semester of the final capstone course, *Assessment and Instruction of Literacy*. I was the instructor for the course at the time that the study was conducted. This course addresses a broad spectrum of assessment strategies, with a focus on assessment as a process of inquiry and reflection, based on observations of children's participation in literacy instructional experiences. The course provides an opportunity for the preservice teachers to expand and apply their understandings of instructional strategies as they engage in one-on-one literacy tutoring with an individual elementary child over the course of the semester. This course is typically taken the semester prior to student teaching.

This study focused on one semester of the students' professional education

experience, but numerous additional data sources were collected and maintained as part of a longitudinal study that will follow these students into their student teaching experience and ultimately into their initial classroom teaching experiences as first, second, and third year teachers

Participants and Informed Consent

The participants in the course were eleven undergraduate education students enrolled in a summer semester. Pseudonyms have been used for all participants. All of the participants had previously been students in my courses. They were all aware of my doctoral program, because, in my previous courses, I had included conversations about my research interests and about my progress through my coursework, general exams, and prospectus development and defense.

An explanation of the research study was part of the first and second class sessions. The explanation included the points that all of the data would come from required activities of the class and that no additional time beyond course requirements would be necessary for participants. The interview process was explained, and the course calendar was adjusted to exchange three hours of class sessions for approximately three hours of individual conferences. The informed consent forms were explained, with emphasis on the fact that although all interviews and activities were course requirements, the students were free to choose not to be participants in the research and to decline to have the data from their course participation included in the data sources for the research, without penalty to their course grades.

All eleven members of the class agreed to be participants. Six of the

students were elementary education majors, three were early childhood majors, and two were pursuing dual certification in elementary and early childhood. Two students held previous bachelor's degrees in unrelated fields, one held two Associates of Arts degrees including liberal studies and early childhood, and one described herself as the first female in her family to ever attend college. Ten of the participants were females, and one was male. One was African American, one was Native American, and the rest were Caucasian. Three (including the Caucasian male, the African American female, and one Caucasian female) had military experience. Two were traditional-age college students, and the rest were non-traditional age. Nine of the students were parents, and two were grandparents. All of the students reported some previous experiences with children, although their experiences varied widely. Due to scheduling difficulties and personal circumstances, two of the students had been allowed to do their student teaching prior to taking this course.

Children Who Were Tutored by the Participants

An important component of the course was one-on-one literacy tutoring of a specific elementary child for two sessions each week. The tutoring sessions are described in more detail in the section of this report that deals with procedures. Children included in the tutoring sessions ranged in age from having completed kindergarten to having completed sixth grade. They had been enrolled on a voluntary basis by their parents, with no pre-assessments being done of the children's literacy development. One of the children withdrew from the tutoring sessions halfway through the course due to family difficulties that made

transportation to the sessions impossible. This child was replaced with an older sibling of one of the other children. Because it was so late in the semester, we had to find a reliable replacement very quickly. The parent of this child had asked to have him included if anyone dropped out, and the attendance of the younger sibling had been reliable. Pseudonyms have been used for all the children.

Prior to the first tutoring session, I explained to the tutors that I would request informed consent forms from the parents and the children. As part of the procedures at the beginning of the first session, the parents completed information about their child at a sign-in table in the hallway. Along with the usual information, the parents received a brief explanation of my dissertation study and the informed consent form, which they were asked to complete if they were willing for their child's work to be analyzed as part of the tutor's participation in the research. I was available to answer any questions they might have. After the parents responded to the informed consent forms, the tutors explained the child consent form to their individual student during an early tutoring session and obtained the signature if the child agreed for their work to be analyzed by their tutors. All parents and all children agreed to participate and signed the forms.

Procedures

The preservice teachers tutored a specific elementary child in one-hour sessions, two times each week, and participated in class activities three hours per week. They had sixteen sessions with the child, including a student-parent-teacher three-way conference in the final session. The tutoring was done on campus at the university, with each tutor and student sharing a table in a university classroom.

where other tutor-child pairs were also completing tutoring sessions. Each tutor was responsible for planning literacy activities specific to the child's literacy understandings and interests, providing all needed texts and materials, implementing the literacy activities, and completing authentic assessments of the child's literacy development, based on observations of the child's interactions during the instructional activities. All of the tutoring sessions were audiotaped by the tutors.

The tutors were placed in peer collaborative groups based on the age of the child they were tutoring. Peer collaborative sessions were held throughout the semester. In these sessions, the tutors worked on specific assignments or engaged in open-ended conversations about the tutoring sessions and the children.

Following each tutoring session, the preservice teachers wrote a reflective journal entry describing in detail the child's response to the activities during the tutoring session, decision-making points that the tutor recognized as potentially helpful in planning further sessions, and self-assessment comments about their own teaching. I read and responded to the reflective journal entries in an on-going manner throughout the course.

The information from the tutoring sessions and the interpretation of that information by the tutor was used to write a comprehensive tutoring report of the child's literacy development. The writing of the tutoring report was done as part of an on-going process of assessment throughout the semester. The introductory section, introducing the child and describing their interests, hobbies, family, etc., was started as part of a take-home mid-term activity and expanded throughout the semester as the tutor learned more about the child. As an in-class mid-term activity,

the tutors worked in their peer groups to develop rubrics for analyzing the children's development as readers and as writers. The groups worked together to analyze differences among the children in the groups and the ways that the differences might influence the criteria that would be appropriate for the rubrics. Tutors were free to adapt their group's rubric to more clearly evaluate their own student if necessary. For example, Valerie's student was younger than any other child in the group, having completed only kindergarten. Therefore, her rubric assessed early emergent reader criteria based on concepts such as awareness of directionality, word boundaries, letter recognition, etc., that were not a primary concern for the tutors of the children who had already completed first grade. Then each tutor used the rubrics and analysis of his or her own notes about the student to write sections of the tutoring report that described the child's literacy development as a reader and as a writer. Each section was continually expanded throughout the semester as new information was gathered from the on-going tutoring experience. Descriptions from the tutor's reflections written after each tutoring session became supportive evidence for their hypotheses about the child, as they tried to support each statement that they made about the children with stories from the tutoring sessions, or became the basis for revisions in hypotheses and for descriptions of the child's emerging literacy development. Near the end of the semester, the tutors wrote a summary and recommendation section, explaining strategies that had been helpful to the child during the sessions and suggesting activities that the tutor expected would be appropriate but that they had simply run out of time to implement. As each segment was completed, the tutors did peer conferences to evaluate and expand their

understandings of and descriptions of the child's literacy understandings. I also read and responded to each segment. After this extended process-oriented assessment of the child's literacy development, a final tutoring report was constructed, and copies of the report were provided for the child's parent and the child's school at the end of the semester.

Course activities were structured to provide support for the preservice teachers' emerging perceptions about themselves as literacy teachers and their developing beliefs about literacy instruction. Some course assignments were designed to support the preservice teachers' awareness of their own emerging beliefs about appropriate literacy assessment and instruction, the influence of their literacy histories, and their self-efficacy as a teacher, both in general and in the given context of individual tutoring over the course of a semester. These activities included writing a literacy autobiography and responding to occasional open-ended prompts for quick-writes during class sessions or as take-home assignments, frequently in narrative form. All data were collected from all of the eleven students.

Data Sources

Data sources, as described in detail below, included the preservice teachers' responses to two types of pre-and-post survey instruments, information about the tutoring sessions (their lesson plans and reflective journal entries, audiotapes of each tutoring session, and retrospective think-alouds about one videotaped tutoring session), student-generated writing (their literacy autobiographies, an introduction of self paragraph, and their responses to varied types of writing prompts), peer-collaborative information (peer collaborative group sessions and activities, and peer

interviews based on student-generated questions), interview data (three individual interviews with me and one with an outside interviewer), and my field notes about class discussions and my observations throughout the course. Triangulation was provided by comparing the multiple sources of data.

Survey Instruments

All students completed two initial questionnaires and two parallel final questionnaires. The survey instruments are included in the appendices of this report. One survey, modified from the Literacy Orientation Survey (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1997, 1998), was based on their beliefs about literacy instruction and their expectations about how they would implement instruction in their own teaching. The other set, modified from the Self Efficacy Survey (Chester & Beaudine, 1996), asked about their self-efficacy in regard to their own teaching. The selected instruments are self-report activities, which inherently depend on such factors as truthfulness and diligence during completion of the questions. In order to help address these weaknesses, I explained the purpose of the surveys as helping the preservice teachers understand themselves as teachers. The on-going mentoring relationship that I had attempted to establish with the participants over two previous courses also helped to alleviate some of the weaknesses of the self-report data, due to levels of trust and rapport that had been established with most students.

I stressed to the students that the survey responses should be based on their personal beliefs, and that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers. To encourage the students to give honest responses, the students did not place their names on the survey instruments. Instead, the instruments were identified with only a personal

identification number selected by each student. So that the numbers would be completely unknown to me, the students did not select their own social security number or phone number. They wrote their number in their own notebooks for the course so they could remember them and use the same number on all of the surveys they completed. I assured them that I would not identify their individual surveys until after the course was completed and grades were posted. The students listed their personal numbers on a roster, which was then placed in a sealed envelope and locked in another faculty member's office until the course was completed. This was a precaution to ensure that the surveys could be identified if the students misplaced or forgot their own numbers.

One of the survey instruments was a modification of the Literacy Orientation Survey (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1997, 1998). The original Literacy Orientation Survey is a 30-question instrument consisting of 15 statements about teacher beliefs and 15 statements about teacher practices developed around the principles of constructivism. At the beginning of the semester, students responded only to modified questions from the Literacy Orientation Survey which related to their "beliefs" about literacy instruction, because they had not done extended teaching in an appropriate format to discuss their "practices." At the end of the semester, they responded to questions about both beliefs and practices, with the questions in the original survey modified to reflect the one-on-one tutoring format of the course (i.e., instead of responding to a question such as "in your class..." they responded to a question such as "during your tutoring sessions...").

The second survey instrument was adapted from the Self-Efficacy Survey

(Chester & Beaudin, 1996) Items concerned perceptions of personal ability and of teachers' ability in general to influence the growth of students and to influence factors that lie outside the classroom

Tutoring Session Information

Lesson Plans, Reflective Journal Entries, and Tutoring Reports

The tutors prepared a lesson plan prior to each tutoring session and wrote a reflective analysis following each session. Tutors completed mid-term, take-home reflective writing assignments based on the child they were tutoring, assessment projects about the child's reading, and assessment projects about the child's writing. The tutors wrote a tutoring report that was given to the child's parents and to the child's school. They also completed several take-home reflective questions, which included some self-assessment questions.

Taped Documentation of Individual Tutoring Sessions

Each tutor audiotaped every tutoring session. I provided the tapes, and the students knew that I would keep the tapes at the end of the course. One tutoring session for each tutor was videotaped for a retrospective think-aloud, as explained in the third interview session description below.

Analysis of Student-Selected Focus Session

Approximately midway through the course, the students were asked to select one of their tutoring sessions that had been completed. They were asked to listen to the tape of that particular session and to write reflective comments about their own teaching and about their student as they listened. They submitted these notes, along with the tape, lesson plan, writing samples, and original reflection about the session.

Student-Generated Writing

Literacy Autobiographies

Each student was asked to write a "literacy autobiography" of his/her own life, focusing on experiences as "a literate individual." The students were encouraged to include specific "stories" from their childhood, their school experiences, their personal lives, and their university experiences. The day that they submitted their literacy autobiographies, they completed a quick-write in class, describing the process of completing the assignment.

Self-Introductory Paragraphs

These paragraphs were written to provide information about the students' selection of ways of representing themselves. I was acquainted with the students from having them in previous classes, so in order to avoid having the assignment feel like a contrived task, I asked each student to write a paragraph introducing himself or herself to an unknown person, such as someone who might help with data analysis. The tutors' selection of elements to include in the paragraph was the primary data from this activity, but I also kept field notes about the questions they asked and the comments they made.

Reflective Writing Assignments

In addition to the reflective journal entries, described in the previous section, that the tutors wrote describing each tutoring session, the students completed numerous quick-writes and learning logs during class throughout the semester. These were written during class in response to course readings or to prompts that were given. Some of the prompts were specific, while others were more open-

ended, such as simply asking the students to write about their tutoring sessions, their reaction to course activities, or questions or concerns they might want to convey

At the end of the course, each student completed individual take-home reflective writing assignments. The assignments included, for example, describing a “good” teacher, describing their own “ideal teaching position,” writing a metaphor for school, and completing a “self-report card” on themselves as a teacher (Anthony, Johnson, Mickelson, & Preece, 1991)

Peer Interaction Components

Peer Collaborative Group Sessions

Throughout the semester, the preservice teachers had an opportunity to participate in several collaborative conversations, a type of “enterprise” (Smith, 1988), in a small group format with peers in the class (Hollingsworth, 1992). These course activities supported the preservice teachers in a process of engaging in reflective discourse about the tutoring session, in order to create a collaborative interpretation (Wideen et al., 1998) of the observations recorded by the tutor. These sessions provided an opportunity for extended reflexive discourse and writing in an interpretive zone (Wasser & Bresler, 1996), where researchers' individual viewpoints and experiences come together in a process of joint inquiry, piecing together observations and interpretations in the manner of a “bricoleur,” a researcher in the process of constructing a “bricolage” or collage-like image that portrays both the observations and the interpretations of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

The students were placed in three collaborative groups, based on the ages of the children they were tutoring. Two groups had four students and one group had

three. The tutor for the child who withdrew from the tutoring sessions changed from the lowest age group (four members) to the highest age group (originally three members) when she started working with her new student.

The collaboration time-periods in the class provided opportunities for open-ended discussions of the children's literacy development, responses to activities in the tutoring sessions, inquiry points that the preservice teachers were considering, resources the tutors used for their inquiries, and the process of constructing the case report about the child that they had tutored. In addition, the collaborative groups were occasionally provided with prompts during a portion of the discussion time.

The groups completed four tape-recorded conversation sessions. The first two were very open-ended. The tutors were simply asked to talk about their students, their tutoring sessions, their planning, etc. The third included those same topics, but in addition the tutors were given copies of the state's curriculum objectives for reading and for language arts and asked to think about their students in relation to these objectives. The fourth included an opportunity for general discussion of the children and the sessions, but the tutors were also asked to talk specifically about the decisions and decision-making processes they had used throughout the semester.

Peer Evaluation of Working Portfolio

During one class period, the students selected a partner and exchanged their working portfolios of lesson plans, writing samples, reflections, etc. They each made notes and wrote comments to their partner as they read through the working portfolio. The notes were written in a format that these students have used

repeatedly in my previous literacy methods courses as they have responded to peer projects and presentations. In previous courses, I have explained the process of peer feedback in a parallel way to a format that elementary children can utilize when they are engaged in peer editing or in responding to pieces of writing that other students have done. In this process, the peers learn to look for positive points, which they describe as "compliments." They also learn to look for ways to expand or refine the writing, and they describe these points as "questions." During the peer evaluation of teaching portfolios, the students divided a piece of paper into two columns headed "compliments" and "questions", then jotted comments in each column throughout the process of reading the working portfolio. At the end of the class period, they completed a quick-write describing their reaction to the process.

Student-Generated Interview Questions, Peer Interviews, and Reflections

Following a discussion in class about the types of questions that might be part of interviews for teaching positions, the students were interested in an assignment to pretend that they were in charge of interviews of prospective teachers and to write at least five interview questions that they thought would be the important things to know about a prospective teacher. They wrote the questions as a take-home assignment and submitted them to me one week later.

They then selected a partner among their classmates and met outside of class time to interview each other. They tape-recorded these sessions. Most groups met in pairs and asked their own questions and responded to the questions written by the same classmate. One group included three students. Each of these students asked the questions he or she had written to one classmate and responded to the questions

written by the other student in this group. The day that they submitted the tapes of the interviews, they completed a quick-write in class, describing their reaction to the process of writing the interview questions and of conducting the peer interviews, from the perspective of the interviewer and of the person who was being interviewed. During the second individual conference with me, each student responded to his or her own questions.

Interviews

Individual Conferences/Interviews with Researcher

All preservice teachers participated in three individual conferences with me. Two of those interviews were approximately thirty to forty-five minutes long, and one lasted about an hour and fifteen minutes. The conference conversations may be viewed as participant construct interviews (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). While questions were pre-planned, the way that they were implemented in the interview was shaped in response to the conversation that the preservice teacher initiated. The conferences focused on the preservice teachers' process of inquiry as they planned and implemented the literacy activities with the children, including what decision-making points they recognized and what they were learning about themselves as teachers. In addition, they were asked to comment on any changes they perceived in their own literacy orientation and self-efficacy as a teacher during the semester, to discuss resources they had used, and to add any other comments they might have had about the structure of the course and about their learning as they participated in the course. The tutors brought their teaching portfolios of lesson plans, reflections, children's writing samples, etc. to each interview, and they were aware that I would

let them open the conference by talking about their student

During the first interview, early in the semester, the planned semi-structured interview questions were embedded into the conference conversation if the topics were not addressed by the students during the discussion. Interview questions included: (1) Tell me about your tutoring sessions. (2) What are you learning about your student? (3) What are you learning about yourself as a teacher? (4) What are your previous experiences with children? (5) What goals would you set for yourself in this class? (6) What questions do you have, or what else would you like to talk about?

The second interview, conducted approximately mid-way through the semester, included the following prompts: (1) Talk about your tutoring sessions. (2) Describe in detail the process you are using for planning your tutoring sessions. (3) What resources are you using as you plan? (4) What changes are you making during the tutoring sessions? (5) Talk about the peer collaborative sessions. (6) Do you have any questions or other things you would like to talk about? In addition, the preservice teachers responded to their own peer interview questions.

Retrospective Think-Alouds about Video-Taped Sessions

A third conference was conducted near the end of the semester. It provided an open-ended opportunity for the students to make comments or ask questions about the course, their tutoring, or any other topics that they wanted to address. The semi-structured conversation included the prompts: (1) Talk about your tutoring sessions. (2) Talk about your expectations and goals and your questions and concerns about becoming a teacher. (3) What parts of the course have you found

helpful? (4) What suggestions can you give to help make the experience you have had in this class better?

This session also included a retrospective think-aloud (Pailliotet, 1997) about their tutoring session which had been video-taped. In order to lessen the influence of the video-taping, the camera was set up in a corner of the classroom and arranged to capture two or three sessions in progress. The tutors were aware of the day that their session was being video-taped, but the taping was not pointed out to the children. The tutors knew that the purpose of the videotaping was for them to watch during our third individual conference while they completed a retrospective think aloud with me. During the interview, the tutor's own audio-tapes of the session provided the audio for the retrospective analysis, while the tutor watched the video-tape and talked about the session. As they talked, I asked unstructured interview questions, focusing on the decisions they made during the tutoring sessions and their rationale for any changes or adaptations they may have made.

Exit Interview with Outside Interviewer

An exit interview of approximately twenty minutes was held during finals week. It was conducted by a graduate of the university's teacher education program who is currently teaching in the local public school. This interviewer was not personally acquainted with the students, but she was familiar with the structure of the teacher education program and of the particular course in which the study was conducted. The students had completed their final surveys, and the interviewer asked them to elaborate on their answers to the surveys. The interviewer also asked them to talk about the processes involved during the course, and she invited them to

make any other comments they would like to make. The students were informed that I would not listen to the tapes of these conferences until after the course was completed and grades had been posted.

Other Conversations and Notes

Throughout the course and the process of data analysis, I kept a field-note journal of my observations, class discussions, student comments and questions, and other thoughts and ideas. Frequently throughout the course, students came into my office to talk with me in informal conversations. A few of these were tape-recorded, and others were noted in my observation journal.

Data Collection and Analysis

At the time that I was teaching the course and simultaneously collecting the data, I acknowledged tensions between my dual roles as instructor and as researcher. At every point in time, I tried to consciously think about when I should intervene and direct, and when I should simply observe and analyze the preservice teachers' decisions. This type of tension is always present in a teaching model that encourages students to construct their own ideas about appropriate teaching, especially in this particular course. My awareness of the challenges in this type of facilitator/teacher role was heightened, however, as I added the lens of researcher to my thinking process.

Data analysis began, although not in a formal way, during the time that the course was progressing and data were still being collected. The informal analysis began as I was reading and responding to students' reflective logs, meeting with students for interviews, keeping copies of student-generated artifacts, and trying to

maintain the balance between instructor and researcher--trying to consciously evaluate my own role. I kept a journal of my own thinking throughout the process

This stage of data collection and analysis was adapted in response to my perceptions of the students. Listening to the tapes of the peer group sessions and of the first interview and developing some preliminary hypotheses helped me decide on types of reflective assignments that might help to clarify some of the students' ideas that did not seem to be articulated in the data sources to that point. My reflections about the interactions in the course shaped many of the activities that we did in class and the assignments that I gave to the students. Reflective writing assignments were developed about topics that were of concern to the students or about issues of concern to me as a researcher that were not being elaborated in their reflections or in the initial interview

The second interview with each student was structured somewhat around some common questions, but was also quite open-ended as I invited them to simply talk about their tutoring. In addition, I asked the students to respond to the peer interview questions that they had personally written

The third interview was a retrospective think-aloud about one of the tutoring sessions, which had been video taped. The primary focus of this interview was for the tutor to watch the videotape and describe his or her decisions during the particular tutoring session. Again, they had an open-ended opportunity to talk about any other topics that they wanted to discuss

Transcribing the tapes and organizing the data consumed several months. I kept a journal of field notes and ideas as I transcribed. Finally, the data were

assembled, and data analysis began with the survey results. The next step was to read interview transcripts and reflective journal entries, trying to be aware of the themes that surfaced again and again. It was extremely difficult at this point in the data analysis not to jump to conclusions, or not to make generalizations based on my overall impressions and knowledge of the students.

As a part of the analysis process, I found important support in dialogues of my own. I spent time in conversations with the person who had conducted the exit interviews with the students and with other colleagues. I found that, just like the preservice teachers, I valued and needed interactions with others who could help me clarify my own questions and interpretations.

Because of the interactions in the study, capturing the complexity by simply looking at the data for each individual student did not seem possible. Instead, the entire group became the primary unit of analysis. The next step was to develop ways to analyze and describe how characteristics of individual students were similar or diverse, and to analyze ways that smaller groups of students had reacted to the components of the research.

More formal data analysis started with the preservice teachers' written reflections of their individual tutoring sessions. I selected a sample of four students, deliberately choosing a range of students who represented diverse types of thinking and different levels of confidence, and read through all of their reflective journal entries, including the focus session reflections. The categories of topics that the sample students had included in their reflections became part of a descriptive rubric for analyzing each tutor's portfolio of reflections. Topics were diverse. Some dealt

with affective issues, either on the part of the child or on the part of the tutor. Many dealt with descriptions of the child's literacy behaviors and with descriptions of instructional activities that had been implemented. Some dealt with the tutors' reflections about the literacy interactions, describing strategies or activities that had worked well, discussing materials that had been utilized, making connections to previous sessions, or setting goals for future instruction. Many of the tutors included self-evaluative comments. Some of the comments described their decisions during the tutoring sessions, and other comments analyzed their reflections following the sessions and in preparation for the instruction that was to come.

Then I went back through the sample students' written reflections, coded idea units for the rubric in the margins of the reflections, and transferred a tally of the units onto a rubric sheet for each individual student. The rubric had room for notes about strategies and skills taught, types of materials used, and other comments. As I coded, I constructed lists of comments that seemed to be exemplars of each type of idea unit.

After two students' reflections had been coded, the coding categories were expanded slightly. For example, the original category of "decoding" was clarified to describe the processes of identifying specific words in text, and an additional category of "oral reading" was used to describe issues including fluency or inflection. In the original rubric, the issue of spelling had been coded as one of the conventions of writing. However, the students' reflections had consistently addressed spelling as a separate issue, so the rubric was expanded so spelling could

be analyzed apart from such issues as sentence structure, capitalization, and punctuation. The first sets of reflections were recoded to align with the new categories. An added space for "other" provided a way to document comments that did not seem to fit into any of the general categories.

The arrays of topics were organized into tentative coding categories, and the four students' reflections were reread and coded with the tentative coding categories. The reflections of the remaining seven students were then read and coded. Topics and concerns that had not been mentioned by the original four students were noted, and coding categories were expanded accordingly. The reflections of the original students were reread in search of instances where the new topics had been mentioned.

The coding categories were noted in the margins of the reflection entries, and each instance of a particular code was transferred to individual coding sheets for each preservice teacher. The number of instances of the codes was determined and transferred to a coding summary sheet to display the patterns of topics mentioned by all eleven of the preservice teachers.

Coding categories were grouped into topics, including (1) affective components, (2) descriptions of the child's literacy understandings, (3) implementation components, and (4) evaluative and goal setting components. Subcategories were grouped within each of the overarching topics. The affective components included subcategories of both child affect (interest, engagement in tutoring session, feeling of success, reluctance, etc.) and tutor affect (enjoyment of session, feeling of success, frustration, etc.). Subcategories of the tutors' comments

about their perceptions of the child's literacy understandings included descriptions of varied components of reading (understanding and response to texts used in the sessions, oral fluency, and decoding), varied components of writing (content of ideas expressed in the child's writing, use of conventions, and spelling development), and descriptions of the oral discussions and interactions with the child. Subcategories of implementation components included descriptions of the texts and other materials used in the sessions, explanations of strategies and skills implemented, and descriptions of some of the sources of their ideas. Under the overarching theme of evaluative and goal setting components, subcategories included connections to previous sessions, descriptions of the child's progress or lack thereof, descriptions of what the tutor thought he or she should have done differently, descriptions of what the tutor thought he or she did well, and plans for future tutoring sessions.

Some of the students were quite brief in their comments, while others were very articulate and detailed. Therefore, the simple tally of the number of times that a topic was mentioned was considered, but did not seem to be the only appropriate type of analysis of the tutor's perceptions. In addition, the patterns of emphasis were noted. For example, patterns were evaluated as to whether the tutor consistently focused on one coding category much more than others or whether they described a broader analysis of the tutoring sessions. Affective comments were compared from the perspective of both positive and negative comments about the child's feelings as well as about the tutor's feelings. Self-evaluative comments were also grouped into positive and negative statements and into goals for future sessions.

The next pieces of data that were analyzed were the transcriptions of the peer group collaborative sessions. The transcriptions were read, and comments from each of the tutors were described in a tally sheet with columns for each of the participants in that collaborative group. The comments were noted in categories of (1) descriptions of the child they were tutoring, (2) suggestions to the other tutors, (3) requests for help, (4) evaluative comments of their own teaching, the success of the sessions, and goal-setting, and (5) connections to personal literacy experiences.

Finally, the student-generated pieces of writing, the individual interviews, and the retrospective think-aloud sessions were analyzed for information about the categories described above. In order to develop descriptions of the tutors' personal histories with literacy and the components of their own backgrounds that they considered relevant, individual descriptive summaries were developed for each preservice teacher from their literacy autobiographies, their self-introduction paragraphs, and some of the quick-write paragraphs that they completed throughout the semester. These descriptions were supplemented with their individual comments from the data analysis process of peer group collaborative sessions and interviews. The responses to the surveys were analyzed, along with notes about the comments the preservice teachers made in the exit interview that explained their responses.

From this broad collection of data, analysis proceeded in a cross-case fashion, looking for trends that cut across the individual students. Analysis was done both within each of the individual cases and by variables across the cases as well (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). After all of the data were analyzed and

categorized, I searched for themes that cut across the coding categories and across the multiple data sources. I tried to analyze holistically, as well as based on the bits and pieces of data. This type of holistic analysis moved away from looking at the individuality of the students to a position to consider the particular “discourse community” we had become (Gee, 1990)

Social Context of the Study

Course Components

In this course, the preservice teachers were responsible for both affective and instructional components of literacy tutoring for one specific child over the course of a semester. The tutoring component of the class was the first extended authentic teaching experience for most of the preservice teachers. This setting was selected for the study because it provided the students an opportunity to explore their roles and responsibilities as literacy teachers in a less complex situation than they encounter in field-based experiences where they have to contend with a classroom of children and with contextual issues of the school and of the cooperating teacher.

One of my perceptions, based on my prior teaching experiences, was the importance of a risk-friendly collaborative environment in classrooms, both at the elementary level and at the university level. Therefore, I encouraged the development of personal connections with my university students in this course and in my other teaching roles as well. The university where the research was conducted is small enough for faculty members to become well acquainted with students, since faculty members generally teach each student in several courses and interact with them through campus activities.

Therefore, the relationship in this study was one of co-construction of knowledge. The preservice teachers were developing their own definitions of effective literacy assessment and instruction for their assigned children. At the same time, I was developing my own understandings of the processes that the preservice teachers were using and of more effective ways for me as a university educator to support students as they worked their way through building their own understandings. The process of inquiry that was used and my close interactions with the students added depth to my interpretations of the data by making me more keenly aware of the thought processes and concerns of the preservice teachers. While the reciprocal construction of knowledge created a tension between my dual roles as teacher and as researcher, the influence of the researcher is inherent with the socially-constructed data in research that is based on human interactions (Smagorinsky, 1995). My awareness of the tension between my roles was constant throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

The Preservice Teachers

This discussion will begin by personalizing the demographic information about the students. The similarities and the diversities in the preservice teachers' personal literacy histories will be briefly described as an introduction to the individual students in the group. These introductions are given to serve as a context for the use of individual students' comments as examples of varied points of discussion throughout the remainder of the study. Although other elements were embedded throughout the data sources, the examples have been selected as exemplars of primary themes.

The conversations in the context of this study included ten female voices and one strong male voice. Hannah, Valerie, and Jeanette were early childhood education majors. Tammy, Elaine, Laurie, Molly, Allison, and Steve were elementary education majors. Samantha and Betty were pursuing dual certification in elementary and early childhood education, and due to scheduling difficulties and personal circumstances, they had both been allowed to do their student teaching prior to taking this course.

Two of the students, Samantha and Elaine, were traditional-age college students, in their twenties. Five students were between thirty and forty years of age, and four were over forty. Nine of them were parents, and Jeanette and Hannah were grandparents. The two traditional-age students, while not parents, had extensive experience with younger children. Samantha was the second child in a family of eight children, so she used her younger siblings as her lens of experience, and Elaine used the children for whom she baby-sat regularly as her reference group.

In addition to their family-oriented experiences, all of the tutors described prior experiences with children beyond the requirements in their teacher education coursework. Some of their experiences had come from interactions with children in public school settings. Molly had worked as a teacher assistant. Steve had experience as a substitute teacher and as an instructor in military settings, and he had completed two voluntary paraprofessional experiences of one hundred hours apiece as independent study projects during his teacher education program. Betty and Samantha had worked as tutors through federally funded programs in the public schools. Elaine had been part of a teacher cadet program while she was in high

school. Jeanette had worked with kindergarten children for four years in a school summer program as a high-school student, and she also had experience as a teacher in several day-care centers, including one at a two-year community college.

In addition to Jeanette's experience, other tutors reported that they had played roles in educational settings outside of official jobs in the public schools. Tammy had day-care experience and reported that she had taught in a Montessori School as well. Allison and Laurie both had extensive volunteer experience in the schools where their children were students and had worked with children in youth organizations. Hannah had helped to raise eleven foster children and had hosted international exchange students. Valerie, and several of the others, described working with children in church settings such as Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and church camps.

Some students already had educational backgrounds at the higher education level. Laurie held a previous bachelor's degree in entomology, Betty had a bachelor's degree in psychology, and Jeanette held two associates of arts degrees including liberal studies and early childhood. Hannah was especially determined to complete her degree, since she was the first female in her family to ever attend college.

The students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds had some shared components, but diverse elements were also represented. Jeanette was African American, Betty was Native American, and the rest were Caucasian. Five of the students, Elaine, Valerie, Samantha, Laurie, and Molly had lived most of their lives in the state or in similar types of cultural backgrounds. Most of these students' childhood educational

backgrounds had been in rural schools, and they believed these types of school settings provided a positive educational experience. Betty was Native American, and was a life-long resident of an area where Native Americans were a significant minority. She had set a personal goal of working for her Native American tribe, the Chickasaws, after graduation. Hannah had lived in several surrounding states and enjoyed discussing the different ways of using language in different areas where she had lived. Four students had more diverse backgrounds which they used to shape their understandings of the complexities of teaching, although in personal ways. Jeanette, an African-American, talked extensively about her childhood in the public schools of Chicago and described experiences that contrasted sharply with the rural background of many of her peers. She, along with Steve and Tammy, had served in the military. Allison and her family had lived in several states, and she described her experiences by stating,

My husband is a pipeline inspector and travels quite a bit. One plus is that we get to see many places in the United States. It's always fun to see people's lifestyles in different areas. When my husband was in Montana, he became friends with an elder of a German community. It was interesting to hear about their lifestyle. They had only one telephone in their community and only the elders were allowed to use it. Also, the children spoke German until they were 12 or 13 years old. It was then that they were allowed to learn and speak English. The elder calls my family once a year to see how we are doing. It is amazing how much diversity there is in this country.

Allison and the other students who had more diverse backgrounds frequently shared

their own experiences with the other tutors in the course in a way that helped to extend the visions of their peers.

Literacy Frameworks and Activities

The course experiences gave the students a broad exposure to varied types of literacy assessments. Some experiences gave the preservice teachers an awareness and understanding of formal types of assessments, but the primary model for assessments and for instruction in the course was one of instructional mediation (Dixon-Krauss, 1996). This dynamic framework is based on Vygotskian principles of literacy as a socially mediated activity, so that assessment and instruction are mutually reciprocal processes. The model begins with teacher mediation within literacy activities. This interaction provides evidence so that the teacher can analyze the student's literacy understandings, the influence of the texts and the tasks that are included in the literacy experiences, and the influence of varied types of teacher interactions on the child's responses. This reflective analysis is part of a process of understanding the types of literacy experiences which are appropriate within the child's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The reflective analysis then mediates the teacher's decision-making processes, both during the actual instructional experience with the child and following the tutoring session, in preparation for the literacy experiences that will follow. In this decision-making process, the teacher is expected to analyze both the reader's characteristics and the text's characteristics, to select and apply appropriate literacy strategies, to adjust the activities during the tutoring sessions in response to observations about the child, and to utilize observations of the child's reactions to the strategies implemented as

the basis of future planning. The teacher's understanding of this particular child, and in a larger sense their understanding of teaching, both guide and evolve through the social interaction occurring during the tutoring sessions (Dixon-Krauss, 1996)

The students also read professional materials which introduced the Gradual Release of Responsibility model of instruction by Pearson and Gallagher (1983) and the concept of scaffolded instruction. Both of these concepts are centered on the interactions between teacher and student in an instructional event. They emphasize the importance of reflective evaluation on the part of the teacher in determining interactions with the child which will facilitate learning at the peak of the child's zone of proximal development by providing consistent support, but no more support than the child needs, in order to be successful with the challenges of a literacy experience.

The preservice teachers had the freedom to use the tutoring sessions as opportunities to explore their own beliefs about literacy instruction and to assess their own understandings of literacy strategies. Within the context of the tutoring sessions, they could construct their own ideas about appropriate ways to support the child's literacy development through instruction, and then they could use their observations to assess the child's literacy understandings. They were free to utilize a wide array of instructional strategies that had been presented in the previous literacy methods courses or to develop activities based on their own ideas and resources. My role was to be available to participate in discussions of their reflective process, and to provide encouragement and suggestions when appropriate, in a type of instructional mediation with my students that paralleled the process that the

preservice teachers were learning to use in their own teaching. The preservice teachers sometimes became frustrated that they did not have one specific model of the "right way" to provide instruction for their student or to present their findings about the child, but they began to understand that they could construct their own ideas about appropriate teaching with this child in this context.

Some broad parameters and some broad categories of activities that needed to be done were part of the course requirements. For example, each tutoring session needed to include both reading of connected text and some sort of writing activity where the child composed and transcribed ideas, in whatever ways were appropriate for that child's individual literacy development. For children who were not yet reading conventionally, these activities might appropriately include listening to a teacher read-aloud, participating in choral or echo reading of predictable or repetitive text, engaging in storybook reading behaviors (Sulzby, 1985), and writing in pre-conventional ways such as through pictures, scribbles, pretend cursive, letter-like shapes, random letters, or emerging stages of inventive spelling. Sometime during the semester's tutoring sessions, each child needed to read or hear both narrative and expository text, to read both familiar and unencountered text, and if they were conventional readers, to read silently as well as orally. Some assessment strategies were part of the course readings or were modeled in class. Examples of these included how to do a miscue analysis and running record of a child's oral reading, how to set up a protocol for a child's retelling of a text, how to analyze a child's writing samples for both content and conventions of writing, and how to interpret scores from informal reading inventories, standardized tests, and published

surveys. Some developmental checklists were used as part of the analysis process, including the State Department of Education's curriculum objectives for literacy

However, the way that each tutor integrated those ideas and implemented them with his or her own elementary student was a personal process. In this study, I deliberately tried not to mandate specific instructional activities, but instead encouraged the diversity of the preservice teachers' ideas and of their personal styles of interaction with the children. It was vital for them to complete this decision-making process for themselves, adjusting to the reactions and literacy development of the child they were tutoring. It was also vital for me to be available to facilitate their development by asking questions, scaffolding and supporting their understandings of instructional strategies and of interpretations of assessment data, and simply by participating in the dialogues of the course. Through these interactions, we developed into a community of learners, where we all were ultimately concerned educators, seeking the most effective learning environments for our students--myself, for the university students, just as surely as the preservice teachers were doing for the elementary children

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy and their theoretical beliefs about literacy and literacy practices which formed the bases of their decisions throughout the semester were woven through the multiple data sources. Sometimes these conceptualizations and theoretical positions were expressed openly and explicitly in the preservice teachers' own words in interviews, conversations, and written reflections. At other times, their conceptualizations and theories were more tacit and unarticulated, but embedded nevertheless in the decisions and decision-making processes the preservice teachers used in their instructional role as teacher and in their interactions as professional collaborator in this particular literacy context.

The findings that emerged from the study were complex, and separating the varied themes for this discussion was difficult because the data sources and the data that were collected were often overlapping and reciprocally tied to other pieces of evidence and ways of describing the preservice teachers' conceptualization of self. This very nature of the findings was an integral part of developing the following overarching themes of the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy and of the decisions and decision-making processes that these teachers employed in this particular social context. Please see Appendix A for a table of the three themes and related findings.

(1) Theme One Conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy is multidimensional

(2) Theme Two The decisions and decision-making processes employed were related to the preservice teachers' conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy

(3) Theme Three Changes in conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy were multidirectional and interrelated

Theme One Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy is Multidimensional

One's conceptualization of self is complex and emerging From a sociocultural perspective, conceptualization of self is personal and is constructed differently for each individual It is also constructed differently for each person at different times and under different circumstances (Dixon-Krauss, 1996, Rogoff, 1990, Vygotsky, 1978). From the analysis of the data for this study, five dimensions of the conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy were examined There were multiple topics and sub-topics throughout the data, but these five dimensions seem to be superordinate ways of collapsing the data The dimensions included (1) personal literacy history, (2) sense of self-efficacy, (3) understandings of literacy instruction, (4) ways of thinking about and dealing with complexity, and (5) interactions in the social context.

Each of the dimensions will be introduced, and examples from each dimension will be presented by using evidence provided by several data sources Conceptualization of self was embedded in their literacy autobiographies, in the

self-introductory paragraphs, in the character maps they constructed about themselves, in other written pieces, as well as throughout their reflections about tutoring sessions and their comments in peer collaborative groups and in interviews. In many cases, the dimensions overlap, so the separation of examples did not fall along clean lines.

Dimension: Personal Literacy History

Many of the pieces of evidence about the dimensions of the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy were embedded in the memories they described, both in their literacy autobiographies and in their discussions during peer collaborations or interviews. These types of evidence could logically have been presented as part of their personal literacy histories (Roe & Vukelich, 1998) or as part of one of the other dimensions, because the dimension of personal literacy history was reciprocally tied to all of the other dimensions. The extensive overlap of their personal literacy history with the other dimensions lends credence to the proposition that personal literacy history is a powerful dimension of one's conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy. For example, tutors evaluated their understanding of literacy instruction by making comparisons to their personal knowledge of instruction in public schools, either based on their own experiences when they were children or on experiences they remembered from adult roles in schools. Their ways of thinking about the complexity in the tutoring situation was often tied to their memories of similar learning experiences in their own literacy history. This process of comparisons between their own personal literacy experiences and the tutoring experiences became one way they started to

think reflectively about their own teaching

Each preservice teacher's personal literacy history was a powerful influence on not only his or her views of self, but on views of school as well. The descriptions of the tutors' memories were told in their literacy autobiographies. The tutors also discussed these components in the peer conversations, in interviews, and in student-generated pieces of writing. Whether the memory was pleasant or less positive, the preservice teachers' conceptualization of self as a literacy teacher had been shaped by their memories from school, from home, and from work.

School Memories

The preservice teachers' own experiences in school as children sometimes had been very positive and had influenced their goals to provide similar successes for their students. For example, in one of the peer conversations, Valerie described a seventh-grade English teacher who had encouraged her creative writing talents as someone who had "really changed the things I believed I could do. I hope I can do that for some kid someday." Jeanette talked about a fifth-grade teacher who had taken her aside, scolded her for "being lazy" about doing her work, and challenged her to set high goals. Mrs. Collins told Jeanette that she believed in her, but it was up to Jeanette whether she "turned out to be anything worthwhile or not. I don't know where I would be today if it hadn't been for Mrs. Collins," Jeanette stated, "but I sure don't think I'd be sitting here, getting ready to be a teacher."

For other students, memories of school were less positive. Molly, for example, was one of the strongest students in the group of preservice teachers, but her memories of school were ones of struggling.

I realized that reading was going to be hard for me. My family moved when I was six years old. I had completed kindergarten and first grade in another state, so I was placed in second grade. I really struggled with reading and writing. It was so frustrating to me that my younger sister in kindergarten could easily spell words I tried all week to learn. I will never forget trying to learn to spell umbrella, Indian, and elephant as long as I live. In fact, I don't want to forget that experience. I want to remember this struggle so I will realize that children can struggle, but they can also be successful readers and writers over a period of time.

Luckily for me, I was placed in a remedial reading program that used an auditory approach with tapes of books that I followed along with the print. I do not think that I would ever have learned to read just with phonics. My memories of phonics are vague, but what I remember is that I never could really hear the sound the teacher said was there within the letters. My steps to literacy, although unsure at times, gave me a valuable lesson in that students can learn through different mediums, whether it be visual or auditory. After a year of remedial reading, I was placed back into the regular classroom. During the sixth grade, my class was divided into two classrooms. At this time, schools placed high and low achievers into separate groups. I was sort of straddling the fence. Consequently, I believe being placed in the higher group was the turning point in my life. It was shortly after this time, I realized I was a reader.

For students like Jeanette and Molly, whose experiences in school brought

unpleasant memories, conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy included the responsibility of teaching in a way that would ensure that their future students would have more positive memories than their own

Home Memories

Memories of literacy experiences at home also had a powerful influence on the preservice teachers. Molly said that her family had always been very involved in supporting her literacy development, so she had consulted her mother for help in the process of writing her literacy autobiography. Her mother had reminded her that they had read and reread many books, including Molly's favorite Golden Books and Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes. Her mother's favorite memory, she said, was of Molly looking at the pictures in a book and telling a "story not even close to the printed words." Molly made the connection between her own literacy development and our discussions in class of Sulzby's storybook reading behaviors (Sulzby, 1985). She commented,

Just watching my mother and my three-year-old niece read a book about Big Bird over and over proved to me that children actually can learn to read through repetition and modeling. My mother would read, 'Big Bird plays the tuba' and my niece would read 'and Little Bird plays the piccolo' with the same inflection my mother had read to her so many times before.

Family members had also impacted other preservice teachers' memories of literacy experiences. Samantha, Allison, Jeanette, and Valerie all exchanged stories in one of their meetings. Valerie recalled playing letter games with her grandmother, forming letters with a flexible yardstick. Jeanette added her memory,

I thought of my sisters. We would all be in the bed, reading to each other, and I think that's how we learned to read, really read. Even though my mom would make us read in the evenings, I think where I really learned to read was in bed, reading to each other, and cracking jokes about looking upside-down at the book. It was fun. We all got a chance to read to each other.

Allison summed up the importance of positive experiences when she said, "It's funny how we take things we enjoyed when we were young and use it with kids that we come in contact with today."

Tammy's literacy experiences, she said, had "exclusively been positive ones." She explained that she had developed a love of reading and a passion for seeking out information based on those positive literacy experiences. She described many memories of her mother reading to her as a young child. In acknowledging an interpersonal connection that goes beyond just reading the books, she stated, "I believe a child feels special and loved when a parent takes the time to read to a child." Although both of her parents were avid readers and there were many books in her home, her favorite memories were of riding her bike to the public library. She also enjoyed recalling trips to the mall, where each of the children, as well as her mother, went to separate areas of the bookstore to browse for books. She smiled broadly as she explained, "We appreciated new books as much as new shoes! I believe that if a parent takes their child shopping at the mall, they should at least offer to go into the bookstore in the same manner they would visit the toy store."

Steve's memories of literacy in his home contrasted sharply with Tammy's, but he still considered them to have had a positive influence on his literacy.

development. He contrasted his own childhood home literacy experiences to his perceptions of those of his student. He imitated his parents' stern voices as he commented in one of the peer sessions.

My parents would line me up and have books, you know, and say, you're gonna read'. I just don't think my guy has parents that will do that for him. Now, I think he gets that at Grandma's. Grandma has books. But I think one thing is that there may be a little bit of aliteracy in the family. Not illiteracy. I think they can read. I just think there are not very many books. I think I might have been just like Kevin if I hadn't had my parents marching me around all the time.

Literacy Memories in Other Settings

Literacy experiences in work settings were frequently mentioned in the literacy autobiographies and other data sources. Molly had worked as a teacher's assistant in a public school, Betty and Samantha had tutored elementary children as part of federally-funded programs in the public schools, and Elaine had experience as a teacher cadet while she was in high school. All of these preservice teachers used examples from those work experiences to help them make decisions in the setting of the tutoring experience and to help them make sense of the complexities in course activities. Molly, for example, used her experience in the public schools to analyze her student's reading. "You know, I have been an aide in a third-grade classroom, and... I'm thinking about the texts that they will be reading. She's going to have trouble."

The three students who had military experience used it in very different

ways to help develop their conceptualizations of self and their perceptions of school and learning. Steve's conceptualization of self was clearly tied to his military background and defined his expectations of children. Military metaphors were threaded through many of his reflections and interviews. For example, when his student surprised Steve by his responses to activities in tutoring sessions, Steve described his student by saying, "He dropped a bomb on me." In one written reflection, he wrote, "Young people have always been a part of my life. I trained young soldiers for twenty years, raised a daughter, and coached PeeWee football. Teaching school is a short move from training young soldiers. My transition will be smooth without serious problems, as the similarities between teenage soldiers and fifth graders exceed the differences."

In contrast to Steve, Jeanette's frame of reference was primarily connected to her day-care teaching and parenthood experiences, even after twenty years in the Navy. However, she valued her military experience and travel as potential sources to enrich her teaching. Tammy also differentiated her experience in the military from her experiences with children. She relied more on her day-care teaching experience and her experience as a parent. Her experiences with young children had been much more extensive than her opportunities to work with older students. She was quite distraught when she received her assignment for her tutoring student, who was a sixth-grade boy. She blurted aloud in class, "I want to trade my kid in! I don't know what in the world to do with a big kid! Who wants to trade kids with me? I've always worked with little kids."

Present Roles as Literate Individuals

The preservice teachers' views of themselves as literate individuals in the present also helped to shape their beliefs and actions. Their varied current roles in life related to their conceptualizations of self as literacy teachers. These roles were reflected in many data sources, including their self-introductory paragraphs. Most of the students seemed interested and pleased to be part of the process. I had asked them to provide some information about themselves in case someone who did not know them as well as I did might help me at some point with analyzing the data for this study. They focused to a great extent on biographical data such as their age, information about their families, including children, siblings, and spouses, their work and volunteer experiences with children, and other personal data that they considered relevant. Watching them complete this task provided evidence of the diversity among the preservice teachers, as they approached the task quite differently. Elaine finished her paragraph quickly, then sat looking around the room as her peers diligently worked. Most of the students appeared to be very serious about the assignment, and seemed to want to provide the best information that they could for the research data. Several sat and stared into space for a while before they began to write. Most of them reread their own paragraphs, made edits, and added more information. Steve sat for a long time, staring down toward something in his lap. He had a dictionary, and he was carefully checking his spelling of such words as "sergeant" in his own writing. At the end of the class session, as he handed in his paragraph, he pointed out that he had worked hard on improving his handwriting. He clearly wanted to project the best possible image of himself.

Dimension: Sense of Self-Efficacy

The tutors' sense of self-efficacy was evident in almost all of the data sources. One measure of this dimension came from the tutors' responses at the beginning and at the end of the course to modified questions from the Self-Efficacy Survey (Chester & Beaudine, 1996). The modifications were made to change the prompts to be appropriate for the tutoring sessions instead of for classrooms. The survey instrument is included in Appendix D. Responses to individual items were reverse-coded if necessary before scoring, so that a higher score indicates a more positive sense of self-efficacy.

Table 1
Total Scores on Self-Efficacy Survey (Chester & Beaudine, 1996)

	Betty	Elaine	Hannah	Allison	Jeanette	Laure	Molly	Samantha	Steve	Tammy	Valerie
Initial Score	61	62	63	60	67	60	70	58	72	60	69
Final Score	59	64	67	65	74	57	66	58	79	71	72
Change	-2	+2	+4	+5	+7	-3	-4	0	+7	+11	+3

The responses to these surveys indicated that most of these preservice teachers felt prepared to be successful in interactions with students and parents. The responses indicated a more positive score on self-efficacy at the end of the course than at the beginning for seven of the students, and remained equal or declined only slightly for the others.

The information from these scores was supported by the tutors' comments

throughout the sessions, as most of the students felt hopeful that they were capable of handling the challenges of teaching. However, this was the dimension of the tutors' conceptualization of self that was most likely to fluctuate during the time they were working with the children. Therefore, most of the description of the preservice teachers' sense of self-efficacy is provided later in this report, in the section that relates to the multidirectionality of changes in the conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy.

Another source of information about the preservice teachers' sense of self-efficacy in this setting with this child came from the character maps of themselves. The tutors had placed their own name in the center of a semantic web, put descriptors of themselves on spokes of the web, and added branches with evidence to support each descriptor. The responses were diverse and personal, but for most of the students were tied to their tutoring experiences in the course. Almost all of the descriptions that the students selected were positive ones.

For example, Valerie described herself as "a learner," because she was "finding forgotten strategies, can change during a lesson where I couldn't very easily before. am getting ideas from peers and indirectly from the tutoring sessions." Allison, who had changed students midway in the course when her original student withdrew from the tutoring sessions, described herself as "flexible," based on the changes she had managed during the course. She believed she could "reach every child and will continue to find ways to teach to meet each child's needs." Hannah perceived herself to be "resourceful—can use whatever I have to make something from nothing; like to research ideas, have lots of books, lots of

ideas for activities, and lots of teacher friends ” Samantha believed she was “encouraging—I’ve always been the one on the team to remain constantly in a positive attitude even if we were down by 10 points,” and “humorous—I like to be funny and allow a time for laughter ” Tammy described herself as “strict, concerned, fun, caring, and fair ” Betty believed she was “creative, patient, kind, and knowledgeable ” Molly chose “consistent, fair, firm, challenging to students, caring, thoughtful, reflective, and a hard worker” as her self-descriptions Elaine perceived herself as “outgoing, problem-solving, motivated, organized, effective, time managing, creative, and trustworthy ” Laurie selected “creative, organized, and caring” to describe herself Each of these students tied their evidence closely to the tutoring experiences

Jeanette made very specific, literal connections to the tutoring sessions as she described herself as creative and caring and used as her evidence, “I learned this through some of the reading activities where I used my own thoughts to create an activity such as the Pancake Word Game ” Steve, in contrast to his peers, almost exclusively used evidence from outside of the tutoring sessions to describe himself In personal and unique ways, the students chose representations of themselves and of their sense of self-efficacy in this particular teaching situation

Molly's experiences with children in her third-grade teacher's assistant role had given her a realistic view of her own sense of self-efficacy She said, “Because of my prior experiences in education, I know I will not enter into teaching with the rose-colored glasses of so many young new educators I will not be able to be everything for every child, but I can do my best while they are in my classroom.”

In sharp contrast to Molly's cautious perspective, Steve's sense of self-efficacy was extremely positive. In the peer interview with Tammy, he explained in great detail

I think I am an effective teacher because I've taught before and I have experience, of course not in the public realm. That was all in the military. I'm good with your discovery learner and your hands-on learner. I'm a great technician. That's what I did...so I've got a lot of the same type of the care and the want to that a lot of the public school teachers have. I've got some of the skills. You know, I've got the geography and the history, the science and the math background with chemical core. I put some of that stuff together and of course there was a few things that I was lacking in and that's why I'm here. As far as putting me against other teachers, I think I'm more dedicated than most...I've always been a leader and you know working out there in the schools we've got a lot of teachers that are followers. They're not leaders. They are not great minds. I think of course some of them are. I think that's something that separates the average from the above average. I've always been way above average in everything I've done, including my studies here in the teacher education program. I'm one of those people that, and I'm not only talking about personal goals but I'm talking about the way that I'm going to attack the classroom and the kids. I'm going to be a self-starter, nobody's going to have to tell me what to do. I've got the resources and I'll use all the tools here. I'm going to take the bull by the horns and go out there and pretty much do what I've always

done. I'm certainly unique, maybe in a bothersome way, somewhat a perfectionist. I think I've got a lot of unusual things that set me apart from somebody else.

Interestingly, Samantha and Betty, the two students who had already completed their student teaching before they took the current course out of the usual sequence, still entered the semester with a low sense of self-efficacy. They both expressed nervousness before the first session, and they looked to their peers for support in their assessment and planning, especially in the first few sessions. By the end of the semester, their scores on the self-efficacy survey had remained the same or declined slightly. However, based on comments in their interviews and in class interactions, their self-efficacy seemed to have improved significantly. Samantha stated that one of her personal goals was "to maintain a healthy self-confidence in the ideas or activities I plan and not to lack knowledge, but to learn and grow and be patient with myself." Betty, at her final interview with me, talked extensively about what her plans might be in the immediate future. She was wondering whether she would find a teaching position immediately, and if she did not, she was considering going to graduate school immediately. She asked me about procedures for entering graduate programs, then asked me if I thought she "was graduate school material." For these two students, self-efficacy certainly was not a static component of the conceptualization of self. They were still negotiating their perceived roles as teachers.

Dimension: Understandings of Literacy Instruction

Tutors entered the course having completed previous literacy courses which

had introduced a broad range of instructional strategies and literacy related activities that would be appropriate to utilize in the tutoring sessions with the children. Even with that shared background, there was still a wide range in their understandings of these issues of pedagogy among the tutors. There was also a wide range of beliefs about theoretical perspectives of literacy.

One measure came from responses to the beliefs section of the modified Literacy Orientation Survey (Lenski, Wham & Griffey, 1998) which the tutors had completed at the beginning and end of the semester. The survey instruments are included in Appendix C. The scores on individual items were reverse-coded if necessary in order for a high score on all items to reflect a more holistic orientation toward literacy instruction.

Table 2

Total Scores on Beliefs Items from Modified Literacy Orientation Survey (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998)

	Betty	Elaine	Hannah	Allison	Jeanette	Laure	Molly	Samantha	Steve	Tammy	Valerie
Initial Beliefs	58	65	62	61	59	66	57	64	56	63	66
Final Beliefs	58	64	62	63	59	65	57	61	58	62	64
Change	0	-1	0	+2	0	+1	0	-3	+2	-1	-2

For most of the tutors, responses to the Literacy Orientation Survey at the beginning of the semester had indicated a holistic perspective related to theoretical beliefs about literacy. Changes in the scores related to their beliefs about literacy had been

very slight at the end of the semester. For four students, there had been no change, three had changed to a slightly more holistic perspective, and four had changed to a slightly less holistic view. These responses would indicate that beliefs were relatively stable in this teaching experience.

At the end of the course, the tutors had also completed a section of the same survey related to practices.

Table 3

Total Scores Comparing Beliefs Items and Practices Items from Final Modified

Literacy Orientation Survey (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998)

	Betty	Elaine	Hannah	Allison	Jeanette	Laure	Molly	Samantha	Steve	Lummy	Valerie
Final Beliefs	58	64	62	63	59	65	57	61	58	62	64
Practices	60	56	60	58	61	59	56	56	54	63	56
Difference	2	8	2	5	2	6	1	5	4	1	8

Tutors who had a higher score on practices than on beliefs would have reported that their practices in the tutoring sessions were more holistic than their expressed beliefs about appropriate instruction. In contrast, tutors who had a higher score on beliefs would have reported that their beliefs were more holistic than their practices in this tutoring setting. Comparisons of these scores is reported simply as a difference. Using this measure as evidence, there was more difference between the tutors' expressed beliefs and their reported practices than there had been between their initial and ending beliefs scores. While the beginning and ending beliefs scores had differed by no more than three points, the differences between the beliefs

and practices scores were different by as many as eight points

In the tutoring sessions, the tutors were experimenting with activities that covered a wide spectrum of theoretical positions. In the peer conversations, they brainstormed with their peers about issues of holistic instruction as well as with issues of direct instruction about more discreet pieces of literacy such as phonics, spelling, and sight words. Their discussions frequently centered on their own experiences with a range of types of pedagogy.

Molly's experiences while working as a paraprofessional teacher assistant had given her a chance to observe diverse types of literacy instruction. Her observations had impacted her beliefs and her professional goals, as she explained by saying

I have had the great privilege to work with children in school settings in the capacity of a teacher's aide. Not only did that experience influence my decision on becoming a teacher, but the instructors I worked for indirectly made my decision. Those two instructors were total opposites in their teaching methods, and fortunately for me, I was able to see the effective teacher's classroom first and then experience a year with a different teacher that taught through worksheets and seatwork. Although that year was very trying for me, I would give her the credit for creating this burning desire in me to teach. She allowed me the opportunity to work closely, not only with the students assigned to me, but with other students also. After that school year, I felt a calling to become a teacher. I knew there were better ways to effectively reach students and motivate them to learn, and I wanted to be the

person in charge of the classroom in order to teach this way

Jeanette's beliefs about the importance of understanding theoretical positions related to literacy and of being competent with pedagogical tasks were reflected in her definition of a good teacher as "knowing developmental theory, and renewing her information so she stays up to date." As she described developmental theory, she talked about her beliefs related to emergent assessment in a developmentally appropriate way. She contrasted those beliefs about those kinds of assessment with descriptions of her military experiences, which were most clearly connected to issues of standardized testing. She explained her fear of testing in her first interview

I was in the Navy twenty years, and I worked from the ground up, so when I went in, I was a recruit, so I did all the manual labor type things that recruits do, and I went from being a recruit to a first-class petty officer, where I was over some, and my career moved along, but it got to coming to a stand-still because of the testing. I have a hard time testing, whether I study or not. And I didn't make rank on time, the captain, because in my mind, I just couldn't get it. So I worry about children in schools, and don't want them to worry about tests like I did, really like I still do.

The preservice teachers' developing understandings of literacy instruction were influenced by their varied types of experiences. Concepts such as Jeanette's fear of testing and Molly's recognition of the different types of pedagogical decisions made by the teachers with whom she had worked were compared to different types of assessment strategies being implemented with the children. This

process balanced their past experiences with their on-going experiences in the tutoring sessions.

Dimension: Thinking About Complexity

A central goal of the course was an increasing awareness of reflective thinking on the part of the preservice teachers. The tutors analyzed their beliefs about literacy practice. They thought about ways to support the child's affective engagement with activities that were interesting and enjoyable. They analyzed ways that their activities related to the child's literacy development.

Some of the preservice teachers were thoughtful and reflective, making statements about the child's literacy and making clear connections with evidence from the tutoring sessions and from those observations to the next instructional planning that they would do. Others made statements that were superficial, based more on their own ideas or perceptions or connections to their own childhood experiences.

For instance, the students were tape-recording all of their own tutoring sessions for my data-gathering purposes. At first, only a few of the written reflections indicated that the tutors were utilizing the tapes to support their analysis of the child's literacy, and only Allison had commented on analyzing her own teaching, such as noticing the kind of feedback she was giving to the child. Then I assigned a take-home reflective question, asking the tutors to select the tape of any session that they wanted to choose, and to describe their rationale for selecting that particular session. They were to listen through their tape once and comment on the child, then to listen again and comment on themselves as teachers. They were

encouraged to do their best to think deeply about their teaching, about their interactions with the child, about the decisions they were making, and about their own decision-making processes both during the tutoring session and following it. The reactions to the assignment varied, but more students began to talk about listening to their tapes from that point forward. Some of them said that they began to value the support of hearing their own voices as they talked to the child. Some of them began to analyze their student more carefully.

Dimension: Interactions in the Social Context

The fifth dimension of the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self relates to the social nature of literacy experiences. The conceptualizations of self are socially situated, and the changes in the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self are mediated by the interactions in the community of practice.

Merging Voices

Within our community of practice, the preservice teachers were part of a chorus of merging voices. The interactions with these varied sources of collaboration were an important support network for the decisions they made and became a part of the decision-making processes that they employed.

Dialogue with oneself as a literacy teacher

Some of the ways that each preservice teacher dialogued with himself or herself have been described in the discussion of the previous dimension. The tutor's own reflective thinking processes became a more important voice in the social context of this course because of the number of activities that encouraged and supported reflection.

For example, preservice teachers wrote descriptions of their own "ideal classroom," and these descriptions were frequently tied closely to their own literacy experiences. Several of the preservice teachers had lived on farms or in small communities most of their lives, and all of these teachers talked about preferring to teach in small communities where, as Valerie explained, "You can know the parents and the grandparents, and it is just nice to have that kind of support at school." Jeanette's projected ideal teaching situation was quite different, but was closely aligned with her literate history, as she wanted to move back closer to her family and teach in the Chicago schools she had attended as a child. Betty wanted to teach for her Native American tribal group, the Chickasaws, hoping to provide early childhood education in a tribal school. Steve's wide travel experience prompted him to be confident that he would be happy teaching anywhere, although he preferred larger school systems with more resources than smaller rural schools could provide.

Interaction with child and child's parents

For the preservice teachers, the interactions with the child they were tutoring were a primary source of learning in the social context of the course. Their conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy and the decisions and decision-making processes shaped, and were shaped by, these interactions between tutor and student. These interactions are described in detail in the section of this discussion that relates to the decisions that were made by the preservice teachers.

Interactions with the children's parents were a part of the course that the preservice teachers valued as an important part of their own professional growth. Most of the parents walked into the building with their child each session, so the

tutors had opportunities to greet them, answer questions, and suggest literacy activities that might be done at home. In addition, copies of the tutoring report they had prepared were made for the child's parents and the child's school. Learning to write for this kind of audience was another important interaction for the tutors. At the last tutoring session, the children and their parents were invited to a three-way parent-student-teacher conference. Many of the students were nervous before the meetings with the parents, but all of them felt that the experience had been positive when they discussed the conference the following class period.

Interaction with peers

The tutors expressed the value of their dialogue with their peers, both in the collaborative groups and in other settings inside and out of class time. In the peer groups based on the age of the child they were tutoring, the conversations were frequently brainstorming sessions as the tutors worked to plan activities, find materials, etc. Molly had discovered at the first session that her student liked rocks, so she asked for help. "Does anybody have any books on rocks? I guess I could do Rocks in my Socks." Steve volunteered, "Yeah, I've got that book. I could bring it to you." Laurie suggested, "There's Sylvester and the Magic Pebble." Steve agreed, "Yeah, I remember that one." Laurie continued, "I did a unit on rocks for Reading II. I'll hunt that out." The conversation went on to Hannah's student, and the tutors brainstormed ideas for that child, who was interested in swimming, Barbies, and space. Then Laurie abruptly returned to the ideas for Molly's student, as she suggested "Stone Soup, too. That's a good one. There's some more. I'll think of them." Molly said, "Well, and I have some rocks. I thought I'd bring my rocks."

Laurie added, "I will hunt you that little deal that we got in our geology class. The last two weeks, all we have talked about in that class is rocks."

This conversation is only one example of the types of interactions that happened frequently. Many other examples of peer interactions are included throughout the discussion section. Other opportunities for interactions with their peers included the peer evaluation of their teaching portfolios, the collaborative development of assessment rubrics by the grade-level team, and daily undocumented conversations in the hallways and classrooms.

Interaction with course instructor/researcher

The students had opportunities for dialogue with me in both written and oral forms. As they wrote their reflections about the tutoring sessions, most of the students were open with questions and concerns as well as with successes. Some asked me direct questions, or appealed for help or ideas. I responded to their reflections primarily by noting positive comments such as "good," "neat," "interesting," or "sounds like a good session." I attempted to allow the tutors as much freedom to explore their own ideas as possible. Sometimes I asked questions, designed to scaffold the preservice teachers' analysis of their teaching, in the margins. My typical comments included such questions as "What did this tell you about him/her?" or "So what do you think you need to do now?" Many of the students started the tutoring sessions trying to determine what was "wrong" with the child's reading and writing, by looking for missing pieces in the child's literacy development, so some of my comments tried to scaffold their recognition of the child's strengths as a way of describing their understandings as a point on an

emerging continuum of literacy development. For example, after four sessions, Tammy wrote, "Today's session went well. I have not noticed anything new about his reading to be concerned with." In the margin, I responded, "Great! Have you noticed anything new to celebrate or praise?" Her later comments focused on the amount of time the child spent in trying to complete oral reading of sections of a tradebook that they were using as the core book of their sessions. Tammy commented, "I never realized how long it can take a kid to read! I hope that by the end of the sessions, he will be able to increase the amount of text he reads by himself. He gets tired after about a page of this chapter book, then I help him." I asked in the margin, "How do you help?"

If my scaffolding questions were not sufficient to prompt the tutor to recognize inappropriate activities, I occasionally made more direct statements. For example, when Tammy noted in her reflection, "I hope he can complete about a chapter by himself later. These chapters are only two or three pages long. I will clearly back off of my reading parts with him," my margin notes reminded her of the Gradual Release of Responsibility model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) by saying, "Remember GRR and keep helping as much as he needs, but no more. Maybe balance other forms of reading with the oral reading." In the tutoring sessions, I had only observed Tammy's student doing oral reading of unencountered text, so I reminded her of other forms of reading that we had discussed in class by asking, "Does he read faster, and understand it, when he reads silently? Have you tried choral reading? Sometimes that helps with fluency and gets them through several pages in a hurry."

Some of the students were still clearly trying to match my mind, at least initially, much as they would have done in a more traditional course format. Jeanette, for example, described her process of writing the lesson plans and reflections. In her first interview with me, she stated,

I like to do the lesson plans well in advance, and that way I can think about it and see what I need to change the day before. The reflections are harder, because I'm not sure what you are looking for, what I am supposed to put in, so I'm just kind of putting everything in that happened that day, and so I do the reflections right after so I can remember everything.

In contrast, Elaine persisted in making her own decisions, no matter what I said. For instance, even though her student was a fairly conventional fifth-grade reader, Elaine persisted in using flashcards to teach a phonics lesson in most sessions, without making the connections to real text that had been emphasized repeatedly as an important component of instruction. Another example followed a tutoring session just after the child had returned from camp and was extremely tired. Elaine had discussed with me the idea of talking to the child's mother and telling her to be sure the child was rested for the tutoring sessions. I had encouraged Elaine not to talk to the parent, especially since the problem had not been an on-going one. In her reflection following the next session, however, Elaine wrote to me

I know that you didn't like me talking to her mother. I feel like I did the right thing. The problem was with Mae and going to bed at her house. That to me dealt with the parent. I wanted her mother to be aware of her performance when she didn't get enough sleep the night before. Her mother

was very appreciative about this matter and said it would be taken care of
See--problem solved!

I conducted more interviews with the students in this semester than I had done in other semesters, when I typically had only a brief mid-term conference. The value of these interviews may have been somewhat in the information I gathered from the students' responses to the interview questions, but it seemed to me that the process of interaction was even more important. The students had a chance to talk about their own professional questions and ideas. Following the model they had used in peer critiques earlier during this course and in previous courses, they described the components of their own teaching in which they felt successful. They were all able to "give themselves compliments." Even more importantly, they all seemed to be able to set goals for the child and for themselves. They were able to "ask themselves questions." They had private opportunities to ask me any questions that they wanted to discuss. They explored the process of developing their thinking as teachers of literacy, and of expanding their conceptualizations of themselves as literacy teachers, even though the degree to which they articulated their awareness of these components was as varied as the preservice teachers themselves.

A few of the students' comments indicated that they valued my dialogue. For example, Betty commented that she had enjoyed the one-on-one time for our interviews, because she needed to talk to someone knowledgeable. She commented, "I can always talk to my mother, but that doesn't help as much because she doesn't have a clue what I am talking about." Allison indicated a similar perspective when she commented, "Well, these interviews have been neat because it gives us a chance

to talk, and I like to pick your brain "

During one class session, our conversations turned to the topic of audiotaping the sessions, and I asked the students how the tapes were influencing the sessions. Most tutors responded that they had become accustomed to the tapes and didn't think about them. Several commented that they were glad to have the tapes to support their reflection after the sessions. Most students seemed unconcerned about the data collection process. One exception, however, was Jeanette, who started the second interview by saying, "I'm nervous!" When I asked why, she replied, "I just hope I can say what I want to say good enough. I hope I can figure out how to say what I mean so you can understand "

Samantha indicated that being a participant in the research had been a positive experience for her. In her final reflection log, Samantha wrote,

I am both honored and intrigued to be a part of your Doctorate work. What I am intrigued with is that you are in a position of "making teachers" and that to me is an honorable thing because you touch us and we in turn touch thousands upon thousands of children but it wouldn't have been possible if we weren't equipped with knowledge, ability, and most of all confidence in self. I would like to say 'thank you' for believing in me so that I could believe in myself. It is a powerful thing that I have been shown.

Interaction with outside interviewer

The students participated in exit interviews with an outside interviewer. The interview format was explained in class, and Elaine boldly asked why I needed to have them meet with somebody else. I explained the purpose as allowing them to

clarify their responses to the surveys. I also told them that they would have an opportunity to make whatever comments they wanted to make, and that I would not listen to those tapes until later, after the course was completed and grades had been posted. I encouraged them to use the interviews as a way to say whatever they thought might be helpful in evaluating the course and making changes before the next semester began. This sort of question was one I typically ask my students near the end of every course, so most of the students just nodded. Elaine, however, complained, "If I want to gripe, I'll just come tell you. Or if I don't want to tell you, I'll gripe to Laurie. I always gripe to Laurie." I again encouraged her, as well as the other students, to feel free to say whatever they had to say during the interview. At the end of the interview process, the outside interviewer commented that she thought most of the students had been thoughtful about their descriptions of their responses to the surveys. She noticed that a few of them, especially Jeanette, Betty and Valerie, had appeared nervous. She commented that the experience had probably been good practice for the professional interviews the students would encounter when they pursued teaching positions.

Some students had positive comments about the semester. Tammy, in contrast, was bold in her critiques. She did not understand why she had not received grades on the reflective pieces of writing, which had been done as journal entries rather than as graded activities for the course. She said she thought that if they had to write them, I should grade them. She pointed out one survey question that asked if she had included writing in her tutoring sessions. She had a hard time deciding how to answer that one, she explained. She wanted to choose "always" as her

response, because she remembered the course structure where each tutoring session was expected to include both reading and writing in each session. There had been one session where she had run out of time and couldn't do the writing activity, so, although she had only skipped writing in one session, she couldn't decide how to answer the question.

Interaction with people outside the course

The students also valued dialogue with others outside of the study, including friends, parents, spouses, children, other students and university faculty, and inservice teachers. Laurie consistently included her own children in helping her to plan. She had a son the same age as the student she was tutoring, so she asked her son to recommend books or to test activities before she tried them with her student.

Valerie used her husband as her sounding board as she developed her own ideas, and she frequently punctuated her comments with "I told Glen" as she participated in a conversation. She also used her experience as a parent to help her define her role as a tutor. In one of the peer group conversations, she told her group,

Well, my daughter is learning to read, and I told Glen, you know, I have more fun sitting in the middle of our kids and acting silly with them. It makes me feel younger. It just brings back all those good memories, and it helps when you are tutoring. You just bring in all those little neat things and hope that they will be good ones for him.

In summary, the situated nature of learning had a strong impact on the development of the conceptualizations of self of these preservice teachers. The interactions with self as a part of a reflective process was one component.

Interactions with peers, instructor, outside interviewer, and others outside the course context were also part of the process

The Social Contexts of Their Future Classrooms

The preservice teachers in the study were thinking intently about their conceptualization of self in the social context of the course, but they were at the same time shaping their expectations of themselves in their own future classrooms. Evidence of their understandings of literacy and of pedagogy in those future teaching roles was found in a definition of good teaching that they wrote in a reflective writing assignment, in the topics that they addressed in the questions they wrote for the peer interviews, in the self-report cards they wrote at the end of the course, and in their comments in interviews and peer conversations. They were, predictably, all hopeful that they would become good teachers. Many of them stated in their final reflections that they realized that they were "not there yet," but most expressed a belief that the experiences of the course had been a helpful component of their professional development.

Many of their descriptions of good teaching related to the interpersonal relationships that they hoped to establish with their students. Jeanette and Steve expressed the feelings of several of their peers when they talked about how much they had enjoyed the sessions with their student. Tammy and Valerie both described their new awareness of the need for sensitive teachers because of their experiences of tutoring children whose typical literacy interactions were quite time-consuming.

Many of their descriptions of ideal classrooms included elements such as

library areas and writing centers that would support holistic types of teaching. Most of the preservice teachers also set goals for extending their understandings of literacy strategies. They wanted to help their future students to learn in a positive environment.

Several described their visions of ideal classrooms. They described themselves in the roles of good teachers. Tammy, for instance, set her own goals as, "I hope I can be flexible. If something doesn't go according to Plan A, a good teacher will try Plan B. A good teacher can devise Plan C at any given moment! Good teachers have band-aides, safety-pins, and extra socks hidden in their desks." In a separate reflection, she commented, "The most important thing I have learned is that teachers must place the needs of their student first in their planning, and it's okay if you don't get finished with the entire lesson."

In summary, the development of the conceptualizations of self by these preservice teachers was personally constructed, both in the context of this course and in relation to their personal literacy histories. From the perspectives of the past, the present, and the future, their conceptualizations were emerging in an on-going fashion. The interactions situated within this course became one of the influences on that emerging process.

Theme Two: Decisions and Decision-Making Processes

Related to Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy

The description of the decisions and decision-making processes will be discussed in two segments. First, three primary types of decisions that were made will be described. Following the discussion of these three types of decisions, the

ways that the decisions interacted with the preservice teachers' conceptualization of self will be explained

Types of Decisions and Activities to Support Decision-Making

As part of their own personal reflective process, the preservice teachers began their decision-making process by describing the child's literacy understandings as they had observed them in the tutoring sessions. In class discussions, the tutors were asked to describe what the child did or was still learning to do. This framework was modeled as a more positive way of approaching the assessment process than the traditional model of diagnosing what the child's problems might be and then attempting to remediate them. This initial step of observing and describing is a vital part of beginning to think reflectively and critically about one's practice, and helps novice teachers move toward more advanced types of reflective thinking, including practical action where the tutor begins to make connections to theory and critical reflection including a high degree of open-mindedness (Collier, 1999). Wink (1997) described the process as "problem-posing," including first "naming" the observation, secondly "reflecting critically" about the observation, and then "acting" on the reflection. Individual and group activities were developed to help facilitate this process. For example, the students were struggling with my requests to describe themselves as teachers, and they also were struggling to find ways to describe the children they were tutoring. In order to scaffold the preservice teachers' understanding of the process of making a statement and supporting the statement with evidence, a character map activity became part of one class period. Each student put his or her own name in the

middle of a semantic web, then drew at least five spokes and added a self-descriptive word to each spoke. When that was done, they chose at least one of the words and added branches that would provide evidence of that characteristic. In order to help the preservice teachers transfer the concept of making statements about a child's literacy understanding and supporting that statement with evidence, a similar process was done in the following class period. On this semantic web, the tutors wrote the name of the child they were tutoring in the center of the web, added words to describe the child as a literate individual on the spokes, and gave examples from the tutoring sessions as evidence toward each word. All of the students were able to find and list appropriate examples from their sessions for the child they were tutoring.

The course components encouraged collaborative discussions, which were intended to support the decision-making processes. Each class session when the children were not present began with an invitation for the tutors to talk about their tutoring sessions, their decisions and decision-making processes, and whatever questions or topics were important to them at the time. They all seemed to find support in their thinking by starting with the concrete narrative of their own individual student. As they interacted with their peers as a whole class or in the collaborative groups, their thinking seemed to move beyond their own concrete teaching experiences toward integrating other narratives of experience. They gradually began to incorporate the ideas of their peers into their own teaching. Tutors were usually generous about sharing their ideas for tradebooks that they had used in the sessions, for helpful instructional strategies, or for supportive materials.

and activities. This sharing of ideas and resources seemed to be one helpful component in establishing a sense of community within the group. Grisham et al (1999) has described this type of collaborative relationship in a setting with inservice teachers as a community of practice. The preservice teachers in the current study also participated in a type of community of practice.

Within our community of practice and using the process of reflective analysis to help with planning the subsequent sessions, the tutors began the process of "problem-posing" (Wink, 1997). These types of problem-posing or points of inquiry were included in their reflective journal entries about the tutoring sessions as well as in their comments in interviews, peer collaborative sessions, retrospective think-alouds, and other data sources. Different preservice teachers gave different types of emphasis to specific themes, and some of the preservice teachers articulated more details and made clearer connections to theoretical perspectives than others did. Based on analysis of their comments in reflections and in interviews, three types of decisions were important. These included: (1) How does one participate in the interpersonal interactions in this context (helping the child feel interested in and successful with the tutoring activities)? (2) How does one develop assessment information (describing the child they were teaching and that child's literacy understandings)? (3) How does one make curricular decisions (teaching appropriately based on their assessments)? Within each of these question types, different individual questions arose. A discussion of each question type will provide examples of the preservice teachers' concerns.

Interpersonal Interactions

(1) How does one participate in the interpersonal interactions in this context (helping the child feel interested in and successful with the tutoring activities)?

One emphasis in the tutors' descriptions was whether the child was motivated, interested, or willing to participate, or whether he or she was resistant, reluctant, bored, or overwhelmed. A primary concern for all of the tutors was developing elements that would make the tutoring experience more positive for the child in terms of affective components (more interesting, more successful, more fun). They also described their own affective responses to the tutoring sessions.

A second emphasis was on determining the type of relationship to establish. The tutors were trying to adjust to their roles as teachers by deciding what types of relationships were appropriate to establish with the children. At the first session, Samantha had allowed the little girl she was tutoring to have a great deal of input about how the session was done. They had read Frog and Toad are Friends. Samantha explained, then she added,

We made Frog and Toad, and she wanted to write Frog and Toad on them, so I let her do that. And she made both capital letters at the front, and she wanted to call herself Frog and she wanted to call me Toad, so she kept saying, "Thanks, Toad. Bye, Toad. See you later, Toad." She kept calling me Toad. So maybe this is going to be a theme.

The negotiation of roles between Samantha and her student continued throughout the semester. Samantha commented to me in her retrospective think-aloud interview that she had to "work on how to be in charge of the sessions. I had to be

sure that I wasn't being submissive to her, making sure that I was responding to her as a teacher instead of a friend or a playmate, because I know that's my problem "

Molly also was thoughtful about her role with her student. She was kind and appropriately professional in her response when her student continued to snuggle close to her as Molly read aloud. Finally the little girl looked up at Molly and announced that she wished she could sit in Molly's lap. Molly smiled and simply replied that it would be nice.

The issue of role negotiation is central to the issues of classroom management and discipline that are primary concerns for novice teachers. In some ways, the role negotiations seemed more intense in this one-on-one setting. Samantha realized that her student was sometimes taking the lead in the activities in ways that Samantha did not feel were appropriate, but she was perplexed about what to do. For example, the child refused to write while Samantha was watching, so Samantha chose to step outside the classroom door to see how the child would write in her absence, then chastised herself for "letting her manipulate me like that ". Steve's student, even as a third-grader, was so distractible that Steve had to keep a brisk pace in the lesson and change activities frequently to keep the child's attention focused. Elaine commented to me in an interview that she was really glad that her student was not as challenging as Steve's, and that she thought Steve was doing a good job but was "having to do everything but stand on his head to keep that child busy. He's up and down and under his chair as much as he is working." Kevin tried to convince Steve that they should go outside instead of working in the classroom, and he continually begged Steve to bring rockets and toys to the sessions. Steve did

his best to accommodate the child's interests by searching for books about cars, for instance, and developing a board game with a theme that related to the books. He described his perplexity to his peers, based on his own surprise that the negotiation of roles in the tutoring setting was so challenging for him.

A third type of awareness in regard to the interpersonal interactions was an awareness from the preservice teachers of the reciprocal roles of learning in this novice teaching experience. Many of the tutors recognized that they were learning from the interactions with their student, and that in many cases, the child was facilitating learning for the preservice teacher. For example, in a discussion in the last group session, Steve commented, "This class was good because you've got somebody to practice on. You get to learn from them, and they got to learn a little bit from you... I probably learned more from Kevin than he learned from me."

Assessment Information

(2) How does one develop assessment information (describing the child they were teaching and that child's literacy understandings)? Based on the model of mediated assessment and instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 1997), the assessment information is developed through the processes of problem-posing and reflection.

One way the tutors approached the assessment process was by anticipating situations. Some tutors began the semester feeling nervous because they did not know what to expect from the child they would tutor. Neither did they know what to expect from themselves as teachers in this new venture they were about to undertake. One strategy that seemed supportive was to try to project anticipated situations and to mentally rehearse what they would do in situations that they

expected to arise. For example, Jeanette had been thinking ahead to how she might react to the child and described her first tutoring sessions:

I guess I had plenty of scenarios of my feeling of what this child was going to be like and what I was going to do in response and how I was going to solve the problem. But I didn't know, I didn't know what she was going to be like, so in my head I just kinda went over what I thought she would be like, and I would think, if she was this type of student, then this is what I would do, but if she was this type of student, I would have to--not coerce, but kind of push her into learning, then I figured out how I was going to do that, but luckily I didn't have that type of student. She was very energetic.

After the tutors met the children and began to form initial hypotheses about them, the next piece of the process of the mediation model of instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 1996) that they were using was developing the assessments and instructional activities that they expected to be most helpful for their students. At this point in the model, the students were again concerned about anticipating the situations that they expected to occur in their next interactions with the child. They planned ahead, guessing what the child would enjoy, what they would be able to accomplish in the time available, and what types of support would be helpful. The process of anticipation and instruction was frustrating at times, if the child did not react in the way they had anticipated. They continued to grapple with issues that are elaborated in the following paragraphs, and their anticipation-reflection cycle became an important type of decision-making process in this context of teaching.

Another topic that the preservice teachers explored was determining

appropriate responses to a child's requests for support or assistance or to the successes that a child experienced. For example, the peer group composed of tutors who were working with second-graders brainstormed with Hannah about how to respond to her child. Hannah had noticed in several sessions that the child was worried about avoiding mistakes and frequently asked Hannah to help her even with simple tasks. Hannah described the child's concern for perfection in her drawing of a self-portrait by pointing out that the child commented she had straight hair, so she drew straight hair, then she looked down at her pink shirt and drew a pink shirt. Hannah commented, "Everything had to be just like she was at that moment." Molly asked, "Do you think she is being pushed to be a perfectionist or something at home?" Hannah said, "Well, that could be true because when she would read, she usually knew the word, but when she wasn't quite as sure, you know, she looked for approval, if that was right." The child's mother had told her that the little girl lacked confidence, so Hannah decided that might be an insight. Laurie advised, "Lots of praise," but Molly had cautioned, "You have to be careful, because if you over-praise, then they become so dependent on having someone say, yes, that's right, or good job, so you have to really walk a fine line there." Steve added, "You don't want to scare them, either."

In their problem-posing processes, tutors also explored their roles in intervening when the child was exploring literacy activities, either in reading or in writing. They wondered about amounts and types of interventions to provide. Jeanette described one of her early encounters with her student's risk-taking by saying,

Well, she sat down and she saw all the books, and she picked one up—The Cat in the Hat, and she started reading. So she read, and I didn't stop her. She got to places in the book where the Cat in the Hat wore brown glasses, the word said brown and you could see brown in the picture, but she didn't know the word, and she said red. She would ad lib, make up her own sentence, and so I just let her go. If it doesn't click in her mind what the word is, she just keeps on and adds her own sentence. I call it "inventive reading." So what I have been doing is just letting her read, then stop her at the end, and we go from there and talk about what she did.

Laurie expressed a similar philosophy in her retrospective think-aloud as she said, "I've learned not to rush it. I have a tendency to want to do it for them. And now I think they should make some mistakes and just let them go. And, you know, that is the hardest thing to do."

As one of the few directives for the course, I required that the preservice teachers include authentic reading and writing activities each session. They were free to implement this requirement in whatever ways they believed were appropriate for the child they were tutoring. Probably in response to the course requirement, the assessment comments consistently described the child's development as both a reader and as a writer.

One component of reading the tutors analyzed was the oral reading or decoding aspect (fluency of reading, inflection, emphasis, recognition of high-frequency words or words that had previously been introduced, and recognition of unknown words). They also analyzed the child's understanding of and reaction to

the texts that they read and of the meanings of specific vocabulary words in the texts. Some of them recognized strategies that the child was using or was still unable to use. As a course assignment, they compared their observations of the child's literacy development to developmental checklists such as the state's curriculum objectives.

The child's responses to the writing activities were also the focus of many of the tutors' assessment comments. They considered the structure of the child's writing such as use of complete sentences and the child's competence with the use of conventions such as punctuation and capitalization. They described the child's spelling development. They sometimes described the content of the child's writing. They searched for activities that would be perceived as interesting or fun by the child, but that would not consume too much time in the sessions. Some of the tutors described the ways they were planning writing activities that would support and document the child's understanding of the texts that were read and their response to the reading activities that were implemented.

Curricular Decisions

(3) How does one make curricular decisions (teaching appropriately based on their assessments)? In the next part of the mediated instruction process, the tutors worked their way through the process of dealing with different types of curricular decisions that were important in order to support the literacy development of the child they were tutoring. Selecting appropriate objectives for the tutoring sessions was challenging for most of the tutors as they tried to be observant and reflective, balancing not only the child's responses but also other issues such as time

and materials that were available. For example, Laurie commented in one of the peer group sessions, "I could see so many directions with my little boy, and so many things that we could stop and work on, until it truly was a decision. I had to decide which ones we were going to work on and what we were just going to hit." Hannah agreed, "Yes, that was the hard part, when you hit on something that they needed a lot of instruction with. You didn't really have time to stop and devote all that time to it."

The tutors were concerned about selection of materials, both texts to be read during the session and adjunct materials to support the tutoring experience. As they selected the texts, they considered multiple factors. One factor was consistently the degree of interest that the material would hold for the child. Jeanette made some of her judgments based on the interesting formats of some of the books, as she said, "I asked her what she liked about this lesson, and it was the pop-up book. She likes the pop-ups." Steve had asked his student's parents about some of the child's interests and tried to prepare accordingly, but in the first group session, he told his peers, "Well, I had a big problem, because the information I had was that he liked dogs, so I brought all dog books, and he doesn't like dogs. He likes cats!" Laurie added to the conversation, "Well, my student likes dogs, and the first book he picked to read was about giving a beagle a bath, and we talked about what a beagle was, and I was surprised that he knew that it was a hunting dog." Valerie's student was fascinated with tornadoes, and she searched diligently for related books that were appropriate for a child who had just completed kindergarten.

Secondly, the preservice teachers perceived the type of text difficulty to be

an important consideration in their decision-making processes. The tutors in the first grade group discussed features that made the texts easier or more difficult for the children. Allison opened the discussion, "I was working with her on the rhyming with Hop on Pop, and I noticed she got tired. You know Dr. Seuss books are just too long. She would get halfway through, and she wouldn't want to do it anymore." Valerie responded, "Now, see that surprises me, because I picked Hop on Pop because it just had a few words on each page, because I thought it's just a few words on each page, you know, hop on pop, hop, hop." Samantha joined the discussion, "She got tired of it? And it was just a few words? But it was a lot of repetition?" Jeanette added, "Yes, it's repetitive." Allison said, "I guess. I don't know." Samantha added a new hypothesis, "Well, maybe it was too easy." Allison answered, "No, I don't think it was too easy. It was probably just overwhelming. It just didn't grab her interest. It was a thick book. Those Dr. Seuss books are thick." Samantha accepted the explanation, "Oh, okay." Jeanette added her own experience to the discussion, "And then they keep reading the same thing over and over, and I think after a while, they get tired of it. I had the same problem with Dr. Seuss books." Allison connected her analysis to her previous experience with her own children, "Now, my son used to love Fox in Socks, and ---ahhhhh--- I hated reading that thing to him because it had all those tongue twisters in it. I just hated reading it to him, but he loved it." Jeanette commented, "Yep, sometimes I feel that way about my granddaughter." Allison returned to her analysis of her own student, "I don't know. I think we are just going to have to work on rhyming words, ending sounds, and maybe find some shorter books that have a little pizzazz to them or

something ” Several of the tutors mentioned that these types of peer discussions were very helpful in their own process of decision-making about the tutoring sessions

Some of the tutors selected texts based on the content or ideas in the text, or the type of words used in the texts that could support instruction about particular types of words, phonics elements, etc Molly, for example, commented to her peers,

Well, I was kind of surprised that her favorite color was purple, and that was what she was writing, and I thought children usually learned their basic color words by first grade So I was kind of surprised that she didn't know that So we are going to read the Many Colors book by Dr Seuss, and it has the basic color words in it, to see if she recognizes them in print and just needs practice on spelling

Molly then commented that her student was having difficulty with the vowel sounds for "ow" and "oi," and Hannah gave a suggestion, "Have you seen The Cow that Went 'Oink'?" It has a lot of vowels and farm and animals, like 'meow' instead of 'moo,' but it's really fun and good because it emphasized that 'oi' and 'ow' and 'cow' "

Other curricular decisions related to the selection of writing materials, which were perceived as potentially influential in the success of the tutoring sessions Discussions included whether the child should use lined, unlined, or handwriting paper Tutors described using decorated stationery and paper shaped to fit with the theme of a book (fish shaped paper, paper decorated with teddy bears, etc) They talked about whether to have the child use pencils, pens, or markers; sentence strips or word cards; marker boards, chalk boards, or graphic organizers.

The entire process of instructional mediation, including the elements of reflection and of problem-posing, was a primary component of the preservice teachers' decision-making processes in this particular community of practice. The process was strengthened by the opportunity to participate in collaborative experiences related to their decision-making (Rogoff, 1990). In their decision-making processes, interactions occurred with the tutors' conceptualizations of self

Descriptive Continua

In an attempt to represent the range of ways that the preservice teachers' decisions were related to each of the dimensions explained in the previous section, a descriptive continuum for each dimension was developed based on an examination of data in this study. The purpose of the continua was to depict levels of professional development displayed in the research data. In the next section of this discussion, the continua will be explained in relation to the decision-making processes the preservice teachers employed.

The points where the preservice teachers in this study might have been placed on each continuum were approximate. The placements were not static, but sometimes shifted in response to the events of the semester. The tutors moved back and forth along each continuum. Within each dimension, each preservice teacher told a unique story. Each continuum interacted with the influence of other continua in ways that shaped, and were shaped by, the preservice teachers' teaching and other participation in this particular social context.

Continuum Decision-Making Interacts with Personal Literacy History

Uses experience with	Recognizes and honors	Focuses on own literacy
other children as well as	differences between	history and assumes
self as a child	student and self	student is like self

One continuum described the influence of the preservice teachers' personal literacy history on their literacy teaching in this setting. The students all made connections between their teaching and their own personal experiences throughout their lifetimes. Evidence for this continuum came from their literacy autobiographies, the varied pieces of writing that they did throughout the semester, and the conversations they had with their peers and with me.

At one point on the continuum, some tutors used their clear memories of their own childhood experiences with literacy as one lens for understanding the child they were tutoring. In addition, they incorporated other memories of children with whom they had interacted during their own literate history. Some of these memories were of their own children or siblings, some were of children they had observed and worked with in educational settings, and still others were of children with whom they had interacted in other settings such as church, youth groups, or baby-sitting. These tutors were working to incorporate all their understandings of children in literate experiences to help them plan and teach effectively in the tutoring sessions.

At another point on the continuum, some of the tutors relied heavily on their memories of themselves as children and compared those memories with the evidence they were gathering through their on-going assessment procedures with the

child they were teaching for the semester. They acknowledged ways that their student was like they had been as a child, but they also recognized differences that sometimes significantly shaped their student's reactions to the tutoring activities. They acknowledged these differences along with the similarities as they planned and implemented the lessons.

Students at the third point on the continuum relied on their own memories of childhood literacy experiences so heavily that they assumed that the child they were tutoring was just like they had been. They described using the same books and activities in their tutoring sessions as they had utilized as a child. Elaine chose books she had read when she was the age of the child she was tutoring, and incorporated poetry she had read in a parent program when she was in third grade. Steve consistently referred to his own childhood, his interactions with his parents, and comparisons between his student and himself at that age. He commented,

Well, I think my guy is just like me when I was that age. He'd rather be doing anything else besides reading. I mean, I hated books when I was a kid. My guy even looks like me—kind of ugly, kind of stocky. I think he's just a little on the lazy side. I don't think he wants to be here. I find that after a hundred words or so, he doesn't want to be here. I don't think he likes books.

Later, in a final reflective writing assignment, Steve maintained his comparison, when he wrote, "Although Kevin was quite a challenge, we had a sense of bonding. I was able to understand Kevin in some ways because he reminded me of myself at a younger age."

Some students planned literacy experiences for their students based on their personal preferences related to literacy genres or author. At the first tutoring session, for instance, Allison had introduced her student to books that she herself had enjoyed as a child.

I was showing her some of my favorites when I was younger, like Tikki Tikki Tembo, and she just got so excited. She said, Oh, our librarian at school read that to us, and she grabbed the book and she was trying to read it, and she was saying the name, and she was telling the whole story, and so I thought that was kind of an ice-breaker for us.

As another example, Molly was describing her planning for the sessions when she explained,

Well, I think there was probably a connection between my literacy development and the decisions that I made because I really felt like I related to my student. I used a lot of repetitive text, easy rhyming because I liked rhyming stuff when I was growing up. So that was probably how I based my decisions on what to do, because there is so much that you could pick from, what you want to incorporate. You have to decide finally and take that path.

Jeanette used her own collection of favorite tradebooks in many of her lessons. She explained, "We started on The Very Hungry Caterpillar. That's my favorite book. Then we went to The Very Quiet Cricket... and some of my old favorite stories, like Jack in the Beanstalk, and my favorite author, Mercer Meyer." The children who were tutored by these students were receiving a clear message that literacy can be an enjoyable, life-long experience.

Another continuum of the preservice teachers' decision-making related to their sense of self-efficacy as a teacher of literacy

Continuum Decision-Making Interacts with Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy high,

Self-efficacy moderate,

Self-efficacy low,

confident in own ability

emerging confidence

lack of confidence

Some of the tutors were calm and confident in most of their tutoring interactions, but for all of the preservice teachers, there were times that their confidence had peaks and other times when it slumped in response to the circumstances in the course. The issue of confidence or of questioning themselves sometimes fluctuated in response to the child's reactions, and sometimes it wavered or was enhanced by the interactions with peers.

The middle portion of this continuum, with confidence emerging throughout the course when their interactions with the child were successful, was an appropriate description for many of the tutors. This continuum, however, was the one where more fluctuation occurred than any of the others. All of the preservice teachers at times expressed a high sense of self-efficacy in some of their interactions with the children, with their peers, or with other course activities. All of them, also, at times expressed some kinds of self-doubts and raised questions about appropriate plans to make for their tutoring sessions.

However, two of the students, Steve and Elaine, had such high levels of confidence in their own thinking that they rarely wavered in their opinions that they had found the solutions to all of the dilemmas related to their teaching. Their high levels of confidence may have made them resistant to new ideas. They seemed to

feel sure that they had already found the answers that they needed to most of the dilemmas they might face. However, even these two students had concerns. These related primarily to the course requirements. They both continued to think about what I wanted them to do instead, especially in terms of constructing the final tutoring report. They were both confident they were capable of handling any teaching situation, but they seemed uncomfortable with the freedom to construct their own ideas about an appropriate format for the report.

Betty felt somewhat overwhelmed in her peer collaborative group when her own assessment style in the first session was different from Elaine's and Tammy's as they focused on identifying deficits in the students' oral reading, in spite of the mediated model of literacy instruction that was the focus of the class. Betty seemed to assume that, since her ideas were different from the other two forceful members of her group, that her ideas must not be "right." In actuality, her assessment strategies were much more closely aligned with the mediated model of instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 1996) than her peers' assessment strategies had been.

Samantha seemed to have low self-confidence at least through the initial weeks of the semester. She struggled to find materials and activities that would capture her student's interests and provide an appropriate level of challenge for the child. She appealed frequently to her peers to tell her what to do.

The tutors' decision-making was related to their understanding of literacy instruction, based on their knowledge of theory and strategies and the ways they applied these concepts to their teaching.

Continuum Decision-Making Interacts with Understandings of Literacy Instruction

Knowledgeable of theory; applies strategies appropriately and flexibly	Able to plan instruction by seeking sources (textbooks, etc)	Plans intuitively, without understanding of theory and strategies
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One point on the continuum described those tutors who had internalized knowledge of instructional strategies to the point that they could comfortably implement appropriate activities during the tutoring sessions. These tutors were able to adapt their strategies and activities during the sessions in response to the child's needs, in a type of reflection in action (Schon, 1983), as well as between the sessions, as a type of reflection on action (Schon, 1983). At a central point on the continuum, the tutor's understandings of pedagogy were not as well internalized, so they had more difficulty with the adjustments during the tutoring sessions. They had a moderately well-developed repertoire of strategies, however, and they were knowledgeable about resources so that they were comfortable with locating appropriate strategies for the next tutoring sessions as they made their on-going lesson plans. At the points nearer the other end of the continuum, some tutors were still planning intuitively and based on their own definitions of literacy practice from their lived experiences, instead of implementing theoretically framed instruction, either in their planned lessons or in the adaptations that were needed during the sessions.

The peer collaborative groups provided evidence of the range of these understandings, along with the written lesson plans and reflections. The peer groups also became an important tool for facilitating development along this continuum as

the tutors talked about their decisions and as they brainstormed together for instructional strategies, materials, and activities that would be helpful to the children.

The tutors' understanding of pedagogical strategies for literacy instruction was tested in this complex problem-solving situation. After one session with the children, I had asked the tutors to complete a quick-write in class describing how they had selected the strategy they intended to implement the next day. Tammy blurted aloud, "Well, what if we say we are doing something just because it is something we know about? I mean, I know KWL, so I might just do KWL." Some were pleased as the semester progressed, with their own increasing awareness of strategies, such as when Tammy described her peer interview by saying that she had been surprised that she "could rattle off answers that sounded like a teacher." I thought, you know, I've learned a lot more than I thought."

Even the students who had a good knowledge of strategies were still trying to learn to apply them flexibly and appropriately in an actual teaching situation. Betty resorted to looking back through previous textbooks, and trying out a variety of unrelated strategies. Several students relied on their knowledge of literacy instruction in the public schools to help them evaluate their teaching. For example, Hannah commented, "I felt kind of at a loss at times because I didn't know what she had already done, what she was going to be doing in third grade, where to go from here, without stepping on toes." Laurie told her peers, "Well, he told me he remembered working on this at school, so maybe I am doing the right thing."

Allison, however, was perplexed as she explained to her peers,

Well, I had a six-year-old girl and she did really well. The only thing I noticed was that when she would read, when she came to a word she didn't know, she'd stop and she'd sit there and wait and wait, and then finally, she'd look up at me like, 'Well? Aren't you going to tell me what this word is?' She wasn't real good at trying the word, or skipping over it and reading on, or at looking at the pictures. That was kind of a surprise to me, because in all these classes that we have, they say to teach the kids to try all these things, and I just automatically expected that's how all the teachers in the world are doing it, and I guess they aren't."

The fourth continuum dealt with the varied types of complexity in the course and the tutors' ways of deal with this issue

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with Thinking about Complexity

Reflective thinker, thinks abstractly, deals with complexity	Recognizes varied complexities, learning to analyze, deals with complexity through support	Seeks simple solutions from external sources, complexity overwhelms
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Tutors demonstrated their reflection and abstractness of thought in their written reflections following each tutoring session as well as in the interactions with peers and with me in the class sessions. At one point on the continuum, a few of the tutors were able to do the type of reflective thinking that connects observations to theory and that analyzes multiple components. Many of the tutors exemplified the middle portions of the continuum, where they were recognizing some of the complexities, but were still puzzled about ways to appropriately address them. At the other end of the continuum, several tutors were still thinking more literally than

reflectively. Their written reflections focused on descriptions of the child's literate behavior (Collier, 1999).

Molly consistently described her student's literacy development in a broad-based reflective fashion. Even after a few sessions, she could articulate diverse components, as she explained in her peer group,

My student was just delightful. She was more fluent than I expected, and she had a very good oral vocabulary. When she was drawing the picture of herself, she said, 'My hair is the color of molasses taffy.' Well, I just about fell through the floor because I thought that was so neat. And, when she first sat down, she had her hand in her pocket, and she pulled it out, and she brought three rocks to show me. She knew the names of every one of these rocks. One was turquoise, one was Apache onyx, and one was something else. She was very interesting.

Molly proceeded to describe the child's oral reading, attention to punctuation, understanding the theme of a book about two people making friends, lack of awareness of the vowel sounds in 'ow,' and writing, both from the perspective of the ideas, and through analyzing use of conventions such as complete sentences, use of punctuation, and spelling.

Samantha recognized many complexities, but was grappling with ways to understand them. Jeanette had explained her student's tendency to guess words based on the initial consonant, and Samantha tried to analyze,

If she gets the first letter, then she'll just guess, right? Well, she's trying to hurry then. She's not taking her time on each word. Or it could be just

because it was the first day and she was nervous. She was maybe trying too hard. Or maybe she just needs to read more, you know, she needs more practice. Maybe she just doesn't have anybody at home to help her learn this.

Sometimes the tutors looked for simple solutions, as Jeanette did when she wrote,

Well, I'm gonna have to let her read, then I'm going to have to mark the spots, and then we go back. That's the only way to teach her, and we're gonna work on those words. The only way to work on them is to keep doing them repetitive, because sight words are not something you can sound out. No, you can't sound out 'the', I mean, it's just 'the'. She had her problems on those, those are all sight words. She just needs to know them when she sees them.

The tutors made decisions both during the sessions and when the sessions were completed, as they prepared the next lesson. They evaluated not only the children but themselves as well. Jeanette, for example, described her adjustments during the sessions by saying, "I made some reflective decisions during my lessons because she just changed the lesson so, and I've always felt that teachers should be flexible enough if they bring something to the lesson." Samantha agreed and advised, "Yes, don't be set in stone about what you are going to do." Jeanette nodded and continued, "Right, because they are learning, and that's what I teach on."

When I asked Jeanette to describe her planning between sessions by describing where she was getting her ideas for the sessions, she said, "I just come up

with them, out of my head ” I inquired, “How do you think they got in there?”

Jeanette answered,

I don't know I always sit down and think, what is it that I have been through, that it would help make it easier for the children if we taught them how to get through—things like working together, sharing, feelings, all those things are good I always think, what is the message I want them to get? I've looked through my books, and I've even gone to the teachers' store, and I got these sight word cards and this idea book. If she has trouble with a word, I go to this, and I've got it

Jeanette then described her self-evaluation of her own teaching and interactions with her student by saying,

My main question I keep asking myself is, am I teaching right? Even though I have read the books, and I am doing what I know, I'm still worrying about am I doing it right? Am I helping her? You don't know what she really needs to know You know what you have observed You also know what she talks to you about and she tells you, oh, my teacher tells me this, or I have done this before, then you will know you are on the right track, but you are still questioning yourself, you are still assessing, is there something else I could be doing? What else can I do?

Support for the preservice teachers' development of reflective thinking in the course seemed to come from three major sources, including their written reflections, their own audiotapes of their tutoring sessions, and their interactions with the peer collaborative groups. Several students discussed the value of listening to the tapes

of their own teaching. For instance, Tammy told me in her first interview,

One of the things I have noticed from listening to my tapes is my response time in allowing Kenny to answer my questions is too short, and I tend to answer for him the things he doesn't answer immediately. I will try to increase my wait time with him, to allow him the opportunity to answer my questions, instead of me being impatient and answering my own questions.

The most helpful parts of the course for me were the tape recording and written reflections of the sessions. It would have been harder to make meaningful, beneficial reflections without having the opportunity to listen to the session a second time. I found myself hearing things on the tapes that I did not remember myself or my student saying.

Allison introduced the topic of the audiotapes in her reflective think-aloud session as she asked,

Is this the first time that you have recorded the sessions? Is that what you said? Well, I think that you should continue to do that. Just because I know how it helped me. Like I said, I listened to the tapes, I don't know how many times. And you can't, I don't care what anybody says, you can't write everything down, and you think, okay, I'll remember this, but you don't. You just can't. So later when you are trying to put everything together, it's a good thing to have. I'll usually think about everything as I drive home. Sometimes it's a good thing to live a ways away, you kind of put things together in your head, how things went and some ideas. A lot of times, I just

want to sit down and think. Sometimes I listen to the tapes beforehand, before I type the reflection. Sometimes I'll type up my reflections, and then I'll listen and jot things down or whatever. Like more specific examples. It all depends on what is going through my head at the time.

Betty and I discussed her use of more reflective thinking in her retrospective think-aloud session as well. She commented, "There is just so much to put in the tutoring reports, and trying to make it sound professional." I replied, "Talk about the process of writing your reflections. I have just left that real open-ended. Has that been okay? Would there have been a better structure?" Betty answered, "No, it was really good, especially using the tapes. At the beginning of the sessions, I didn't use my tapes. I just used my lesson plan and thought about it. But I think it is better to use the tapes, because there is so much more you can pick up on." I asked, "Why did you start using them? What gave you the clue to do that?" and she responded, "Well, my reflections started getting short... and I thought, there has got to be more going on than this, and so I thought, well, I'm going to start listening to my tapes, and I couldn't believe, like I said, all the teaching that was going on."

The students evaluated the written components of the course quite differently. Many talked about hating to invest the time in doing the written reflections after each tutoring session, but finding them extremely helpful in documenting their student's literacy development later in the course.

Even though I had given very general guidelines about ways to construct the final tutoring report, Steve's comments about the written components of the course focused on what he perceived to be helpful to him, as he said,

The most helpful parts of the course for me were the guidelines given me to help in preparing tutoring reports that reported Kevin's actual performance and learning. The guidelines were subdivided into reading, writing, etc., in ways that broke the report format into easy-to-manage segments, rather than presenting me with the challenge of working from scratch on several different levels.

Molly analyzed her own reflective thinking process by describing the writing of her reflections in a way that would align with Vygotsky's notion of writing as a tool to support thinking (Vygotsky, 1978). Molly said, "I was writing in one of my reflections, and I wrote something about my opinion of why this was going this way, and then by the time I got down to the last paragraph, I had it, well, maybe it was this, the reason that this was happening."

Tutors exhibited varied degrees of independence in the context of this teaching experience. Some were quite self-confident and planned independently, but all of them at some time in the discussions accepted ideas from their peers. A few were consistently overwhelmed by the challenges and were dependent on others for ideas, as Samantha openly appealed for help by saying,

Okay, what I need to know is when you have them write things, how do you ask them? Because maybe I'm making it too hard, too big, like saying, please write a story may be too much. What do you have them write about? Do they write right after they read? Or do you just let them write something, just whatever they want to?

The preservice teachers exhibited varied types of thinking as they planned

their instruction for the tutoring sessions. Some were thoughtful and reflective in their planning and implementation of their lessons. Others were just beginning to develop these characteristics, and found that the tutoring sessions, along with the support of the social context of the course helped in their development along this continuum. Still others were dependent on others for solutions, or were satisfied with their own unreflective ideas, in ways that hampered their instruction and their development of their conceptualization of self. Their type of thinking influenced, and was influenced by, their interactions in the specific social context of the course.

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with the Social Context

Facilitates analysis process, mentor to peers, open and willing to share	Participatory, seeks and offers help, cautious about value of own ideas	Little facilitation of collaboration (quiet or domineering)
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The tutors often worked in peer groups that were based on the ages of the children that were being tutored. All of the tutors found times that they were willing to assume a leadership role in the peer groups and to describe their child or provide ideas for their peers. All of the tutors also used the peer group as a resource or sounding board for their decision making at some time through the semester. The typical amount of time that each tutor spent in these roles and interactions, however, seemed to fall into different patterns of group interactions in the three peer groups.

In the interactions in the second grade group, Molly typically took the lead role of the questioner, almost in a teacher/facilitator role. For example, in the first group meeting, Steve was describing his student in a very superficial way, and Molly asked him questions that had the potential to scaffold the expansion of his

thinking. Steve responded quickly, confident and not thinking beyond his own initial assessment of simple solutions. All the other members of the group joined the conversation and asked questions that implied they might have had a different conclusion than Steve had reached. None of the group, however, confronted Steve or pointed out that he might have made incorrect assumptions.

Typical interactions in the first grade group contrasted sharply in regard to the amount of direct suggestions that the tutors gave to each other. For example, Jeanette directly instructed Samantha on what to do and what not to do as she supported her student in the process of using inventive spelling. All of the preservice teachers willingly shared ideas and received suggestions from their peers.

In the fourth/fifth grade group, the typical interactions found the tutors engaged in parallel thinking about their own individual child. They would listen as another tutor described an incident from the tutoring session, then respond with, "Yeah, it's like my child . . ." then engage in telling an incident from their own tutoring experience. They seemed to value the opportunity to have the other tutors to serve as a sounding board, even though they most frequently did not go beyond surface acknowledgment of the observations or dilemmas that their peers were describing.

Theme Three: Development of Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy is Multidirectional and Interrelated

Multidirectional

The ways that the preservice teachers in this study conceptualized themselves as teachers of literacy were complex and dynamic. Change occurred in

many dimensions of the conceptualizations, but not in a linear or unidirectional way. Instead, the change seemed to fluctuate or even reverberate or resonate (Conle, 1996). Some of the influence on the directionality of the preservice teachers' conceptualization came from the tutoring sessions and the reactions of the child to the instructional activities that the tutor had prepared. When the child's response aligned with the tutor's expectations, for example, the tutor's sense of self-efficacy may have been enhanced. At the same time, however, the tutor may not have felt as compelled to pursue other ideas for the upcoming tutoring sessions and may have simply enjoyed the success, relying on their own personal literacy history for ideas and settling for easy answers to the challenges of preparing lessons. In contrast, when the child's responses were not in alignment with the tutor's expectations, their self-efficacy might move lower on that continuum. At the same time, their commitment to thinking about the complexity in the teaching situation may have increased, along with their commitment to collaboration as they sought help with their decision-making from peers.

As evidence of the multidirectionality back and forth along one continuum throughout the semester, the dimension of self-efficacy is provided as an example. For some of the teachers, each day of the tutoring brought new excitement and success, as the children responded to the literacy activities with enthusiasm. For the teachers who had this experience, their conceptualizations of self, especially in terms of their self-efficacy, seemed to become more positive throughout the semester. Many of the students, for example, started the semester feeling nervous about meeting the child and about how the interactions would develop, nervous

about the process of assessment and of curriculum planning, and nervous about the process of reporting their observations and reflections. Their self-efficacy about themselves in this teaching role was tenuous. After a few sessions with the child, they began to relax and feel more confident. Their self-efficacy was more positive.

For most of the preservice teachers, however, the changes were not linear or even always moving forward. Circumstances and children's reactions brought changes and challenges, and the preservice teachers' sense of self-efficacy moved through peaks and valleys. Some of these influences came from the children's reactions to the literacy sessions. Samantha, for example, seemed to feel alternately competent and distraught as the child she was tutoring had diverse reactions to the instructional activities, and Samantha struggled to find literacy tasks where the child could experience success. Steve was alternately confident and frustrated as he planned some successful experiences but finally realized he could neither bribe nor simply intimidate his child into staying focused on the literacy sessions.

Allison's conceptualization of herself as a literacy teacher started very strong, was challenged when the child she was tutoring dropped out in the middle of the semester, and surged to a new high as she was successful with a new student. She described the experience to the outside interviewer who conducted the exit interviews:

Halfway through the class I had a student that dropped out—she just stopped coming. I panicked. Because I'm also very conscious about getting my work done. I thought—Oh no, what am I going to do now... I had to get another student and work real fast. That was another thing that I thought

how am I going to handle this. But it ended up being a positive. Because I got to work with a six-year-old girl who was an emergent reader who needed a lot of work. And I moved to an eleven-year-old boy who was a very good reader and had so many interests. He loved to read, and the little girl didn't like to read. It was just two different experiences. I had to really switch gears. But I learned how to do it. I learned to be flexible with both of them. I had some higher expectations with the younger one, and I had to back up a little bit so she could catch up. But with the boy I had some lower expectations, then I had to boost those up to meet his needs. It was a real challenge but it all fit together just fine. I was shocked that I made it through. I've become more confident. I didn't really think I could do it, you know. I knew I could, but I didn't think it would come so easily for me. That kind of surprised me, so I kind of pat myself on the back. I think I did a pretty good job.

Much research has documented that preservice teachers have overly optimistic perceptions of themselves, or high expectations of their own self-efficacy (Chester & Beaudine, 1996). These preservice teachers overall followed that pattern. The surveys asked about some components that were outside of the teacher's control, such as issues of parental involvement, and most of the preservice teachers responded that they believed they would be able to meet those challenges. Most of these preservice teachers responded positively to questions that related to their own self-efficacy in dealing with children in the setting of the tutoring or in their future classrooms.

An interesting contrast to some previous research developed in these students' responses on the post-test in comparison to the pre-test. Previous studies had indicated that novice teachers' self-efficacy tends to decline when they first encounter the realities of interacting with children in teaching situations (Chester & Beaudine, 1996). The overall scores for these students, however, showed a slight increase in overall self-efficacy at the end of the course, in comparison to their already high scores at the beginning. The gain was slight, but it seemed to be supported by their comments in reflections and interviews.

In the middle portions of the course, comments from varied data sources indicated that the tutors' self-efficacy fluctuated from time to time. The tutors described ways that their teaching was going well and ways that they were struggling. The predominant theme that ran through the majority of the preservice teachers' reflections and interview comments, however, was that the tutors themselves felt generally successful and that their overall self-efficacy as teachers of literacy had been enhanced by the experience. For example, Jeanette commented,

I like to let her write things her own way. The words may not look the same, but for some reason, when she is writing, I can follow her. Before I started with her, I couldn't tell you what this said. I think it is working with her and thinking like a kid. And now I can see what I couldn't see before.

Several factors may have influenced these preservice teachers in maintaining their high overall self-efficacy. Such factors probably included the limited amount of complexity in the structure of this initial teaching experience, as the tutors planned for and taught only one child, without the distractions of the other children

and the expectations of most initial teaching situations. Another positive factor may have been the collaborative components of the course, which generally provided positive feedback and supportive ideas to the tutors

The multidirectionality was not limited to issues of self-efficacy. Other components of the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as literacy teachers also fluctuated throughout the semester

Interrelated

Interactions among the continua were complex and reciprocal, so that the position on one continuum was influenced by positions on the other continua. The positions on some continua, however, were relatively stable for some students. If students focused extensively on one dimension, it seemed that they were so far out on the end of the continuum that they ignored other dimensions. In this case, an extreme position seemed to limit their understandings and interpretations in their own teaching. One example was Elaine's focus on her own literacy history. Her assumption that the books she herself had read and enjoyed as a child would be appropriate for her student may have limited her exploration of appropriate choices for her tutoring sessions.

Many factors influenced the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self. Therefore, determining the causes of their developing conceptualizations was not always possible. Nevertheless, some of the diverse influences seemed clear. For instance, the importance of the peer support teams impacted Valerie's conceptualization of herself as she felt somewhat isolated in her search for appropriate literacy tasks for her student, who was the only early emergent reader in

the group

Interactions among the dimensions were complex and powerful. Molly and Allison were the primary examples of those students who were abstract thinkers, flexible in their decision-making, and were knowledgeable about pedagogical strategies. These students were more likely to deal well with the complexities of planning and implementing instruction based on their own observations and reflections. Allison, for example, had managed to construct one of the most professional tutoring reports by the end of the semester, in spite of the added challenge of changing children late in the course. Sometimes, however, these thoughtful preservice teachers expressed lower self-efficacy, probably based on their more advanced awareness of how much they still needed to learn and their more critical reflective processes of self-evaluation. Molly, for instance, was one of the students in the group whose scores on the self-efficacy survey declined from beginning to end of the semester. In contrast to her scores, Molly expressed confidence in her interactions with the child. She was clearly, however, very reflective and analytical in her self-assessments of her own teaching, and was able to set goals for herself as well as for her student. An opportunity to understand the students in a holistic way will help with interpretation of the complexity of the data, so that isolated data sources such as Molly's score on the self-efficacy survey are balanced with the broader context of the participants as students.

Emerging voices

In the final data analysis, the primary focus was on the interactions for which data was available from this semester, but it was inappropriate, if not impossible, to

ignore my personal knowledge of these students over previous courses and semesters. Therefore, in my final analysis of the tutors' development over the course of this semester, I looked for evidence in this data to support, or to refute, my understanding of them beyond this small snapshot of time.

The students had gone beyond the expectations of the course. They had indeed become, in a unique way, a community of practice. From that community, their unique voices were emerging. Some of the students had grown tremendously in their understandings of literacy assessment and instruction. Some were still very weak in their understandings of pedagogy. Some were still looking for simple solutions to complex problems. Some had become comfortable with sharing their ideas and with seeking support in their decision-making from their peers, while others were still reluctant to admit they did not know all the answers or to accept ideas from their peers.

The students had not achieved all of the goals that they set for themselves at the beginning of the course. However, their conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy had changed in some way for every student. For some, changes had been almost imperceptible. For others, the changes had been more dramatic. The interactions among the dimensions of their conceptualizations of self influenced their conceptualization of self in diverse ways.

In trying to explain patterns of these interactions, I have placed the students into four groups. These groups can exemplify the "emerging voices" from our community of practice. The groups include: (1) whispers—subtle shifts, (2) quiet comments, (3) confident conversations, and (4) shouts—ah-ha's. My own voice

will be necessary as I try to explain the development of the students' conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy from a broader perspective

Whispers--Subtle Shifts

Two students seemed to have made only subtle shifts in their perspectives over the course of the semester. For these two students, the interactions among the continua were extreme. These students would be placed extremely high on the continuum of self-efficacy. They were so confident in their own ability, however, that the interaction placed them at the lowest end of the continuum related to thinking about the complexities in the course. Steve and Elaine were both good students who had come into the course with high understanding of pedagogical strategies from the previous literacy courses. Their high levels of self-confidence and their strong focus on definitions of appropriate literacy instruction from their own personal backgrounds limited their thinking about the complexity. They settled for quick and simple solutions to complex problems. They probably exemplified one type of students for whom teacher education programs have traditionally had little impact because their initial definitions of appropriate ways of teaching are so strong (Grossman, 1991). They expected to teach in the ways that they had described in their own literacy autobiographies. Steve focused on the practice with reading that his own parents had encouraged for him as a child. Elaine focused on the specific books and poems she herself had enjoyed. Even for both of these students, however, change did occur.

Steve's military background had prepared him to deliver instruction and to expect students to obediently follow his instructions. Then he encountered Kevin,

and realized his parallels between third graders and raw recruits were not really applicable. He had expected to intimidate any student into complying with his instructional objectives. He decided to try putting himself in the authority position by wearing a tie to one session, he explained in his reflection, to see if Kevin behaved differently, but Kevin did not change. Steve began to discover that he had to entice, not force, Kevin to participate. He had spent the first weeks of the semester diligently recording and counting miscues in Kevin's oral reading. His change in decision-making was supported in his retrospective think aloud, when he said, "I started out not really thinking about Kevin as just a little kid. I'm glad you told me to quit counting the miscues. I learned a lot more about Kevin's reading by counting the number of sentences where the meaning changed from his miscues." In a final reflective writing assignment, Steve described his own learning,

I evolved into a teacher of total literacy. At first I was confused about how I would teach Kevin. I concentrated on recorded reading and penmanship. After a few weeks of this, it occurred to me that activities involving reading, listening, and speaking were better than rigid instruction with a few mini-lessons. I learned just as much from Kevin as he learned from me.

Steve's tutoring report still was filled with quantifiable data, neatly organized in chart format, in a way that Allison, his partner in the peer editing step, described by commenting, "Well, it was interesting to look at the different ways people had put the tutoring reports together. Steve's was—well, just so 'Steve.'" He had found a way to speak to the parents in his own way, while still shifting slightly in his ways of speaking. Even more important, beyond the scope of this semester, was Steve's

change of conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy in comparison with his appearance, demeanor, and vocabulary when he entered our teacher education program two years earlier, looking and sounding much more like an army sergeant than a prospective teacher. When he greeted Kevin's mother and grandmother for the parent conference, he was dressed in neatly pressed slacks and a tie with school-related objects on it, and he supplemented his explanations of Kevin's writing portfolio with comments such as a crisp "Yes, ma'am, Kevin worked hard "

Elaine had entered the course as a strong student whose ideas had always dominated peer-group projects in the previous literacy courses. She had strong positive memories of her own literacy experiences in her childhood, which she directly included in her lesson plans. She had centered one tutoring session around the same poetry that she remembered reading aloud in a parent program when she was in third grade. She stated that her "primary goal in the tutoring sessions" was for her student to "complete reading Tales of a Fourth-Grade Nothing," which had been the first "chapter book" that Elaine had read. Elaine expected that her student would be exactly like she had been as a child. Elaine had recognized her own way of thinking about her student only when Tammy confronted her in the peer collaborative sessions. In her retrospective think-aloud sessions, Elaine commented,

Well, I hated to just take my group members' ideas and use them with my student. I know my ideas are good ones. But I thought Tammy had a good point when she said I couldn't expect her to like everything I did when I was little. So I tried to think about how we were different. I was an only child, and she had a brother. So I found some poems about siblings for her to read.

The difference in Elaine's decision-making was indeed subtle, but it was a change, nevertheless

Quiet Comments

Three of the preservice teachers were placed at the lower end of the continuum related to roles in collaboration because they were such quiet members of their groups at the beginning of the semester. Laurie, Valerie, and Betty made fewer comments than most of their peers, both in the collaborative groups and in class discussions. As the course proceeded, however, they added important comments to the peer collaborative sessions. All of them had well-developed understandings of literacy development and pedagogy. They each expressed an expanded understanding of literacy instruction and assessment as the semester proceeded. They would have been placed in moderate to higher positions on the continua of personal literacy history and ways of dealing with complexity. They shifted even higher on these continua as they worked with the children. Their tenuous sense of self-efficacy at the beginning of the course probably had a strong influence on all of the other continua. As they experienced what they perceived to be successful tutoring sessions, their self-efficacy seemed to grow stronger.

Laurie carefully considered her student's interests as she planned her lessons, and she was observant in analyzing his use of unusual vocabulary words. She realized she needed to think beyond a simple topic and consider the other features of a text as she selected reading materials for the sessions. In the group sessions, she rarely asked for help from her peers, but she was a willing member of the team in terms of analyzing the children who were tutored by her peers, suggesting books

and activities, and sharing materials. She went beyond course requirements to help her peers. For example, she volunteered to bring her own elementary-aged children to campus with her so that students in the first literacy methods course, which met immediately prior to her course, would have children available as they implemented a read-aloud activity. Later, she thoughtfully described her children's responses to the activity, and made specific connections to the child she was tutoring. She told me later, "I think it's a good thing they used my children instead of my tutoring student. From what my kids said, the book was kind of long. I don't think my student would have been still enough to listen."

Valerie was reserved and quiet in her interactions with faculty and peers. She was an active member of the Student National Education Association on campus, but she preferred hostessing the reception table to speaking in front of the group. Some of the reasons she was so quiet were revealed in her literacy autobiography, which was written early in the course. She had described a challenging time in her life by writing,

When my two oldest children were four and three years old, we watched Reading Rainbow. I would quickly scribble the names of the books and authors from the show. We would then go a couple of blocks to the public library and get those and other books. This was a time in my life when actually leaving the house wasn't easy. I had panic attacks. I guess the need for the kids to have books to read was stronger than any dumb panic attacks.

Valerie described herself in the present when she completed her final take-home reflective assignment by saying,

I'm still learning to have confidence in myself. In comparison to my peers, I'm more of a follower. I like to sit and listen to their ideas and comments. I then decide if I agree with them and if I want to steal an idea. I would have liked to have been in some of the other age groups related to my field to see what they were doing also. My strongest feature as a teacher is that I am willing to try any strategy to help my student to learn. The most helpful parts of the course for me were making the lesson plans and actually using them. I was able to find out if an activity was too long, short, hard, simple. Tutoring was the most beneficial lesson I have received since I've been in teacher education. (I really mean this.) One goal I have set for myself is to write some children's books that are appropriate for children like Jim to read. It was very difficult to find an easy book that wasn't just naming objects or nonsense books. The most important thing I have learned is that I can actually teach!

Her confidence was reflected again in the exit interview, when she elaborated on her response to the final self-efficacy survey. She explained, "Well, as far as strongly disagree, this one says teachers are not a very powerful influence on student achievement when all factors are considered. I just don't believe that. Because I know that with my student that I tutored, there were little things that I would say that he would just catch on. I just didn't realize how much he would start copying me. We would predict and I would say, 'Well, let's see,' and he started getting the book and asking me, and I would go, 'I don't know,' and I would give him my idea and he would

say, 'Well, let's see,' just copying me, even my inflections. Then he started writing 1999 on his papers because I always wrote the date on the bottom. So he started writing, and at first you couldn't tell it was the numbers that it should have been, but toward the end his nines were looking better. Just little things like that. So I feel like teachers really do have an influence.

Hannah was quietly thoughtful about her student's home environment. In her reflections about the tutoring sessions, she noted several interactions that she had with the parents. Her own life experience of helping to raise eleven foster children and of hosting international exchange students had obviously prepared her to be empathetic and observant. In the group sessions, she often asked questions to prompt her peers' thinking. She was also quite knowledgeable about children's literature, frequently suggesting appropriate books to her peers in her collaborative group, and frequently loaning her own copies of tradebooks for their use in their tutoring sessions.

These three students all had outstanding ideas to share with their peers, but they remained quiet in class discussions. While their interactions in their groups were limited, they still had important ideas to contribute to the discussions.

Confident Conversations

Three preservice teachers seemed to be models of increasing confidence in the conversations of the group. They would have consistently been placed high on all of the continua. Molly, Allison, and Tammy were thoughtful and reflective. They were leaders in interactions with their peers. They had good understanding of literacy development, and they were willing to share ideas and serve as mentors to

other preservice teachers. They were actively seeking ways to learn as much as possible and to expand their own understandings of themselves as teachers.

Allison had started the semester tutoring a first-grade girl who was quite hesitant to participate in any of the activities. Allison's quiet and patient encouragement had helped the child to blossom into a more confident emergent reader and writer. Allison had served as the leader in the meetings of the other tutors who were working with emergent readers, lending a guiding hand to the conversations. She pointed out aspects of the children's writing that the other group members had not recognized. She suggested ways to continue to expand the children's understandings. Allison was the student who had to change to a new child when her first one withdrew from the sessions due to transportation difficulties. Allison smoothly made the transition into her new peer group where the students were working with fourth and fifth grade students. She continued to be a collaborative participant and a leader in that group as well.

Molly was clearly the most professional member of the class in terms of her understanding of literacy strategies, her thoughtful way establishing continuity in her teaching, and in her role in the dynamics of class discussions and peer group conversations. Each class session had started by my asking the tutors if they had questions or comments and by inviting them to "show and tell" things they had done in the tutoring sessions that had worked well or that had been less successful so we could collaboratively analyze them. Molly frequently brought tradebooks she had used in her teaching and talked in class about ways she had used the books to model an important concept for her student. She located helpful strategies in the course

textbooks, created assessment and instructional strategies based on the ideas, and demonstrated them to other members of the class. She modeled the way she had used Yo! Yes! to encourage her student to read with fluency and inflection, noticing the use of exclamation marks. Several other tutors incorporated her ideas with children of varied ages. She utilized a professional journal article to develop a manipulative game for her student and after she shared her ideas in class, several other children had a chance to learn the strategy as their tutors used Molly's suggestions in their own teaching. Molly's voice was definitely that of the leader.

Tammy was also a leader, although in quite different ways from Molly. Tammy's leadership was demonstrated more in her small group than in the whole class. She was confident enough to directly question some of Elaine's assumptions about her student, in a way that Elaine was willing to accept. Tammy was willing to ask questions in class discussions, without concern for how "silly," in her words, the questions might seem. Her peers relied on her to serve as spokesperson for their shared questions. This was a significant shift for Tammy, who had been so outspoken in previous classes that her peers often had rolled their eyes and sighed when she started to speak in class. Her strongest leadership, however, was in a paired activity that she did with Samantha. Tammy and Samantha had both been absent on the day that the other tutors completed their peer evaluations of teaching portfolios. I gave them an opportunity to complete the activity outside of class time. While the other teams had completed the activity in thirty to forty-five minutes, Tammy and Samantha worked for more than two hours. At the end of the time, they appeared together in my office door. Tammy was smiling broadly, and Samantha

seemed overcome by emotions. Tammy had helped Samantha to organize her scattered lesson plans and reflections, had helped her analyze her student's writing samples, and had encouraged her until Samantha felt she had experienced a breakthrough in her own understandings about teaching. Tammy stood by Samantha's side, beaming proudly in almost a parental way, as Samantha tried to explain how much Tammy had helped her.

Shouts--Ah-Ha's

Three students made such significant gains in comparison to their performance in earlier classes that their voices were described as shouts and ah-ha's. These are students who were still just beginning to understand pedagogy at the end of the course. They were still struggling to deal with the complexities of teaching. Their confidence in their own ideas was still quite shaky. They were students for whom movement along the continuum of thinking about the complexity and along the continuum of roles in collaboration had gone from the lower end into the moderate ranges. By the end of the course, they had made strong movement toward the higher end of the self-efficacy continuum, and the changes in their conceptualizations of self were dramatic.

Betty was the Native American student in the class. She was very quiet and reserved. In my earlier classes, she had listened carefully but had seldom offered comments in class. She had had trouble with completing projects on time and according to requirements. She was one of the two students who had received special permission to do her student teaching prior to completing the current course, because of family emergencies that had made the regular sequence impossible. She

was still quiet at the beginning of the course, but she had obviously learned to be organized and professional. She utilized many literacy strategies from the textbooks from earlier courses in her teaching with her fifth grade student. She talked extensively in her retrospective think-aloud interview about how much she felt she had grown during the tutoring experience. She evaluated her own teaching carefully, especially noticing that she had not given her student much wait time before she intervened. She laughed at herself, shook her head, and commented, "Okay, Betty, at least let her hold the book and turn the pages. Oh, dear!"

Remembering her shyness of a year earlier, I was astonished when she came to my office about a week before the end of the semester and told me that her student's parents had said they could not attend the final conference session. Betty was aware that some of the tutors were worried about younger siblings joining their conferences, so she volunteered to conduct an activity with the other children while the conferences were completed. She wanted, she said, to share some of her Native American heritage with the children. On the day of the conferences, Betty dressed in traditional Native American dress, shared stories and music of her tribal group, and led all the tutors and children in a Native American dance. She was beaming. There had been an amazing shift in her confidence.

Samantha was the other student who had completed student teaching prior to taking this course. Her difficulty in scheduling had resulted from the fact that she had not successfully completed the second literacy course in the first semester she had taken it. At that point in time, she was so busy with playing on the university's softball team that she had not completed all of the assignments, so she had repeated

the course in the subsequent semester. In her interviews, she described how she had realized the importance of studying and making her teaching career her first priority. After the day that she and Tammy completed the peer activity described above, Samantha's confidence had risen dramatically. She talked again to me in her retrospective think-aloud session about that day, and how she had really begun to understand the process of reflective thinking that day. She had commented,

I think I've got it. You are wanting us to do just what we are wanting our kids to do. We want them to try things out and experiment and feel successful. That's just exactly what you want us to do. This is really weird. I've never talked to a professor about the way I am thinking before. This is really weird.

She smiled and shook her head. She repeated her comments to the outside interviewer in her exit interview. She believed she was "thinking like a teacher" now. Her new way of thinking was important as she finished the last of her degree requirements at the end of our summer session and was busily applying for teaching positions for the fall. She had utilized the state department of education's webpage to apply for teaching positions in opposite corners of the state. She spent an entire day driving to one interview, and arranged a weekend interview after a full-day's drive to the other side of the state. She was offered a pre-kindergarten teaching position in a remote rural school, where she would also help coach the softball team. The morning she received the phone call confirming her job, she bounced into the classroom, jumping and laughing with excitement. We spent the entire class period listening to her description of her job search and interviews. She read aloud her

cover letter, talking about being the second of eight siblings and about traveling throughout Europe as a high school student. She described how tempted she had been to accept a teacher's assistant position in her hometown, but she stated with great emphasis that she had not gone "through all of this to settle for not being a teacher!" Her peers were fascinated. They asked her question after question about how to do all the steps of pursuing a job as vigorously and successfully as she had done.

Jeanette was the third student who was in the "ah-ha" group. Jeanette's determination to succeed had been strong throughout the two years she had been in the teacher education program, but it was even stronger after she had survived inside her home while it was destroyed by a massive tornado just weeks before the semester began. Jeanette explained her feelings about herself:

I'm learning I have a lot of strengths. I attribute it to the tornado. I realized, I've got this wealth of information that I haven't even tapped into but just a little bit of it. Now I am beginning to grow and I can see. Now that's what I mean, that nothing goes by each day without doing something and adding to it, and the tornado and all the other experiences, going overseas, being in other countries, these are things that I can share, and I have them to share. I guess you could call it looking at life. Years ago, it was work hard, work hard, and that was all I could focus on, but now I know you need to enjoy life, take some time off for yourself, not bog yourself down. Now, I'm seeing I can do both. I can work hard and still enjoy life.

Within the group interactions during this course, Jeanette had developed a

stronger sense of self-efficacy and a willingness to assume leadership roles. Jeanette explained to Samantha in their peer group the appropriate way, in Jeanette's opinion, of supporting her student's writing. She suggested encouraging inventive spelling to the point that she would not tell the child how to spell a particular word. This explanation might be interpreted as somewhat rigid if one does not consider the context of her comments. In a sense, it was non-rigid, in comparison to Jeanette's beliefs two semesters earlier. Based on her incoming perceptions of the way that school should be done, Jeanette believed at that point that a good teacher needs to be in control of every step of instruction. It was amazingly non-rigid for Jeanette to relinquish the control of how a particular word should be spelled to a child who could then invent her own strategies for representing her ideas in text. The role Jeanette had assumed in the small group conversations was another strong contrast to that first course, when Jeanette rarely raised her eyes from her notes and textbook, never ventured a comment or question during class discussion unless I specifically directed a question to her, and timidly waited until class was over and the other students had left before she approached me with a question, always nervous to the extent of being somewhat breathless even in that one-on-one setting with me. Now, she was confidently directing the discussion in her small group. She was confidently giving ideas to her peers. Her conceptualization of herself had grown tremendously.

On-Going Voices

All of us, the students as well as myself, had made changes in our conceptualizations of ourselves as teachers. The following semester, I supervised

three of the students in their student teaching. In preparation for a national conference where I expected to share the preliminary findings of the research, I asked the three student teachers what they thought I should say about our summer class. Their responses were almost representative of different ways of viewing themselves as teachers that had seemed to emerge from the course.

Steve focused his comments at a literal level as he made comparisons. "Well," he said, "I think the best part was the activities. I really learned a lot of activities from working with Kevin. I don't think I would have had a clue about what to do with those third-graders in my student teaching if I hadn't had Kevin." Steve represented students who are still developing a flexible understanding of when and how to use instructional strategies. For these students, one value of the course was the opportunity to explore varied types of strategies in a risk-friendly collaborative environment with peers who can make suggestions and support cognitive development in a social context (Rogoff, 1990).

Molly thoughtfully analyzed her own student teaching site, and explained that she would love to be able to teach in her student teaching classroom the same way she had taught during the summer course. It just wasn't working, she explained, because of the context of the school. She was required to follow the sequence of the textbooks and packaged curriculum material. She was very comfortable, however, with explaining to me in detail how she would add writing activities and other divergent experiences to the mandated curriculum if she were the teacher in the classroom. For students like Molly, understanding more about the realities of varied influences within school contexts is an important piece of

professional development

Laurie first spoke through clenched teeth. "You know, I really hated writing all those reflections all summer " Then she smiled broadly, shrugged her shoulders, and continued, "But, you know, now that is how I think about these kids I'm still doing that reflective thinking every day I watch these kids, try to figure out what they know, and try to figure out ways to teach to help them keep learning That's just how I think " Professional experiences that can facilitate the development of reflective thinking are important in supporting novice members of the educational community so that they will not be as likely to be overwhelmed by the complexities of teaching and simply resort to teaching in the ways that they have been taught

Jeanette was not doing her student teaching at that point in time, but she was in my office to return a book she had borrowed when I asked her the same question "What should I tell the folks at the national conference about our summer course?" I asked her She beamed with a broad smile, turned two thumbs up, and replied, "You tell them, we were good!"

Jeanette had chosen words that implied the powerful influence of the group at the same time she conveyed how much her conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy had been strengthened She had captured in one phrase the components of the course that seemed to have been most powerful Situated in this specific social context, the students had shared a collaborative experience in a professional community For most of them, the experience had supported their professional development in a way that enhanced their self-efficacy and would have encouraged them to join Jeanette in stating, "We were good!" These two elements, professional

collaboration and enhanced self-efficacy, will be important support systems for these preservice teachers as they move into the next phases of their careers

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary of Findings

This study examined two aspects of the professional development of beginning teachers of literacy. One aspect was the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy. The second aspect was the decisions and decision-making processes employed by the preservice teachers in an initial teaching experience. In summary, considering specific analysis of data sources and holistic construction of understanding of the participants in the study, answers to each of the research questions were developed.

Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy

1. How do the preservice teachers conceptualize themselves as teachers of literacy?

These preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy were diverse and personal. Five dimensions of their conceptualizations of self that were examined in this study included their personal literacy history, their sense of self-efficacy, their understandings of literacy instruction, their thinking about the complexities in the course, and their roles and interactions in the social context of the course.

Their conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy reflected diverse

influences from their own personal literacy histories as children and as adults, in educational contexts, at home, and in other contexts. Their conceptualization of self was evident in the present, both in the context of this course and in other settings, and as a projected conceptualization of self as a “good teacher” in the future.

Changes in Conceptualizations

2. How do the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of themselves as a teacher of literacy develop or change, if at all, over the semester-long teaching experiences?

The conceptualizations of self as a teacher of literacy did indeed change for all of the students. The conceptualizations shifted in response to circumstances and interactions. The changes were multidirectional, along each of the dimensions, and interrelated among the dimensions. The preservice teachers' understandings of their roles in literacy instruction were expanded and clarified in some ways by each of the students, although there were clearly many areas where the preservice teachers' understandings remained novice level. Some changes were very subtle, while others were dramatic. In at some least some way, however, each preservice teacher articulated positive changes in his or her own conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy.

Types of Decisions and Decision-Making Processes as a Teacher of Literacy

3. What types of decisions and decision-making processes do the preservice teachers employ during the semester?

The decision-making processes were complex and addressed many types of decisions. A primary emphasis was on the type of relationship they wanted to

establish with their student and the appropriate interpersonal interactions they wanted to employ, such as ways of addressing the child's interests, scaffolding the child's success with the tutoring activities, and dealing with resistant learners. Another emphasis in their decisions related to ways of developing assessment information. They made decisions about describing the child they were teaching and that child's literacy understandings. They also made curricular decisions about affective and self-efficacy goals for the child, about key concepts that needed to be taught, and about selecting strategies and materials that would support teaching appropriately based on their assessments.

The preservice teachers made decisions about their interactions in the particular social context of the course. In addition to decisions about their interactions with the child they were tutoring and his/her parents, they made decisions about their roles in collaborations with their peers, in their interactions with me as the course instructor, and with persons outside of the actual context of the course such as the outside interviewer, other friends and family members, and other professionals.

The decision-making processes employed were sometimes intuitive, based on personal experiences. The processes were sometimes reflective, based on their own assessments and ideas. They were mediated by the social interactions. Most often, the processes were influenced by multiple components among these factors.

Conceptualizations of Self Related to Decisions and Decision-making Processes

4. How do these decisions and decision-making processes relate to their concept of self as a teacher of literacy?

The decisions often interacted with multiple components of their own conceptualizations of self and their personal characteristics as teachers of literacy. A series of five descriptive continua were developed to describe the interactions between each of the five dimensions of their conceptualizations of self and their decisions and decision-making processes.

No Easy Answers

As an overall statement of the findings, data from this study supports the idea that learning to teach is not simple, and the complex questions that are raised about how to make the process more effective will not have simple answers (Bullough, 1989). The complexity was perhaps the most important finding of the study. Examining any of the components in isolation might have missed the implications of the interrelated nature of development in the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self and of their decisions and decision-making processes.

Implications

Among the dimensions of the preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self as teachers of literacy, the study helped to describe important implications, both for preservice teachers and for teacher educators. Implications as described relate to each of the dimensions of conceptualizations of self.

The role of one's personal literacy history in developing views of self and of the world of teaching was a strong finding in this study. It is a probable factor in the resistance to change that characterizes many educational settings (Lortie, 1975, Grossman, 1991). For some of the preservice teachers, concepts from their childhood were so powerful that they overpowered other components. For others,

the concepts from their own experiences became important ways of understanding their teaching, their students, and themselves as teachers. Implications for teacher educators include the importance of helping preservice teachers recognize the influence of their own literacy histories on the ways that they teach. Based on this notion, the importance of "reconstructing or reorganizing one's experiences" (Dewey, 1916, p. 76) becomes paramount. In this regard, the components of the study that seemed most helpful were the personal reflections and interactions among their peers. Making these types of understandings more explicit for novice teachers may be one way to replace the "apprenticeship of observation" (Lortie, 1975) with a more effective type of "cognitive apprenticeship" (Rogoff, 1990). In this perspective, development is facilitated through interactions with peers as well with the "more capable others" that Vygotsky described (Vygotsky, 1978, Dixon-Krauss, 1996).

Implications may also be drawn in relation to the preservice teachers' sense of self-efficacy (Chester & Beaudine, 1996, Henck & Melnick, 1992, Tsschannen-Moren, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). In this literacy methods course, the collaborations served as a facilitator in the development of the preservice teachers' own self-efficacy and conceptualizations of self, as every student, even those who were struggling with the concepts, took a turn with sharing ideas or materials with their peers. In at some least some way, each preservice teacher articulated positive changes in his or her own conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy. The feeling of success that came from working with the children led to a sequence of ongoing success for every tutor, even for those whose self-efficacy fluctuated. The

role of the group was important for the students to develop an increased belief in themselves as collaborators. They had been able to add their voices to the conversations, and they began to value their ideas in a different way (Rogoff, 1990). Implications for teacher education related to this dimension of conceptualization of self include the importance of providing experiences where preservice teachers can perceive themselves to be successful. A supportive component in this course was the dialogue in the instructor-tutor exchanges in the reflective journal entries about each tutoring session, where I could point out the positive components of their teaching, as well as provide scaffolding for their instructional ideas. Another supportive component was the peer collaborative group format (Kasten & Ferraro, 1995), where each tutor had an opportunity to describe the child they were tutoring to their peers, who then provided positive feedback and provided the instructional scaffolding.

The processes of the course served as a vehicle to strengthen the preservice teachers' understandings of theory and pedagogy. The structure of the course provided a risk-friendly environment for the students to explore their ideas about literacy instruction (Graber, 1996). As they brainstormed, collaborated, and researched, they expanded their understandings of appropriate teaching and of themselves as teachers. These beginning members of the profession of teaching found benefits from the opportunity to plan literacy activities for a specific child, based not on standardized assessment data, but on their own ideas about literacy and literacy instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 1996). As they watched and observed, they gathered the data they needed for planning the next steps of instruction. In a

recurring cycle, the assessment-reflection process supported their emerging understanding of an individual child and of themselves as teachers. Through these interactions, the tutors learned in a reciprocal way from the children. An important role of literacy teacher-educators is to help expand understandings of theory and pedagogy. The experience-based exploration was a helpful component for most students. The students who expressed that they valued feedback were the ones who were struggling the most with the course. An important implication is related to the Vygotskian perspectives of the role of the more capable other (Dixon-Krauss, 1996, Vygotsky, 1978). Even at the university level, teachers should provide enough scaffolding and support so that the students can succeed with the task at hand. For the students who are struggling, more support should be available. For the students who are more comfortable with the teaching responsibilities, freedom to explore should be encouraged while still providing whatever types of scaffolding are appropriate. The course components provided the opportunity for me as the instructor and researcher to be a participant-observer in the class dialogues, to develop a closer rapport through the interview processes, and to assess the students' pedagogical understandings or misunderstandings by listening to the tapes of the collaborative sessions. Implications include the importance of developing means for university instructors to participate more effectively.

The students had an opportunity to develop a more reflective, collaborative vision of teaching (Collier, 1999; Liston & Zeichner, 1987; Schon, 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). The chance to observe and describe children's literacy development helped some of the students move into analytical types of reflection.

In addition to analyzing the children, the preservice teachers benefited from analyzing their own teaching. In the context of this course, Allison's use of the session audiotapes to analyze her own teaching demonstrates one example. Molly's use of her written reflections as a tool for her own thinking was another example (Vygotsky, 1976). Implications for teacher educators relate to the importance of incorporating reflective activities in coursework.

Creating a vehicle for conversation was supported by the peer teams which helped the students to recognize and value different perspectives. Sometimes the enhanced perspectives came from sharing of ideas and suggestions. Sometimes the changes came more directly as one of the other students confronted an idea or challenged an assumption held from their own life experiences. Even when the confrontation seemed to make little change from the perspective of the preservice teachers whose ideas were extremely rigid, the peers who had confronted the rigid ideas sometimes expressed their own heightened awareness of issues of literacy theory and instruction that they might not have considered without the conversations. The dialogues truly became sites of meaning construction. The reciprocal nature of learning was evident (Rogoff, 1996). The interactions helped create an increased awareness of the value of collaboration for some of the students. Implications include the importance of providing course activities that will encourage dialogue and collaboration as part of the reflective process.

The course also helped to mediate an increased understanding of the situated nature of literacy and literacy instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1976). The study added to the knowledge base about the role of

collaboration in the initial teaching experiences of literacy teachers and about ways that teacher educators can assist in this phase of establishing new teachers' professional decision-making. Research on collaboration in student teaching experiences is mainly situated in professional development schools, and the studies appeared mostly concerned with describing (or prescribing) collaboration efforts rather than with examining their effect on beginning teachers (Wideen et al., 1998). The current study examined a different classroom context and its influence on the self-efficacy of the preservice teachers. It also examined the role of collaboration with peers in the students' evolving beliefs about literacy instruction and assessment and their emerging sense of self as a decision-maker in this setting. The social context of the course was collaborative and risk-friendly, and the students all seemed to respond positively to this kind of environment (Graber, 1996). Even in this one-on-one setting, they began to understand the complexities more clearly and to realize that searching for simple solutions will not provide real answers. Implications include the notion that initial teaching experiences that provide support from peers and from course instructors, with limited amounts of complexity for the novice teachers to handle, seemed to be beneficial in these initial teaching encounters.

The overall implications from this study, in summary, include the importance of both the interpersonal interactions and the social contexts of literacy methods courses in the development of preservice teachers' conceptualizations of self and their decisions and decision-making processes. The most valued components of the course from the perspective of the preservice teachers were their

reflections, the tapes of their tutoring sessions, and the collaborative group sessions. Implications would stress the value of supportive components in teacher education programs, to serve as support systems for the development of all of the dimensions of one's conceptualization of self as a teacher of literacy.

Limitations

One limitation of the study was the small number of participants. In addition, nine of the eleven participants were non-traditional age college students who had varied types of experiences with children. Findings from examinations of other types of populations may not align with the findings from this group of participants.

A second limitation of the study was the fact that it examined only one semester of the preservice teachers' professional preparation. Other research has indicated that long-range interventions are more likely to produce on-going impacts on teaching, and longitudinal studies are more effective in providing long-term information about teacher development.

Another limitation of the study may have been my role as both the researcher and the instructor for the course. Every attempt was made to establish a research environment that was risk-friendly and that the students would not perceive to be threatening to their course grades. Some data was not examined until the course grades had been posted. Nevertheless, the students may still have been influenced by my role as they decided to become participants in the research and as they completed the activities of the course. Many of the data sources were self-report instruments, and my role as both researcher and instructor may have shaped

the students' responses as well as my analysis of the data

Another limitation was that this study required a time-intensive level of support from the perspective of the teacher educator, and was also time-intensive in terms of the amount of class time that was invested in collaboration. Providing this level of support and commitment of time is not easy given the constraints of requirements on teacher preparation programs

Future Research

Further research may examine processes that can help teacher educators more clearly understand the multidimensionality of their students' conceptualization of self in ways that will effectively facilitate change and development of university students. My close knowledge of the students helped me to analyze the data in a more holistic way than I could have done simply by reading the transcriptions of the interviews and the student-generated writing. Further research may investigate the impact of the instructor/researcher relationship found in this study

The issue of self-report instruments was an important concern in this research. Further research studies may examine other types of data sources that will provide richer forms of data.

This study was based on a limited number of students, and nine of the eleven students were non-traditional age students with extensive experiences with children. Further research may examine the responses of diverse types of students to the format of the course.

The role of the collaborative sessions may have served as support for the preservice teachers' developing an awareness of the value of working in a

collaborative role. The experience with their peers in this course may help facilitate their willingness to work with other faculty members in a collaborative role in their student teaching and future classrooms. Longitudinal studies will be needed to observe their participation in those kinds of social contexts.

The voices in our conversations were indeed "interwoven" (Newman, 1991). Instead of eleven individual students and one instructor, we had become a group, a community of practice (Grisham et al., 1999), a holistic collection of teachers, pursuing our individual professional understandings, but in mutually reciprocal ways so that each of us influenced and was influenced by each of the rest of us. Even the informal conversations that I have had with some of the students since the completion of the course lend credence to the concept that there are no easy answers or quick ways to shape the development of conceptualization of self in a field as complex as teaching. Jeanette and Betty have both returned to my office in the following semester at times when they were feeling overwhelmed and less capable than they did in the supportive environment of the course. Betty stated that she, "just needed someone to talk to." On-going support and mentoring are important, and longitudinal studies are needed to understand ways that this support will be helpful in other social contexts.

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APPENDIX A

Themes and Dimensions of Preservice Teachers' Conceptualizations of Self as a Teacher of Literacy and Related Continua of Decision-making Processes

One Development of Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy is Multidimensional.

- Dimension: Personal Literacy History
- Dimension: Sense of Self-Efficacy
- Dimension: Understandings of Literacy Instruction
- Dimension: Thinking about Complexity
- Dimension: Interactions in the Social Context

Two Decisions and Decision-Making Processes Related to Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with Personal Literacy History

Uses experience with other children as well as self as a child	Recognizes and honors differences between student and self	Focuses on own literacy history and assumes student is like self
--	--	--

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy high, confident in own ability	Self-efficacy moderate, emerging confidence	Self-efficacy low, lack of confidence
--	---	---------------------------------------

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with Understandings of Literacy Instruction

Knowledgeable of theory, applies strategies appropriately and flexibly	Able to plan instruction by seeking sources (textbooks, etc.)	Plans intuitively, without understanding of theory and strategies
--	---	---

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with Thinking about Complexity

Reflective thinker, thinks abstractly, deals with complexity	Recognizes varied complexities, learning to analyze, deals with complexity through support	Seeks simple solutions from external sources, complexity overwhelms
--	--	---

Continuum: Decision-Making Interacts with the Social Context

Facilitates analysis process, mentor to peers, open and willing to share	Participatory, seeks and offers help, cautious about value of own ideas	Little facilitation of collaboration (quiet or domineering)
--	---	---

Three Development of Conceptualization of Self as a Teacher of Literacy is Multidirectional and Interrelated.

APPENDIX B

Interview Formats/Questions

All interviews were conversational and semi-structured. The preservice teachers brought their teaching portfolios of lessons plans, reflections, writing samples, etc. and were invited to talk about their portfolios or to add any topics of their choosing. The indicated prompts were embedded in the conversations.

The first interview was conducted early in the semester. Semi-structured interview prompts included:

- (1) Tell me about your tutoring sessions.
- (2) What are you learning about your student?
- (3) What are you learning about yourself as a teacher?
- (4) What are your previous experiences with children?
- (5) What goals would you set for yourself in this class?
- (6) What questions do you have or what else would you like to talk about?

The second interview, conducted approximately mid-way through the semester, included the following prompts:

- (1) Talk about your tutoring sessions.
- (2) Describe in detail the process you are using for planning your tutoring sessions.
- (3) What resources are you using as you plan?
- (4) What changes are you making during the tutoring sessions?
- (5) Talk about the peer collaborative sessions.
- (6) Do you have any questions or anything else you would like to talk about?

In addition, they responded to their own peer interview questions.

A third interview conference was conducted near the end of the semester. The semi-structured conversation included the prompts:

- (1) Talk about your tutoring sessions.
- (2) Talk about your expectations and goals and your questions and concerns about becoming a teacher.
- (3) What parts of the course have you found helpful?
- (4) What suggestions can you give to help make the experience you have had in this class better?

This session also included a retrospective think-aloud about one of their tutoring sessions. During the interview, the tutor watched a video tape and talked about the session. As they talked, I asked unstructured interview questions, focusing on the decisions they made during the tutoring sessions and their rationale for any changes or adaptations they may have made.

An exit interview was conducted by a neutral interviewer at the end of the course. The prompts included:

- (1) Talk about your answers to the surveys.
- (2) Talk about the processes involved during the course.
- (3) What other comments would you like to make?

The students were informed that I would not listen to the tapes of these interviews until after the course was completed and grades had been posted.

APPENDIX C

Survey Instruments

Self-Efficacy Survey –modified from:

Chester, M. D. & Beaudin, B. Q. (1996). Efficacy beliefs of newly hired teachers in urban schools. American Educational Research Journal, 33, pp. 233-237.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

I can get good results with students other teachers have found difficult

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Children are so private and complex, it will be hard to know if I am getting through to them

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

When it comes right down to it, most of a student's motivation depends on his or her environment so a teacher can have only limited influence

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

If I try really hard, I will be able to get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated student

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

There is a limited amount that teachers can do to raise the performance of students who begin school with low abilities.

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

I am uncertain about how to teach some of the students I will have in my classes

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

If students aren't disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline at school

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

My teacher training program has given me the necessary skills to become an effective teacher

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

At times, I won't know how to get my student to make academic progress

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

When my student does better on literacy activities than usual, it will usually be because I have found alternative methods for teaching that student

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Teachers are not a very powerful influence on student achievement when all factors are considered

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

If parents would do more with their children, I could do more

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

If my student becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him/her

Strongly agree		Mildly agree		Mildly disagree		Strongly disagree
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Initial Literacy Beliefs Survey
 modified from Literacy Orientation Survey
 Lenski, Wham, & Griffey (1998). Literacy Orientation Survey: A survey to clarify
 teachers' beliefs and practices. Reading research and instruction, 37, 217-236.

Directions: Read the following statements and circle the response that indicates your feelings or behaviors regarding literacy and literacy instruction

1. The purpose of reading instruction is to teach children to recognize words and to pronounce them correctly.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. Reading and writing are unrelated processes.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

3. Students should be treated as individual learners rather than as a group

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. Students should use "fix-up strategies" such as rereading when text meaning is unclear.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

5. Teachers should read aloud to students on a daily basis.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. It is not necessary for students to write text on a daily basis.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

7. Students should be encouraged to sound out all unknown words.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. The purpose of reading is to understand print.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. Reading instruction should always be delivered to the whole class at the same time.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|---|---|----------------|
| 10. Grouping for reading instruction should always be based on ability. | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Subjects should be integrated across the curriculum. | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Students need to write for a variety of purposes. | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Parents' attitudes toward literacy affect my students' progress. | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. The major purpose of reading assessment is to determine a student's placement in reading material. | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Parental reading habits in the home affect their children's attitudes toward reading | strongly disagree | | | | strongly agree |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Literacy Survey for Tutoring Sessions
modified from Literacy Orientation Survey

Lenski, Wham, & Griffey (1998). Literacy Orientation Survey: A survey to clarify teachers' beliefs and practices. Reading research and instruction, 37, 217-236.

Directions: Read the following statements and circle the response that indicates your feelings or behaviors regarding literacy and literacy instruction

1. The purpose of reading instruction is to teach children to recognize words and to pronounce them correctly.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

2. When my student reads text, I ask questions such as "What does it mean?"

never				always
1	2	3	4	5

3. Reading and writing are unrelated processes.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. When planning instruction, I take into account the needs of my student by including activities that meet their social, emotional, physical, and affective needs.

never				always
1	2	3	4	5

5. Students should be treated as individual learners rather than as a group.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

6. I schedule time every tutoring session for student-selected reading and writing experiences

never				always
1	2	3	4	5

7. Students should use "fix-up strategies" such as rereading when text meaning is unclear

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

8. I read aloud to my student every tutoring session.

strongly disagree				strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

9. I encourage my student to monitor his/her comprehension as they read.

never				always
1	2	3	4	5

10. I use a variety of prereading strategies with my student.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
11. It is not necessary for students to write text on a daily basis.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
12. Students should be encouraged to sound out all unknown words.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
13. The purpose of reading is to understand print.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
14. I can recommend ideas about how parents can help my student with school.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
15. I organize my tutoring sessions so that my student has an opportunity to write every day.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
16. Teachers should ask the parents of their students to share their time, knowledge, and expertise in my classroom.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
17. My student generally moves through the processes of prewriting, drafting, and revising.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
18. In my tutoring sessions, I organize reading, writing, speaking, and listening around key concepts.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
19. Reading instruction should always be delivered to the whole class at the same time.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
20. I teach my tutoring sessions using themes or integrated units.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5

21. Grouping for reading instruction should always be based on ability.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
22. Subjects should be integrated across the curriculum.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
23. Teachers should use a variety of grouping patterns to teach reading such as skill games, interest groups, whole group, and individual instruction.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
24. I ask my student to write for a variety of purposes.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
25. I take advantage of opportunities to learn about teaching by attending professional conferences and/or graduate classes and by reading professional journals.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
26. Parents' attitudes toward literacy affect my student's progress.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
27. The major purpose of reading assessment is to determine a student's placement in reading materials.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
28. I assess my student's reading progress primarily by teacher-made and/or book tests.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5
29. Parental reading habits in the home affect their children's attitudes toward reading.
 strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 strongly agree 5
30. At the end of each tutoring session, I reflect on the effectiveness of my instructional decisions.
 never 1 2 3 4 always 5

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent Forms

TUTOR INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORM for participation in a study entitled

Conversations among multiple voices Merging and emerging stories of beginning literacy teachers as professional decision-makers

conducted through the University of Oklahoma
by Linda J. McElroy, doctoral candidate
Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, Literacy

This research project will investigate aspects of the topic of beginning teacher development including the preservice teachers' sense of self as a teacher of literacy, their beliefs about literacy instruction, and their reflective inquiry process as they make professional decisions in their beginning experiences as a literacy teacher and as they participate in collaborative reflections with their peers in the teacher education program. These elements will be examined through their process of inquiry in their initial teaching experiences, when they identify their own questions or decision points as a process of problem posing, and when they identify the problem-solving strategies and resources they have found helpful in making their professional decisions.

The data will be collected through a variety of procedures, including observations, interviews and retrospective think-alouds with preservice teachers, analysis of documents produced by preservice teachers both individually and in small groups, including their literacy autobiographies, responses to prompts done in class and as take-home assignments, lessons plans, reflective journal entries following their teaching sessions, audiotape and video recordings of class sessions, small group discussions, and tutoring sessions. Most data sources will be part of regular class assignments. Focus participants may be asked to complete two additional interviews of approximately one hour each.

The preservice teachers who participate in the study may benefit from participation in this study by learning more about the factors that influence their individual sense of professional identity and by reflecting on their developing understandings of and beliefs about literacy instructional practices. Society could benefit from understanding better the processes of preservice teacher learning and development and the components that support these processes. The research will entail no risks to participating group members.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and should involve no additional time outside of regularly assigned activities for the course. Data collection should be complete by Aug. 8, 1999. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. Participating preservice teachers are free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

Participants will not be identified by their own names when the research is reported. Only people who are associated with the research will have access to the data in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Participants agree to allow copies of the observation notes, class transcripts, interview data, tapes, and documents produced by the preservice teachers to become part of the researcher's property. The data will be stored in the researcher's private office, in a file which is kept locked at all times. Data will be kept on file until no longer needed.

The research should involve minimal risk of injury. The research will create no additional risks than a preservice teacher would ordinarily encounter during participation in university coursework. Should a participant become injured during the course of the research, he or she assumes responsibility for protection.

If you have questions regarding the rights of research participants, you may contact the Office of Research Administration at (405) 325-4757. For other concerns about this research project, please contact Linda J. McElroy at (405) 527-3874.

By signing below, I agree to participate in the project listed above. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Participant signature _____ Date _____

PARENT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The research described below is being conducted under the auspices of the University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus. This document is a formal request for permission from you to have your child participate as a volunteer in the study described below.

CONSENT FORM for participation in a study entitled
Conversations among multiple voices: Merging and emerging stories of beginning literacy teachers as professional decision-makers

Investigator: Linda J. McElroy, doctoral candidate
Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, Reading/Literacy
College of Education
University of Oklahoma
Phone: 325-1498

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Pamela Fry and Dr. Bonnie Konopak, Co-Chair
Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum
College of Education
University of Oklahoma
Phone: 325-1498

The investigator is a doctoral candidate at the University of Oklahoma who is studying reading and literacy in the Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum. Her research centers on how beginning teachers make decisions related to teaching children to read and write.

Your child's tutor at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will be making audiotapes and a videotape of some of the tutoring sessions with your child at USAO. The tapes will be used for the tutor to analyze his/her own teaching. Children's writing samples may also be analyzed to help the tutors understand how children learn to write. The focus of the research study is on the tutors and their own learning about becoming a teacher. The children will not be identified in any way in the research study.

The research will not require any additional time beyond the normal tutoring sessions. No risk is anticipated to participants. Data collection should be complete by Aug. 8, 1999. Participation in this study is voluntary, and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. Participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Participants will not be identified by their own names when the research is reported. Only people who are associated with the research will have access to the data in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

The research should involve minimal risk of injury. The research will create no additional risks than a child would ordinarily encounter during participation in tutoring sessions. Should a participant become injured during the course of the research, he or she assumes responsibility for protection.

If you have questions regarding the rights of research participants, you may contact the Office of Research Administration at (405) 325-4757. For other concerns about this research project, please contact Linda J. McElroy at (405) 527-3874.

This is to certify that I, _____, give permission to have

(Parent/guardian's full name)

my child or legal ward, _____
(child's name)

participate in a study of how beginning teachers learn ways to teach children to read and to write as part of an authorized research program of the University of Oklahoma under the supervision of Linda J. McElroy, Doctoral Candidate. I understand that my child or ward may refuse to participate or may withdraw from the study at any time without any problem.

date

Parent/guardian signature

CHILD INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The research described below is being conducted under the auspices of the University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus. This document is a formal request for permission from you to have your child participate as a volunteer in the study described below.

CONSENT FORM for participation in a study entitled
Conversations among multiple voices: Merging and emerging stories of beginning literacy teachers
as professional decision-makers

Investigator: Linda J. McElroy, doctoral candidate
Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, Reading/Literacy
College of Education
University of Oklahoma
Phone: 325-1498

Your tutor's teacher is working on a project to learn more about how teachers plan reading and writing activities for children. Information for the project will come from the things you and your tutor do during your tutoring sessions. They will tape some of the sessions, look at your writing, and ask you questions to help them decide what to plan for your next lesson. You will not need to do anything extra. It is okay if you change your mind anytime.

It is all right if my tutor tapes my tutoring sessions and asks me questions about reading and writing.

Child Signature