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A Study Of Southwest Florida High School Reading Teachers And The Implmentation of Scientifically Based Reading Research Instruction

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A STUDY OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA SECONDARY
SCHOOL READING TEACHERS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
SCIENTIFICALLY BASED READING RESEARCH INSTRUCTION

by

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ABSTRACT

The literacy mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) swiftly and directly have an impact on reading teachers. The literacy directives of the act constitute a paradigm shift in reading reform, especially at the secondary level. Literacy directives require state and district level administrators to focus on secondary reading teacher pre and in service training. Effective secondary reading teachers must be well-versed in the foundations of Scientifically Based Reading Research.

Florida is among the first states to implement six competencies of professional development that leads to endorsement in the teaching of reading. Florida teachers of secondary reading are required to earn a reading endorsement. Professional development founded in Scientifically Based Reading Research is a knowledge-driven process. The process requires teachers to be actively engaged in action research that links theory to practice. School districts are to train teachers to implement recommended strategic teaching tools in their classrooms. Learning the teaching strategies of reading requires educators to commit time and mental energy to complete a robust professional development track.

With concern for the success of reading teachers, this qualitative study utilized case studies and the interpretive approach to investigate the question: Will secondary reading teachers implement Scientifically Based Reading Research in the classroom? The research examined the attitudes, reactions, and classroom practices of eight teachers who were assigned to teach secondary reading. Data gathering spanned two

semesters and an intervening in an urban Southwest Florida school district. The purpose of the research was to investigate whether participants chose to use the prescribed interventions of Scientifically Based Reading Research to meet their students' diverse literacy needs. Data gathering for research included participant interviews and classroom observations that took place over eight months. Survey and evaluation instruments were based on the teacher evaluation templates of Dr. Thomas Guskey.

The results of this dissertation are encouraging but mixed. The researcher discovered that secondary teachers of reading who experienced at least one class of reading professional development were discovering a climate of collaboration, a body of research, and inconstant implementation success. Teachers gained more awareness of their roles, began to employ the metalanguage of reading terminology, and acquired new teaching tools. The research also uncovered teacher perspectives of the negative factors of mandated professional development: time pressures, curriculum frustrations, needs for follow-up collaborations to continue expert support, and assumptions of administrator neglect.

The one exclusive sign of thorough knowledge is the power of teaching.

Aristotle

Very special thanks to my children, Robert and Jill Phaneuf. Their understanding and patience, as I faced the long-term challenges of completing coursework and then the research project, inspired me to continue. They urged me on and made me promise to never give up. To Michael, thank you for always having my back. This dissertation is the product of your constant companionship, love, and encouragement. To my friends, my peers, my pastor, the Reverend Dr. John Adler, to my fellow reading teachers, and to my God, you have all in your own ways contributed to my success. Thank you.

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This study would not have been possible without the help and assistance of my adviser, Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe at the University of Central Florida. I feel fortunate to be participating in the reforms of the secondary reading profession while at the same time having access to Dr. Zygouris-Coe's research base of professional knowledge. Dr Zygouris-Coe remains at the forefront of the paradigm shift that encompasses the teaching of reading, nationally, as well as in Florida. I was able to constantly use the ongoing research, both prior and emerging, that she has made available to all Florida teachers of reading. I am especially grateful to her for patient understanding of the lengthy process of this dissertation.   Knowing that she was standing alongside the research helped me tobecome immersed in all things about reading.

I would also like to acknowledge with appreciation all of my committee members, who were my professors as well: to Dr. Kay Allen, whose joy for learning is charismatically contagious, to Dr. Larry Holt, who generously shares so much of his expert practical teaching knowledge, to Dr. Laura Blasi, who gives me confidence in my research abilities, and to Dr. Roger Green who allows me to politically vent. Thank you all.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Rationale

The Florida Department of Education, local school districts, and university researchers are in the midst of aligning the classroom practices of teachers with professional development for teachers of reading. Under the requirements of No Child Left Behind (US Department of Education, 2006) and its embedded, prescribed Reading First directives, federal literacy directives immediately have an impact on secondary teachers of reading. The professional development provisions of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) direct teachers of secondary students to be to be well versed in reading pedagogy.

Scientifically Based Reading Research: Definitions

Teaching is art, craft and science (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2006). The Reading First initiatives of NCLB dictate that professional development for teachers must be based upon scientifically driven research. (USDOE, 2006). Research from educational settings consisting of empirical data about student and teacher performance that is then used to compare, evaluate, and monitor progress, defines Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR). SBRR is empirical evidence that may resolve competing teaching approaches, and generates a body of cumulative knowledge that avoids short-term fads, fancies, and biases (Whitehurst, 2001).

In 2003, the Florida Department of Education added a Reading Endorsement for teachers of reading that met SBRR guidelines. Earning the Florida Reading Endorsement requires the interested teacher to complete 300 hours of professional

development time in structured competencies (Just Read! Florida, 2006). SBRR

underpins the six reading competencies that reading endorsed secondary teachers

must complete:

> #1: Foundations in Language & Cognition

> #2: Foundations of Research-Based Practices

> #3: Foundations of assessment

> #4/5: Foundations and Application of Differentiated Instruction

> #6: Demonstration of Accomplishment (Portfolio)

The underlying assumption of all of competencies is that scientific research

increases teachers' academic autonomy, professional initiatives, and curriculum

expertise. Successful secondary reading instruction depends on whether the teachers

have developed all three pedagogical components (International Reading Association,

1997). Retraining in the teaching of reading requires actively engaged and committed

teachers.

<div align="center">Scientifically Based Reading Research Assumptions</div>

The research in this dissertation is one look at the experiences of secondary

teachers of reading as not only as they progress through the Florida competencies in

reading, but also as they attempt to implement what they have learned in the

classroom. The researcher began the study with the assumption that the participants

would finish their competencies and implement the training inside their classrooms.

The experiences they learned and shared would become part of their daily classroom

routines.

Scientifically Based Reading Research: Reform Initiatives

Under the current paradigm of the reading reforms of No Child Left Behind, practitioners will adopt efficient, empiric instructional strategies for diverse secondary classrooms. Teaching strategies must facilitate rapid reading acquisition. Despite a sizable group of research documents that support the effectiveness of Scientifically Based Reading Research, research based strategies are not likely to be disseminated among middle and high school teachers without intensive retraining (Alfassi, 2004). Implementation of instructional practices that are designed to assist struggling readers depends on whether or not the middle or high school teacher chooses to use them

As developing experts in reading instruction, teachers can do three things to improve literacy expertise: become more informed about NCLB Reading First initiatives, engage in dialogue and in service with their peers about school district improvement, and participate in helpful professional development programs, training and technical assistance that is offered by colleges and universities (Morrow, 2003). Professors and graduate students at Florida colleges and universities are at the forefront of developing a research base that is capable of being promoted by federal policy. Postgraduate research in reading pedagogy drives Florida school district professional development reform.

NCLB Reading First initiatives provide Florida schools with unprecedented professional development funding. Monies are to be used for teacher retraining in the use of an array of intensive interventions: reliable screening tools, researched reading curriculums, and progress monitoring tools and assessments. Legislated reading

mandates will be ineffective if they are focused on the wrong dimensions, artlessly employed, and practically neglected (Torgesen, 2004). Successful results in the reading classroom depend heavily on the retrained teacher's acceptance and implementation.

The usefulness of Scientifically Based Reading Research has yet to be conclusively proven. The major problem with the research is that it cannot tell us what works with everyone, everywhere, every time (Allington, 2004). Older poor readers need more comprehensive expert instruction to become proficient readers. The difference between what teachers should be doing, and what teachers actually do, depends on a variety of neglected factors that prescribed curriculums cannot reveal. Too much of previous reading research remains dormant and inaccessible. Research to practice is implemented in single, or segmented, evidentiary pieces.

Advance studies reveal that older poor readers can be remediated more quickly with appropriate, explicit, and direct instruction. The accomplished secondary teacher presents middle and high school students with a host of Scientifically Based Research Reading strategies that can be used before, during, and after reading and across the core curriculum (Early, Fryer, Leckbee, and Walton, 2004). Well into the secondary grades, the delivery of reading instruction must be intentional, focused and must have all the necessary components that a well prepared and time supported teacher needs (Moats, 2005). Retrained teachers can revisit curriculum application opportunities, assess the degree to which their students missed foundational building blocks as emergent readers, and apply the latest reading research during classroom opportunities.

Limitations of the Research

The primary limitation of the research undertaking was avoiding a subjective
stance . I continuously examined my personal assumptions as a co-participant in the
professional development mandated by reading reform. Co-participants must tread
carefully and always remember to maintain objective distance between the
respondents and the researcher (Merriam, 1998). The research was designed to
parallel the course of the professional development track of the participants.
Cautionary methods included researcher listening skills and maintaining an "other"
stance.

Theoretical Perspectives

The demands of middle and high school content area reading require
knowledgeable, qualified, and experienced teachers. Many secondary teachers do not
possess the special knowledge to teach struggling readers, nor do they have adequate
materials or instructional time to promote literacy. Core content area teachers may
not have been previously prepared to assist students with problems in reading
(Ingersoll, 2003). The requirements for Florida high school graduates to pass the
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) continue to increase. Scientifically
Based Reading Research provides the reform impetus for qualified secondary reading
teachers to learn, and then implement, effective teaching strategies that are assumed
to more quickly remediate struggling readers.

At the secondary level, practical teaching is no longer enough. Teachers are
expected to be aware of reading research that can be directly and transparently linked
to classroom realities (Nuthall, 2004). Teachers who revise their delivery of

instruction, and who reform and reshape their perspectives on what works best, have a greater chance of reaching their struggling readers (Cobb, 2004). Secondary teachers who are knowledgeable in the direct instruction skills and strategies, as articulated by the systematic instruction of Scientifically Based Reading Research, have better successes in teaching secondary students to develop higher order critical thinking and reading skills (Howerton and Thomas, 2004).

The improvement of U.S students' reading achievement is an overarching national educational goal. Secondary language arts teachers are to improve reading achievement and raise middle and high school students' reading scores on mandated standardized tests (Bush, 2001). It is a political necessity for K-12 reading teachers to be acutely aware of whom or what is guiding their classroom teaching (Stephens, 1998). Historically, secondary teachers have autonomously selected their favorite pedagogical strategies and literacy learning accommodations.

A paradigm of change and reform began with No Child Left Behind. School districts are burdened by the enormous national, state, and local political pressures that mandate classroom student reading success. Federal monies are available only to state and local school districts that can provide swift and direct evidence that quality teachers undergo professional development in the teaching of reading (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

Focus of the Study

There is a paucity of research on how language arts and reading teachers, particularly those who are participating in professional development, implement what they have learned in re-training. This lack of research presents an opportunity to

examine teacher change. The present dissertation examines the institution of teacher professional development and focuses on middle and high school teachers' roles during and after acquisition of Scientifically Based Researched Reading professional development. As Florida secondary teachers experienced mandated reading in-service training during the first years of statewide implementation, a primary question emerged about professional development theory to practice. Would Florida secondary reading teachers cognitively embrace and pedagogically implement Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development?

The participants for this research were enrolled in the six competencies of Florida reading teacher professional development. The participants all teach in a rapidly urbanized Southwest Florida school district. The results from this study serve to elucidate reading teacher participants' current perspectives in the appreciation, use, and impact of mandated secondary Scientifically Based Researched Reading curriculum strategies. As part of the wider process, the researcher identified successful and unsuccessful aspects of classroom implementation.

Background of the Researcher

My interest in reading teacher professional development was heightened because of my teaching assignments. Five years ago I returned to teaching language arts and reading in high school after an almost thirty year hiatus. When I left teaching in 1978, I was teaching English skills to at risk learners. During my child-raising years, I taught part time, but continuously, in a Florida community college. Upon returning to the high school classroom full-time, I quickly realized that I would need to update my own research-based knowledge.

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I enrolled in the University of Central Florida Doctorate in Education Cohort

program at the Florida Gulf Coast University site. I simultaneously enrolled in, what

was at that time, voluntary professional development for teachers of reading. Two

years ago, the six competencies of professional development in reading became

required for Florida Reading Endorsement. I voluntarily completed the Florida

Online Reading Professional Development (FOR-PD) class at its second offering.

The FOR-PD became Reading Competency 2.

The evolution of the mandatory nature of reading professional development

provided the impetus for this study. (University of Central Florida, 2006). I finished

the endorsement training among the first district cadre. I have always had a strong

belief in the social efficacy tradition of classroom success. I have a strong belief that

reflective practice produces the best teachers. This study springs from my belief that

to be a powerful teacher, I must also be a powerful learner.

<center>Researcher Subjectivity</center>

This dissertation necessarily adopts a subjective stance so that sharing the

views of participants through their personal responses and understandings can occur

(Rossman and Rallis, 1998). I have approached data gathering by using qualitative

methods. In qualitative research, truth is problematic. There are multiple

perspectives about events. I have tried to report data objectively.

<center>Purpose of the Study</center>

Sample

The purpose of this study is to enlarge the knowledge about the role of

scientifically based reading teacher education and professional development in the

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classroom. The researcher hopes to provide the latest professional development

implementation success documentation for administrators, leaders, and curriculum

designers and coordinators. Prior to undertaking this study, I developed the pilot

questionnaire during required doctoral coursework at the University of Central

Florida. I distributed the pilot questionnaire among secondary teachers so as to

identify those who had participated, or were continuing to participate, in professional

development for reading retraining. I asked twelve possible respondents if they

would be interested in participating in the research study. I identified eight

prospective participants. The eight respondents became my purposeful sample.

Site

The site of this study is a Southwest Florida school district. The district is the

sixth largest in Florida by student population. There are 19 middle schools and 13

high schools. Secondary enrollment is 38,809 students. The district has grown and

continues to grow rapidly. Of the total enrollment, 10, 200 students were designated

Level One or Level Two struggling readers (FLDOE, 2006). Participants were

interviewed and observed in their classrooms at least once during each of the two

semesters of this study.   All participants returned written surveys when requested.

Surveys were hand delivered and returned by hand or returned by district pony mail.

All surveys were returned. At least one interview was conducted by telephone for

each participant.

Duration

The data gathering for this study spanned eight months and incorporated two

semesters and an intervening summer. Initial observations and interviews were

conducted during the spring semester of the 2004-2005 school year. Interviews and

discussions took place during intervening summer months. Follow-up interviews and

observations were conducted during the fall semester of the 2005-2006 school year.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted during spring, summer, and fall

professional development trainings, private meetings, or by telephone.

<div align="center">Rationale and Background of the Study</div>

High school seniors continue to show declines in reading ability (National

Assessment of Educational Progress, 2004). The NAEP defines four levels of student

reading achievement. The following hierarchal definitions are used to report

secondary student literacy demographics:

Below Basic is used for those readers who are deficient and struggle with

Reading skills in all areas. In Florida, *Below Basic* is a Level 1 Reader.

Basic denotes partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are

fundamental for proficient work at each grade. Readers can still struggle.

In Florida*, Basic* is a Level 2 reader.

*Proficien*t represents those students who have demonstrated competency over

challenging subject matter, including subject matter knowledge, application of

such knowledge to real-world situations, and use of analytical skills

appropriate to the subject matter. In Florida, *Proficient* is a Level 3 or higher.

Advanced signifies superior performance in all areas.

In 1998, 40% of high school seniors, nationally, demonstrated *Proficient*

levels in reading. In 2002, 36% achieved a *Proficient* rating. Sixty eight percent of

8th graders are *Basic* or *Below Basic* readers by the time they are ready to enter high

<div align="center">10</div>

school. High school students begin to improve in 9th and 10th grades. Almost 50% become *Proficien*t readers. However, there is a noticeable, unexplained drop in 11th and 12th grade reading cumulative scores. Less than 40% of the nation's 12th graders are *Proficient* (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2004).

Almost one million functionally illiterate students continue to graduate from high school each year. Eighty percent of adolescents who are under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court or probation are Below Basic readers. Eighty-five percent of adolescents incarcerated as adults are functionally illiterate (Toffler, 2000). The implications of adolescent illiteracy for society are insidious. High school readers in the bottom 25% are almost four times more likely to drop out of high school than *Proficient* students (Carnevale, 2001). Almost 40% of the nation's high school graduates who enter college are enrolled in reading remediation courses (US Department of Education, 2000).

Language acquisition, or not, significantly affects learning behavior at all stages of human development (Vygotsky, 1962). *Proficient* readers are language learners. *Proficient* readers ensure success at school, procure a better chance at fulfilling their potential, and have the literacy tools to successfully master post-secondary academic content (Lyon and Chhabra, 2004). Graduates, who are to be taken seriously by future employers and within their professions, need sophisticated vocabulary, error free grammar, and strong oral and written communication skills. Deficits in language skills often signal a deficit in reading ability.

Professional development for the remediation of poor readers has formerly focused on elementary teachers. Immediate intensive elementary reading remediation

can narrow students' language skills deficits, and heretofore, Florida educationists have heretofore focused on elementary students' achievement (Education Trust, 2003). In the last two years, Florida has implemented swift, proactive secondary reading teacher professional development retraining in Scientifically Based Reading Research. The principles of No Child Left Behind have been enacted earlier in Florida than in most other states. Florida educators have met Reading First Initiatives head on (Nelms, 2004). Yet, research does not exist that substantiates the expectancy that teachers will embrace and implement Scientifically Based Reading Research.

The lack of robust studies on reading achievement reform contributes to research gaps. What works for elementary teachers may not work for secondary instructors. Struggling readers at the secondary levels experience skill deficits that have continued since childhood. Whether teacher training in the tools of scientifically researched instruction interventions can prevent high school reading failure, or whether older struggling readers might never catch up to proficient adolescent readers, even with secondary remediation reforms, remains vague (Torgesen, 2004).

Summary

Federal and state researchers have begun to address the practical problems of secondary teachers as they transfer reading professional development into classroom arenas. Scientifically Based Reading Research provides a paradigm shift in professional development. As secondary literacy rates decline, middle and high school educators face pressures of mandated in-service professional development. Legislated reform adds a fundamental responsibility for secondary educators to re-

teach reading skills that adolescent learners may have missed in early years. The

overarching academic goal is all students read proficiently by graduation

(International Reading Association, 2003).

Teachers may or may not resist this results-driven, pedagogical burden.

Will reading teachers implement, within their classrooms, the professional

development of Scientifically Based Reading Research. Subordinate questions, as

summarized in the following table, were used throughout this study to answer the

primary research question.

Table 1: Summary of Research Questions and Methods

Question	Method
1. What do reading teachers learn from their trainings?	Interviews/Surveys
2. What do reading teachers use or value most from their trainings?	Interviews/Surveys
3. Which strategy (ies) do reading teachers find most useful?	Interviews/Surveys/ Focus Groups
4. Which strategy (is) do reading teachers use most often?	Interviews/ Observations
5. Was the professional development useful?	Interviews
6. What was the teacher level of expertise during and after training?	Observations
7. What was the teacher level of engagement/concern after training?	Observations
8. What do teachers think needs improvement in the training?	Interviews
9. What do teachers think was least useful in the training?	Interviews
10. What do teachers now need after the training?	Interviews/Surveys

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Background and Significance

Foundations of Secondary Teacher Training in Reading

In 1997, Congress charged the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to appoint the National Reading Panel. The National Reading Panel was directed to perform a meta-analysis of available experimental research on the availability, application, and implementation of effective reading instruction based on scientifically based research standards. The Report of the National Reading Panel (2000) outlined the following criteria for inclusion in Scientifically Based Reading Research meta-analysis:

1. Any study selected had to focus directly on children's reading development from pre-school through grade 12.

2. The study had to be published in English in a refereed journal.

3. Study participants must have been carefully described.

4. Study interventions had to be described in sufficient detail to allow for replicability.

5. Study methods had to allow for judgments about how instruction fidelity was ensured.

6. Studies had to include a full description of outcome.

From the preceding base criteria, the National Reading Panel identified five components of acceptable Scientifically Based Researched Reading instruction:

1. Phonemic Awareness

2. Fluency

3. Phonics

4. Comprehension

5. Teacher Education

For the fifth component, the National Reading Panel posed the following five questions to determine the research that can support reading teacher education:

1. How are teachers taught to teach reading?

2. What do studies show about the effectiveness of teacher education?

3. How can research be applied to improve teacher development?

4. What findings can be used immediately?

5. What important gaps remain in our knowledge?

There was considerable acceptable research for questions 1, 2, and 4. For questions 3 and 5, the panel's findings revealed a widespread belief that there is little research on reading teacher education, despite the great interest in the issue. There were significant gaps in research that focused on understanding the connection between teacher professional development and practice.

The panel suggested that school districts re- focus on reading teacher professional development. The panel recommended the use of scientific research in bridging the professional development to practiced gap. Scientifically Based Reading Research is grounded in the principles academic inquiry and empirical research. Teacher re-training in the scientific research of reading is based on norms and practices as outlined by the following list from the National Research Council's Committee on Scientific Principles in Education Research (2004).

1. Studies must link research to theory

2. Methods must permit direct investigation

3. Research must be coherent, explicit and persuasive

4. Research must be replicable and generalizable.

5. Research must be open to scholarly debate.

A culture of inquiry assumes that pedagogical reading research will produce knowledge about how best to teach reading to students.

Scientifically Based Reading Research is much more extensive and better funded because it is based on more sophisticated studies that attempt to investigate and illuminate the cognitive science of reading and its effects on instructional research (Torgesen, 2004). Teachers of reading who successfully pursue opportunities to learn about research-based strategies engage in the most effective professional development (Morrow, 2003). Special emphasis is placed on students who are at risk or in danger of failing because of illiteracy.

No Child Left Behind is so sweeping in its reforms for the teaching of reading that its regulations allow locally elected officials and federal policy makers to institute and require scientifically valid qualitative and quantitative methods inside classrooms. Connections that link research theory to teacher classroom practice must be proven before monies are allocated to states that will be used to fund reading curriculum, literacy materials, and technology programs. Scientifically Based Reading Research is a convergence of scientific findings from discoveries about the cognitive nature of reading and practical instructional studies that implement those findings.

The Importance of Professional Development for Reading Reform

Scientifically Based Research in Reading has the potential to successfully redefine the professional reading educator (Hall, 2004). In Florida, a growing body of best practices exists for secondary professional development. The combined efforts of reading researchers and practitioners, especially the Center for Reading Research at Florida State University, Zygouris-Coe at University of Central Florida, and Allington, formerly of the University of Florida, have begun to lay a foundation for quality secondary reading teacher training (Torgesen, 2004). Teacher preparation accounts for much of the variance in reading proficiency success and can increase or decrease student learning curves (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Scientifically Based Reading Research provides the practical impetus for reading teacher reform (Olson, 2005). Teachers should be active and prepared participants in the deliberation of the effectiveness and governance of their classrooms. Teachers who undergo Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development can continue to expand reading strategies, promote the development of good reading habits, and provide secondary students with confidence building practices in sustaining the act of reading (Nelms, 2004). Current research continues to attempt to answer five rigorous questions about reading education:

1. How do skilled readers process text with comprehension so rapidly and accurately?

2. What must students know and be able to do to become independent readers?

3. Why do some children with good intelligence and strong home support struggle in learning to read?

4. How is early skill in learning to read accurately linked to later skills in reading fluently?

5. How are "good thinking skills" linked to good reading comprehension?

Studying newly trained secondary reading teachers adds to effective professional development research.

Historically, there have been no consensual academic definitions or defined proficiencies for professionals who teach secondary reading. Teachers may or may not have a variety of trainings or certifications. In the present political climate of mandated student improvement, the literacy development of adolescents is as important and requires just as much attention as that of beginning readers. Teachers, who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, are a must (Allington, 2006).

Legislated Mandates for Improving Secondary Instruction

Until No Child Left Behind, little political attention had been given to helping secondary reading teachers develop the skills necessary to promote reading comprehension strategies of middle and high school students. Middle and high schools educate 33 percent of the nation's students. Prior to the enactment of No Child Left Behind, middle and high schools had received only five percent of Title One funding in K-12 education (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

President Bush has called on educators to fix the nation's high schools with focused remedies that beef up secondary reading programs. At the 2005 Summit on America's High Schools, 45 of the nations' governors articulated support for more rigorous high school curricula, standards, and tests (Alliance for Excellent Education,

2005). Implicit in their support is the recognition that the task of improving the nation's high school graduation rates demands an increased focus on the teaching of reading. Congress and President Bush have signed into law and continue to fund the following initiatives to help struggling high school readers.

Striving Readers: This act promotes adolescent literacy. Thirty million dollars are available to school districts that have implemented Scientifically Based Reading Research literacy programs that prove effective in raising student reading achievement. The funds are allocated for secondary school based literacy coaches, reading specialists, and tools for assessing and diagnosing high school reading problems.

Title II: Teacher Quality: This entitlement provides state grants totaling almost three billion dollars to improve teacher quality in literacy instruction and reduce class size.

Dropout Prevention Program: Five million dollars has been allocated to assist schools with high dropout rates and to implement dropout prevention programs including professional development for teachers with at risk-students.

Throughout the preceding legislation, reading teacher and reading coach professional development is well funded under Title II of No Child Left Behind. Programs in literacy remediation leave states with little choice but to be cooperative in applying prescriptive requirements for uniform reading reform (Manzo, 2004). Funding is appropriated solely to school districts that have adopted programs that retrain teachers in Scientifically Based Reading Research.

Strict, legislated implementation deadlines add to reading reform urgency.

Florida school districts have acted swiftly to put into place reading teacher professional development endorsement classes (Nelms, 2004). By 2006, at least one fully certified reading coach must be in every secondary school. Highly qualified classroom reading teachers must demonstrate competency in the use of Scientifically Based Research Reading strategies. Professional development has taken on a sense of urgency.

<div align="center">History of Secondary Teachers of Reading</div>

The reading competencies that Florida middle and high school teachers are expected to complete are grounded in a century of curriculum investigation. Reading reform balances three bodies of curriculum theory: reading and study skills, cognition and learning, and Social Constructivism (Vacca and Vacca, 2002). Teaching strategies, classroom interactions, and growing bodies of best practices which round out Scientifically Based Reading Research, are firmly grounded in tenets of Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978).

Historically, struggling adolescent readers were viewed as students with some kind of mental deficiency or other psychological or physiological malfunction, or mysterious disability. Prior to the current paradigm reading reform, secondary reading teachers engaged in what were primarily hit or miss curriculums. Adolescent remediation has heretofore been addressed by accepting the following almost universally accepted struggling reader myths and assumptions (Bontrager, 2004).

1. Reading is a mental deficiency that can be corrected with nagging, scorn, punishment and ridicule

2. Teacher beliefs that there is a one correct way to teach reading.

3. Classifying and labeling students in a manner false to the uniqueness of their maturations.

4.   A prescribed system of book instruction for every grade.

5.   The practice of allowing maladjusted teachers to teach reading

Another historical complication is that teachers have generally directed secondary instruction to a mythically good high school reader, thereby ignoring the uniqueness of all learners' literacy development processes (Roswell and Natchez, 1964).

The delivery of effective classroom literacy instruction has been further hindered by the misleading assumptions of secondary instructors. Teachers of secondary readers have previously been characterized by a lack of urgency. This time deficit may have been caused by a belief that struggling readers were somehow mentally deficient (Lewis, 1978). Students with late emerging literacy problems are often identified too late (Sexton, 2003). High school students with inadequate reading skills have traditionally been sidetracked into vocational training. In the worst case scenarios, high school students have simply dropped out.

Secondary teachers have been ill equipped to address the needs of secondary struggling readers. Early 20th century instructors taught reading as letter decoding. Teachers previously focused on phonics, word recognition and comprehension for information or pleasure. By the mid 20th century, reading became the vehicle for meaning making. Students were to develop relevant and meaningful experiences and relate them to their reading habits.

Throughout the next twenty years and as computer technology began to be introduced in high school classrooms, reading became a functional tool of

comprehension. The focus shifted to creating and composing various meanings from text. Spelling and grammar conventions became less important to a student's skill progress than to overall understanding. The post modern period has introduced socially purposeful reading that incorporates the student's ability to read and use written information appropriately across a wide range of contexts (Turbill, 2002).

Secondary readers continue to be the most vulnerable for reading failure (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). As illiteracy rates continue to rise, much of the blame can be squarely placed on a century of American teacher mis-education (Sweet, 1996). Blatantly or unintentionally ignored best practices have resulted in historical failures in getting almost a century of proper principles of effective reading instruction to classroom teachers.

Any direct, explicit, scientifically driven pedagogy, especially at the middle and high school levels, has met entrenched rejection throughout the past 100 years. Teachers have not had access to experimental research that has proven benefits of direct systematic instruction. Any direct systematic teaching of reading using scientifically based principles is ineffective, harmful, and an insult to learners' self-esteem. Well into the late 20th century, middle and high school teachers continued to operate under forces of tradition. These forces excluded the use of systematic phonics instruction and practitioners have previously expected that exploratory research would not affect secondary teaching practices (Turbill, 2002).

The shift toward Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development signals the beginning of a dominant model for 21st century teacher training). Proponents of SBRR ask teachers to analyze and reflect on previously

unheeded research based practices in the teaching of reading. Research frees

practitioners and researchers from slavish dependence on subjective personalized

views of authority (Stanovich and Stanovich, 2003). Psychological science, in

particular, informs the teaching of reading (Rayner, Foorman, Perfetti, Pesetsky, and

Seidenberg, 2001).

Internet resources and media technology combined with the assessment and

accountability age in education demand the most efficient, effective and meaningful

classroom accommodations. These accommodations synthesize earlier approaches to

the teaching of reading with a fluent knowledge of studies across teacher preparation

curriculums: psychoanalytic theory, cultural studies, social linguistics, post-feminist

pedagogies and critical context (Alvermann and Hagood, 2000).

It is a global, diverse and multi-literate era in which the 21st century teacher

finds herself. She is responsible for creating fluent students who understand the

complexities of necessary reading. Secondary students must be able to make

meaning from color, sound, movement, visual representations, as well as printed text.

The 21st century reading teacher is an educator with cognitive presence and

immediate purpose (National Science Education Standards, 2006). She will view

reading as a science of complex, multi-literate, and socially purposeful processes.

Language Development and Reading Behavior

No classroom, especially the reading classroom, is an isolated box. It is, by its

very nature, part of a wider community beyond the school. Local communities

demand that students learn cultural practices and social norms (Jaworski, 1993).

Social Constructivism reinforces a community of practice from which the classroom

environment can draw and modify for core curriculums. Reading is a re-creation of process in the learner. Teachers are guides and mediators for students as they decode symbols in multi-purpose texts (Greene and Ackerman, 1995). Discussion, debate, hypothesizing, and investigation contribute to the creative or re-creative learner. Reading is a psycho-cognitive and socio-cognitive literate behavior with general multipurpose learning strategies that can account for academic achievement (Chomsky, 1968).

While it cannot repair faulty teaching practices, psychological science necessarily informs the teaching of reading (Rayner, Foorman, Perfett, Pesetsky, and Seidenberg, 2001). The literacy interests of psychologists, reading research scholars, and classroom reading teachers are convergent phenomenon. Cognitive psychologists study how the mind transfers knowledge and whether or not the mind can describe its own workings in an intellectually useful way that allows human minds to socially interact. Social constructivism reinforces the importance of the learner's active role in language acquisition. Teachers have much to gain by studying language acquisition.

The complexity of language acquisition, and its close relation to the psychology of mental states, has been well observed over the past century. Psychological knowledge and curriculum action programs are synchronic with each other (Minuchin, Biber, Shapiro, and Zimiles, 1969). Children's understandings of their environments, as well as their mental capacities to function successfully, are likely to be related to their general proficiency in understanding and producing words and sentences (Carpendale and Lewis, 2005). Teachers become even more important if they act as students' primary language development guides.

Piaget (1954) established three major premises of education: the importance of the social context of learning, the importance of the teacher, and the importance of the cooperation between teacher and learner. The student's brain is an organism that can process and produce information. The student can simultaneously employ mechanisms of accommodation and assimilation in age appropriate stages. Accommodation allows cognitive structures to continuously change through out the learning process. Assimilation is the interpretation of events in terms of present cognitive structures that intellectually de-code the student's environment. Language and culture play essential roles in this intellectual development. Linguistic abilities enable learners to overcome errors in ecological judgment, environmental perception and cultural assimilation. Language provides the medium for the comprehension frameworks that students use to acquire academic skills.

The Importance of Teachers of Reading

Student-teacher interaction in the pedagogy of reading goes well beyond the acquisition of academic skills. Cognitive skills in reading are based on an historical analysis of thought. Mental structures are used to represent information and store it for memory. Mental operations are continuously performed upon these memory structures (Posner, 1973). Teacher influence, therefore, takes many forms and shapes the qualitative features of a child's cognition acquisition.

The social interaction between adolescent students and teachers reveals that teachers are second only to peer group influence inside the classroom (Carpendale and Lewis, 2005). Helping students develop more effective cognitive strategies adds power to social behavioral strategies and language improvement. For the developing

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adolescent, middle and high school years are crucial to later life success (Kaplan, 1986). Developing social behavior in adolescent learners simultaneously with language learning significantly affects a student's IQ. Cognitive skills in reading empower secondary students to know, to self-motivate, to solve problems, and to reinforce positive behavior within social experiences.

Adolescence is the period in which language thinking becomes combined in a complicated new way with the student's perception, memory, and concentration (Huey, 1908). Practical activities such as reading and writing can transform a student's personality into a new and higher synthesis of experience and cognition for functioning adulthood. The singular difference between the thinking of a child and that of an adolescent is that the adolescent begins to apply personal definitions, judgments, and values to an emotional life. Successful learning in adolescents requires content that is direct in asking adolescents to think to the point. Simultaneously, the adolescent's thinking is wholly renewing itself at all points. Adolescent learning requires a flexible teacher who has access to construct wider curriculum scopes, capacities for greater mobility of thought, and abilities to interconnect content ideas and characteristics.

The Social Constructivist theory provides the most logical synthesis of growth that links IQ, social behavior and language development. Students build knowledge together with their teacher (Dewey, 1916). Social Constructivism provides teachers of readers with the most amount of learning for the least amount of teaching (Primeaux, 2000). The learner is the maker of meaning from what the teacher presents as guide, facilitator, and role model. In literacy development, the learner and

teacher are involved in a joint enterprise, wherein the learner is the maker of meaning from what the teacher presents (Vygotsky, 1978). The teacher must be academically proficient, well trained, and skilled in pedagogy.

Language acquisition is not a goal, but a lifelong process. This process develops, within the classroom especially and most importantly, as a social phenomenon (Vygotsky, 1968). The most successful learner is one who co-constructs knowledge from the teacher or role model. The adolescent constantly analyzes the intellectual and social value of this knowledge, and then changes it to fit self-needs as life progresses. The student can only make progress through other interaction that is mediated and structured by a teacher who presents specific concepts and scenarios. The teacher directs clarification of concepts and information that build on previously learned material. The secondary student must be allowed to work out new instruction and concepts in tandem with a qualified teacher and then have the confidence to proceed alone (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2004).

The Importance of the Learner

Vygotsky (1931) theorized two levels of learner development. The level of Actual Development (AD) is the level the learner has previously reached. The level of potential development, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the level the learner can reach in collaboration with peers, guides, and skilled, knowledgeable teachers. The learner is in a reflexive co-maturation process. Children did better on tests and tasks when they worked in collaboration, cooperation, review or mediation with an adult guide or qualified teacher. Students rarely performed as well on specific tasks that they performed by themselves. Vygotsky concluded that for

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proficient language learning to occur, students must work with a literate language role

model.

> The entire history of the child's psychological development shows us that
> from the very first days of development, its adaptation to the environment is
> achieved by social means, through the people surrounding him. The road from
> object to child and from child to object lies through another person (Atherton,
> 2003, p.116).

The teacher, working with the school child on given day, questions, explains,

informs, inquires, corrects, and forces the child to explain her learning. The child can

work tasks out in collaboration with the adult in instruction. The child needs the

enabling leadership of adult assistance and guidance to do something that she knows

is necessary, but that she is not yet able to do alone.

Reading and writing should be organized in such a way that they are

necessary for something. Literacy achievement will become much more meaningful

and relevant if reading and writing are geared to the curriculum needs of adolescent

learning opportunities (Wells, 1999). The student's ability to cope with the specific

tasks and the nature of the difficulties that he or she is experiencing, are best

remediated when the teacher intervention is tailored to the student's actual needs,

rather than assumed needs. What is assessed is then taught. Ongoing assessment

becomes particularly important as literacy becomes more complex and social, and the

literate demands of the world keep changing with exponential acceleration.

Social Constructivism and Assessment Needs

The primary problem for early 20th century reading practitioners was that

curricularists had not worked out effective procedures for teaching students who

struggled to become literate. Vygotsky (1978) developed a parallel concept of

ongoing student assessment. Teacher assessment is to be used to guide instruction. It is to be undertaken with a view to providing appropriate instruction. The nature of the instruction is then deemed appropriate, especially with regard to delayed development learners. The goal of the 21st reading teacher is to enable the adolescent reader to function autonomously (and perhaps later provide assistance and guidance to peers.)

The successful adolescent learner masters the process of concept formation for the first time and is able to constantly progress to new and higher forms of intellectual activity of thinking in concepts. Adolescent cases in which the student's higher intellectual functions of verbal activity and conceptual thinking had been disrupted earlier in life, before or during adolescence, revealed literacy deficits. If imagination was stifled during puberty and the student experienced disrupted language learning, or if the adolescent was not able to rework or translate the experience of childhood concrete sensory images from visual to abstract, then mental development was interrupted and language and higher order thought were delayed or nonexistent. Student assessment of literacy needs can reveal such literacy problems. Assessments then guide curriculum interventions. Interventions by cognitively trained and academically skilled teachers could possibly make up for adolescent language deficiency (Vygotsky, 1930).

Current and Future Adolescent Literacy Development

It is, at the beginning of the 21st century, impossible to now know what kindergartners will face in adulthood. Instant text messaging, paging, web and cell phone connections, speech translation software, and the facility with which text and image are fused, demands constantly changing and resilient teachers who show

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learners how to quickly decode and reproduce text both orally and graphically (Carr and Claxton, 2002).

Teachers of adolescents are asked to exhibit proficiency in delivering a broad range of curriculum activities: previewing, organizing, selecting, and connecting content information. Concept formation is mediated activity. Concept formation requires tools of literacy mediation: reading, speech and writing. Literacy links individual minds to other minds by social immediacy. Reading is both the tool and the material that stirs adolescent minds to be able to make adult connective inferences, recognize causal links, and extend meaning to fill gaps in comprehension as they move into adulthood. Teachers as guides must be consciously trained in action and activity to correct adolescent reading and language problems (Grossman, Smagorinsky, and Valencia, 1999).

There should be no underestimation of the importance of a skilled language teacher to the integral process of language development. Language development, concept formation, and proper teacher guidance are internally bound up with one another by an essential, not an accidental bond. Often during puberty, adolescents display difficulty with verbalization and logical speech that can result in misrepresentation of content. Social sciences cannot be adequately communicated and represented in any other way except in the form of logical verbal thought. New domains of intellectual activity and equally new worlds of thought content unfold in the adolescent (Carr and Claxton, 2002).

Adolescents need to be taught words as concepts. Thinking processes are connected to comprehension and communication. Problem solving as part of

complex thinking process is a communicative, an interpretative or a comprehending complex (Vygotsky, 1978). Thinking in concepts is impossible without modeled and instructed words. Words serve as signs that can be applied in different ways for different intellectual operations. Upon successful intellectual maturation, adolescents demonstrate developmental processes of word recognition from reading. Word recognition allows adolescents to automatically create, relate and investigate real concepts in thinking processes.

Literacy behavior and successful reading activities require specific tool use and the application of special means for the adolescent to master the process of her own behavior. The formation of a concept or the acquisition of meaning by a word results from a complex dynamic activity in which all the basic intellectual functions take part in their peculiar combinations to adolescence. Teachers who are well-grounded Social Constructivist research understand this dynamic, causal relationship.

Teachers of adolescents must take into account the emergence of a completely new form of relationship between the abstract and the concrete aspects of the thinking process, a new form of fusion, or synthesis. Adolescents are developing meta-cognition skills and processes that control tactics, which are used in knowledge acquisition (Sternberg, 1977). Learning materials and activities should involve the appropriate level of motor or mental operations of the adolescent. Tasks should be within the Zone of Proximal Development. These tasks should continuously and actively involve students and present age appropriate challenges (Guilford, 1950).

Unlike the teaching of spoken language, into which children grow of their own accord, the teaching of reading is based on artificial training. The essential

feature of this training is the functional use of signs or words. These are the means with which the adolescent takes charge of her own psychological processes and with whose aid she masters solving the problems she is faced with. Such training requires an enormous amount of attention and effort on the part of teacher (Vygotsky, 1978). It is at this juncture that reading, a skilled reading teacher, and the professional development of the reading teacher meet.

Professional Development for Teachers of Reading

Scientifically Based Reading Research reform requires that reading teachers embrace Social Constructivism in methodological practices (Pomuit, 2000). The convergence of Social Constructivism and learner centered reading education is a philosophical starting point. Both theory and philosophy can well be understood by reading teachers in training. The most significant problem lies in the application of theory at the practical level. Teachers' perceptions or understandings of the interrelationship between theory and practice underpin professional development (Guskey, 2000).

Social Constructivism: Theory to Practice

Social Constructivism allows the reading teacher to make use of broad based educational theories derived from humanism while building on disciplinary beliefs about the inseparable connection between reading and writing. The belief that literate adolescents can deliberately and inventively negotiate successful social contexts that promote learning is paramount (Greene and Ackerman, 1995). Successful teachers employ a host of interconnected social practices in which various tools are used for various purposes. Learning is best facilitated when the reading teacher applies

academic knowledge to contextual and experiential knowledge by personal

involvement, self-initiation, and self-evaluation of her effects on the learner (Johnston

and Costello, 2005).

Social Constructivism allows teacher inquiry learning for practical

applications in the broadest of classroom contexts. The reading classroom

environment honors the learner's voice, cultivates interaction and decision making,

and support reading and writing for real purposes. Good teachers of reading

recognize the social purpose of literacy and acknowledge the value of assessment,

representation, interpretation and the primacy of the teacher's role (Primeaux, 2000).

Language acquisition and reading assessment involves complex social interactions of

probing, noticing, representing and responding to literate behaviors.

Social Constructivism cultivates interaction and decision-making and supports

literacy for real, outside world purposes. Teachers can choose from a variety of

learning styles: direct instruction, collaboration, inquiry, and peer teaching. They can

rely on the theory based cognitive constructs of graphic organizers, discovery

learning, and building and scaffolding. Adolescents should not only be engaged in

social learning processes, but be guided by skilled teachers to take more

responsibility for literacy learning decisions that meet diverse criteria (Knowles,

1984):

Explanations of why something is being taught

Instruction that is task oriented

Instruction that accounts for the wide range of different backgrounds. Use of

learning material that could allow for different levels and types of previous

experience

More self- directed instruction, and time to allow for learners to discover

things for themselves.

Availability for guidance and help when mistakes are made.

For the adolescent reader, the synchronicity of Scientifically Based Reading

Research and Social Constructivism becomes most important during comprehension

strategy instruction. A set of comprehension strategies that works together before,

during, and after reading created independent readers more quickly (Carr and

Claxton, 2002). Core reading strategies require clear teacher explanations of what it is

they are doing in reading, and how students need to do it.

The Social Constructivist approach enables children to live in and contribute

to increasingly democratic, global societies. Reading comprehension involves the

reciprocities of a socially global world. Teachers and students must be prepared to

willingly engage in joint learning tasks, express without fear their uncertainties, feel

comfortable enough to ask questions, to employ a variety of learning strategies, and

to respect other's purposes (Oldfather and Dahl, 1995).

The primary problem with the implementation of professional development

reform in reading is that secondary teachers have not been fully taught, or allowed the

time and opportunities, to convert Social Constructivist theoretical perspectives into

habitual classroom practices. Most secondary classroom instruction during the past

century has left the necessity of student teacher proximity and interaction out of curriculum formulas (Ivey and Broadhus, 2001).

The Social Constructivist approach requires a great deal of classroom time for activity engagement at the secondary level (Fielding and Pearson, 1994). Teachers need to allot time to allow students to interweave personal interest and self-involvement. The best teacher professional development practices proffer reading teacher pre and in-service education programs that are robust in Social Constructivist theoretical approaches (Watson, Kendzior, Dasho, Rutherford, and Solomon, 1998)

Role and Responsibility

Professional development has robust ties to accountability and reform. The current paradigm of instruction, founded in scientific inquiry, is supported by a series of well-researched and documented programs that facilitate the enhancement of teacher capacity and expertise in reading (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005). Guskey (1998) warned that 21st century educators will not only be held accountable for student results, but will be asked to show that what they do really matters in classroom practices. Critically important and effective professional development is tied to specific implementation evaluation including participants' reactions, participants' learning, and continuous post evaluation of participants' experiences.

Richardson and Anders (2005) revealed that the examination of what teachers actually learn from professional development programs is the area of teacher preparation that has received the least attention in research, yet is the most complex. Deep, long-term inquiry processes lead to changes in teacher instructional practices,

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thinking about lessons, and classroom intellectual habits (Richardson and Placier, 2001). Professional development evaluation research focuses on the extent of the advocated change inside the classroom. Before student results can happen, participants must use what they learned during professional development and use it well.

Guskey (2000) stated that there are four principles of effective professional development:

1. A clear focus on learning and learners.

2. An emphasis on individual and organizational change.

3. Small changes that are guided by a grand vision.

4. Ongoing professional development that is procedurally embedded.

Professional development depends on successful implementation. Professional development knowledge and skill development, combined with participant motivation and commitment, lead to teacher success.

Darling-Hammond (1998) found that twenty first century teachers need meta-cognitive skills and broader kinds of knowledge about learning. Teachers need to think about the challenges students face in learning different kinds of materials and for different purposes. Teachers need empowerment in decision-making and strategy development. They must have more than a passing knowledge of evaluation tools and assessments most appropriate for their students. Effective professional development allows teachers to address all students' weaknesses and strengths in language skill development within their classrooms. Teachers need to know about the most recent curriculum resources and available technologies to accomplish goals. Teachers must

have time to analyze and reflect on the impact of their implemented practices.

Good professional development provides numerous opportunities for research and inquiry, and then for talking about the results (Fieman-Nemser, 2002). Good teachers have knowledge about knowledge. Quality teachers are willing to implement best practices inside their own classrooms. The teacher has a multi-faceted role as intellectual leader, scholar, and subject matter specialist. Good teachers, especially those instrumental to reading reform, must be able to recognize research worthiness for themselves (McCardle and Chhabra, 2005). Professional development cannot be divorced from practice.

Professional Development and Practice

Reading teachers who engage in Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development are laying the groundwork for a sophisticated strategic approach to the teaching of reading. Newly mandated policies of professional training mean that the teacher selects appropriate materials, teaches the strategy explicitly, models the strategy, conducts focused discussions, and chooses effective activities and graphic organizers (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2004).

The primary goal of all professional education is to enable teachers to become not only aware of research, but also to help them develop a feeling of responsibility for their roles in the implementation of what they have learned (Korthagen and Russel, 1995). Professional development success is also contingent upon a socio-psychological process that teachers undergo when changing literacy practices in their classroom. Teachers must be current and adept about literacy issues including assessment and evaluation, and relate their new information to their daily practices

(Lankshear and Knobel, 2003). Professional development that is implemented

properly empowers a classroom teacher.

Implementation

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) define policy implementation as a multi-

faceted process. Successful policy implementation relies upon numerous factors: the

ability of the policy to structure the implementation with clear and consistent goals,

sufficient support from legislators, well-funded finances, strong public support, and

implementer willingness, commitment, and skill. Problems arise when the target

implementation group, which is most affected by the reform, is beset with difficulties:

insufficient resources, diversity, technical complexities, inability to change behaviors,

and participants' unwillingness to comply. Educational reform is highly susceptible

to failure unless the reform initiative includes extensive professional development

opportunities (Swanson, 1995).

Teacher professional development in Florida invests heavily in legislative

directives of educational reform policy. The general assumption of Scientifically

Based Reading Research professional development is that change in reading teacher

expertise, which is subsequently and robustly implemented inside the secondary

classroom, will sufficiently improve the reading skills of all learners. This externally

driven, top-down model frames reform in the teaching of reading.

However, the top-down implementation model can introduce new problems

without fixing old ones (Datnow, Hubbard, and Mehan, 1998). Educational reform

implementation can become a cumbersome, complicated, multi-layered, bureaucratic

process. Explicit, directed, and narrowly defined, linear implementation models can

present difficulties for teachers, especially if reformers mistakenly assume that the social interactions of educational implementation proceed in one direction without cautious and sustained examination and evaluation.

Real educational reform requires professional commitment to enact research-based change that guarantees teacher expertise improvement (Swanson, 1995). Educational implementation success is generated in face- to -face interactions among real people. Teachers confront real reading problems in concrete social contexts, i.e., the classroom. Teachers are most always the stakeholders that are most immediately and directly affected by educational reform. Affected teachers provide the best means of examining implementation processes.

Cohen and Hill (2001) acknowledged that educational reform implementation efforts could seem to be unsuccessful. Ambitious and controversial programs can stagnate or fail completely, without carefully examined teacher professional development. Simply adding teaching requirements, mandated curriculums, and policy driven directives, without providing research and rationale, assures reform failure. When teaching professionals are offered time and opportunities to connect policy to practice, policy reform implementation works best

Intersection of Social Constructivism, SBRR, Training and Implementation

Politically driven reform and individual teacher practices are on a fast track to confluence. School accountability demands researched based performance driven instruction. How teachers pedagogically address these demands is not immediately apparent or easily agreed upon (Heydon, Hibbert, and Iannacci, 2004). Changing literacy practices for instructing secondary readers necessitates matching quality

professional development practices with teacher engagement (Goodlad, 1998). What works in professional development appears to be driven by peer collaboration, research ground theory, an acceptance of a partnership with state and federal governance, and district training that assures certification and professionalism (Guskey and Huberman, 1995). The importance of providing reading teachers with instructional strategies that reflect the strongest research based available is a necessity (Little and Houston, 2003). The school accountability statutes of No Child Left Behind demand performance driven professional development.

Worthwhile professional development is generative (Schoenbach and Greenleaf, 2000). Generative professional development includes Social Constructivist constructs: reflection, personal trait modification and skill development. Social Constructivism, Scientifically Based Reading Research, and quality teacher professional development provide a unique opportunity for historic comity and convergence.

Reform requires solid, focused and rigorously efficient time in training (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005). Teacher time should be spent in providing or facilitating professional development sessions such as seminars, action research, case study examinations and study groups. Effective reading teachers need time to focus on skilled training in school leadership, classroom listening skills, and personal persistence.

With carefully planned professional development, secondary teachers became increasingly skillful at developing classroom interventions to help their secondary students engage in reading, employ literacy strategies, and build concepts from the

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text. Guskey and Huberman (1995) endorse professional development knowledge building by using a generative approach. The professional development must be anatomically complete and must make direct impact on instructional practices. It must

- Inform and transform teachers' basic conceptions and approaches to teaching reading

- Provide teachers with immediate, practical and useful classroom application methods

- Support and enable teachers to generate new knowledge based on theory, case inquiry, classroom implementation procedures, assessments, and reflection

The assumption of mandated reform is that if teachers are offered the necessary professional development resources then their pupils' literacy learning increases.

The mandates of reading reform will be ineffective if they are focused on the wrong dimensions and ineffectively led and implemented. Professional reading teacher educators are best served if teachers are given research findings on effective teaching that serve as the basis for all professional development training. The immediate and pressing needs in reading improvement rely on efficient training of secondary teachers in instructional strategies. Reading professional development must include teacher training that uses a variety of research based content enhancement routines (Torgesen, 2004).

Numerous, beneficial models of teaching exist within the Scientifically Based Reading Research implementation impetus: reciprocal teaching, direct explanation, modeling and assessment driven lesson plans (Alfassi, 2004). Differentiated

instruction, student interaction, continuous progress monitoring are useful, observable and practical applications (Johnston and Costello, 2005). Retraining in time management also makes a difference in reading teacher behavior (Cobb, 2004). The continuity of direct instruction and the availability of technology based reading curriculums enable secondary teachers to systematically and methodically incorporate successful Scientifically Based Reading Research teaching skills into language arts programs that benefit both teachers and students (Howerton and Thomas, 2004).

Professional development provides the power to implement new standards and offer educators a direction for reform initiatives. Teacher training provides a platform of consensus about what is important for teachers to learn and what skills they should acquire (Guskey, 2005). Scientifically Based Reading Research calls for a collective sense of inquiry from teachers who share the goal of reading success. Teachers can construct new knowledge based on their individual understandings, interactions with peers, and collaborations. Participants have the ability to determine both individual and collective academic goals, experiment with practices anew, engage in open and trusting dialogue with colleagues and facilitators and focus on the best researched based practices of teaching and learning (Richardson, 2001).

Little attention has been paid to conducting research on the implementation success of professional development. Teachers have traditionally found retraining workshops unenjoyable or non-useful (Richardson and Anders, 2005). Summaries of research on programs of staff development classroom implementation are slim. Implementation studies that evaluate the nature of teacher change process are lacking. Studies conducted within subject matter areas such as reading add much to the

elements of good professional development, especially if they focus on participants'

existing beliefs, practices, and aspects, or characteristics of effective professional

development programs.

Reading Reform: Gaps, Hurdles, and Changing Roles

Enormous professional development challenges, as well as lofty and far-

reaching goals, face the 21st century reading professional. Stumbling blocks, as well

as opportunities, exist for high school reading teachers. Professional development

problems that may hinder in service training of secondary teachers of reading include

entrenched attitudes and implementation resistance. Historically, reading teachers

have received little administrative and cultural respect for either themselves or their

students. High school reading teachers were considered remedial teachers for

teaching mentally deficient people (Barry, 1997). Teachers and administrators of

secondary students sometimes resist their roles as literacy educators and cite a lack of

time, skill, and support. Most secondary reading teachers have simply wanted to

know about the daily practices of peers (Clinard, 1999).

A major dilemma in Scientifically Based Reading Research professional

development is that teachers may feel policy makers are pushing toward a

standardization of curriculum driven by outsiders (Richardson, 2001). Secondary

teachers may also feel forced into certain ways of thinking as well as teaching.

Teachers may feel that they will lose their ability to select and experiment with

multiple instructional approaches and can no longer be driven, autonomously, by the

responses of their students. Relying on a perceived one size fits all curriculum based

instruction is not one of the characteristics of the nation's most effective teachers (Allington, 2005).

Other negative factors that might affect reformed reading teacher practices are communication between researchers and participants, the context for learning and implementing a new practice, the practice itself, procedures for implementation, the expertise of the teacher, and the level of the students (Boardman, 2003). Potential reading professionals may have only been exposed to a few successful reading strategies or the wrong kind of literacy teacher training. Secondary reading teachers may have been asked to focus only on one or two components of the reading process and may be unfamiliar with other proven strategies (Killion, 2003).

Most reading researchers agree that well-designed reading instructional approaches have existed for many years. The professional development disconnect appears when students are not taught by a knowledgeable reading teacher who uses a well-organized approach. A chasm exists between classroom instructional practices and the literacy development research knowledge base (Moats, 1999). Secondary language arts teachers often view themselves as content area teachers and could be unwilling to assume responsibility for their students' reading abilities (Jacobs, 2004). For most of the twentieth century, limited use of reading strategies in the content area classroom was a direct result of poor teacher training in reading methods (Clinard, 1999). Teachers, with limited knowledge and impractical use of limited reading research, can actually make secondary students hate reading (Holt, 1967).

Legislated reading initiatives may bring more unexpected hurdles. The language of No Child Left Behind, Reading First and subsequent laws might be

unwieldy and burdensome (Carnahan and Fitzpatrick, 2003). Savvy teachers

understand research language. Part of professional development in reading is to train

teachers in the terminology or lingo of Scientifically Based Reading Research.

Becoming sophisticated in literacy practices and terminology is an ongoing process.

The vocabulary of observation, methods, hypothesis, professional wisdom, empirical

evidence, evidence based education; scientifically based instruction, explicit and

direct strategies, and statistical analysis must be fully understood and assimilated. A

well-trained reading teacher is a critical inspector of research-based materials that

claim to provide students with authentic learning that improves reading achievement.

There are no single causal factors that create a struggling reader and, in both

theory and practice, reading professionals can end up spending much time being

psychological counselors (Woolf and Woolf, 1957). Struggling readers are

instructionally needy. The inordinate demands that struggling readers make on

teacher time in middle and high schools present a daily curriculum hurdle. Classroom

teachers may not be able to find time to provide one on one support and tutoring that

so many struggling readers require (Allington, 2004). High school teachers approach

lifetimes of individual student reading problems within their classrooms, and they

may perceive Scientifically Based Reading Research re-training as simply too

enormous of a task to tackle (Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes, Lipsey and Roberts, 2001).

Reading professionals at secondary schools may be unwilling to explore subtle,

psycho-linguistic reasons why many disabled readers may be able to think effectively,

but have never learned to read well (Shaw, 1956). Students who are viewed as

persistent failures in acquiring word-reading competencies are less likely to read in

and out of school.

Good research often does not find its way into practice, even with teacher friendly professional development (Wren, 2005). Teachers have limited time, ability, and little know-how to bring research information into practice. Research into practice is often an ideological battle (Allington, 2005). In the rush to use research driven practices, teachers might feel caught in the ever-present gulf between the society of which the teacher is a part, and the social environment to which the students belong.

Teachers who value skills in human relations may experience alienation from theories that science can drive reading improvement (Blackington and Patterson, 1968). Teachers may also resist a perceived shift in professional development models from individual enterprises to institutionally driven training (Guskey and Huberman, 1995). Reading teaching nightmares have plagued the field of reading education for decades. Teachers are insecure about teaching reading directly in the content area. They are often unable to plan for students who show up with below level reading skills, are not confident or do not have a repertoire of skills to engage average or advanced readers. Teachers are now more worried than ever about reprisal from parents, principals and administrators. These stakeholders demand increased accountability from teachers of students who cannot pass exit exams (Blintz, 1997). Under assault from all directions, professionally aware reading educators can begin to have a larger and louder voice. (Allington, 2006).

Professional Development Mandates for Teachers of Reading

Secondary teachers can no longer neglect their struggling readers (Alvermann, 2004). Scientifically Based Reading Research demands not only higher standards for reading achievement in adolescents. Secondary reform also demands that reading teachers contribute toward the entire high school's academic success. Professional development must wed effective classroom teaching and effective school reform programs (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole and Walpole, 1999). Twenty first century reading professionals perform in much broader collaborative scopes across secondary content curriculums (Henwood, 2000). Accomplished teachers and effective schools are syntonic.

The International Reading Association (2003) has identified four specific role descriptions and academic preparation for 21st century reading professionals. First, the specialized reading professional has the primary responsibility for teaching reading to struggling readers. Second, the reading professional works cooperatively and collaborates with other professionals in planning programs to meet the needs of a diverse population of learners. Third, the reading professional serves as a resource in the area of literacy education for teachers, administrators and the community. Fourth, the reading professional provides school leadership in literacy instruction and in professional development opportunities and programs.

Secondary teachers who are prepared to teach reading are able to focus dually on the conceptual and pedagogical tools of effective professional development. Good professional development ensures classroom authenticity that involves practice and

assessment, access to the newest materials, curriculum, time and opportunity for peer

contextual debate, time for teachers to examine prior misleading assumptions, and

latitude to explore and apply newly acquired skills in front of students (Young, 2001).

Secondary content teachers necessarily look to instructional approaches that

provide ways to better meet the reading needs of all secondary students (Alvermann

and Moore, 1991). Subject area teachers invariably rely on peer reading teachers first

for curriculum shortcuts and time saving strategies. The hallmark of a successful high

school is a knowledgeable, if not expert in reading, staff member who is responsible

for working with both teachers and students (Wren, 2005). Innovative secondary

reading programs are those which are conducted by reading teachers who have

established a formal reading course within the curriculum. These teachers have

received extensive staff development in curriculum design and instructional strategies

and have a higher probability of literacy success. Teachers who have learned to tap

into the immense body of prior research based practical knowledge that professional

peers have acquired through use and experience can result in more reflective teaching

and effective professional growth (Holloway, 1999).

Scientific research can inform classroom instruction, but the most effective

implementation begins with the reading teacher's use of a repertoire of good literacy

strategies (Pressley, Duke and Boling, 2004). Staff development that is built around

both experiential activities and theoretical lectures is advantageous (Zimelman,

Daniels and Hyde, 1998). Professional commitment and the initiation of new

classroom strategies rely on in-service programs that highlight classroom experience

and inquiry. Action research and inquiry based approaches allow teachers to

investigate questions that they themselves have generated about the teaching and learning of reading (Vacca and Vacca, 2002).

A skilled reading teacher, who is always engaging in collaboration with colleagues and participating in scientifically driven action research, provides direction and support for secondary content teachers who seek to improve their own teaching. (Gove and Kennedy-Calloway, 1995). Action research can uniquely empower teachers to work with at risk students and has problem solving as its goal. It is effective in building a literacy community at the high school level (Wineburg and Grosman, 1998).

During any massive educational reform effort, it is important for academicians to investigate the progress of its implementation inside the classroom and include drawbacks and caveats. Reading initiatives could actually be detrimental to staffing reading classrooms. A total embrace of science without continuous inquiry is detrimental to any professional development reform (Cunningham, 2002). There are multiple curriculum realities and high school reading teachers cannot stand outside of their own classroom experiences (Stephens, 1998). Since the academic conduct of data gatherers, journal reviewers, conference programmers, and program grant writers is tied to funding, reading teachers should not engage in the national reading curriculum reform without reflection (Allington, 2004).

There are numerous successful ways to teach reading. The 21st century paradigm shift to Scientifically Based Reading Research shepherds in a new era in the ways secondary teachers teach reading. Reading research momentum and teacher implementation research must continue (Pressley, Duke and Boling, 2004). Qualified

literacy professionals are on the cusp of a new paradigm of engagement, cooperation, focus, research, and funding. The formal scientific method and scientific thinking in the educational practices of reading teachers is the foundation of reading reform (Stanovich and Stanovich, 2003).

                                        Summary

        Scientifically Based Reading Research, tied to politics, funding, assessment, accountability, and teacher professional development, affects teachers' classroom experiences daily. If teachers are in charge of their classroom instruction, then teachers should be asking the questions, sharing their realities, and building their own constructs (Stephens, 1998). Research, statistical studies, and narrowly defined population samples that are used to generalize for all, should be consistently and repeatedly challenged for appropriateness (Pressley, Duke and Boling, 2004). The growing host of Social Constructivist teaching techniques that build reading proficiency at the secondary level will never be successful intervention tools unless teachers use them. (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2004).

        The research in this dissertation provides an ethnographic eye into the professional development of the reading teacher. The data gathering methods address the teachers' voices as they reveal their developing roles within the paradigm shift to Scientifically Based Reading Research. The investigation of reading teacher professional development in this dissertation has, as its main focus, teacher use and implementation.

CHAPTER THREE: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Mandated professional development for secondary reading teachers provides the researcher with a prescient opportunity to explore the implementation gap between professional development theory and classroom practice. Twenty-first century professional development is about closing gaps that may exist between beliefs, theory, and practice (US DOE, 2000). Academic and professional development knowledge about the most effective pedagogies of reading comes from the close examination of teacher practices (Duffy et al, 1987).

Acquiring sophisticated, ongoing, scientifically based research knowledge for classroom implementation exposes a rub between reading teacher beliefs and practices (Miller and Silvernail, 1994). The National Reading Panel (2001) identified a paucity of research that explores the efficacy of establishing and implementing standards for teachers of reading. The Panel has called for more research, both experimental and non-experimental. Knowing that teachers simply participated in staff development is not necessarily correlated to student achievement. It is, rather, knowing that teachers have implemented standards based staff development that impacts high school student success and assures successful reform (Killion, 2003).

The research that guides professional development for teachers, while extensive, has not been extended into implementation studies (Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, and Rodriguez, 2003). With concern for teacher success in implementing

professional development, this dissertation uses case studies and the interpretive

approach to investigate the question: Will secondary teachers of reading implement

Scientifically Based Reading Research in the classroom? Working with eight

secondary reading teachers in a rapidly growing Southwest Florida school district

over nine months, the research collected field notes, surveys, and observational

evaluations. The results derived from this examination contribute to the small, but

growing body of evidence, that bridging the gap between theory and practice is vitally

important in producing successful secondary readers. The teachers in this study

provided a valuable opportunity to interpret and theorize about Scientifically Based

Reading Research professional development reform and its consequences for the

classroom.

This study examines how teachers implemented the knowledge they gained

from Florida professional development reading competencies covered during one

year of scripted training (School District of Lee County, 2004). All but one

participant was finishing their training. They were completing the sixth and final

competency. Seven of the eight participants trained simultaneously in the following

state approved district professional development classes:

Competency 1: Foundations of Teaching Reading in Middle and High School

Competency 2: Foundations of Developmental Reading

Competence 3: Foundations of Assessment

Competency 4/5: Advanced Reading Instruction/Disadvantaged /Disability

Competency 6: Reading Practicum

All six professional development competencies offer robust teacher training in teaching skills, strategies, graphic organizers, and guided modeling behaviors.

Knowledge about effective reading instruction, while limited, has come from close examination of effective teachers who specialize in teaching in the secondary classroom (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, Walpole and Walpole, 1999). As much more attention is currently focused on improving teaching results; there are new expansions of reading teacher and reading specialist responsibilities. Reading specialists are asked to engage in a complex range of activities derived from numerous scientifically researched practices. It is time to focus on the teacher's role (Tatum, 2004). The research in this study contributes to a body of work that moves beyond prior, limited analyses. The research adds to knowledge that may substantiate that professional training for teachers of reading produces better teachers of reading.

Data gathering instruments were based on teacher in-service evaluation templates as created by Thomas Guskey (2000). These templates specifically include:

Level 1: Participant Reactions

Level 2: Participants' Learning

Level 4: Participants' Use/Implementation of New Knowledge and Skills for Evaluation at Level 3, addresses organization support and change, and is not included in this study. This study does not address Level 5, student-learning outcomes. These templates are used to frame the primary research question. How have secondary teachers implemented Scientifically Based Reading Research strategies in their classrooms?

Role of the Researcher

As a teacher educator, reading teacher trainer, and as a professional development participant who is interested in authentic educational reform, I undertook this study to better understand the relationship between theory, research, and practice. I observed teachers in their classrooms as they attempted to implement knowledge that they had learned from their professional development in Scientifically Based Reading Research competencies.

I used qualitative data gathering methods including surveys, interviews, observations and narrative journals with field notes. There are extant innovative qualitative models that suggest blueprints for evaluating professional development. Observations, structured interviews, and participant questionnaires are qualitative research tools that are particularly suited to a study of this nature. In order to find out if participants are using what they learned well, evaluation rests in specific indicators that reveal both the degree and quality of implementation (Guskey, 2000).

Method

The teachers in this study were trying to deal with an outside directed and complex paradigm shift. This study is grounded in their holistic and daily classroom routine. I have tried to provide lifelike, and simplified data to be considered by educationists interested in reading reform. I used the interpretive, case study approach for data collection and analysis (Geertz, 1983). Interpretative case studies provide

valuable qualitative methods for data analysis: thick descriptions, explanations, and evaluative judgments (Merriam, 1988).

Qualitative research can be used effectively to examine literacy improvement practices (Tobin, 2005). Teacher insights, perspectives, and Scientifically Based Reading Research pragmatics can be sufficiently and rigorously represented with qualitative methods (Allington, 2004). Researcher stamina, subject permission, and participant responses can inform No Child Left Behind and reading teacher policy.

Qualitative research helps educators to understand variations and representations, and provides future grounding for large-scale experimental reading teacher studies (Hinchman, 2005). Policy decisions, those that should be informed by classroom teacher implementation data, can only be sufficiently buttressed and enlarged by utilizing qualitative approaches.

Qualitative frameworks provide for a multi-perspective analysis of teacher discourse, reflection, discussions, evaluations and opinions in naturalistic settings (Townsend, Zygouris-Coe, and Weade, 1995). Qualitative methods allow for research that comes directly from the educator and includes the voice (Cheek, Steward, Launey, and Borgia, 2004). The voices in this study are the most swiftly and directly affected by Scientifically Based Reading Research--the classroom teachers. It is from the classroom teacher that we learn what has been most effective in assisting secondary students to read successfully (Early, Fryer, Leckbee and Walton, 2004).

Teachers of at risk students, struggling readers, and teachers whose students have severe reading disabilities are on the frontline of high school reading reform implementation. By observing classroom educators during any reform, we can

compare what educators actually do with what they say they know about providing research based reading instruction to their students (Bell, Ziegler, and McCallum, 2004). It is from the tools of qualitative research that researchers can more closely examine teacher actions, responses, implementations and emergent beliefs, perceptions about acquired knowledge (Bos, Mather, Dickson, Podhajski and Chard, 2002). Success hinges on what happens at the classroom level and whether the best ideas are implemented well, poorly or not at all.

Numerous facts about teacher professional development and implementation might only be obtained by asking teachers about their classroom practices (Guskey, 2005). Observation instruments and special purpose surveys may be the only way to ensure that all the data needed for a given analysis are available and can be related (Fowler, 2002). The researcher requested and was granted author permission, in writing, to use one or more survey instruments adapted from Guskey (2000). Mail surveys were not necessary for the purposes of this research.

Qualitative methods, especially case studies, provide enriched multi-dimensionality. In theory to practice, the goal of professional development is a positive and idealistic change in the way teachers conduct their reading competency learning in the field. Improving literacy practices that translate to exemplary literacy practices is most effectively examined by observing the teacher (Grisham and Brink, 2000). Although field experiences are various and uncertain, classroom teachers can provide much concomitant conversational and observational evidence that reading reform is working.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data gathering includes the descriptive, naturalistic approach of the qualitative

case study: interviews, field notes, observations, and running records of participant

responses. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow and see

precisely which events led to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations

(Miles and Huberman, 1994). Telephone and face-to-face interviews are valuable data

gathering instruments were used appropriately and as needed (Shuy, 2003).

Telephone interviews were purposeful for efficiency and valuable for gathering data

that was supportive of research. Face- to-face interviews were important to record

participants' reactions. These interviews engaged the participant in rich discussions

about her teaching situation. Follow-up telephone calls were used to clarify

responses. All data was coded and kept confidential.   Data was collected according

to the University of Central Florida, Internal Review Board rules. Respondents were

assigned pseudonyms.

Observations are particularly important in qualitative research design and are

superior to all other forms of field research (Atkinson and Coffey, 2003). The

participant observer is the most complete form of the sociological datum. Field notes

and audio transcripts were used to record observations. Surveys are basic tools which

provided the primary methods for data mining from documents (Merriam, 1988).

Much can be learned about teacher professional development from documents and

survey instruments. These documents can be revisited almost infinitely for new and

fresh insights. For the survey data-gathering phase, I relied on the templates devised

from previous professional development research of Dr. Thomas Guskey at the University of Kentucky (2000). Because I was a participant-observer and because observations were crucial to this study, I used Guskey's Teacher Implementation Log (Appendix G). I recorded the classroom observations in Chapter Four of this study.

Dr. Guskey generously allowed use of his survey templates (Appendix A). These were used as interview guides (Appendix E) and for participant self-evaluation surveys (Appendix F). For the analysis phase, Guskey's recommended teacher professional development evaluations were appropriate. For implementation analysis, I was particularly attentive to Level 4: Participant's Use of New Knowledge and Skills. I kept a teacher implementation log on each participant during observations and interviews (Appendix G):

a. Outline strategies for gathering evidence

b. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' reactions

c. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' learning

d. Gather and analyze evidence of organization support and change

e. Gather and analyze evidence of participants' new knowledge and skills

Guskey's recommended teacher professional development evaluations were used for planned observations and post observation interviews (Appendix F).

Guskey's Levels of Use (Appendix H) and Stages of Concern (Appendix I) were used to frame researcher evaluation forms. Running records were particularly valuable for confirming researcher reflections before response coding. Observations were used to scrutinize participant teachers' uses of the following best practices from SBRR strategies (Young, Righeimer and Montbriand, 2003).

1. Ability to teach the strategy explicitly

2. Ability to model the strategy

3. Ability to choose effective activities that promote strategies

4. Ability to create helpful graphic organizers

<div align="center">Data Sources</div>

Participant Selection

I gathered data from a purposeful sample of eight Florida high school reading teachers in the School District of Lee County, Florida. Purposeful selection is the primary motivation for using qualitative research methods (Creswell, 1998). The eight teachers were selected to represent middle and high school teachers of reading. Participants should inform research with multiple perspectives (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The multiple perspectives as well as shared common patterns among respondents are those from which I could learn the most.

The participants are representative of a wide range of characteristics. All participants are currently teaching reading in secondary schools. For the second semester of the study, I taught with two of the teachers. All other participants were at different middle and high schools. I was a co-participant in reading professional development with all of the teachers. I did not supervise any of the participants. The following table represents teacher participant characteristics.

Table 2: Participant Characteristics

Reading In-Service Teachers	Teacher Degree/Certification	Grade Florida Reading Level	Schools	Subject Area	Competencies Completed
Cherise	MBA/Business	10 and 11 Level 1,2	High School	Intensive Reading	6
Carolina	BA/Spanish and Social Studies	10-12 Level 1,2	High School	Intensive Reading	3

Gracie	Masters/Social Work	9-10 Level 1,2	High School	Intensive Reading ESOL	6
Georgia	MBA/Physical Education	11-12	Vo-Tech	Reading	6
Claressa	BA/Journalism	10-12 Level 1,2, Advanced	High School	Reading Journalism	6
Meryl	Elementary K-6	Level 3,4,5	Middle School	Reading	6
Janie	Master in Education/ESE	Level 1,2,3,4,5	Middle School	Reading	6
Luanne	Master in Education/Language Arts	Gifted	Middle School	Reading	6

Pilot and Telephone Surveys

Respondents were qualified by their responses to specific questions on a pilot

survey about their willingness to participate in the study and the progress of their

professional development for reading. I used a researcher authored questionnaire

(Appendix I). I spoke with each participant on the telephone at least twice during this

study. As I needed to confirm certain quotes and beliefs, the telephone became

particularly useful during the writing phase of the research.

Face to Face Interviews/Surveys

After I identified the eight respondents, I met with each participant to conduct

a face-to-face interview. These interviews clarified purpose and established the

participants' understanding and acceptance of this study. Interviews also served to

increase the comfort level of each participant. I wanted each participant to be honest

and forthcoming. For validity of pre observation respondent attitudes and reactions, I

used the researcher-authored questionnaire (Appendix J). When the participant

allowed, I used recordings. Running records and note taking/note making during

interviews became especially important for recording participant responses that were not allowed to be audio-taped.

Interviewing provides researchers with an understanding of others' experiences and meanings (Seidman, 1998). Each teacher granted at least two private interviews. At least one interview was pre-observation, and at least one interview was post observation. I spoke with all teachers, both individually and in groups, while co-participating in professional development.   I recorded participant reflections after each observation. There is a written record of feedback for each participant.

After I explained the purpose of my study, each teacher willingly signed consent forms. They agreed to as many interviews as needed. At least one interview was conducted in each participant's classroom. Other interviews were conducted during or after a professional development session or on the telephone. Some interviews lasted less than thirty minutes. Some lasted as much as one hour, especially if responses took on conversational aspects from open-ended questions.

Observations

All respondents consented to two classroom observations. I pre- arranged each observation with participants. Observations took place at the time and convenience of the participant. Each observation consists of a reading instruction. I made no specific request for any particular class level or grade level. Each participant is aware that a copy of observations, as well as the final project, is available for inspection. No respondent asked to see a copy of the observation form. All respondents have asked for a final copy of this dissertation.

Field notes and running records provided the most effective means of recording all of the participants' roles. As the teacher taught, I wrote copious notes on the classroom environment, the lesson, the teacher's voice, and the progression of each lesson. All participants asked for subjective feedback immediately after the observation. The post-observation interview data is an integral part of this study.

I was often engaged in the concurrent activities, but maintaining running records did not hamper participation or the course of the observations. If the observation was interrupted, I noted the time and reason for the pause. Upon resumption of classroom activities, I immediately returned to note-making for data recording. Three participants granted me permission to record interviews and classroom settings. Five of the teachers felt threatened by use of the recorder, so I used running records. I visited six respondents for two observations. I visited two respondents for one observation.

Surveys

Each participant received an open-ended evaluation form. This form served to review their professional development experience (Appendix F). I delivered or mailed the survey before classroom observations. All participants returned the open-ended evaluation forms. I used this form as a guide during interviews. During observations and post-observation interviews, I used the open-ended graphic organizer impact survey to establish the teacher's favorite reading strategy and to confirm the implementation of graphic organizers (Appendix E).

Data collection started in the middle of the second semester of the 2004-2005 teaching year. Before I began classroom observations, I interviewed all eight

participants to get permissions, views, and experiences. I spent careful hours on sufficiency and saturation (Seidman, 1998). All of the participants felt compelled to elaborate on many of the questions I asked, and I needed time to reflect and cull meaning from their responses.

All participants were eager to share their reactions and welcomed me into their classrooms. They willingly shared their student artifacts and assessments Participants viewed me at the very least as a peer and fellow in-service traveler. I was experienced reading competency professional development simultaneously with all. I empathized with the participants. Four participants stated they viewed me as an accessible and resourceful researcher-mentor. They used observation and interview opportunities to ask questions and request strategies and ideas. Two of the participants continue to contact me. I finished formal data collection during the late fall of the 2005-2006 school year.

After formal data collection, I called or returned in person to participants to ask for further review and clarification. They unhesitatingly shared in-depth responses. If their responses became mundane or repetitive, I assumed I had reached saturation. I have reported as truthfully as the participant responses revealed. Co-participant reactions, implementations, and observations gave me an insider perspective of Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development. The present research enables findings to be positioned on the cusp of reading reform. I reviewed anonymity repeatedly and all respondents were unconcerned with anonymity issues. They did not feel that any revelations would affect job security.

Timeline of the Study

The following timeline graphs the work schedule.

Table 3: Timeline of the Study

2005	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Proposal	/	/										
Permissions		/	/									
Interviews			/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
Observations			/	/	/				/	/		
Reflections						/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Transcription						/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Data Analysis								/	/	/	/	/
Follow Up Interviews								/	/	/	/	/
Write Up Research								/	/	/	/	/

Participant/Observer

Participant observation allows the researcher to engage in the intense social interaction that is needed between researcher and respondents (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). I was a participant observer in professional development during the research. I was a co-participant with all of the eight participants at least once during training. I recorded and reflexively analyzed personal professional development experiences. During the final four months of data analysis, I fulfilled the role of research recorder. Moving from participant-observer to research recorder enabled me to check observations against professional development directives.

I observed the participants for the use of professional development strategies: engaging learners, assessment, and use of strategic/graphic organizers, and modifying instruction. If the teacher allowed, I spoke with one or more of their students before, during, or after observations. None of the teachers provided written lesson plans for the observations. I tried to enumerate only interview questions; occasionally, a

teacher would elaborate and discuss observed events conversationally. I provided

teachers with copies of this study.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Trustworthiness of the Data

Each participant represented a case study for the purposes of this research. I

used copious notes, running records, Guskey's structured evaluations, and completed

surveys to triangulate the data. Since this study is primarily confirmatory, for validity,

I retained artifacts, phone messages, and emails from each participant. I was

constantly reviewing and sifting through notes during the research process.

During data gathering, it was necessary to eliminate ambiguity as much as

possible (Scheurich, 1997). My voice is heard throughout narratives and dialogues,

therefore, to protect the integrity of the qualitative stance, I have tried to be

systematic, disciplined and analytical. By using fictitious names I have kept the faith

of the ethical process. Respondents trusted me and became accustomed to seeing me

at professional development courses. I have addressed my roles throughout the study.

Investigator Bias

During written analysis, I asked for repeated clarification if the data became

confusing. During data interpretation, it was impossible to separate word choice from

reading terminology. Some of the data may appear contradictory when respondent

voices are used. Interpretations, and descriptions, even those that are contradictory,

add rich subtexts for further study (Roussman and Rallis, 1998). To minimize

investigator bias, I allowed participants to review any responses they had given.   The

following table summarizes the data gathering contributions for each participant.

Table 4: Participant Data Contributions

<div align="center">65</div>

Participant	Pilot	Observed Spring	Post Interview Spring	Summer Focus Group	Observed Fall	Post Interview Fall	Phone	Email
Cherise	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Carolina	x	x	x		x	x		x
Claressa	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Georgia	x	x x	x x	x			x	x
Gracie	x	x	x	x			x	x
Janie	x	x x	x x	x			x	x
Luanne	x	x x	x x	x			x	x

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

Limitations, Assumptions, Definitions

The nature of this study is exploratory first and confirmatory second. The purpose of the study is to analyze teachers' use of Scientifically Based Reading Research methods. Professional development research should be directed and narrow enough to find out if anything has happened differently or has changed inside the teacher's classroom (Gordon, 1999). Teachers learned new methods of teaching reading in mandated professional development. Teacher participant classrooms were the primary sites for this study and each teacher taught in a permanently assigned classroom. No teacher traveled or roamed from classroom to classroom. Each observation took place in the teacher's assigned classroom. At least one post-observation interview was conducted inside the teacher's classroom. Some discussions were conducted after participants' professional development classes.

Understanding success implementation requires the researcher to recognize and evaluate a teacher's style, approach, method, and student rapport inside the classroom (Fasse and Kolodner, 2000). Classroom sites provided the most important method for bridging the gap between theory, curriculum design, and implementation practice. Classroom observations can be labor intensive and the constructs of this study were no exception. The results of this research study afford a means to understand field-testing of Scientifically Based Reading Research.

The primary theoretical limitation was the manifestation of professional development proof (Guskey, 1998). Field notes often contain anecdotes and testimonials, which from a methodological perspective, may not be a good source of data because they are biased, highly subjective, and unreliable. Additionally, real world classroom settings are complex and fraught with intervening variables that can allow for simple causal inferences. Other reform initiatives may also be taking place simultaneously inside school settings. Curriculum innovation, the teacher learning curve of legislated in-service training, and commanded professional development may have also served to hinder teacher reaction and implementation.

I selected respondents who had participated in at least three district reading competencies as mandated for the Florida Reading Endorsement. Three reading competencies offer teachers a working knowledge of reading instruction terms and definitions. I assumed that participants had continued access to online and/or district in-service or pre-service staff development.

I needed to complete two observations in the teachers' classroom settings. I also needed opportunities to talk with them individually and in groups. Data gathering

bridged a spring semester, continued through summer and culminated in the fall semester of the subsequent school year. The ongoing availability of reading competency professional development that was offered, either through district in-service or online training, helped the progress of this research. I was minimally limited by classroom time and teacher ontology. Research limitations did not severely inhibit the progress of this research. I received uninhibited access from school district on and off site administrators.

Professional development for reading teachers gained momentum during the data gathering stages of the dissertation. I made no assumptions about predicting my research findings, and I tried to keep my own prior professional development opinions outside the parameters of the findings. I had experienced minimal professional development before this study, and I had no personal previous assumptions about reading professional development.

Participant Portraits

The eight participants in this study are reading teachers who have varying pedagogical skills. They teach in both middle and high schools. They are each uniquely equipped with different cognates, experiential knowledge, and educational backgrounds. They shared enthusiasm and energy. All seek to learn how to teach reading better. All participants taught reading, but not everyone in the study taught struggling readers exclusively. Two participants also taught average or gifted Language Arts classes. The average age of the participants is 53. The average of the total number of teaching years is 3.5. Five participants had less than 10 years teaching experience.

Cherise

Cherise is a motherly, gentle, forty something new teacher. I observed her during her first and second years of teaching high school. Her undergraduate degree is in Business. She has a Masters in Business Administration. Divorced, she is the adoptive single mother of five children. Her life has been devoted to helping struggling children. When she moved to Florida she decided teaching was a way of reentering the workforce. She had taught part time in college and had been contemplating teaching high school for a few years. Cherise applied for a position with the district to teach business. Due to a shortage of reading teachers in the high school to which she was assigned, she was recruited to teach reading to at risk 9th and 10th grade students. At risk students are learners who are in danger of failing the Florida 9th or 10th grade Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT).

Cherise immediately immersed herself in extracurricular activities: sponsoring and coaching, committee chairperson of numerous school/parent/teacher committees and co-sponsor of the freshman class. Cherise admitted to me that she is often frustrated with how best to reach her students. Her high school ranked 7th out of 11 in District FCAT achievement scores. The overall school score for 2005 was a D. She said that she had been to her principal, on her own to express her nervousness about her students. She related that she had been called in to the principal's office to explain why so many of her students were failing her class.

Cherise was constantly on her feet teaching. She appeared to genuinely like her students and worry about them. While she did not supply me with a lesson plan, her class was well organized, her students appeared to know what to do throughout

their lessons, and she had very little management problems. Cherise displayed a high tolerance for discipline problems.

Cherise was welcoming and accommodating. She sought suggestions on resources and happily displayed any resources she had gathered. During my interviews with her, she expressed repeated frustrations with reading training because of the time factor, reading research, and paper writing requirements. She felt like trainers did not understand just how little time she had and "could they please give us more direct useful strategies and less reading?"

Carolina

Carolina is one of two African American women in the study. She is strikingly beautiful and speaks in quiet, modulated tones, even when speaking to her students. She is taciturn except when she is directing her students, and then she raised her voice and spoke in clipped, authoritarian tones. This incongruity was noticeable during observations. In her early thirties, she was in her second year of teaching. She moved to Florida because of her husband's banking job. She was originally hired by her school to teach Social Studies and possibly Spanish. Since there was a high population of struggling readers at her high school, she was reassigned to teach reading to at risk 10th and 11th graders. She has a two-year-old baby girl. She coaches the girls' basketball team. She is on a "fast track" certification. She teaches in the same high school as Cherise. Prior to undertaking the research, I taught with her for one year as her peer.

Carolina runs a very controlled and quiet classroom. Her students sat in strict alphabetical order. She told her students in clipped tones, exactly what to do. She sat

almost exclusively behind her desk for the entire lesson. During our interviews, Carolina constantly reminded me, that as a new teacher, she must not only participate in reading in-service, but she must also complete other district directed orientation programs and alternative certifications. Her oft repeated question to me was "Exactly how do I do all this reading stuff and new teachers' Apples program and English as a Second Language (ESOL) training, too?"

Gracie

Gracie is the most vivacious of the participants. A new grandmother in her early sixties, she refers to herself continually as a Jewish tubby bubby. Gracie comes from a background of both education and business. She and her husband moved to Florida over seven years ago. She taught for thirteen years in New York and collects a pension. She managed an assisted living facility and pursued a degree in Social Work. Upon moving to Florida, she turned her attention to teaching. Because she had taught in New York, her credentials were immediately accepted, but the district gave her caveats to update her in-service. She watches the district's professional development website for innovative in-service offerings. At the end of this study she was asked to become both a reading teacher trainer and an ESOL facilitator. She was assigned with me to co-teach Reading Competency 3: Foundations of Assessment, during summer in-service.

Gracie has taught middle school, but for the last five years has taught at a progressive, academically successful, and nationally recognized high school that also houses an International Baccalaureate program. The school population represents the highest scores in reading district wide. When 2005 FCAT scores were released

statewide, she called me. She was elated with great news about her students' learning gains. "I guess this reading stuff works," she told me. She frequently decries the other teachers in her school as not wanting to teach her throwaway kids. She thinks some of her peers are arrogant in their approach to struggling readers.

Gracie is the English as a Second Language (ESOL) coordinator and teaches all struggling readers. She serves on many district wide committees: construction, growth, quality, and management policy. Gracie gets her feelings hurt when she doesn't get included in reading training and workshops and responds angrily if she feels she's been slighted in any professional development opportunity that furthers her reading career.

Gracie subscribes to Florida DOE administrative memos and bulletins online. She has kept up to date on state reading initiatives by being proactive and in her words "ahead of the pack." She is always moving in her class. She speaks loudly, but pleasantly, in her teacher voice all of the time. Her room is the most print rich of the participants' classrooms. Her bookshelves house almost 1500 volumes that she has bought through self-initiated grants, stipends and lead money. She has taken students home when they have missed the bus, checked on their parental and financial status, and doesn't hesitate to call them at home if they display continuous reading difficulties. She is a mother hen. She constantly interspersed her remarks with a repeated comment: "I love what I do and I love my kids."

She likes participating in professional development and mentioned that the reading training helped reinforce what she knew, but most of the training she said she already knew how to do. She forces her administration to find money for her

attendance at annual reading conventions. "I am going to bug downtown continuously to participate in teaching other teachers. I mean I have the training I want to go farther with this. I want to be a reading coach possibly."

Georgia

Georgia teaches reading at the district's vocational technology high school. She is in her second career and comes from thirty years experience as a corporate business training manager and human resource specialist. An attractively young retiree, her certification is in Physical Education. Georgia is pursuing reading certification to keep her job. Her portable classroom is the last one in the last row at the very back of the school site. She is the only reading teacher at her site. Her classes are small. One class had only nine students, another twelve. Many of her students have poor learning habits, and she spends almost every other remark shushing them, asking them to get their heads off their desks, or take their hats off or pay attention. Occasionally she threatens. Her students are mostly male. Each class I observed had one girl in them. The girls were actively listening and trying to learn. Her students have had limited success in traditional high school settings. Shortly before observations began, she was also teaching mathematics. While she had finished her reading competencies, she was continually searching for resources and assessments for her students. During my first observation, it became clear that Georgia was struggling to engage her students. She wrestled with the difference between direct instruction and lecture, and she kept looking at me with pleading expressions. After my first observation, Georgia requested that I teach her next class, and "show her how to do stuff."

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Georgia refused to give up. She has great will and stamina in front of her students. During our interviews, she frequently stated she didn't have enough tools, and many of our chats were categorized with the phrase "we have nothing…I have to get something." She was persistent in her ability to get more resources. In our last interview she said she no longer felt like a "step-child." Halfway through the 2005-2006 school year, and shortly after my observations ended, Georgia was given the opportunity to be the Reading Department Chairperson. She had been swift and proactive in completing her professional development competencies. At the beginning of this study she felt unsupported by her administration. Her principal was replaced and her current administrators are supportive and knowledgeable about her reading professional development.

Claressa

Claressa is one of two African American women in the study. She is 40 and she has two small children in district elementary schools. She moved to Florida because of her husband's job as a sportswriter for a major newspaper publisher. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and worked for a major northeastern newspaper before moving to Florida. She took the opportunity to try teaching because even while working for newspapers she "had always been drawn to the possibility of teaching." During my classroom observations, Claressa never raised her voice over a modulated, quiet and explicitly literate tone. She incorporated writing at the end of her reading lessons.

She moved around her room and in and among her students frequently. She always addressed each student individually. She used their first names either before

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during or after interaction. She expected students to be mannerly and respectful and displayed a high tolerance for administrative and student interruptions. Since she was also responsible for her school's newspaper, the interruptions were frequent. "I get used to it and keep going," she said. Her reading classes were composed of struggling Level 1's and 2's. During one interview she mused that she was hopeful that the strategies she had learned were helping her students.

Claressa was frequently surprised to find out just how low her students' abilities were and commented continually about their skill deficits. "I had no idea what they needed. These students just don't know." Her own academically oriented family and her sophisticated educational background did not prepare her for students' disconnect between reading demands and high school literacy production.

Claressa often asked for help, both on the telephone and on email, on how to complete the practicum case study for Competency 6. She once phoned me to say how shocked she was that her high school students did not have phonemic awareness and couldn't divide their words into syllables. They couldn't pronounce more than three syllable words correctly the first time. During the first half of this research, her school's FCAT scores came in. Even though the school grade was a D, her struggling readers had made significant academic yearly progress point gains. Over the summer, Claressa transferred to a newly built, comprehensive high school. She taught two classes of 11th and 12th grade FCAT retake students. She was also asked to be Reading Department Chairperson. During the second half of research data gathering, her students' October FCAT retake scores came in. She was elated. More than 60% of her 11th and 12th graders had passed. She said, "The reading stuff must work."

Meryl

Meryl is a pretty and perky teacher in her early 40's. Her degree is in Elementary Education, but she obtained a teaching job at a small island middle school. Struggling readers are not leveled at her school because of the unique but remote location and the more relaxed nature of her island school. During both my observations she was teaching 7th grade reading to average and at risk readers. Her administrator told her she could keep her job if she enrolled in reading training. WE were co-participants in all competencies.

She revealed her feelings and perceptions cautiously but optimistically. "I get to keep my job in middle school because I did the reading competencies. I knew a lot of this stuff before, and I like talking to everybody, but there was just so much repetition." Meryl has been teaching almost twenty years. She had large classes and no classroom management problems.

Janie

Janie is a vivacious, outgoing, middle school teacher in her late thirties. She moved from Exceptional Student Education (ESE) team teaching to take on the reading program at her brand new school. Her classroom was bright and cheery. She was in a room with a huge bank of windows. Many computer stations were scattered about the classroom.

She had a few motivational posters and numerous well-stocked bookshelves. She used the overhead for each lesson and made sure the students not only had the text in front of them, but also could read from the overhead. Her students appeared to love her. She had many different ways to praise and reward them: point systems, free

time and working on the computer for individual, but text related projects. She

appeared to me as being exceptionally autonomous as she taught and moved across

the front of the room. She thought out loud, changed the flow of instruction when

needed, and snapped quickly to answer individual students.

Even when she chatted with me, she always had an eye on the classroom. The

interruptions from other students were frequent, but she managed them with poise.

Her classroom was attached to the media center. Her students worked facing each

other. Her average class size consisted of about 20 students. Her 7th graders were all

struggling Level 1's and 2's,

Luanne

Her indomitably cheery spirit marks Luanne's teaching style. She has been

teaching for six years. Luanne comes to teaching late in her life. She completed her

Language Arts credentials through alternative certification programs after a lifetime

career in business. During this study, Luanne taught 7th grade gifted reading classes at

a newly built middle school. My observations occurred during her first year teaching

middle school. During the research for this study she transferred from a high school

where she taught struggling readers for three years. After her transfer to middle

school Gifted Language Arts and Reading, she particularly enjoyed the experience of

having strong readers.

Luanne literally bounced in and among her students even when she used the

overhead projector. Her average class size was about 22 students. She yelled

frequently and engaged them personally in aside remarks meant to call attention to

their behaviors. It seemed to me that it was a tone more for adults than active 13 year

olds, but she remained confident in her teaching ability. Though evanescent, she appeared to be under pressure to accomplish much in 45-minute periods. She tried to cover both fluency checks and give direct instruction for the definitions of 60 literature terms. Her lessons contained more than robust curriculum content for coverage in the allotted time. Luanne was detail oriented during the lessons. She was able to carry on three or four conversations with different students simultaneously. Luanne's classroom walls were papered in student work, student projects and theme-based posters.

Luanne believes in a variety of teaching methods. At the beginning of district reading competencies, we collaborated on compiling a secondary reading curriculum containing FCAT test taking strategies. I have borrowed many of her unique graphic organizers. She loved to share everything she comes across. She teaches part time at the local university's teacher alternative certification program. Luanne and I were students together for of the competencies. In one of our interview she said, "was greatly disappointed in some of the reading competencies…they were too repetitive and too boring…too much like ESOL."

<center>Participant Roles</center>

Anecdotal portraits of the participants lay the groundwork for revealing the unique experience of each teacher as they accomplished the six competencies for Florida Reading Endorsement. While each reading teacher experienced Scientifically Based Reading Research training in a fairly uniform fashion, their implementations, uses and their role perceptions were different. All teachers but one expressed the reading teacher professional development training experience as positive, but not all

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teachers had positive classroom experiences. Their experiences are recorded using interviews and reflections.

Interpretation of the Data

True professional development is a deliberate process, guided by a clear vision of purposes and planned goals (Guskey, 2005). The views of the eight reading teacher participants are relevant to the role and implementation of mandated professional development. Professional development in Scientifically Based Reading Research is a consciously designed effort that is designed to bring about positive teacher behavior change and student improvement statewide. Throughout the following section, the views of the participants, as well as the observational records, are framed by the structure of Guskey's (2001) templates of effective professional development:

Level One: Participant Reaction

Level Two: Participants' Learning

Level Four: Participants' Use/New Knowledge Implementation and Skills

How teachers come to understand recommended new practices and activities determine how the instructional tools are actually used in their classrooms (Borko and Putnam, 1995).

The participants' statements and messages revealed how reading teachers view reading teacher reform. Their teaching was infused with new commitment, excitement, enthusiasm, disappointment, and the overwhelming details and pressures that sometimes seemed impossible to conquer. How the participants exposed themselves to me in common themes of learning emerged from their interviews and observations.

Noting patterns and themes in qualitative texts in semi-organized contexts allows for research plausibility (Miles and Huberman, 1994). While many of the conversations with participants were not distortion free, recognizing common themes and drawing verifiable conclusions with as much fact of the matter approach as possible, rendered trustworthiness. I adhered to the same survey questions and approximately the same amount of interview space and time as practically possible for each participant, so as to ensure shared standards. Shared standards or goodness criteria are worth striving for. While shared standards are unable to render qualitative work entirely subjectivity free, consistent questions, surveys and interviews can render a reasonable thematic view of what happened in any particular situation (Howe and Eisenhart, 1990).

<div align="center">The Researcher as Collaborator</div>

As a professional development competency participant for much of this research, I assumed the role of a collaborator. Researcher collaboration empowers participants in professional development to share personal stories (Holsten and Gubrium, 2003). Being a researcher collaborator allowed me more conversational partnership with participants. During one observation, Georgia asked me to co-teach the GIST (Cunningham, 1982) reading strategy. Instinctively, I accepted. Teaching one of her classes empowered me to open up subsequent interviews to extend discussions among "us." Empowerment is a professional development responsibility that teachers owe their colleagues (Hargreaves, 1995).

The Researcher as Advocate

The researcher as advocate implies that the researcher can bring forth the participant's story and voice to bring about change and reform (Holsten and Gubrium, 2003). All participants were curious to know if I would take my findings to district administrators.

Themes

Recurrent themes have emerged from the data. As I interviewed and observed, I began to hear repetitions and common concerns in the teachers' voices. Emergent themes are categorized by similarities in participants' responses. I explored and analyzed each theme and examined my own understanding, experience and subjective insight. I take the voice and stance of the researcher in a sub-category entitled Reflection, so that my views are differentiated from that of the reading teacher participants. The following table outlines research questions and corresponding resultant themes of process and use.

Table 5: Research Questions and Corresponding Themes

Research Questions	Themes Emanating from Data
Participant Reactions What did you expect from this session What did you get from this session What do you value most from this experience?	New strategies and ways to teach reading Reading teaching knowledge/awareness. Collegiality and peer mentoring
What will you use or do next?	Look for more information, modeling, and self-advancement.
What do you now need?	Teacher Modeling and Sharing Strategies that worked. Extension
What worked best in this session?	Cooperative Collaboration

How could this session be improved?	Less Reading/Less Research
Participant Learning	Reading Research availability
	Assessments Availability
	New Lesson Strategies
	Fluency
	Graphic Organizers
	Reading Terminology
	No Written Lesson Plans
Participants Implementation of New Knowledge	New Strategies in Teaching Reading
	a. Fluency/Assessment
	b. Vocabulary/Comprehension
Implications	Empowerment/Depowerment
	Collaboration extensions
	Becoming the Expert
	Administrator Neglect
	Exiting the Profession

Research Question: Participant Reactions

Researcher interpretations are based on the participants' explanations of personal understandings and experiences as they implemented reading professional development in their respective classrooms. Educators are most experienced at assessing participants' reactions to professional development. Evaluating participant reactions is the most common type of professional development assessment. Participant reactions can be categorized by relevance, utility and timeliness. The questions that can be asked of participants are varied and broad but all must contain an element of self-analysis. For the purposes of this study, I used Guskey's (2000) *Open Ended Response Evaluation Form.* Open ended response evaluation forms put optimal value on unstructured or semi structured comments from participants and they offer participants great latitude in recording their responses and for this study, are highly effective in detecting unanticipated reactions.

As a research collaborator, I intuitively suspected that respondents would be willing to offer anecdotal details during our interviews. Guskey's survey is criterion referenced. It asked participants to judge particular aspects of their reading training in terms of quality. I was not interested in respondents' comparisons of this professional development experience to other trainings. While past comparisons are almost impossible to weed out, criterion related information on key dimensions of Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development training is most useful for determining the value of purposeful professional development experience

Reaction One: New Strategies and Ways to Teach Reading.

Successful professional development often depends on matching expectations with experiences (Guskey, 2001). It is important to hear the participant voices as they reflect on what they initially expected from reading teacher professional development. Teacher's knowledge of facts, concepts and procedures within a discipline such as reading and the interactions among them are vital to quality teaching. Teacher subject knowledge is important for teaching for understanding, and there are important relationships between teachers' subject-matter knowledge and their instructional practices (Borko and Putnam, 1995).

Seven of the eight participants expected benefit to benefit from reading teacher professional development by learning new strategies and ways to teach reading to their students. They also expected to increase their subject matter knowledge. Cherise expected to learn how to teach reading as a content area. She felt she had been floundering around looking for help from any source and expected her reading competencies to teach her how to teach reading. "I just wanted to know what to do

for these kids. I get so frustrated because they are so low. Nothing I did seemed to work. I'm not sure it's working now but at least I have a better sense of what I'm doing. I still don't know totally what I'm doing, but it's getting better."

Carolina was less forthcoming. She was the only teacher learner who had not yet completed Competency 4, 5, or 6. "I just wanted to get strategies, but I really didn't know what to expect. I'm trying to improve their comprehension. I am trying to implement sustained silent reading."

Janie and Claressa expected quick, time saving teaching strategies and techniques, and both expressed surprise at the rigor and robustness of the competencies. They were both happiest with learning about reading assessment. "Assessment seems to be a key for me." Claressa said. Janie would like more assessments. "I just want to get as much as I can about assessment and more reading tests."

Luanne and Janie were startled at how much of the teaching of reading they didn't know. Both were surprised at how much more there is to do to stay knowledgeable. Luanne was amazed at how deep she worked at ferreting out the reading strategies that would most benefit her students. "I didn't know that much about fluency and how much more there is to know."
Claressa confirmed her discovery of fluency as an important part of the reading process. "None of my strugglers were fluent and I didn't know what to do about it, but I'm coming up with some good ideas and I'm definitely more aware of the phonological awareness work that needs to be done with secondary students."

Janie, too, felt much more confident in utilizing fluency strategies but felt the assessment competency was repetitive and unhelpful. "I'm not going to sit through any more competencies. Those were a complete waste of time. But, I did create my Frieda Fluency character and the kids love her. I dress up in my hat and fake glasses."

Luanne and Meryl both expected the reading competencies to be rigorous in teaching and sharing new strategies. Luanne said she knew the training would be focused if "it was going to be like National Boards, it had to be hard. But it was still more than I expected and took longer." Meryl also thought it would be "like National Board training, but it ended up being more difficult than it had to be."

Georgia expected to learn how to teach reading from other teachers, but seized immediately on one strategy she could use over and over. She pictured her competencies as more of group training, where teachers could learn the best of the best. "I come from the business world, twenty years as a corporate trainer and I expected this training to be more like that. It was harder in some respects because I had no knowledge base. I'm not trained in language arts or even teaching. I just wish I had more lesson plans. I want to see how to use these strategies."

Gracie was the only participant who really didn't expect much strategy introduction from the training. "I just figured it would be a revamp of what we've done in other trainings. It was almost like putting the ribbon on the package because I took a lot of my reading courses through college credit. I didn't expect these to come close to what I learned in my college reading courses. It was getting to be so repetitive."

Reaction Two: What Participants Received From Training

  This section begins the focus on teacher learner outcomes. I have combined

two of Guskey's criteria: *What did you get from this session*? and *What do you value*

most from this experience? into this subsection because they are so closely related in

teacher-learner outcomes. Focusing on student learning outcomes is much like

gathering in an opinion poll as well as broadens perspectives on factors that influence

professional development (Guskey, 1998). Teachers want to know that what they do

counts. They will accept the challenge and devote the time to the mastery of

professional development concepts because they enhance competencies while they

satisfy their personal and professional needs (Koehler, 1999). What teachers get from

professional development can be compared to what they expected to get in evaluating

the training's success or failure.

  Two participants were surprised at how much they enjoyed the sharing aspect

of the reading competency training. Peer collegiality was the most enjoyable

outcome. Georgia and Meryl both stated that their favorite outcome was the sharing

of strategies. "Talking to everybody and listening to everybody's ideas. I just loved

the sharing of reading strategies," announced Georgia. Meryl, too, loved the bonding

she experienced with Janie. "Janie and I just hit it off and now we call each other all

the time to talk about ideas."

  Gracie, Cherise and Carolina expressed bewilderment at the amount of reading

research they didn't know. Gracie had an *aha* moment when she discovered Vygotsky

during Competency 6: Portfolio. "I'd never heard of him. I didn't know he was so

important to reading." Carolina and Cherise felt overwhelmed by the amount of

reading they had done. Cherise stated that she didn't understand most of the reading

she had to do until almost the end of the training. "Now that I look back I'm more

aware and I understand why it's necessary, but it's still too much."

"It's definitely too much." said Carolina. I feel overwhelmed by the amount of

reading I still have to do even though I've done this in Competencies 1, 2, 3.

Reaction Three: What Respondents Valued Most

Teachers value professional development as having a strong effect on their

literacy practices (Sturtevant and Linek, 2003). Teacher validated research based

knowledge is the most important and valued supplier of professional development to

teachers and has the most effective results (Tillema and Imants, 1995). Teachers who

take away contextually plausible results from professional development training will

value their experience.

All respondents shared what they valued most. Meryl, Gracie and Georgia

valued the sharing and collaborative nature of their training. "Sharing, sharing,

sharing." said Georgia. "I can't say that enough. I have really valued being able to

talk what works best in teaching of reading. I like to hear actual practical

experiences. I mean I knew nothing about teaching reading and you guys know so

much more and I've loved listening to you. In fact, I want more."

Gracie reiterated the sharing motif. "I really enjoyed talking to you and I

really liked having you in my classroom not just being able to work with you in cadre

and teaching Competency 3. I get lonely here being the only reading teacher. I know

that is going to change, but you understood what we go through." Meryl said that

having someone to go through the training together helped enormously. "Teaching

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reading is hard work. I work hard and it was really nice to have Janie to talk to. She really understood how lonely we could be at our schools. Sometimes other teachers don't understand how hard it is to think of ways to teach reading and it's nice to have the support. I could have lost my job if I didn't do this, so Janie really helped. We did most of the training together. You ought to tell them downtown we need to keep being together."

Claressa valued the knowledge and evidence based research most. "It's nice to finally know what good reading is and what good reading isn't. I don't think I knew that at the beginning of this training." Luanne, too, valued the research-based knowledge but felt having to produce a video of her teaching was most valuable in the long term "I really wrote better papers for all my classes. You know some teachers tried to skim over and not do the reading, but I really dug deep and did the work. I especially valued the video and seeing myself. I learned so much from having to do my portfolio in the last competency and I've learned from my mistakes."

Carolina felt the most valuable experience was learning how much she didn't know, and how much work was ahead of her. "You know if I'm going to reach my kids on a daily basis I'm going to have to find time to do this and I just don't have it right now. I only value how much work I've got to do." Cherise, too, valued how much she didn't know and now felt she knew more but specifically mentioned graphic organizers. "My favorite part of all the trainings was the graphic organizers. I never knew about them. I'm trying to learn and use them all."

Reaction Four: What Do You Now Need?

Professional development is about promoting informed decision making on daily practice. Educators who can relate informed beliefs to practice needs effect more positive change (Kindsvatter, Wilen, Ishler, 1996). Autonomous professional learning from a training program helps teachers form ideas about greater intentions to transfer help them apply the strategies based on credibility, practicality and need (Yelon, Sheppard, Sleight and Ford, 2004). In fact identifying needs is an ongoing process during any policy implementation. Planning for success is a critical factor based on redefining and refining needs (Kaufman, Herman, and Watters (1996).

Cherise felt her greatest professional development need was more lesson plans and to be able to have continued access to other trained and knowledgeable colleagues. "I'm still not sure I know what I'm doing and if I'm reaching the kids. I'd really like someone to come in and teach me a strategy or teach my kids so I can watch."

Georgia agreed. "I want to see more reading lesson plans and literacy strategies and to talk to other teachers that they work for. I think we should have an ongoing way to share curriculum materials and I definitely want to see someone come in here and show me more of these strategies. The classes go by so fast and I really didn't understand the names and how to implement all of the strategies. I'm the only reading teacher here so there is no one to talk to." Georgia was clearly identifying a need for more personal mentoring and collaboration.

Luanne wanted more continued sharing as well. "I need more materials sharing. I need to keep talking to my colleagues. I feel I'm making progress. I don't

want to go back to feeling isolated." Meryl wanted fluency strategies "And I could really use some more reading strategy research and planning time." Claressa said she needed more reading discipline strategies. "I want them to be structured in reading more and I need more information on how to make them want to read more and behave more." Gracie was the only teacher who felt she didn't need anything else, but was over prepared. "Well I took all those college reading classes and I just think I'm way over prepared. I've done this enough now. It's time to move on." Carolina wanted more time for her struggling readers in class. I just need more time to teach and help them catch up. I'm not sure what I need. I just know they need to catch up and make up missed work. They are so slow and I just need more strategies to give them more opportunity to catch up to where they need to be."

Reaction Five: What Worked Best in this Session?

Effective teachers use credible best practices from effective professional development (Sturtevant and Linek, 2003). Characteristics that define effective professional development are multiple and complex. There may be no single list, regardless of the quality of professional development research, which provides clear descriptions on the contextual elements of effective teacher training in researched based practices (Guskey, 2003). The defining characteristics of professional development success and empowerment come only from teacher voices (Koehler, 1999).

Cherise could identify no favorite strategy or practice. "I like them all. Mostly I just wanted to get through the training at the end, but now that I look back, I have no favorite. I just use them all if they seem to work." Carolina seemed puzzled by when I

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asked her about her favorite strategy. "I just let the students pick what they want to use." I found Carolina's response puzzling and probed further.

VH: You don't pick a lesson plan or a reading strategy?

Carolina: No, I don't pick them, I let them do it. They choose what they want to do.

VH: How do you guide them?

Carolina: I just let them read and fill in the worksheet. They are so low. I have to do what works for them.

VH: What are they doing today?

Carolina: Well they are doing silent reading. They have to keep reading.

VH: You mean sustained silent reading (Pilgreen, 2000)?

Carolina: I guess. Yes, sustained silent reading. Their comprehension is so low. What do you think I should do with them?

I realized that Carolina not only viewed me as a researcher, but also as a more knowledgeable advocate. For some reason I hesitated to answer her.

Janie thought that the teacher sharing was the penultimate part of the training and will work best in further trainings. "We just need to go on together. Sharing is the best way I have learned. I've learned fluency ideas from listening to our district teacher trainer and I've learned how to assess fluency from you and from working it out with Meryl." Georgia echoed her feelings. "I loved our personality interaction and sharing our professional knowledge. You know I'm feeling better about teaching reading because I've been hanging out with you guys. I wouldn't have known what IRA was or gotten my principal to let me go. I had no idea there was so much to this."

Claressa loved the small group teacher interaction during the competencies especially during Competency 6: Portfolio. "Also, if we could get together again, we could uncover some more issues in teaching reading. I guess I have really liked knowing how to do my job better. Luanne said her experience was striking. "This has been such an eye-opening year. We really need to keep this going and keep talking to each other. I could really have used this sooner in my career." Meryl enjoyed the close contact with district reading trainers and personnel. "I have learned so much about district support, and it's been nice to consider everyone's teaching situation."

Gracie was the only participant who mentioned she would like to have more access to research articles. "I never knew about all the researchers. It's certainly opened my eyes to what is out there and I want to read more especially about Vygotsky. I think that's about the only thing I learned new. I wonder if there are other researchers with theories that could help me?"

Reaction Six: How Could this Session Be Improved?

Teachers who undergo training are redefining their reading teacher roles based on new information and from both personal and impersonal sources. Teachers should be continually thinking back and reflecting on their experiences in order to engage in future improvements (Schon, 1983). The ongoing presence of challenging but attainable goals and feedback mechanisms may promote self-efficacy and enhance subsequent learning and performance. Feedback is part of professional development optimal mix (Guskey, 1995).

The eight reading teachers gave different ideas and forwarded varied feedback

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for improving reading training. Most of their suggestions were linked to their excitement and actions as re-trained reading teachers. They mirrored their excitement in their reactions. During this phase, I began to note an increased use in reading terminology among the participants. Cherise and Claressa wanted less reading research required especially during Competency 2: Florida Online Reading Professional Development Course (FOR-PD). "It's just too much, and I don't have time. Just give me the lesson plans and the strategies. No more reading." said Cherise. Carolina agreed. "Just give more lesson plans so I can let the kids pick and choose what they like. I'm still so lost sometimes. I don't have time for all that reading. I dropped out the first time I signed up for it.

 "Yes, there are so many resources especially in the online course, which is probably too much." added Claressa. Georgia wanted more. "I love the articles and there should be more. Luanne thinks more fluency training should be added. "There should just be more fluency components. My knowledge of fluency and how it affects my kids reading has proven to be the best. The next courses should keep adding fluency training and assessment in all the competences."

Janie and Meryl could use some more time for sharing of teaching ideas and strategies within the competencies. "The training just goes by so fast and this is such a big job and so much to learn." Meryl said. Janie wanted to hear what other teachers are saying. "Let's just hear what everybody says, but unless we have time to talk we can't hear our colleagues. There is too much pressure during the competencies to have time to talk."

Gracie expressed extreme disappointment in the district trainers. "I know more than they do sometimes. Also, we need to be taught by more people with secondary teaching experience. I am so sick of elementary teachers trying to tell secondary teachers how to teach this stuff. I have offered to train to teach but they never get back to me. They must have too much to do. They keep putting me off, I want to move up and be a trainer. The state is demanding too much right now from our trainers, so it must not be their fault. They keep ignoring me. I found out about Reading Coaches Boot Camp (2005) on my own. I have to self-advocate all the time. If this is so important why do I feel ignored? I am ready to move on. I feel ready to train others and that's what I want to do."

Researcher Reactions

The participants' responses offered suggestions on improving reading professional development training:

1. Less required research reading

2. More opportunities for teacher sharing of experiences.

3. Less time pressure to complete the Florida Reading Endorsement

4. More communication from district coordinators for learning about further training or reading leadership roles.

5. More resource sharing beyond the competencies.

I finished reading professional development with seven of the participants. I attended the statewide Reading Coaches Boot Camp (2005) with Gracie and Claressa, and acted as mentor to Carolina. I met often both informally and formally with the participants. I remember not saying much at first. I was trying to listen to their

responses and experiences. As my own content knowledge grew, I began to be more courageous in engaging the participants. Occasionally, I had to refuse to cross the line between researcher and participant, especially when teachers asked about district opportunities and planning for the future.

There was much in the district implementation process I did not know, even though I had self-advocated for much of my training including Reading Coaches Boot Camp. I took the FOR-PD well before most of the participants, and I could offer empathy on the amount of research and reading. I had also taken Competency 1, Teaching Secondary Reading, as a college course, and I understood the perspectives of those participants who resented being taught by district trainers with elementary backgrounds. I had also completed training via the college credit transfer route and I understood the challenges of both training tracks.

Most enlightening was how stressed for time we all felt. We felt the urgency and an invisible weight hanging over our heads. It was a constant push to get through the training and bring back knowledge to our various schools as quickly as possible. On many levels we were learning, struggling, and helping each other, but always together. Simultaneously, we were often frustrated, impatient, and skeptical. The difference was that as a researcher I brought an investigator's observant eye, which allowed me detachment. Some of the participants were occasionally uncomfortable with that perspective, but I was able to maintain a serious yet congenial discourse. I kept focus by conducting interviews and observations in available, compact and efficient time slots. Many of these teachers gave over their valuable planning time to

answer questions. The degree to which they wanted their voices heard as the first

trainees in mandated reading teacher professional development was palpable.

Research Questions: Professional Development and Participant Learning

What did participants learn from this session?

Policy supported professional development must support teacher learning.

The most effective indication that teacher learning has taken place is through teacher

evaluation activities, most notably through self-examination (Darling Hammond and

McLaughlin, 1995). I used the Guskey's (2000) Professional Development Open

Ended Learning Evaluation Form (Appendix D). The Learning Evaluation Form is

designed to obtain important information: flaws or gaps in participants'

understanding, personal estimates of their knowledge level, versatility in describing

what they learned, and prioritization of learning by indicating what they considered

most important or least important.

By the time of their interviews, respondents felt comfortable with our

conversations. The eight participants opened up varying degrees of enthusiasm. Two

participants, Cherise and Georgia, did not discuss specific strategies, and instead

talked more about how they continued to feel frustrated in being able to have specific

ideas for their struggling readers. Claressa, Janie, and Meryl felt they learned and

acquired certain additional and supplemental materials to add on to their pre existing

reading knowledge. They used new ideas and strategies to refine their classroom

techniques. Georgia was still looking for resources. She used her acquired knowledge

to ask her administrators for more workbooks and curriculums for her students.

Gracie, the most experienced reading teacher, felt that her learning was a good reminder of many things she had forgotten. Three participants, Claressa, Cherise, and Janie, were particularly smitten with fluency checks and improving her students' phonological awareness. They employed inventive fluency improvement lessons and indicated they were much more aware of specific student problems with reading. Georgia had seized the GIST (Allen, 2004) as a favorite graphic organizer. Gracie was using Literature Circles (Daniels, 2002) repeatedly. Carolina still believed that silent reading was best for improving comprehension, but she had learned to name her style of teaching as direct, explicit instruction (Grossen, 2004). Georgia kept expressing to all of us how much she really enjoyed being with us, listening to us and sharing ideas. Georgia was constantly asking how we implemented what we learned.

Researcher Reactions

We were beginning to develop camaraderie, and I observed how special and separate from other teachers that seven of the participants were beginning to feel. Gracie and Claressa were especially interested in assuming reading leadership roles at their schools. Georgia and Carolina were still struggling with trying to make the connection between the professional development and the classroom experience. Janie and Meryl had bonded as friends, and both told me often how they kept in touch. Luanne was gracious with sharing strategies both during our competencies and in private.

Seven participants were becoming much more at ease with using reading terminology: phonemic awareness, fluency, decoding and assessment. We were deepening our understanding of secondary comprehension problems. Janie said

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that she "Never knew why assessment was needed, or why it was so important to knowing why my students are struggling." She was particularly pleased to be able to understand how all the parts of reading are important. Luanne said it was "good to know all of the reading terminology so we could speak the same language. Cherise said she was really happy to learn that fluency caused a lot of reading problems but "now what am supposed to do about it?"

During one of my observations, Carolina asked me to explain the difference between phonological awareness and fluency. When I explained that phonological awareness was decoding, while fluency was prosody and word recognition, her face lit up with remembering. "Oh yes, I remember, we discussed that in Competency 1. I just needed to make the connection in class." Carolina struggled to find the time to complete competencies and began to skip trainings. I could see her interest begin to slip. I found myself asking her often if she was ok. During one interview she revealed she was thinking of leaving the profession.

Participant Learning: How Could These Sessions be Improved?

During one of my visits to Cherise's classroom, she was sorting through volumes of research she had printed and placed in her training binders. They were piled on her desktop. She called the training "information overload and to be able to sort through it all requires time I don't have. Sometimes I just seized on what I knew would work or what I could add to what I already know." Cherise represented what all eight participants said about the amount of research demanded throughout the competency training.

All participants stated there were parts of the training that were burdensome or repetitive. Cherise said she simply didn't have time to assimilate conflicting reading curriculums and choose correctness. "It's too overwhelming." She felt combined Competency 4/5 were most helpful. She thought the FOR-PD: Competency 2 was the least helpful.

Cherise: Truthfully the online course was just too much information for me in such a short period time. Very few people I believe actually read all that research that's posted. I tried, but I was totally overwhelmed and I'm not sure I still understand the purpose of all that research. I'm still waiting for my aha moment and I'm still waiting for someone to walk in here and say Here is what you need, here is the when of what you need and here is the why. For someone new this would be overwhelming. I'm still dealing with classroom management stuff at this reading level. Look, since I've been teaching FCAT reading, I've developed high blood pressure. I've never had it. I'm having a stress test tomorrow. It's not the administration or politics. I stay out of school politics. They can do what they want. I try to do what's best for kids.

VH: Well what did you learn or did you learn anything that was most helpful?

Cherise: There are no lesson plans that I can see help these kids. We're in 7th grade books and they *can't do it*. I spend hours trying to come up with interest holding assignments. These are all the kids that don't read. I stand on my head trying to motivate them. So I just give them life skills. Everything I do now is life skills basic living stuff. They are just not going to graduate but if they do I want them to be successful at something. We really can only do fluency and comprehension checks about once a week. I have a 36 % failure rate and the principal called me in. I cannot

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force a child to read and do the work. I'm not assigning work anymore if they won't do it. I asked the principal what he suggested and he just said he forgot I had low kids. He had NO suggestions for me. I told him I was doing everything the district wanted me to. He asked me what was that and I told him reading training. He had no clue. Well the principal backed down. We get zero guidance at this school. I need someone to turn to. I used to talk to you. There is no one here. We don't talk to each other. I'm exhausted.

Carolina teaches in the same school with Cherise and is still trying to assimilate the implications of fluency. She was working on Competency 4, the fluency and phonological awareness component.

Carolina: I think the most I've learned about my students in reading is their biggest problem is fluency. They have no phonological awareness. They are just not fluent.

VH: What are you using to help them?

Carolina: Well the strategies just don't necessarily pertain to my students' problems.

VH: How so?

Carolina: What I see doesn't seem to match my high school age groups. I need useful high school stuff. In fact those are the things I'd like to learn more of. I need to get them up to speed. They are so far behind.

Luanne and Gracie felt the most valuable learning occurred when they confirmed something they had already been doing intuitively in their classrooms. Luanne and Gracie had also been teaching secondary reading the longest. Both had taken college credit reading classes at the Masters level. This is Luanne's first year teaching at the middle school level. For four years prior she taught in high school.

She taught, almost exclusively, 11th graders who had failed the FCAT one or more times.

Luanne: I teach gifted and this is such an enjoyable change for me to be able to teach students who want to learn to read. You remember! Those high school kids didn't want to learn a thing about reading.

VH: What do you think you have learned for your own best use and what more could you have?

Luanne: You know I feel it's very important to track FCAT scores and I didn't used to think that until this year I made huge gains. I even triangulated with other tests such as the Gates MacGinitie (2005). I purchased a book series called out of my own pocket. You know these are different kind of kids. I have to stay in touch with their parents. These are gifted. We do lots of group projects. I just added on to things I already knew from struggling readers.

VH: Yes, I remember you and I collaborated on the FCAT reading strategy guide for our high school. I remember how much you already had.

Luanne: Yes, do you still have that? I have mine!

VH: Yes. I've used it. What about your fellow teachers or administrators? Do you feel supported?

Luanne: I think I'm alone here. The teacher next door has already dropped out of the online course. I stuck with it though.

VH: I wonder why she dropped out.

Luanne: She doesn't care. Nobody cares here. I have not had one administrator come to my room to see what I'm doing. I do my own thing and go home.

Our Assistant Principal for Curriculum is not a teacher, and he doesn't come from education. He's clueless. I know he doesn't care about reading. He's never in my room. I've invited him so many times. He's clueless as far as I'm concerned.

VH: How so?

Luanne: Well you would think administrators would pay attention to reading training but they don't. In fact, we're supposed to meet every Friday but we don't everyone goes home. Nobody cares to collaborate.

VH: Maybe they don't need to.

Luanne: She shakes her head. Well they don't come to me, that's for sure.

VH: What do you think was the least helpful part of the training?

Luanne: Just way too much repetition throughout. I've been doing this since the beginning of 2004. Also, I would have liked to see more curriculum resources in all the competencies.

Gracie too thought that there was too much repetition. But both Luanne and Gracie have the most teaching experience. They each have been teaching reading continuously for over five years each. Five years ago I taught with Gracie in what was then an A high school. We bonded as professional peers because we both taught 1's and 2's.

VH: Gracie, what a print rich classroom. Oh, my gosh! There are books everywhere!

Gracie: You like? I just smother them. I'm like their mother. You know I teach the monolingual second language kids as well as the worst of the 1's. The whole school is going to be looking at me for us passing the FCAT to get a school A.

VH: Well have the competencies helped? What do you think you've learned the most from this whole experience?

Gracie: I don't think I learned much that was new to me especially in Competency 6. I thought Competency 6 would have much more in it like the other competencies but it was just portfolio stuff and I've done so much of that in other classes. I did pick up a few ideas for comparisons and contrast but I've been tracking my kids for years. I would never use the KWL graphic organizer. I'm sick of it. Some of the lesson plans were repetitive from ESOL training.

VH: Anything else?

Gracie: I did discover using literature circles, I sort of evolved into those and my students love them. But I was doing guided reading already. I just didn't have a name for it I guess, or I forgot it. I go after lots of grant money for my students to buy books for my classroom, and I'm getting better at facilitating literature circles. For new teachers this is fabulous because I can see where they need the learning. If I had had this seven years ago, I could have helped more. I think this training should be mandated across the curriculum especially for Science teachers!

VH: Why science?

Gracie: FCAT! And they need the vocabulary the most. And by the way I am very upset with our Assistant Principal for Curriculum (APC).

VH: Why?

Gracie: She gave the reading coach job away to someone else. You know these administrators are just clueless when it comes to reading. I've done all this training and I feel well qualified. But she gave the reading coach position to another teacher

who hasn't had one iota of training. I went to Reading Coaches Boot Camp, and I think I want to be a coach. But she didn't even tell me about the camp. I had to find out about it on my own!

VH: Yes, but she said you could go.

Gracie: No, she didn't. I had to go to the principal. You know he sent that email to her, and she didn't pay any attention to it. I may look for another school. I did all this training and she gave the job to Lana. I am insulted. You know I'm going to the superintendent. I have to fight for every reading responsibility.

Georgia noted how being aware of her students vocabulary deficiencies had helped her learning. "I think the most helpful was the vocabulary building, and I really loved assessment in Competency 3. I love it when my kids do well, and I loved finding out about the GIST strategy. Jamie, my only student who has passed the FCAT used GIST all the way through and I am so proud of her. She finally found something that works for her."

VH: And the least helpful?

Georgia: Scanning all that research. I didn't read most of it and I don't have time. Also I tried to teach Skimming and Scanning (Salembier, 1999) to my students, and they just put their heads down.

VH: What could you learn more of?

Georgia: Strategies for better connections to my students. I don't want to keep forcing stuff on them. They tune out. Yesterday, they got their FCAT scores so only one passed. I still have work to learn. You know I'm not from education. I'm from

business. So I have a lot more to learn. Oh, by the way, I get to go to IRA convention this year. I am really excited.

VH: Yes, you told me, that is good news.

Georgia: My administrator said I could go.

VH: Do they know about reading training?

Georgia: I don't know if they know exactly what I'm doing, and until I got this new administrator, I really had to fight for stuff and I was lost. But it's getting better; my principal now is trying to help.

Janie and Meryl are the most excited about learning new reading strategies and acquiring ideas. Georgia, Cherise, Carolina and to some extent, Gracie and Luanne are still struggling with how they feel about the components of the process.

Janie: I have to tell you about a character I created. I created Frieda Fluency. I dress up and walk around the room when we do timed fluency checks. My 8th graders love it!

VH: Wow! I love the idea!

Janie: Yes, our district secondary coordinator did too. In fact she wants me to do a district wide presentation. I'm so proud of myself. She smiles widely. You know I'm going to fluency training in two weeks. I learned a lot about fluency in this training and I also learned about assessment. I also learned what the Florida Center for Reading Research (2005) has to offer. I didn't know we had a central place to go for help. I come from ESE burnout and I wish I had had these strategies before. You know I was tired. But, now I have 1's and 2's mixed and I love helping them. Most

of these students are going to pass the FCAT. I can feel it. I'm staying in reading

teaching forever.

VH: Tired? Is it easier now with the training ideas?

Janie: Much! I've learned how to teach them to keep fluency notebooks,

comprehension notebooks, and do syllabication. They are doing the work. I have used

so much.

VH: What's your favorite graphic organizer?

Janie: One of my favorite graphic organizers is the Tri-folds.

Janie showed me the Tri-folds. She is animated and excited.

Janie: I saw these in one of the competencies and they work!

VH: The students did this?

Janie: Yes! Look what they can do with these!

VH: What do you think you've gained most?

Janie: I really love what I do now. I get so much support now. I was worried I

would have to go back to teaching ESE, but I won't. I'm just going to stay right here

teaching reading. We have the best team here and great administrative support. I may

end up being a coach. We all help each other.

 VH: What was your least valuable learning experience?

Janie: Most of the assessment training was just a complete waste of time. You know

just give us to pick one and present doesn't help at all, it's so boring sitting there

listening to something we may not use at our level. Maybe we should divide up. I

think assessment could even be more fast and furious and we could get on to what we

need at our middle school level.

Claressa liked the fluency knowledge. "I used to work in journalism and I had no idea how to teach reading. Now, I have four classes of reading but they're not all the lowest. I have mixed, some 1's, some 2's. I was just trained as a Journalist and I am really glad to have this training

VH: What have you learned the most?

Claressa: It's got to be fluency. It's got to be how low they are in phonological awareness. I didn't' know there was so much to it, but now I know what to call their problems and what to do about. We've been using Scholastic Scope. We read the newspaper out loud once a week.

VH: What do you think the weakest training link was?

Claressa: Assessment could have definitely been stronger. I could have spent more time on learning assessments. I did get some ideas for fluency, but I could really have spent more time on learning high school reading level assessments for all the parts of reading.

VH: How so?

Claressa: You know what happened at our school don't you?

VH: No.

Caress: We used to have a very strong reading department and we all relied on each other. We were a great group. But one of us got promoted and the others went to other schools, so now I'm kind of on my own. I have to get my own stuff. I can't ask the administration, they are clueless. They never come in or see what I am doing about reading. They only contact me if there's a problem or something wrong. I think they are clueless when it comes to helping us.

VH: Clueless?

Caress: Yes, Not that I know everything now, but they never seem to focus on us. I mean if I tell them what I want now, I may get it. Before our other principal got promoted, we would get whatever we wanted immediately. But she was a reading. teacher. Thank goodness I'm going to another school. It will be better next year because I'm going to her school and she knows reading. But it's been really hard this year. I'm the only one who is doing this training here now. I definitely feel better trained now to teach reading, I just could use some more assessment techniques for high schoolers.

Meryl felt that she could learn some more assessment techniques for her middle school students. She loved learning more strategies for summarizing and questioning because she uses inquiry learning with her regular readers. Her classes aren't leveled because there are so few strugglers. Her school is located in an upper income resort oriented island community and the student population is the least diversified of the participants.

Meryl: I don't have to do a lot of diagnostic testing for weak readers but I think I could use them for my regular readers.

VH: Probably, what else did you learn?

Meryl: I learned that there are plenty of strategies out there. I like the inquiry learning ones like QAR and SQAR (Raphael, 1986), and I like them to do a lot of finding the main idea. I also like them to summarize a lot. I don't have too many Fluency problems, but I do work on their comprehension. All in all, I'm pretty happy. I just wanted to get through the trainings them to keep my job.

VH: Did you get to keep it?

Meryl: Yes, but I'm moving to the new middle school and I'm going to still teach

reading. I'll still have regular students. She lowered her voice to a whisper.

Meryl: You know I'm leaving because of my administrator, she doesn't really

support me or probably want me here, but I'm out of here. She doesn't care about the

reading professional development training or at least not mine. I mean she sent an

email asking me if I did it, but she doesn't come here.

VH: Not wanting a trained reading teacher?

Meryl: She doesn't care. I'm leaving.

VH: What was the least helpful learning in the competencies?

Meryl: I think they all work in the right situation. I'll tell you that online course is

just way too much research and reading. We need to make the reading less in some

competencies! We don't have time! I'm just not going to read all that stuff in the

online course. I mean it was good. I printed it out at my school and do you know it

took up almost three-inch binders?

Researcher's Perspective on Participant Learning

The most striking observation among all participants was their ease of use with

reading terminology. As professional collaborators we all seemed to be starting to

understand the jargon of Scientifically Based Reading Research. During later

interviews, especially after second observations, we conversed in the jargon of

reading. Using terminology seemed to mark an understanding that we were all on the

same urgent journey.

The participants were able to readily recognize their own learning and favorite reading strategies. At least two were having fun with engaging the students. Janie's creation of her Frieda Fluency character, and Luanne's collaborative group work were evidence that they were trying to be innovative. Carolina and Cherise made me think about why they could not pinpoint their own learning from the competencies, even when I encouraged them to focus on what they learned. Both of these participants taught the very lowest high school readers or Level 1's. I considered that ontological frustration was taking its toll. Instead of finding benefit, ease of use, and efficiency from the training, both viewed the training as burdensome and unnecessarily extensive.

Luanne, who teaches gifted students, was able to articulate best what she liked or disliked. I consider that the teacher's student population and level of teaching might frustrate or elevate the teacher's ability to connect to useful reading strategies and graphic organizers. A difference in professional development perception exists between teachers who instruct regular or gifted secondary students and those teach the lowest readers. Meryl did not teach struggling readers. She could articulate quickly what she valued most.

All teachers mentioned that their site administrators were minimally or not personally interested in their reading training. The only time they felt administrators took an interest, initially, was to force them into the training so they could meet reading standards. I view this as an important finding. During part of this study, I was asked by my principal to teach six classes of almost thirty students each even though the state recommendation was for less than twenty-five students. I felt the

administrator was deliberately ignoring my request for class leveling. I was exhausted

from trying to reach my struggling readers. The principal never walked in my room

in an entire year to see how my reading classes were going even though reading has

such a tremendous statewide focus. I thought back to Luanne, Cherise and Carolina.

They said that he never came into their rooms either. "You know he has never even

been in this room, he sends a Dean down when he needs something and I've been her

almost two yhear snow." said Cherise. "Well it doesn't bother me he's never been in

my room. I'd rather be left alone." said Carolina.   Gracie told me that her principal

had never been in her room. "I have invited him so many times and he can't even

make it to hear these kids read out loud." she complained.

All of the participants seemed particularly grateful for fluency training.

 All participants mentioned assessment strategies as a component in which they

would like to further their training. I, too, was grateful for the learning I experienced

in fluency assessment from Competency 3. The district testing coordinator provided

all of us with an array of worthwhile standardized assessments. Simultaneously, my

eyes were beginning to be opened to the availability of the numerous, specific tools to

teach struggling readers.

It was also became evident, especially from the viewpoints of Gracie, Janie,

and Claressa, that as respondents were becoming more knowledgeable in

Scientifically Based Reading Research, they were beginning to feel more politically

empowered and aware of district and state initiatives. They were also beginning to be

asked to take on more responsibility at their schools sites. This empowerment might

shed light on some of the frustration they speak toward their school administrators and how well supported they feel in their professional development pursuits.

Research Question: Did Participants Implement New Knowledge?

The biggest challenge for teacher professional development that will foster the kind of learning envisioned by reading reformers is how teachers implement effective practice in the situation-specific practice that is teaching. Teachers hold the authority, and thus the responsibility, for initiating the curricular and instructional changes made within their own classrooms (Carr and Kemmis, 1986).

One of the most important aspects that authenticates successful professional development is the design principle of positive change. Robust professional development must be obviously linked to meaningful content and change efforts rather than simply provide a generic in-service opportunity (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995).

Scientifically Based Reading Research is standards based professional development that lies at the heart of reading teacher reform. It is discipline specific. Discipline specific professional development is more effective than generalized training (Alvermann, 2005). Reading teachers are the foot soldiers in the war against academic failure. The well-prepared reading teacher is an active participant and is able to make the connection between literacy training and classroom use (Nelms, 2004). Training success determination lies in the major interest in determining if what participants learned through their professional development experience affected or changed their professional practices (Guskey, 2000).

Professional development evaluation at Level 4 poses two questions:

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Did participants incorporate the new knowledge and skills into their practice?

Are participants aware that they incorporated new knowledge and skills into their

practice? Guskey's *Implementation Log Forms* are designed to collect detailed

information on very specific implementation behaviors and practices. The

participants in reading teacher professional development attended training to learn

very specific and purposeful components of reading instruction that are designed to

quickly improve student literacy.

<div align="center">Participant Observations</div>

Researcher observations provided me with the most cogent information about

the success or failure of implementation. During direct observation, I assumed a more

detached perspective (Shaffir, Stebbins, and Turowetz, 1980). Direct observation

allowed me to step out of the participant observer role I had previously assumed in

preliminary interviews. I could focus intensely on the research question of

implementation. Direct observation allowed me an efficient means of studying

specific circumstances as outlined by the implementation questions.

I strove to be as unobtrusive in the classroom as much as possible, so as not to

bias my observations. On certain occasions respondents attempted to draw me into

their classroom environments during the lessons. Students also talked to me. I kept

my responses to a minimum during lessons (Spradley, 1972). The observations took

place over a period four months. All observations took place in participant-respondent

classrooms. I took field notes of the classroom environment. After each observation,

I interviewed each participant. I recorded the observations and interviews using

running records or audiotapes if permitted.

I incorporate the running records and transcriptions in Chapter Four to reinforce authenticity. All participants' and their students' names have been changed to protect anonymity. School district and site administrators granted prior permission. No administrator was in attendance. The following table summarizes each participant's observation.

Table 6: Participant Observation Schedule

Week/Teacher	Duration	Lesson Content or Title
1/ Cherise	35minutes 35 minutes	Fluency Check Echo/Choral Reading
2/ Carolina	55minutes 55 minutes	Sustained Silent Reading Sustained Silent Reading
3/ Gracie	90 minutes	Literacy Circles Guided Reading
4/ Georgia	55 minutes 55 minutes	Vocabulary Reading Aloud/GIST
5/ Claressa	15 minutes 35 minutes	Fluency Paired Reading
6/ Meryl	55minutes 55 minutes	Shared Inquiry Approach Shared Inquiry Approach
7/ Janie	20 minutes 60 minutes	Fluency Check Guided Reading PowerPoint
8/ Luanne	45 minutes 45 minutes	Direct Instruction Literary Terms Fluency/Direct Instruction Literary Terms

Classroom Observations

Cherise's Classroom

Big, bright windows illuminated Cherise's spacious and new classroom. Cherise's room was at the furthest end of the newest wing of the school. Her room had few posters and no student artifacts were displayed. The only visible texts were

FCAT workbooks. They lined her wall-sized bookshelves. Her desk was located behind the students' rows of paired desks. She rarely sat down. I arrived early and settled into a back row seat. She did not provide me with a written lesson plan. Cherise was uncomfortable with being audio taped. I used field notes and running records to record the observations and post interview. Her classroom quickly filled up with 19 students As soon as students walked in the room they hounded her with questions about their FCAT scores. She brought them to order by asking them to check the board for today's assignment.

Jason: (Yells across room) What are we doing today?

Cherise: Well, we're going to flip a coin. We're going to see who reads first. We're doing your fluency check again.

Cherise: OK, we're on reading passage number 10. Read through it and stop when you come across a word you don't know. What about the first word?

Missy: *Sculpture*.

Cherise speaks over her voice: What about the third word? What does consequently mean?

 A result of something you do?

Missy: I don't know what *sculpture* is.

Cherise: Any other word?

Mike: Reeeennnnaa

Cherise: That's Renaissance. It was a time period.

A student interrupted as he comes in late. She ignored him as he takes his seat. She moved ahead with the lesson.

Jason: Fourth paragraph…plast…

Cherise: *Plastocene*: do you think this has anything to do with plastic?

Mike: manip…

Cherise: *man i pu la ting*. She pronounced it syllable by syllable.

Tony: I know, it means move it around and change…

Mike: 8th line p word

Cherise: *polychromy*

(Another student walked in late and stares at the class before he took a seat. Cherise ignores him. She kept teaching.

Missy: You still didn't tell me *sculpture*.

Jason turned to her: It's art.

Cherise: OK, please listen. I'm going to read the passage to you hopefully not very fast, so you can understand sculpture…go to page 49 and listen up (to late student) Johnny open your book.

Cherise had yet to raise her voice or make an issue of what I see as constant discipline problems: late students, students chatting, students not opening their books.

Cherise quickly read the entire passage to them and stood to one side of the podium at the front of the room. She continued to ignore the students chatting among themselves in the back.

Cherise: OK! Here's another word you may have trouble with *Mesopotamia*

Mike: I know! "Between two rivers!" (Yelling).

Cherise: Right! Cherise moved to the other side of the room.

Mike: I'm a scholar! (Some in class laugh at him).

Cherise took a coin out of her suit pocket. "Now we're going to flip a coin…tails for

window side of the room. She headed for the center of the room. She flipped on the

overhead projector and put 1:99 minutes and seconds on the screen timer.

Cherise: She flipped the coin in the air. Window side is heads…door side is tails.

OK, it's window side first. Get with your partner.

Cherise: OK, when I say start, those on the window side start reading. Partners help

them if they get stuck…OK, everyone ready. Go!

Students murmured as they read to each other. One girl in a pair was putting

on make up and the other was checking her cell phone. Another two students have not

opened their books. Most, however, were reading softly. Cherise paced the front of

the class. The majority finished at about 1:30 seconds. Just then the door opened and

the Assistant Dean for discipline walked in looking for a student. The student was

absent. Cherise was forced to put the entire class back on the reading fluency task

with repeated instructions.

Cherise: Shhh…keep your voices down, not everyone is finished.

It took almost four minutes for the rest of the class to catch up with those who were

finished. Cherise glanced over at me.

Cherise: OK! I gave you more time. I hope you recorded your partner's time to

finish. All right, person closest to door -- it's your turn. OK ready, 54321 and start!

Cherise has reset the time. She allowed the second group time that was well beyond

the two minute deadline. She walked over to a student who was leaning back in his

chair and laughing.

Miguel: I know man I am wasting my time…she's nothing but a girl and starts talking about her girlfriends.

Cherise: Quiet—are you doing this? How are you dong? Have you mastered it?

Miguel made a half-hearted effort to open his book. Cherise went back to front of room with one eye on the class and the other on the timer.

Cherise: OK, it looks like everyone's finished. Please make sure you put your timed charts back. Record your partner's word count. Everyone fill out your own reading charts and put them away. Thank you everyone. The bell is going to ring.

I am concerned by how long it has taken to get through two partner fluency checks. Almost the entire 50-minute period. The interruptions, late students and students with and without passes seemed endless. I thought about the difficulty Cherise faced in keeping the students engaged and away from chatting and their cell phones. I left with more questions unanswered.

Over the summer break, Cherise had completed her reading competencies. I was again teaching in the same school with her. The school district had purchased a new reading curriculum for struggling readers. Cherise and I were both teaching struggling readers, and we attended the district pre-service training together.

I visited Cherise's classroom about three weeks into the new school year for my second observation. The new curriculum hadn't arrived from the publisher, and we were both relying on our old resources for lesson plans. The district's new curriculum calls for fluency checks periodically. Cherise was again repeating fluency checks. The passage she chose was a passage about life skills that she had copied from a workbook. Again, she did not provide a written lesson plan. In this lesson, the

students seemed to have become used to fluency checks. Cherise did not give any pre

reading or background knowledge about the passage. Unlike my first observation, this

check took only about 20 minutes of class time. She assigned them a life skills work

sheet to complete.

Cherise: OK, looks like everyone's finished. Please make sure you put your timed

charts back. OK we're done with our check. We're going to do some goal setting and

some life skills. I want you to think back to some time in your life when you felt

successful. These can be academics, sports, relationships, life or family. I want you

to think back and go there in your mind. I want you to write a short paragraph.

John: Miss how long (he yells out without raising his hand).

Sarah: When is this due?

Cherise: Let me finish. I want you to write a three to five sentence paragraph just like

you would write on an FCAT. This could be a question on the FCAT. The question

could ask you to write about a successful time in your life.

John: On our own paper?

Cherise: Yes, your own paper.

Lorenzo: I don't have a pen. Can I have a pen?

Cherise: I'll see if I have one.

The class was shuffling and chatting. Cherise wrote the assignment on the board.

Within five minutes they were working. Most students only attempted one sentence.

Cherise walked among them and tapped their papers.

Cherise: You have to write. What are you going to do on an FCAT?

Lorenzo: I'm not going to pass it anyway. (Class laughs).

John: True dat bro!

About two minutes before the bell she asked for their papers. The class left.

On this day we had time to sit and talk about her lesson.

VH: What do you think? We've finished our competencies. What do you like now?

Cherise: I think my class is better when I focus on their life skills. They don't have basic manners, they can't sit still, and they don't know how to act. They really have just bad classroom behavior.

VH: How do you think you are doing teaching reading?

Cherise: It seems my students are trying to assimilate vocabulary. They like fluency charts and I think they are participating. I have so many different reading levels moving in and out of these classes.

VH: I notice your fluency checks aren't cold readings. You read the passage with them beforehand.

Cherise: Well, if I don't they won't do it. Their reading habits are so poor. So, I try to combine comprehension and fluency in one lesson strategy.

VH: What's your favorite strategy that you've learned from your reading training?

Cherise: I love the graphic organizers, but I think they conflict with FCAT.

VH: What do you mean?

Cherise: Graphic organizers are great for teaching reading and fun for the kids to do. But my kids are so low and I feel pressured to get them through the FCAT. I have to just do practice FCATs.

VH: Do you think the competency trainings have helped you?

Cherise: I'm generally enthusiastic about competency trainings. But I'm afraid to talk about the reading competencies with my administration.

VH: Why?

Cherise: Even though they encourage me because of laws for highly qualified teachers, they just stay uninvolved. Everything I have discovered about reading, I got from you or found outside of any school administrative support. I even discovered the reading competencies on my own.

VH: Tell me about the trainings.

Cherise: You know they leave you on your own in those courses, and there's no discussion. I don't have time to chat with others anyway. I'm a class sponsor and I have all these committees. Now, in retrospect I guess I understand why we took the training. But the most value from those courses was the strategies. I need real lesson plans. I have no favorite lesson plan, and I certainly want less research and reading from my competencies. I also want to talk to more teachers. I would really like it also if someone came in and taught some of these lessons. That's why I really appreciated being able to talk to you when you were here. You gave me so many resources when you were here and you told me how to do it. I want more how to dos.

VH: What do you think was the worst part or the part you learned the least?

 Cherise: I just hated the FOR-PD because it seemed just too much assigned busy work and reading. The reading was just impossible with all I have to do. It was way too much. I'm not sure of the reasoning behind all that reading and research. I'm exhausted. I guess I still learned a lot. I'm still waiting for some practical help like "Here's what you need…when what…well I've never had an aha moment in almost a

year of training. For someone new this training would be overwhelming. You know I keep trying to do what's best for the kids. We're in 7th grade work sometimes and my kids' can't even do that. I spend hours trying to come up with interest holding assignments. These are all the kids that' don't read. I stand on my head trying to motivate them. Some days I can't even get classroom management with our type of students. Since I've been teaching reading, I've developed high blood pressure. I never had it before. I have to have a stress test tomorrow.

VH: Do you feel your training helps your students?

Cherise: I can find something in all training but administrators don't understand. My kids are too low. So I keep going back to life skills. Everything I do now is life skills. Basic living. They are not going to graduate, but if they do I want them to be successful. We only do fluency and comprehension checks now once a week. I try to add computers now.

VH: I don't see computers in your room to access FCAT Explorer (2003) or other reading programs.

Cherise: Well the tech specialist has just helped me. We've been using the computer lab in the media center. I bring my students up there to work on FCAT Explorer at least once a week.

VH: Do you have enough time to use what you have learned in the reading competencies to teach reading?

Cherise: It's difficult but we do combining over to the next time.

VH: Combining?

Cherise: I put lesson plans together. I try to teach life skills. They don't know how to live. I get so frustrated.

VH: Frustrated?

Cherise: They don't get it. I've tried everything. My FCAT scores are appalling. My principal called me in and asked me why I have a 36% failure rate!

VH: What about the reading department in general? Does everyone feel this way?

Cherise: I've given up talking to my colleagues here. It would be a blessing to have a reading coach. I just feel so overwhelmed. Nothing stays the same. It's always something else we have to do in reading.

VH: What would help you now? What do you now need?

Cherise: I need help with lesson plans. I need to see other teachers teach. We need to stay together. I could really use someone coming in here and showing me to do these things we've learned. I don't want any more research. It's too much. I want practical help!

 (I saw tears forming in Cherise's eyes and decided that it was time to end our talk.)

VH: Well, you are certainly trying hard to do a good job.

Reflection

During both visits, I heard overwhelming impatience and frustration in Cherise's voice. I noted her frustration with her administration and her increasing lack of interest in trying to contact with peers. I reviewed my background notes. Cherise is not certified in language arts, and she told me she took the reading competencies to keep her job. She was in her second year of teaching during my observations and was trying to get a fast track certification. I immediately noted her

Implementation and Stage of Concern scores. On Guskey's professional development scales, Cherise's implementation scores are at 4b *Refinement*. She was still struggling to establish a routine, but her lessons seem disjointed. Cherise's impact score is a 3 for *Task Management* and a 2 for *Self-Management*. My reflections revealed that she was disjointed in her approach. She let her frustration with her students' poor reading skills get in the way of implementing strategies. There was a disconnect in perceiving that trying a strategy might work on correcting low skills and actually doing it. Her continued comments about being frustrated with what to do revealed that she was still in a low level of use.

Although she mentioned graphic organizers as her favorite teaching strategy, I saw no implementation. She often called me for assistance during the spring, but I heard from her rarely in the fall. She appeared to have given up searching out support. I suspected that she used quick fluency checks because they were easy to use under time pressure and were the quickest way for her to assure policy compliance for student assessments. I thought about the young student, Missy, who repeatedly asked for clarification of the word *sculpture* and saw how the pressures of the classroom kept Cherise from answering her.

Carolina's Classroom

I visited Carolina's classroom after making arrangements to arrive on a day when she was attempting to instruct Sustained Silent Reading (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2004). Carolina was very pleasant and very welcoming. She expressed how she didn't want me to think badly about her, but she didn't know what to do sometimes with her students, and had no one to ask. She told

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me that she often wanted just to teach and not make waves. She was most uncomfortable with taping as her current principal was engaged in district grievances with unions and the faculty at her school had become engaged in an untrusting spy mentality.

I taught in the same school with Carolina. I had been her peer teacher during her first year. She originally had been hired to teach Spanish and Social Studies, but the need for reading teachers in our high school precluded her from teaching those subjects. She was on a fast track certification and had moved to Florida from New York after spending several years in the banking business. She was the girls' varsity basketball coach. At the time of my first observation, Carolina had completed Competency 3. She had a new baby, and she found the time constraints of attending further professional development difficult.

Her classroom was much too small for the 24 struggling Level 1 readers she was responsible for. It was placed next to the sports trainer weight room, and she was attempting to teach with loud hip-hop, rap, and oldies music blaring through her walls. FCAT workbooks were stacked in three piles on the floor in a back corner. I picked an unobtrusive corner desk near hers and sat down.

Carolina started class seated behind her desk that was located in the center of the back wall. She had divided her room into two facing sections of desks to optimize room and movement. Carolina started class by announcing that reading students need to build their fluency. She told the students to write in their FCAT Journals. They were to also keep track of what they were reading. She told them to try to comprehend what they were reading. Two students approached her desk and

interrupted her. She questioned them about their missing planners and ID's. Two other students had left their books in their lockers. They interrupted her first conversation and she told them to go get their books, but she wouldn't write a hall pass. She told them that she knowingly could not give them a pass for forgetting their books during lunchtime, but she did let them leave. Two students asked her if she could explain the directions to them in Spanish. Her initial attempts to start her lesson had been completely interrupted.

Carolina: No, I'm not helping you by doing this in Spanish. OK class we should be getting our reading books out. You have different books right? OK everybody, don't ask if you've forgotten your book, and just go without a pass. Anna, come here to ask your question.

We were now ten minutes into the period. Carolina appeared to be very busy with housekeeping. She still hadn't risen from behind her desk. Most of the 25 students were quiet. Four students were looking over each other's shoulder and whispering.

Carolina: Meredith, Meredith, do you have your book? (Meredith is putting on make up from a compact). Meredith where is your book?

Meredith: I don't have it.

Carolina: You know you need a novel to read every Tuesday. Go get it.

What's that Tinella? Tinella showed her a book that she is reading.

Is it interesting? Kelly is that your book?

Kelly: Not it's the other girl's…that girl's (she points next to her).

Carolina: Brittany? Are you OK?

There was total silence in the room.

Carolina: I don't have to give out any zeros to anyone for not having their books.

Everyone has their book? Everyone happy? Brian, I need your homework.

Brian: I'll bring it tomorrow.

Carolina: How many days did I give you?

Brian: Til Tomorrow.

Carolina: I suppose.

Carolina: Ashley? Homework from Friday, the song and your interpretation of the lyrics? No?

Ashley: It's 'cause I came in late yesterday.

Carolina: Bring me the song tomorrow.

Ashley: OK.

The 50- minute period was now more than half over.

Two students were sleeping with their cheeks on their books. The room remained quiet. After about 10 more minutes, students started to whisper to each other. Four students with their heads down on their books were mouthing silent messages. Two girls were exchanging notes. The bell rang, but we did not have time to talk after the class. I asked Carolina if I could call her if I needed any clarification.

Carolina remained behind her desk. Even though the classroom was small, I noted Carolina seemed to distance herself from her students. Carolina's tone of voice was military like. The class atmosphere seemed rigid. Carolina was, like Cherise, uncomfortable with being taped. I had visited Carolina's classroom late in the year. She told me she would be taking more reading competencies over the summer and

welcomed me to visit with her in the fall again. Although Carolina thought she was

trying the Sustained Silent Reading strategy, I aw no evidence of SSR practices

(Pilgreen, 2004).

I visited Carolina in the fall for a second observation. I had not seen her at any

summer reading trainings. I had called her a couple of times and she told me she had

signed up for the FOR-PD reading course for Competency 2 at the beginning of

school. She had not found the time to add any more professional development

because of the demands of her baby girl. When I returned to Carolina's classroom for

a second observation early in the fall, her classroom design had not changed. The

tiny classroom was divided into two halves and her desk was still at the back of the

classroom. Her room was bare of posters and student artifacts. A few emergency

exit and school maps dotted an otherwise empty bulletin board.

Carolina had attended the district training for the new district assigned

curriculum along with Cherise and me. Her texts had just arrived, and she seemed

willing to give the new district wide reading curriculum a try. Her only comment

during training was that she could not see how the curriculum would help her students

pass FCAT. The curriculum seemed to her to be more about beginning reading

interventions than teaching what was necessary to pass the FCAT.

The administration had changed at the school. A novice principal had been

removed and a veteran principal had been hired to replace him. Carolina appeared

genuinely glad to have me observe her. I noted again her authoritarian posture and the

stern atmosphere of the classroom. Carolina had a reading assignment posted on the

board. The assignment was an activity from the new district assigned curriculum.

Carolina: OK everyone, get busy on your assignment and have it done by the end of the period.

Mason: What are we doing?

Carolina: It's on the board, write it down and go do it. It's in your workbook.

Jennifer: I need a pen.

Carolina: You know you can't come to class without a pen.

Jennifer goes back to her seat with no argument. Everyone picks up his or her workbook from the desks. There is very little noise except the blaring of rap music through the walls from the adjacent athletic training room. I am again struck with amazement at the absurdity of placing a Level 1 reading class next to a very noisy athletic training room.

Carolina's students are 11th and 12th graders with a touch more maturity than the students who were in the spring observation. They settled down more quickly. They flipped through pages of their workbooks. One or two students begin to write while others tried to figure out the writing assignment on the board. Carolina did not give verbal instructions but referred all students to the whiteboard. Carolina asked me to show her how to do something on her computer. I leaned over and showed her how to access a reading fluency data file. She performed very little teaching and did not engage her students. To be sure of what I was seeing, I asked to stay for another class period. The entire classroom scenario repeated itself with very little exception. At the end of the class, I stayed and we talked. Carolina seemed withdrawn and more reticent than she was during our first observation during the previous spring.

VH: Do you feel you have time to implement your strategies?

Carolina: Oh yes, I have time.

VH: What is your favorite reading strategy that you have learned?

Carolina: I guess I don't have one yet. The students seem to like some of the
activities in their new books though.

VH: What are those?

Carolina: Well, the ones where they write about themselves. I try to get them to
practice writing for the FCAT.

VH: How about sharing and talking with your colleagues?

Carolina: Yes, I try, but you know how it is around here.

VH: How about diagnosing and assessing your readers?

Carolina: I haven't done much of that. I feel there is no time. I do ask other teachers
for their assessment materials. I have administered the Gates Maginitie (2005). I
guess I have gotten that from you or was it from someone else?

VH: Are you enthusiastic about Scientifically Based Reading Research?

Carolina: What do you mean?

VH: I mean the research and the reading strategies.

Carolina: (Shrugs and nods yes). I don't keep reading records or wall charts on my
students. You know I sometimes really don't know what to do with them. My
students are so low. I just try to get what I need from other teachers.

VH: Even with the new district curriculum?

Carolina: Well, we're just going to have to stick together on all this reading stuff.
I still don't have time to do it all and I'm still doing the new teacher orientation
program. I'm also thinking about leaving teaching.

VH: Are you supported by your administration in your teaching?

Carolina: I generally feel supported by the administration if you mean getting what I ask for. I try to stay out of the politics around here. I don't think they really know much about the reading training anyway. I'm doing this reading stuff on my own just to keep my job. To be honest, the administration is still only worried about FCAT more than reading. I am geared to FCAT all the time. My students are very low. Some will never pass. They don't want to read either.

VH: Does your evaluation weigh on your mind with FCAT? I mean if you are supposed to have all this professional development finished this year. Are you worried about the time?

Carolina: No, I'm not threatened. I can always do something else.

VH: Are you honestly thinking about leaving the profession?

Carolina: You never know.

VH: What do you need that would make you stay in the profession?

Carolina: Probably, less requirements. I just can't get all this professional development done. It's too much and reading isn't what I wanted to teach anyway. I am not a reading teacher. I want to teach Spanish and Social Studies. Those were my majors. I am kind of looking around for another profession.

Reflection

Carolina represents how professional development can overwhelm new teachers and actually chase them out of the profession. I noted that Carolina was one of three teachers who did not have a language arts undergraduate degree. At the time of my second observation, she no longer engaged her students in teaching and

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learning. Carolina is not teaching her college subject majors. Upon being hired, she

had been promised classes of Social Studies and Spanish, her major and minor.

Because her school urgently needed reading teachers, she was reassigned almost

immediately to teach reading "a subject I know almost nothing about." she told me.

As a new teacher, she had been loaded up with almost two years of unpaid district

professional development requirements: 300 new teacher induction hours (APPLES),

300 hours of English as a Second Language (ESOL) training, and 300 hours of

reading training. With just two years of teaching experience, and a very young

daughter, she doesn't see how she can meet NCLB highly qualified teacher deadlines.

She was close to the point of giving up.

In late fall, I emailed Carolina to ask her about her plans. I asked her again if

she was still thinking of leaving the teaching profession. She said that she would

continue to try to meet all requirements if she stayed in the profession. She had made

no decision. She was thinking if she left, she would like to start her own business.

On Guskey's *Levels of Use* scale, I assign her a 1: Orientation. She sought

information and explored the personal and resource requirements for use, but I noted

a lack of enthusiasm for classroom preparation. She also did not have written lesson

plans for both observations even though each observation was a semester apart   I

noted no implementation of any of the fluency and vocabulary strategies from the

vocabulary strategies and fluency assessments of Competency 3. For implementation

I also assign a 1. With only two reading competencies completed in a year and one

half, she represented a reluctance to continue with reading professional development.

She seemed to want to remain aloof and non-committal to not just reading teaching, but to the entire teaching profession.

Claressa's Classroom

Claressa has been teaching for four years. She is n her early 30's, and she is one of two African Americans in this study. During my first observation with her, she was teaching reading as well as Advanced Placement English and Journalism. When I visited her classroom in the spring term, she had just been hired to transfer to a newly opened high school. She would help start classes, she would begin the reading program, and she was to be Reading Department Chair. She had finished *Reading Competency 6: Portfolio*. Claressa and I completed three reading competencies together.

Claressa's room was print rich. She had placed a huge reading motivation poster above her whiteboard. She had also posted the six elements of good reading skill development along the side wall: *Metacognition, Schema, Engagement, Fluency, Competency and Text.* On the back wall were one-word strategy posters: Chunking, *Strategy, Summarizing, and Paraphrasing*. Her class slowly filed in. It was a good nine minutes after the second bell before everyone got to their seats and started listening to her.

Claressa had posted two definitions of good reading ability on the whiteboard: prosody and fluency. She announced that today would be fluency checks, but the phone rang before she was finished defining prosody for her students. She put the phone down and asked everyone to get a reading partner

Claressa: Guys, I'm not speed-reading. We're concentrating on tone and pitch. Yesterday we did role-play, and today we read together. Ok, score your partner, liven up your reading! Checker/reader write it down.

Cassandra: How long do we have to read for?

Claressa: You may begin.

The students are reading, *"To Build a Fire* (London, 1908), a story that has been copied from a workbook. Students read out loud. Students are counting miscues and since Claressa has given no instructions on miscues, I assume these students are familiar with fluency checks. Students were in pairs or triplets. One student had his feet up on desk and is leaning back. Another girl was smoothing his hair. One girl was looking at a photograph book. Claressa paced in front of the class. She walked around. The PA blared: *All teachers read your email now!"* Claressa walked over to her computer and immediately checked her email. She winked at me, and then she regrouped in front of the class.

Claressa: Time, record the errors; let's begin again in reverse.

She stood in the middle of the class, and timed for 1 minute.

Claressa: Time is up! We're going to turn to page 14. Go back to the original person and remember to circle the number at bottom of how well your person read. Circle the number. Jonathan keep your hands to yourself! A student grabbed at Jonathan.

Claressa: Begin!

Students seem minimally engaged. Some chat across room. One girl looks away and another is studying her chest. Claressa paces and times.

Claressa: Time is up on this one!   Record the time, record the mistakes, and see what your partner did.

Claressa: All right! Last time through. Everybody reading, your scores should increase every time.

Feet up student: Miss I can read this whole thing in 2 seconds?

Claressa: Maybe, OK you may begin!

The read aloud din ensues for two minutes. Everyone is engaged.

Claressa: Time! Calculate your scores in back of book on 145. Put your last score on the chart. We did this two times you should be getting higher each time.

Within 10 minutes all are finished. Claressa continued to move around the room.

Feet up student: Miss can I go the library after I finish? I never got a book to read.

Claressa: What do you do for your reading? You are supposed to have your book now. Wait, you can go after this lesson. Let's do read alouds.

Claressa: How many of you have ever made excuses for not bringing homework?

Every hand in the room shot up. Claressa flipped through a book. She has never raised her voice and doesn't seem to need to. She didn't yell, order, or threaten. She talked in a casual, quiet tone, and the students seemed to meet her at the vocal focus.

Claressa: Listen. I am going to read this poem...

Listen to how I read it. Follow along.

Claressa read the poem and then read *My Dog Ate My Homework* (Holbrook, 1996).

Claressa: Now we're having a vocab test in 5 minutes. Get your books out.

Students rustle around and got workbooks. Claressa handed out a worksheet with a list of vocabulary words.

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Claressa: This is an open book test. Ok everyone grab a book no slacking. You should finish this in 15 minutes. I gave you these words on Monday. You looked them up. We reviewed yesterday. It's Thursday and what do we do on Thursday?

Class chorus: vocabulary quiz and fluency practice.

Students finish their vocabulary open book tests one by one. Four students linger and struggle to work on the handout. They group their desks and speak Spanish.

Claressa: If you finish early you can go into your literature circles.

Student: Our what?

Claressa: You know our literature circles.

There was no time to do either. Time had sped by. The bell rang and the students gathered their papers and books

After the class left I sat down with Claressa, and we talked about her class. Claressa was quick to ask me what I thought of her lessons. I told her I thought it went well.

VH: What do you call this today?

Caress: Thursday is our fluency day.

VH: Yes, but you did so much more, you did a fluency check, a read aloud (Burns, 2001), modeling, and then you had them do a vocabulary test. The students kept up with you.

Caress: Yes, but these kids seem a little distracted. You know I don't just teach reading. Journalism too. I have four classes of reading. One is English, and one is the newspaper.

VH: This class seemed engaged but antsy.

Claressa: You know I presented something at our district reading conference on fluency. I like fluency.

VH: Yes, I forgot.

Claressa: I did a whole thing about how kids hate to read. She hands me artifacts.

VH: I missed it because I presented at the same time.

Claressa: I want them to love to read.

VH: What are your favorite strategies and resources for your students?

Claressa: I like having them read the newspaper. We do the newspaper once a week. But there is no more money for issues according to administration. We have lots of reading games. She pointed out boxes of reading games: *Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit* and *Scholastic Scope* and *Action*.

VH: What is your favorite reading strategy from the district training?

Claressa: I didn't know about fluency and prosody until we did this in our competencies. I really like the read aloud and fluency and prosody strategies. I wouldn't have done fluency unless I had *Competency 3*. We tested them last year and I didn't know it was so important. Now we do it weekly.

VH: Is that your favorite reading strategy or did you learn another favorite one?

Claressa: I took the online reading course first, before any other competency to learn new techniques for teaching reading. I hadn't really understood how many I was going to have to take to keep my job. My administrators warned me I had to take reading training. I was upset, but it's turned out ok.

VH: How so?

Claressa: Every one of the competencies has been great. There is lots of knowledge

of what reading is, and what it's not. I don't think I understood it took fluency

monitoring at every level. We weren't paying attention to individual problems that

they had. I want to keep teaching reading. I am into all these reading strategies

because I think they make a difference. I wish I had them before. I just don't want

students to behave I want them to learn to read.

VH: What was your best competency?

Claressa: Best competency was the online course and the one we're doing,

Competency 6. The online really helped. I like learning online. There were so many

resources. I printed out the online course. It was huge. But it really helped me

become aware of what I was doing.

VH: Can you recommend any improvements?

Claressa: I guess it could have been less repetitive.

VH: How so?

Claressa: It was a lot of reading about the same stuff. I like more doing things. I

want to learn new techniques all the time. I took one competency through Florida

State University that was great for theory and it was an eye-opener. It's amazing, that

as much as we need to know, so many kids do know how to read. Reading is hard

work for kids and adults.

VH: What do you mean?

Claressa: Well after all this knowledge I've learned, teaching reading is hard work.

Knowledge is what reading is about.

VH: In your classroom do you have time to implement the professional development strategies you learned?

Claressa: No. I'm still trying to juggle just the work. I'm moving to a new school and we're still trying to set up resources and strategies so I'm just out of time.

VH: What about your colleagues, do you have time to talk with them?

Claressa: Yes. We do have some time. Early in the year we had a great reading team, then we got new administrators, and you know one teacher left to be an assistant principal at the new high school so now our reading department is just destroyed. We used to talk about every week's assessments on Monday, but we don't do that so much anymore.

VH: Do you have time to assess and diagnose your students?

Claressa: It's difficult to track, but I like them to assess themselves. We have Plato and four computers. Having the FCAT programs allows me to give individual conferences so they can teach themselves while I'm doing this.

VH: Do you think Scientifically Based Reading Research has helped you assess?

Claressa: I am very enthusiastic about the reading strategies. You call it Scientifically Based Reading Research? What's that?

VH: It's what we're doing in the competencies. How about your administration? Are they supportive?

Claressa: My administration is clueless. They don't seem to know or pay attention to what's happening in reading. They are slow getting it.

VH: How about FCAT testing? Does emphasis on FCAT testing keep you from trying reading strategies you learned in professional development?

Claressa: No, it encourages me. I want all the info I can get on strategies for FCAT.

VH: What's your favorite graphic organizer? Do you have one or do you use them?

Claressa: Yes, lots but I can only seem to focus on one monthly. I like the *GIST* (Cunningham, 1982) and the *K-W-L* (Ogle, 1986). The kids also like to color. I don't think coloring is a graphic organizer, but I always give them something to color that's related to learning to read.

VH: Does your school curriculum allow you to try reading strategies?

Claressa: Yes, I definitely feel trained now. At the beginning of the year when all my friends the other reading teachers were here, we came up with a set reading curriculum. It's not so much now because the reading department is torn down. because I think they make a difference. I wished I had them before. I just don't want students to behave I want them to learn to read. I like more doing things. I want to learn new techniques all the time.

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Claressa: I'm still trying to juggle just the work. I'm moving to a new school and we're still trying to set up resources and strategies so I'm just out of time.

VH: What about your colleagues, do you have time to talk with them?

Claressa: Yes we do have some time. Early in the year we had a great reading team. Then we got new administrators. You know one teacher left to be an assistant principal at the new high school so now our reading department is just destroyed. We used to talk about every week's assessments on Monday, but we don't do that so much anymore.

Claressa needed to start her Journalism class. I left, but about a week later,

Claressa called me to ask me what I thought of her class. I took the opportunity to talk

with her about lessons and about reading competencies. She wanted to tell me that her

first love, teaching English, was getting more exciting. She had just been elected Vice

President for the District Chapter of Teachers of English. She also told me she was

asked to attend the Reading Coaches Boot Camp. I told her I would see her there.

Reflection

Claressa was clearly trying to implement her competency training. She

mentioned the training numerous times and appreciated learning fluency. She was

engaged in district initiatives and was beginning to feel empowered. She gave a

presentation at the district reading council meeting and was actively seeking

innovative activities to keep her students engaged.

Because of her ability to integrate and communicate not only with her students

but also with fellow reading teachers, I assign Claressa a 6 on Guskey's *Levels of Use*

Scale. Claressa is constantly in renewal and constantly reevaluating her teaching

strategies. On *Levels of Concern*, I assign her a 5. It is not the highest, but Claressa

is a strong collaborator. She is, however, beginning to move into a 6. In our last

conversation she shared that she would like to start training as a professional

development instructor for the district.

Over the summer break we participated in our district's leadership cadre

together. We were trainers for pre-service reading teachers. She asked me if I had

thought of transferring to her new school. I asked her to ask her administrator if she

would consider hiring me. The thought of transferring schools was intriguing. As I

was coming off academic leave, it seemed to be an opportune time to make a fresh start. I interviewed and was assured a position later in the fall, especially if student counts continued to climb.

Claressa has been a constant professional development companion. She emails me often with questions, and we share ideas and practice instruments. She is constantly reevaluating strategies. We have attended district reading leadership meetings. We talk openly about our students and what we can do to help them. Early in the fall term, Claressa called and asked me if I would take a position to help start a reading team at the new high school with her. I interviewed with the assistant principal and accepted the transfer offer. My former principal released me, even though I was the Reading Department Chairperson. One of my first duties was to write reading curriculum with Claressa. Claressa is an active seeker of reading teaching knowledge, and she is the most forthcoming of the participants. She shared her feelings honestly and didn't hesitate to ask for help. We helped each other open a new Reading Department.

 Even though I am enjoying the respite of not being in charge of a full Reading Department, I still receive have many emails from her with questions about reading. She is always asking to peruse my extensive professional development library. We often collaborate. She is now working on her National Board Certification. We are colleagues who have become great teaching friends.

Professionally, Claressa is constantly pulled between her journalism background and reading. When I transferred to our new high school to teach with her, she was able to drop two reading classes. I am now the only full time reading teacher.

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I have assumed primary respona8ibliy for the struggling readers. This freed her to teach Journalism and Speech. We will continue to collaborate on our new high school's reading curriculum.

Georgia's Portable

Georgia is responsible for FCAT reading remediation for 11th and 12th graders at the districts central vocational technical high school. She is the only reading teacher. Her classroom is the last portable in the last row of three portable classrooms. Mindy, one of her students, escorted me to her room. When we arrived, Georgia quickly pointed out that Mindy is the only re-take senior to have recently passed the FCAT. I am reminded of Sweet's (1996) thesis that for the latter half of the twentieth century, reading teachers were relegated to last place position in the high schools. A derelict, overgrown nursery greenhouse bordered her portable.

I asked her about the vacant greenhouse. She told me that the landscape program had been terminated, and the printing and publishing programs were being terminated at the end of the year. I told her that if Mindy hadn't helped me I would never have found her portable. It took us almost 15 minutes to walk back to her portable from the front desk. She laughed and said that she was a reading teacher, and this is where her principal thought she belonged. She also told me that this location was better than what she had before. She pointed to a portable behind her about an eighth of a mile further away." This is good, look where I was before!"

The district vocational technical high school offers certificates in criminal justice, cooking, auto mechanics, beauty design, and computer-assisted design. To get their certificates, they must pass the FCAT. Georgia shoulders reading instruction by

herself. She is the only reading teacher at the school. Georgia has invited me to watch her teach the *GIST* to two classes. The *GIST* is a well-documented reading strategy that is taught in all competencies. I recorded Georgia's implementation and reaction using note taking, note making and running records. She was videotaping the classroom.

Her portable is crowded with bookcases, computers, beanbag chairs, and lots of posters on the walls. Her desk is tucked away into a make shift divided alcove. Georgia is bubbly and personable. Her students stumble in noisily on the shaky portable floor and take their seats. She introduced me to the class and I sat in front of the only available space in front of her eleven students desks. One student sets up a video camera. We shared *Competency 6* together, and one of the requirements was to film ourselves teaching a reading strategy. Her reading classes were 90 minutes long.

Georgia: I'm filming my videos for *Competency 6* today. Maybe you can help me to see if I'm doing this correctly.

VH: Well after you do *GIST*, I'll give you some feedback, how about that? But, today I'm just here mostly to observe.

Georgia: OK, but I need you to help.

The bell rang and the students settled. They chatted noisily.

Georgia: OK, this is Ms. Harper and she's here to watch me teach. I'd appreciate your cooperation. I'm going to read this newspaper article to you (Mindy is handing it out). Then I want you to summarize it in 20 words or less.

Georgia reads aloud *High Court Won't Review POW Suit Against Iraq* (Ft. Myers News Press, 2005). She finished reading.

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Georgia: Class can you summarize in twenty words or less?

No response from the class.

Georgia: Anyone? Jamie can you summarize this article?

Jamie did a fairly good job of restating the title but she missed the key reasons and the author's purpose.

Georgia: OK, I'll do it, OK; the court case won by others was thrown out or overturned.

Jamie: Thrown out?

Georgia: Yes, they won't hear it. OK let's do the vocabulary. There is vocabulary on the board. I'll go over the words and then you have to use it in a sentence. (She models the list):

Georgia listed off the words and asked students to pronounce for fluency: *POW, revive, toppled regime, terrorist, captivity, essentially, adversary, consequences, endured, subjection, mock, dismemberment, engage, cited, sanctions, imposing, appealed, validity.* Students were very quiet. Georgia handed the only dictionary in her room to one student.

Georgia: OK, Mike, you are in charge of giving the class the definitions from the dictionary as we read again. In the fewest words possible, everybody write out just the facts so if I read your papers I would understand your summary. After you've done this …hey what's wrong with you guys? No Wheaties today? I want you to make a GIST sheet.

The students tried to make their own from her diagram on the board. I quietly pass the book, *Tools for Teaching Content Literacy (*Allen, 2004), to her from my briefcase as she moved in between the students to look over their shoulders.

Georgia: (To a student who is laughing with another). Brian come sit here.

Brian moves to another desk. Georgia came over and sat with me for a moment.

Georgia: What am I doing wrong? What do you think aren't you the expert?

VH: I'll give you feedback after the lesson if you want.

She jumped up again to do a spot check.

Georgia: The whole purpose of this *GIST* is to help you with your comprehension.

Lucky: When do we get our FCAT scores?

Georgia: May 5, or thereabouts. You guys are now giving me every reason you don't want to be here doing this. OK, now we have the rest of the class. OK, now copy down the vocabulary from the story on your sheets. Stop videotaping (to the student who is filming). You can start again in two minutes.

Georgia then plodded through giving the students dictionary definitions for each word.

Georgia: *Adversary,* what is *adversary*? What do we see in the word adversary? You're adverse to be in an FCAT class.

Gabriel: Opposed to it?

Georgia: You all need to be writing this down in your notebook. *Consequences.* If you do not pass the FCAT, the *consequences* are no diploma.

Jamie: I've passed it. It means the outcome.

Georgia: Yes, and *endured.*

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Gabriel: The power to go through.

Georgia: to last through…so if you *endure* my class you've passed the FCAT.

The students begin to yawn and stretch.

Georgia: OK, *liability*.

Gabrielle: *Accountable?*

Brian reads from dictionary: obligated according to law.

Georgia*: Appealed?*

Gabrielle: legal?

Georgia: *Subjection?*

Brian: (from dictionary) to subdue

Georgia: Ok, what is mock?

Jamie: to make fun of

Gabrielle: Like pretending to shoot him.

Georgia: mm…ooohhh, like fake you mean

Gabrielle: Yeah

Georgia: What does dismember mean? OK, We're talking about body parts?

Student in back of room: What is it again, Miss?

Georgia: Like cutting body parts.

Student in back of room: Like amputate.

Georgia: Jamie, can you turn on the air, it's hot.

Jamie gets up to turn on air conditioner and instead turns on heat.

Georgia: Jamie, not the heat. Ok let's give this up, where are your textbooks?

Student in back of room: We didn't do *engage!*

Georgia: Yes, I'm trying to get you *engaged.* It means involved. OK. Cite from the dictionary. (She steps to a student.) You are still on *mock.* No, No, here's how to use the dictionary. You look up the base word.

Georgia seemed to be giving up slowly. She offered no more student praise and no longer stopped for discussion. She seemed tired.

Georgia: OK! Create two sentences from each word. She looked over a student's shoulder. He has been writing furiously during her definitions. She pulled his paper and handed it to me.

Georgia: Bryan Peters has taken 12 of the words and turned them into rap verses.

VH: Can I have this?

Bryan: Sure, but only if you read it to the class.

I tried to read it to the class, but his handwriting was virtually illegible.

Georgia: Bryan is very creative; he can write a rap song from anything.

The bell rang, the students leave, and Georgia came over to sit with me.

Georgia: Can you stay and teach the next class and please show me how *GIST* is done.

VH: I'll try. I'll use something that works for me, using your definition strategy and then we'll do *GIST*. Can you get someone to copy the *GIST* graphic organizer?

We walked down to the cafeteria for lunch and then to the main office to make copies. When we returned, Georgia introduced me.

Georgia's Portable Observation/ Researcher-Participation

Georgia: Class, we have a guest teacher. She is an expert from the district office. She's going to teach you vocabulary from your reading. You are going to do the GIST.

VH: OK, I want to divide you into two groups of four and I want you to turn your desk to face each other. Everyone right now, copy the vocabulary list from the board on the back of your GIST sheet. Quickly.

I gave them five minutes to copy the words.

VH: OK, I want you to split the words in half. Group One I want you to talk about the first half and Group Two I want you to figure out the second half. As you read the passage in your group, I want you to use your prior knowledge, what you already know, to figure out what the words mean and then help each other in your group. You have 20 minutes to read and discuss your list and then we are going to teach the other group the words you have defined. Any questions? And don't forget to copy them correctly from the board. If you can't understand your own writing, how can you get the definition right?

Student One: Right Miss!

I waited twenty minutes and kept an eye on the class. Georgia and I chatted about district reading training initiatives. She was so happy to have reading training. Georgia has come to teaching after twenty years as a corporate trainer. She thought she could live on her retirement, but found in Southwest Florida's increasingly expensive environment she would need a second income.

VH: OK, everyone got their words copied? Now it's time to talk within your group and teach each other your list. Then once you have your list with you definitions, we'll teach the other group. Does everyone understand? You only have 10 to 12 minutes, so you have to get your group's list done fast.

We proceeded. I was pleased that the students were engaged. I remembered reciprocal teaching and peer collaboration. We did not have to use the dictionary. The students were nice to each other and corrected each other. I only intervened when the definition needed further clarification. We bantered over words and I shared a police ticket story. We were engaged.

VH: Ok that was great. Now you have a copy of a newspaper article in front of you. I have the same article. The words you just did are taken from this article. I'm only going to read the first two paragraphs for you then everyone is going to take a paragraph out loud. Got it?

Students: Yes miss, OK.

The students read their paragraphs with only slight trepidation. The miscues on the vocabulary words were reduced. I let nothing go uncorrected. Georgia had remained silent the entire lesson. I have not had to shush or discipline once. I had wanted to try the *GIST* for reading and reciprocal teaching for vocabulary for a while. I had read about these in my FOR-PD and in *Competency 3*. I was eager for a chance to try them. The students left quietly after the bell. Georgia and I sat down to talk. We had taken two competencies together and were now finishing our last competency together. We had become friendly colleagues.

Georgia: You know that was great. You really had them engaged.

VH: Well, I think the only thing I did differently was to restructure the lesson around specific tasks that they do together. You know research indicates that high schools students learn more from each other than from any other person. (Howerton, 2004).

Georgia: Really? I'm afraid I don't do much group work. You have time to read research?

VH: You could try more group work. What do you really like to use?

Georgia: I get so tired of trying to teach them reading. They are so low and there's so little time. My students give me every reason to not want to be here.

VH: You could engage them more? What other strategies do you use?

Georgia: What do you mean?

VH: Well, I always say if you are the one tired at the end of the lesson, that's the wrong person doing the work.

Georgia: You're right. I should model more but leave them alone to do more of the work. If I could see stuff modeled for me, or it being done by another teacher--that would even be better.

VH: Do you think the reading training has helped?

Georgia: Yes, but I really think I could use a copy of everyone's meatiest lesson plan. There are so many different graphic organizers we could put all those in one session. We should all get back together.

VH: What don't you like?

Georgia: My only criticism is that we get way too much stuff to read. I simply don't have the time to read it and teach. Another problem is that the competencies are

usually geared only to elementary teachers. I know there are some good things but I would like to have separate secondary competencies.

VH: Did you get more out of the *GIST* when you saw me do it another way?

Georgia: Yes, I loved watching someone else's ideas. I loved seeing the kids do it well. I love the *GIST*. It is a consistent graphic organizer. They do well if they stick with it too. Janie, my only student who passed the FCAT says she used the *GIST* during the test. The competencies gave me something to give the kids that works.

VH: Any more organizers you liked?

Georgia: Well, they are all probably ok, but every reading teacher should have a paid day off to go observe other teachers' classes to see how they are all used. I tried *Skim and Scan* but scanning seems to be the least helpful. The students aren't engaged and they don't read it whether they are skimming or not unless I stand over them. Graphic organizers give them a visible connection to the reading. I'd really like to see other teachers do what they like?

VH: Are you saying we don't talk to peers enough?

Georgia: I have no colleagues at school to talk to about reading. I call around to people in my trainings. But everyone is so busy, or they don't think they are doing it right. It's probably my own lack of knowledge that keeps me from doing a better job. I like to try the new stuff, but I still don't understand everything about assessment.

VH: Do you assess?

Georgia: With what? What am I supposed to use? How do I get them?

VH: Yes, but we took assessment together?

Georgia: Yes, you were supposed to send me the level tests.

VH: You mean the *DAR* (Rosswell, Chall, Curtis and Kearns, 2005)? Downtown was supposed to send us all that. Call Brenda and tell her you didn't get yours.

Georgia: See! I knew you were the expert.

VH: So what could make this better in the long run? What more do you need?

Georgia: I need more talking to other reading teachers. I want to keep on increasing my professional knowledge. I like interacting with my peers.

VH: How about administration? Would they support a day off to visit other teachers?

Georgia: I took the initiative at first to keep my job. I don't think the administration knew what was going on, but they told me about it, and now it's even more important to them. They told me I could go to *International Reading Association* (2005), too. But I really think it's because I have a new assistant principal who knows what's going on in reading. My old APC left and didn't understand what I was talking about doing reading training. This reading teaching stuff is how I kept my job! My new principal walked in while I was explaining fluency to my class, and I got the highest evaluation score I had ever had.

Reflection

It was obvious that Georgia was extremely enthusiastic about learning more about the reading profession. She was so happy to be teaching. She cared deeply for her students' learning. She was also time stressed like the other teachers and wished for more peer collaboration. While some of her lesson plan techniques were disjointed and threads were not completed in teaching vocabulary, I noticed that she tried often to engage her students. She did explain the *GIST* and indicated it was one of her favorite strategies.

I saw Georgia frequently at district reading cadre professional development. She always asked me for any copies of anything I thought could help her. Her curiosity about what other teachers were using in the classroom as well as what I was doing impressed me. In Guskey's *Levels of Use*, Georgia represents a Level 5: Integration. Georgia is making a conscious effort to coordinate with her colleagues and improve the impact of her learning on her students' successes. Within *Stages of Concern*, Georgia has a Level 5: Collaboration.

Gracie's Classroom

Gracie is a vivacious 60 years old. She moved from New York State eight years ago. She was originally a middle school English teacher before moving to her A+ high school five years ago. She is an experienced educator and holds certifications in middle and high school in Exceptional Student Education, ESOL, and Gifted Language Arts.

I have known Gracie as a peer reading teacher for over five years. For four of those years we were the only full time reading teachers at our respective schools. We each taught the *at risk* struggling readers: Level 1's and 2's. While our students often repulsed other teachers, we shared the challenges and joys of teaching the most at risk. We were drawn together because there was really no one else doing our jobs. We taught together for one year. When I transferred schools we naturally stayed in touch. We both traveled a lonely road before the focus became reading at the secondary level. We shared strategies, reading successes, and the latest gossip including the coming reading command. Gracie started a Masters in Reading about

the same time I started my doctoral program. We used each other as peers and more: cultural sounding boards, curriculum depth finders, and emotional vents.

Gracie and I shared only Competency 6. Gracie earned four of her reading endorsement competencies by participating in her Masters program. She took the FOR-PD course. Two years ago Gracie became the ESOL coordinator for her school. She taught all 9th 10th FCAT Reading ESOL students. Almost all of Karen's students are Level 1's. She teaches the most reader deficient.

Her high school is recognized as among the top 100 in the nation. Much of the assurance of her high school's continued grade of A fell to her. Gracie is an advocate for her students and is frank with a no nonsense approach. I visited Gracie shortly after the spring administration of the FCAT. Her high school is on block schedule, and her reading classes are 90 minutes long. I observed her afternoon class of 9h and 10th grade struggling readers.

When I arrived, Gracie was fuming because she wasn't allowed to be a proctor for the FCAT. She is protective of her students, mothers them, and gives them rides to their homes. She always ensures they have money for food. She asked me if she could vent to me. She told me that she had spent most of this morning coordinating with her guidance department, unsuccessfully, to find a new student shelter, get him properly registered in school, and make sure he had money for food. She was driving him to and from school from his foster home for a few days until he was settled in. He did not speak any English, and Gracie was worried about him fitting in. Her school is on a 90 minute per period block schedule, and I have been

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invited to spend two blocks, and much of the rest of the afternoon, observing and chatting.

I listened without comment. I know that teaching the lowest readers can be a very frustrating experience even for the most accomplished of teachers. She needed someone to listen to her. I kept running records, observation notes, but Gracie did not want to be tape-recorded. The students began to file in, and Gracie started her class promptly at the bell. Many of her students were late and she singled out each one out for correction. Then five minutes into class, an administrator announced a fire drill. Finally, 25 minutes into the block, she started the lesson plan.

Even with the confusion and late start, the students seemed to know exactly what they were to do. It's almost as if they didn't need any cued instruction. They obeyed her as if they were minding a stern, but concerned mother.

Gracie: Ok, your progress reports are due. This is a major grade. A lot of you are just goofing off. We need to remember our skimming skills. Grade yourselves, do your own work. I know you've been lazy.

It took me a minute to figure out what she was doing. She did not give me a lesson plan. On her whiteboard she had instructions for forming literacy circles. But she began with guided reading (Jacobs, 1999).

Student: I like my book but I don't get the worksheet.

Gracie: I know.

Student 2: I have a headache.

Gracie: I'm sorry. OK. We're going to work on tolerant vs. intolerant.

Student 3: That is the biggest ring I've ever seen.

Gracie: My mother wore it everyday.

To all: Ok, we can even answer up to Activity 14. Open your books.

The class is reading *Witness* (Hesse, 2003).

Gracie: Do you know who shot Esther's father yet?

S1: Yes, it's Harry.

S4: Can I get a pencil?

Gracie: Hang on everybody; I just want to do one thing. I want to check and make sure you have the activity sheet and the book.

Gracie went from student to student, hands are up. Students yelled out page numbers while calling each other names. Gracie made her way back o the podium in the front of the room.

Gracie: Everyone enough! Go back to where it looks familiar to you, somewhere around Chapter 4.

Student 6: What's a WASP?

Gracie: It's a white person.

S1: It's a redneck. Class laughs. Gracie didn't answer. In fact, I note Karen left many students' questions unanswered as she forged through her lesson.

S2: Miss, what's a WASP? (To me).

VH: I whisper. It means White Anglo Saxon Protestant, like me.

Gracie shot me a dirty look. I realized she didn't want me talking to them.

S4: Teacher I'm trying to ask you for help.

Gracie: I'll send you out.

S3: What if…

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S4: Don't ask anything she don't like it.

Finally, I understood the point of the lesson. It was now 40 minutes into class and Gracie put an audiotape into a tape recorder on her podium at the front of room. She was giving them earphones for books on tape. Students go silent.

Gracie went back to her desk and handed me a worksheet packet of fourteen pages that included diagrams boxes, and Venn diagrams. The phone rang, she answered, and while she was talking, the class immediately got off task. Gracie hung up the phone

Gracie: Shut up everyone.

The class went silent. Gracie moved to a table loaded with books and she fidgeted with the recorder. The tape still wasn't on.

Gracie: Everybody! I'm going to play a book tape. When you get to the end I want you to answer questions. You can also skim and scan (Winograd, 1984). You can answer the sheet. Wallace! Keep your eyes open. Fernando! Get your head up.

Gracie read questions to the students and tried to explain an activity on page 9 of their handout packets.

Gracie: Who is Iris Weaver?

Student 1: Parroting Gracie: Who is Iris Weaver? I'm thinking out loud.

Gracie: Stop! I've asked you not to do that

Student1: What and you don't yell? You told us to think out loud remember?

Gracie: Stop! Be quiet! (She has raised her voice to a yell.) Do not share with anyone or think out loud. Now are we going to listen to Act 5? Yes, we are. Imagine

a conversation between characters you write the dialogue. That's a fun activity to do.

Gracie sat on a desk and reverted to reading assignment questions out loud.

Gracie: OK! I see certain people looking away! Get back on the activity. Go back to activity 14. Now I'm giving you a purpose for reading and paying attention.

Student 3: Miss we haven't read this before have we?

Gracie: Shhh. I'm giving you a reason to read. Karen read down the lists of activity questions and tried to explain them for 10 minutes.

Gracie: Ok, go. We're going to run out of time. I really want to get into literature circles. Try to stay awake! Sleeping is forbidden. OK Act 5!

Students shuffled a lot and laughed. They were socializing everywhere!   Almost 50 minutes into the class and after much management issues and interruptions, Gracie struggled to find her place. The tape was on the wrong cue. She stopped it and restarted it.

Gracie: Ok, while I'm finding this…I want to ask all of you a question. Why was Merlin at the well? She didn't wait for an answer. Students had their hands up and were trying to answer. Gracie jumped in before anyone could speak and answered her own question. Students kept trying to answer and engage her.

Gracie. There are so many characters. Who's the lead?

Student 2: He's the lead.

Student 3: You just said….

Gracie: OK let's listen, why don't you listen? You are really loud?

Student 2: Miss what is lynching?

Gracie: To class…what is it?

No one answered.

Gracie: You all don't know what lynching is? Why didn't you stop me? OK just so you know it means a person who is hanged and by the way a picture is hung, a person is hanged. Gracie stopped the tape.

Gracie: What's going on? Who saw them doing it (having sex)? He's a pastor so the KKK found out.

Student 5: So, this is what happened?

Gracie: So, what happens when you are absent? You don't know what's going on. So we all know Johnny is not head of Klan? Students try to answer.

Gracie: Before I start tape I am going to model a few paragraphs, follow along. She started reading. She interrupted herself.

Gracie: Wallace are you with me?

She started the tape again. Students made comments about the characters on the tape as if they were in the room with them.

Student 4: What is Armistice Day?

Gracie: Who knows what Veteran's Day is…she turned to me…isn't Veteran's Day Armistice Day, I shook my head yes.

Gracie: What term do we use to describe the way a person who thinks like KKK? How about this have you ever heard this word? She writes *skinhead* on board. This is a very intolerant word that is an example of intolerance.

Student 3: My mom is a skinhead! Everyone laughed.

I was reminded of a tornado as I watched Gracie teach.

Gracie: Do you know what a disco ball is? It's like old ballroom Dancing ball.

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Student 4: Yeah I saw *American Idol* yeah from the 70's.

Gracie: OK, (She stopped tape.) Go back to the packet. Now we have no time for literature circles. OK tomorrow in lit circles I want to know what you like about the ending. You put your own opinions in the packet.

Use the book. Sighs…Wallace.

Student 6: Can I collect the books?

After the class Gracie and I talked together. She was very tired. She put a lot of energy into the class and was constantly moving. She couldn't sit still when she talked with me. She jumped out of her seat incessantly. Her mind and mouth joined together in a running stream as she rambled from topic to topic.

Gracie: That was the raw me you saw today. You taught me all about reading. How did I do? I was mad when you talked about WASP. I wanted to wring your neck!

VH: Why?

Gracie: It was my class you shouldn't interfere.

VH: I apologize. The student asked me.

Gracie: You shouldn't do that.

VH: OK. What did you call that lesson plan?

Gracie: Guided reading and I was trying to get them into literature circles. I always try to get them high interest reading books. Our next book is on the board. But we're reading *Witness*. Did you see how the kids loved this book?

Gracie talked so fast that I could barely keep up. Gracie is very verbal and was constantly talking even when I tried to ask questions.

Gracie: My kids don't always get it. This class is way above them sometimes.

VH: Why do you think that is?

Gracie: I never have enough time. I'm always hurried. I know. These kids have such great needs.

Books were scattered, shelved and piled everywhere in her classroom. They were piled on tables and lined every bookshelf. Her room was connected to the media center. She told me it was the old librarian's storeroom, but they needed the classroom space five years ago. Gracie earned a grant to buy 3000 dollars worth of books for her students, and she borrowed other books often from the district's reading foundation libraries. She also kept track of the latest book award winners and picks those for her students. She was very cognizant of what resources are available. She is always asking me what I have. She wants copies of every strategy I have.

VH: Did you learn about literature circles and guided reading from competencies?

Gracie: Oh no, I've been doing them for at least two years. But I learned that they are in the competencies.

VH: Well what did you gain most from the reading training?

Gracie: You know I really didn't expect to learn anything from my reading training. I thought it was going to be like ESOL training, repetitive and boring. I thought it would be a revamp of what we've done in other trainings. But you know Competency 6 is the pulling together of everything. I get the relationship of our training to our kids in the classroom now. The best thing I got from *Competency 6* was discovering who Vygotsky was. Making that connection somehow has made me more aware as a teacher. I enjoyed sitting and talking with our mentor and checking off what I've done. I liked to argue with her. I think I might want to be a reading trainer and

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because I had college competencies. I almost feel over prepared. I loved reading the

research article but you know the state demands too much of us. We don't have time

to read all this research! I just didn't have the time to read everything in depth. Our

trainers had too much to do and sometimes my questions got put off. I had no respect

for some of the other groups because they didn't take it seriously.

VH: What do you mean?

Gracie: You know you saw it. People in our classes just looked bored and just don't

take this seriously. They left early or asked stupid questions or didn't care. I saw

some doing crossword puzzles.

VH: Do you think maybe he reading training is too much for some teachers?

Gracie: No not too hard but too much for some teachers not in language arts and they

just tuned out. You know I think the best teachers are English or language arts

teachers.

VH: What about you. What did you gain most?

Gracie: I loved it, I am so grateful, but I don't thank anyone. I just thank myself for

going after this. I did all the work. Some of it was so repetitive.

I do my best to implement the reading strategies. I have to discipline a lot.

VH: What about your colleagues? Are they training with you?

Gracie. I never talk with my colleagues. I am the only one training so far.

I think everyone in language arts should have plenty of assessment data and should

learn what Scientifically Based Reading Research is.

VH: What's your least successful component of training?

Gracie: I don't think there will ever be enough time. I can never get through everything. I feel so pressured. There just isn't enough time for these level kids, they need so much and they have no home supp ort. So I have to rush and pressure my students because they barely speak English.

VH: What about graphic organizers? Do you use anything you've learned in reading training?

Gracie: My favorite strategy was the KWL, but I knew that before I took the competencies.

VH: What is the best part of the training?

Gracie: You know I think the trainings have helped me give my kids exposure to great literature. They need it. But I need to know if they are getting it. I liked Competency 6 because I get to see myself on videotape. I would like more strategies and less stress. I would really like to see this training mandated across the curriculum especially for science teachers.

VH: What about your administration. Do you feel supported?

Gracie: Are you kidding? I don't get any support. For a year I have advocated for myself in this reading training. My administration doesn't know what is going on. Not one of my principals has inquired about my reading training. My principal never comes down to see me. I found out these training opportunities on my own. I even found out about *Reading Coaches Boot Camp* on my own. You know this could get political. Do you have to be downtown's favorite to go to boot camp? I was hurt that the district didn't tell me about *Reading Coaches Boot Camp*. I found out about it from the Florida Department of Education. I had to beg my principal to let me go. I

always had to pressure my administration to let me go to IRA. You know what? This year a vendor at IRA offered me 50,000 dollars worth of books if I will ask my students to read their books and then evaluate them. Do you think my principal cared? My principal didn't even read my professional development end of year evaluation form. He just signed off on whatever I told him. The administration isn't really interested in my hard work and reading achievements. I think they just want me to fill a slot.

Gracie and I attended *Reading Coaches Boot Camp* over the summer. Just before we left she learned that her administration asked another teacher, untrained and who had not taken any reading strategies, to be the school based reading specialist. I talked with Gracie at length at the *Reading Coaches Boot Camp.* She told me she was furious. She told her assistant principal, who had made the decision, that she was insulted. Gracie went straight to her principal who called a meeting. The assistant principal told her during the meeting that she wasn't chosen because she was too abrupt and abrasive for the job. The selected teacher would also be mentoring the National Board Training. This information infuriated Gracie.

VH: How do you feel now that you have finished your competencies and you are here?

Gracie: I'm not sure where I am going with this. I can see how this might help.

VH: Are you going to be a coach?

Gracie: Not at my school. I've been passed over. I am furious. Why did I do all do all this to be overlooked?

VH: What do you mean?

Gracie: I have the training. I've worked hard. This is an insult. My principal is clueless. My assistant principal is a bitch I know that she chose her because she is her friend and she hasn't had any training at all. What's she going to do?

VH: There will probably be more jobs in coaching.

Gracie: Well, I'm not sure I want to do that anyway. That means going to teachers' classrooms. But you know I'm done extending myself for others. I'm only going to advocate for myself. These principals don't care. They don't know what's going on in reading and they don't care if you do the training. They don't recognize anyone for it.

VH: You got caught in school politics.

Gracie: Yes, but that doesn't help the kids. It's not politics-- it's reading. Why did I do this? I want to move up in the district.

VH: Do you feel the training somehow affirms your position or makes you feel special in your job? What could make you feel better?

Gracie: My scores are my affirmation, that's all I need to know. Sixty percent of my kids passed FCAT. That's all I need.

Gracie's attempted repeatedly to engage her students. Her attempts were noteworthy, if not always successful. Her students seemed to want to engage but she continually talked over them. I suspected her deep concern, almost a maternalism, compensated for her inability to slow down with her students. She ignored several opportunities to explore student engagement and think alouds. Students peppered her with questions, a sure sign of engagement. She talked over them and often missed opportunities to further comprehension. She had text, but not full command of her teaching strategies.

Gracie was the most professional developmentally aware teacher I have interviewed. She kept track of all district professional development announcements. She subscribed to many publisher emailed announcements. She paid attention to new reading trainings and professional development. Over the summer break, we taught *Competency 3* together to 35 new teachers. I enjoyed collaborating with a metacognitively aware reading teacher. Gracie told me she also enjoyed working with a seasoned reading teacher.

When school started again in the fall, we continued to talk. She was becoming more and more miserable. She had already undergone much of the training and her administration was finally under new pressure to address reading issues with all teachers. She bridled at having to take direction from an untrained Reading Department Chair person. Gracie was becoming more and more chagrinned and feeling under appreciated.

Six weeks into the new year, Gracie transferred schools. She took my position as Reading Department Chair when I left for the new high school. I had opted to help open a brand new first year school nearer my home. Gracie felt newly empowered and wanted recognition and leadership. I decided not to re-observe Gracie in her new class because her students were my former students. When she replaced me when I transferred, I asked if we could sit down and talk about the changes.

VH: So how is it going in your classroom?

Gracie: I love it. And, the principal told me I could be Reading Department Chair. I won't give up on that, but I'm building a new house closer to a high school that needs a reading coach. Teaching reading takes so much energy. Teaching six reading

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classes is exhausting. We had block schedule at my old school. I am tired. But we're already doing literature circles and guided reading, so I can do this one more year. I'm thinking though that I want to move up to reading coach.

VH: Why is that?

Gracie: I just feel that is what I'm ready to do. Also what I want to do now is train other teachers. I kept calling downtown and they have finally given me a class to co teach and train with. I am so happy.

VH: That should be good learning material too for you. So what do you need next?

Gracie: Absolutely. I just feel I am ready to be a district trainer. I have spent so much time getting reading training. I jumped through all the hoops. I don't' want anymore professional development. I want to try teaching other teachers. By the way, some of these new teachers aren't taking this seriously. I went to observe my peer trainer's class and two teachers were reading something else. Another teacher was doing a crossword puzzle. They are not taking this seriously. I don't think they should get credit. I'm going to say something.

VH: Do you think that would help the training?

Gracie: Of course. We need good reading teachers.

VH: Looking back over the past year, and all the reading competencies, what do you think the best part of the training was?

Gracie: Well, probably just getting together with everyone. I don't have a favorite training. I can do it all. I was already doing a lot of the stuff, but you know, I love the literature circles and shared inquiry (Senator, 1995). I just think I am more aware

now. I am also always looking for money, grants and stuff to buy more books. Oh by the way I just got another grant from the foundation.

VH: What will you do with the money?

Gracie: I am going to buy books from Barnes and Noble for our time out room for sustained silent reading. I called the grant *SSR for ISS*. Cute huh?

VH: Are you going to implement it or train somebody in the ISS room?

Gracie: I hope so. It's my money. I hope they don't give it to our reading coach. She's from middle school and doesn't know anything about high school. In fact, I wanted her job. Why is she there and not me?

VH: I thought you were going to be reading chair?

Gracie: Yes, but I'm beginning to butt heads with her. She gave out wrong information to everybody the other day. I went straight to the principal.

VH: Why?

Gracie: Well, our classes aren't leveled correctly, and they should be, so I asked her to do it. She never did it. I went around her to guidance and they did it. You know I know more than she does. She's never ever taught in a high school.

VH: A reading chair is different than the reading coach.

Gracie: Well I have so much training. I'm not sure we would need her. Sometimes I think she's only there to gather data and do the fluency checks. Oh well. We'll see. I feel so empowered; you know that's what I am going to do. I am going to keep self-advocating in this reading thing.

Reflection

I am always charmed by Gracie's go get 'em attitude. When I transferred I had

suggested to my principal that Gracie would be a possible candidate to take over my

position, and that I would trust my students to her without question. As an observer

participant in Gracie's observations and reading professional development, I

continued to witness how her enthusiasm and high interest in training herself

translates to her professional expertise. I assign Gracie a 6 on Guskey's *Levels of*

Use: Renewal

Gracie was in renewal and she was persistently re-evaluating not only her

professional position but also the quality of what she was doing. She was seeking

alternatives to her teaching situation. I also assign her a Level 6 on *Guskey's Stages of*

Concern: Refocusing. She talked often about exploring the broader benefits from her

reading professional development. She was anticipating major alterations or

adaptations to her assignments for the next school year. She very much wants to

become a reading coach and is waiting for the right opportunity. Gracie started

teaching other teachers this past summer. She teaches *Competency 1* and

Competency 3.

Meryl's Classroom

Meryl is an attractive and pleasant teacher in her early fifties. She has been

teaching for over ten years, and we had taken all competencies together. I arrived for

my classroom visit on a beautiful sunny morning. Her middle school is one of the

oldest in the district and one of the most remote. It serves pre teens in an island

community. The building is colorful. The chatter and laughter from classrooms

struck me as so different from other schools. The middle school is a perennial A

school. A student aide happily guided me to Meryl's classroom and I could hear the excited voices of learners all the way down her hall.

I entered and without stopping her verbal instructions to her students, Meryl waved me over to her desk. I had arrived about five minutes into her first period class. The students sat in traditional rows. She taught in an airy and spacious classroom. Meryl had posted numerous student artifacts and poems on her walls. Meryl was not threatened by my tape recorder and had previously told me I could record her classes. I taped her class and complemented the recordings with field notes and running records. Meryl did not have any written lesson plans for me; however, I observed that she had written down in large black letters *Shared Inquiry* across the week's planner which was open on her desk.

Meryl perched on a stool in front of her 24 middle school students. She was already reading aloud from the short story *A Game of Catch* (Wilbur, 1994). She gave directions for students to silently read along with her. She instructed them that when they came to a word they didn't know they were to underline or highlight it in the story. Meryl read the story carefully and with slight exaggeration for Prosody. She finished up; paused, and then asked the class for volunteers to call the words they had trouble with.

DC: Hunter?

Hunter: *abstractedly*

Meryl: What do you think it means? Everybody find the sentence that abstractedly is in (waits). OK, where do we hear this word a lot?

Shannon: Art?

Meryl: OK, Art and Science probably others?

Jordan: *gravelly* (He mispronounces as gravely.)

Meryl: What do you think weak and *gravelly* means?

Shannon: Rusty?

Meryl: Kelsey has the dictionary.

Kelsey: Indolently: without energy, lazy.

Meryl: That's right but can you find *gravelly?*

Tad: Miss on page four, *serenely*, where it says *serenely absorbed*.

Hands are up everywhere and students are very engaged.

Tad: Not as focused?

Amy: Not as into the game?

Shannon: Not paying attention?

Meryl: OK, what else?

Shannon: *Exuberant*

Meryl: What do you think it means?

Shannon: Excited?

Meryl: Ok, any others? (Silence). OK let's discuss the text. Let's go back and look at the story. Here's my question. Where in the story did you find where you could sympathize with Scho?

Shannon: When the others were excluding him.

Meryl: Anyone not feel sympathetic? Tad?

Tad: I don't sympathize because some people carry their gloves wherever they go…Eric what's your problem?

Eric: I've never carried my glove, ever, ever (laughs)

This enlivens the discussion, and there is much chatter.

Meryl: Ok, everybody, does that sway your opinion? Kayla has a point.

Kayla: I disagree with Tad at this point but I don't think he has to carry his glove everywhere, because it says he left it. Student gestures to reading and the boys in the back continue to discuss Tad's glove carrying comment.

Meryl: Scott: I agree with Tad because the other two boys had their gloves and he could have gone home.

Meryl: Are they excluding him on purpose glove or not? Chris read from the text again.

Chris reads.

Meryl: OK, Kyle. Monk didn't do anything; he just threatens Scho.

Kyle: I feel sympathy for Scho because Monk was just trying to make him feel so bad he would leave.

Hands shoot up across the room and student chatter ensues.

Student: Yeah "eliminate" him by making him go home.

Kayla: I disagree.

Meryl: Ok some of you have yet to speak up, I'm waiting? Long pause...opens hands

Eric reads from text then: I felt bad,

Taylor: I felt bad because I heard him say *OW!*

Christian: He deserved it!

Meryl: Well, did he fall on purpose or did Monk push him? Find the evidence before you answer, but find the evidence.

Students continue to be very engaged.

Kyle: He wasn't coordinated. He deserved it.

Jen: He did it on purpose…some groundies are hard.

Hands are up everywhere during debate of falling out of the tree or being pushed.

Laura: It was his fault in the first place. I think it was self-induced.

Hands stay up.

Sean: I believe the parties did it too each other.

Meryl: (Laughing). The discussion continues on well to the end of the period.

The bell rang for dismissal, and I sat down with Meryl during her ensuing planning period. She picked up a workbook from her desk and handed it to me. It is *The Great Books Foundation: An Introduction to Shared Inquiry* (2006). She had a passion about her as she discussed shared inquiry and she grew more animated. She said she was really trying to help students determine author's purpose, engage in character analysis and interpret plots.

Meryl: Could you tell I was trying to do Guided Reading (Idol-Maestas, 1985)?

VH: Well it was very engaging. The kids were with you all the way.

Is that your favorite reading strategy?

VH: What's your favorite or your most valuable reading strategy?

Meryl: The most valuable materials are the ones in the online course.

VH: The FOR-PD?

Meryl: Yes. That course took me 14 weeks and two huge volumes of printing to get through, but it really had a lot of stuff I could use. I'd like to see another one but hey, less reading please. I didn't have time to read the recommended reading for

Competency 1. Did you? That was too much! Then I took Competency 4/5 and 6

together? Aren't you ready to move on? It's getting repetitive? Don't you think it's

getting to be the same stuff in each competency?

VH: Yes, so it seems, but do you still get anything out of them? Did you like being

taped and observed for *Competency 6?*

Meryl: I just wanted to get it done and make sure I covered everything

I pick up her instructor's copy of *An Introduction to Shared Inquiry* (Great Books,

2006). I almost wanted to ask her to borrow it because it looked so engaging.

Meryl smiled: Oh that! I have used that even before I took the competencies. It

makes teaching so much easier. *Shared Inquiry* -- which I knew about. It reminds me

of QAR. Here copy down where you can order it.

VH: This is great…now you have taught me something too. This lesson went so

very well. These are some of the most engaged readers I have observed.

Meryl: Yes, shared inquiry is great.

VH: Are you using things that you have learned in all these competencies?

Meryl: Yes, I try, but you know with FCAT...her voice trails off, and she turns and

watches her students come in. The bell rang and she was ready to begin again. She

stood up and went back to front of room and sat on the stool. Students filed in for the

next lesson and interrupt our interview.

For the second observation, I watched Meryl teach another session of guided

reading. I visited her late in the spring. Her class was still vibrant and she was just as

cheery as the first time I observed her.

Meryl: OK everyone. If you owe me your *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* (Irving, 1917)

homework get it in and now we are going to read. First I want you to read silently.

The students got settled with some rustling and fidgeting. Within five minutes they

were reading silently. Meryl directed them specifically to fill out a character chart

when they finish the book. They were close to the end. She eyed the students and

gently chides the ones who have not yet gotten started. Another teacher entered the

room and asked her about a student who has been sent to read in her room. She and

Meryl stood at the back of the room. The students were reading silently. Some

doodled on their pages. She came back to sit with me and whispered. "What do you

think? Do you think they are reading?"

VH: It seems so.

Meryl: I really like the Great Books series. I get a lot of ideas from them. But I got

my ideas from them before I took the competencies. I was always doing Great Books

for shared inquiry.

VH: Great Books?

Meryl: Don't you know them? I'll give you the address. Here take the flyer. They

have a lot of resources for middle schoolers.

VH: OK thanks. What is this lesson plan?

Meryl: We're just finishing up by doing silent reading. They have to do character

analysis when they are finished. I gave them a handout to copy from the board.

VH: OK.

    Meryl has an easy relaxed style with her students. She gave them plenty of

time to respond to her questions. She waited for them without pressure.

After the second lesson, we sit down to talk some more. I noted that I had spent

almost the entire morning with her and had been just as much engaged with her

lesson as her learners.

VH: You know, your teacher gift seems to be student engagement.

Meryl: Thanks. I love to work with fluency and vocabulary. I love the Jamestown

(2006) vocabulary strategies and word mapping.

VH: Had you focused on fluency before your competency training? You and I have

been on the same competency track now for almost a school year.

Meryl: Yes, and I really feel there is plenty of sharing going on between all of us in

the competency classmates. I love getting together with us all. Janie and I have

become really good friends too. You know Janie? We have become mentors because

we teach the same things at our schools? She really turned me on to fluency and

assessment.

VH: Do you have enough time to employ your assessment and fluency strategies?

Meryl: I only have to time to assess and diagnose my problem students. I haven't

had time to assess everyone. These competencies have been a lot of work, almost

like National Board Certification. But it's been so much added work and I'm glad it's

getting to be over. With all the portfolios, it's even more rigorous than that it needed

to be. Why do we have to do case studies?

VH: Maybe because individual students represent broader categories of what's going

on with all students? Case studies might show us…

Meryl: We need more planning time if we are going to include more strategies. And

we need more time to work together and always have someone to talk to, I like the

independence with good support but trainers need to consider everyone's situation. I

really like teacher sharing. Janie and I work a lot together. Modeling from other

teachers would be a good idea. Maybe we could all get a day off and visit each

other's classroom or have someone come in and show us how to do it.

VH: What about graphic organizers?

Meryl: I've always used graphic organizers, even before reading classes. I've always

used *QAR* (Raphael, 1986). It's my favorite. But it makes me feel better, like I'm

doing the right thing, when I talk with others in our classes. There were many other

 web sources from the FOR-PD resources. I have enough time in class to implement

the strategies but not enough time to read about them. I just want to do them.

VH: What do you think worked the least in the reading training?

Meryl: I'll tell you what. Learning reading terminology is a total waste of time for us.

We don't need that.

VH: What do you think worked best?

Meryl: I do like all the summary and questioning strategies. They all work in the right

situation. You know the FOR-PD is good, but excessive, especially if we have to do

300 hours of ESOL. I'd like more diagnostic testing strategies. I don't deal a lot with

that. More assessment stuff.

VH: What do you think you need most right now?

Meryl: Well, I would like to see our collaboration continue and staying in touch with

each other would be great. I really want to stay in touch with each other.

VH: What about your administration? Are they supportive? I mean do you have the

support you need to keep going?

Meryl: You know I'm a certified elementary K-6 teacher, but this is a 7th grade class. My administrator let me keep my job if I participated in the competencies. My principal told me I could stay at the middle school level, or if I didn't take the competencies, I could go back to elementary teaching.

VH: That's interesting. Everything is the reading push.

Meryl: I don't think that's support. I think that's an ultimatum. That ultimatum alone made me want to look for a new job. I would have taken the competencies anyway."

VH: You mean you would have done the reading training for your knowledge?

Meryl: We do our own thing here, and we're a great team. I teach reading. In the beginning when I felt threatened and the principal asked me to take these competencies I was a little worried. But I love knowing strategies now.

Reflection

I have spent all morning with Meryl. I observed two of her classes. Her students were lively and engaged in the reading. She had told me that her students were all average readers and if any were struggling, they were mixed in and not tracked in special classes. Meryl was engaged with her teacher tasks and seemed genuinely happy to be with her students. She wore a permanent smile. I was impressed with her deliberate focus on using *Shared Inquiry* and combining it with the direct instruction of vocabulary context clues. She was fully implementing *QAR,* an accepted reading strategy of *Shared Inquiry*. She was also allowing her students to buy into reading by engaging them with words they did not already know and combining their learning with activating prior knowledge. She had also mentioned how much she enjoyed staying in touch with Janie to discuss, acquire, and implement

and refine strategies. On Guskey's *Implementation Scale*, Cheryl places at a 6:

Renewal. She was constantly reevaluating her implementation and deliberately

sought out alterations from others to improve her students' learning. She indicated

that she was past the integration stage of making deliberate efforts to coordinate use

and was well past the refinement stage of varying use within the context of the

instruction.

Meryl transferred to a new middle school in the fall. She had loved the island

remoteness and the close-knit community feeling of her small cheerful campus but

felt that she needed to be closer to her home on the mainland side. When I caught up

with her for a post interview during an in-service training in the fall, she said she

missed her peers, but was looking forward to help in the opening a new middle school

closer to her home.

She revealed that she continued to talk with her reading professional

development peers and was continuing to explore more train the trainer opportunities.

She enjoyed staying in touch with all of us. I saw her again at a district Reading

Department Chairperson meeting. Meryl was asked to be the reading team leader at

the new middle school. She was the only reading certified teacher. She had reduced

classroom duties and had added reading data collection duties. She was not a titled

reading coach, but it appeared she was moving in that direction.

She mentioned that the new school was having a hard time finding reading

certified teachers. She was grateful for the year of professional development, not

only because it made her more aware of Scientifically Based Reading Research, but

also because the training gave her more leadership opportunities.   Meryl is at the

highest stage of Guskey's *Stages of Concern* in her professional development: Level

6: Refocusing.   She continues to explore benefits of professional development

change and is willing to make continuous teaching adaptations.

Janie's Classroom

I visited Janie at her one-year-old middle school. Janie is an energetic and

attractive teacher in her late thirties. With almost twenty years of teaching

experience, Janie came to the district from another county. She has been in this

district one year. This is her first year teaching reading. She has a Masters degree in

Exceptional Student Education and was striving for National Board Certification.

We had a few minutes to talk before the bell rang for her 6th grade reading class. She

allowed me to tape record her observation and her post interview. I also reinforced

her comments by using running records.

Janie told me that she loved to teach reading. Her principal had asked her to

take on the reading competency challenges in professional development. She felt her

principal was totally supportive of her efforts. Her principal was a former reading

teacher. She liked Janie's ability to work with struggling learners. Janie was

enthusiastic and animated. Her lesson plans for the morning, although she

had not written them down, included fluency checks, some silent reading, and

independent student projects on a technology based group presentation.

When I arrived for my observations, Janie sent Iris, her student to escort me to

her room. Iris told me the class was in the middle of the book *Number the Stars*

(Loury, 2002), a Newbery (2006) award winner, and they got treats for

comprehension. Iris related the plot as we walked to the classroom. Iris was a sixth

grader, and I was impressed with her comfortable and familiar conversation about

reading fluency checks. She walked me into a modern classroom. Computer banks

lined the walls. Janie rushed over and invited me to sit with her at her desk. This day

she started with one minute fluency checks.

Janie's room was attached to the media center. There was an electric air about

the classroom. The students were excited and energetic. Janie was bubbly and

animated. She teaches 6th graders, 1's and 2's in 90-minute blocks. "Ideal… for

getting a lot done." Janie and were in two competencies together, 1 and 6, and we

were finishing *Competency 6* when we met for her observation and interview. Janie

seems eager to talk and the words come fast and furious.

VH: How are you doing?

Janie: Great. We're going to do fluency. Do you know my Frieda Fluency?

VH: No?

Janie: Well I started out by doing it as an original idea for the fluency competency

and it has just taken off.   Now I do it every week with the kids. They love it. Our

reading coordinator for the district has asked me to demonstrate it for everybody.

VH: That is wonderful. I'd like to see it.

Janie: It's so much fun. I get in costume and we really have fun.

VH: Are you the only reading teacher?

Janie: No, we are such a great team here. My administration has talked to me about

coaching, but I don't know if I want to leave my kids. Reading coaches aren't

necessarily welcome in the classroom.

The bell rang and Janie jumped up to start class. Janie started her class by doing a fluency check. She moved around the room and used the overhead for her 17 students. She began class. She told her students to pair up with a partner for peer fluency checks.

Janie: Raise your hand if you are first reader. I say start, start. You know what the other person is supposed to be doing. Listening and checking, now turn to page 452 and begin.

Students read aloud to each other. Students were in pairs. One girl joins a triad. They read. The room is a low din.

Janie (to me): They love this. It's their favorite activity to do once a week. Class this is our guest.

They say hi to me, and I wave and smile. There is a joyful air in this classroom.

Janie: OK, we're going to consider that first one as a practice. Ok, we're going to consider that a practice. Watch the TV time counting down. Remember we're counting only errors.

Chris: What's the date?

Janie: May 17th, Thanks Chris for reminding us, remember to record this on your chart. That was practice. OK. Now it's for real.

Janie strolled through the class. She was constantly walking among the pairs. She carried a timer. Fluency charts were on the back wall. There were numerous of student artifacts about reading and fluency covering the classroom walls.

Janie came over to me. "I usually choose a poem, but today we're reading from Trophies" (Jamestown, 2003).

Janie timed the first group, and then has them record their scores. She didn't

explain error recording so I assume the students seem to know what they are doing.

She repeated the same process for the second half of the readers. She called time.

Janie then gave directions to get out their silent reading books and finish Chapter 15

in *Number the Stars*. The students were readily engaged and there were no

distractions or discipline problems.

Janie: OK. Everyone, after you have finished Chapter 15, you can go to the

computers to work on your PowerPoint presentation about your characters. So get

settled, but only after you finish Chapter 15 and no cheating. The questions are on

the overhead and when you have finished answering those question by question, you

can go to computers." A student immediately got up and handed her the sheets.

Janie: Wow, OK, you are OK on the computers? Good.

The class was engaged in their tasks and students were self-directed. Janie

has an exuberant teaching style and is kind with her students. There was a spirit

moving in her classroom, and the only words that came to mind were passionate love.

I noted in both observations that Janie was a very efficient multi-tasker. Even during

interruptions from students she shared bits and pieces in a running stream of

consciousness dialogue. She could carry on many conversations at once. She finally

sat down with me at her desk, and we talked about her class and the competency

training. Jane liked the reading professional development and found the training

exceptionally worthwhile.

VH: So what have you found most helpful about our reading training?

Janie: I am the only one doing this at my school. The other teachers are going to be so behind. I felt stupid at first. I like having knowledge. Now I want to know what you know.

VH: Me? You seem really comfortable with all of this. Well do you think you have learned enough to practice in your classroom?

Janie: Lots, I will sift through a lot of stuff and I'm glad it's over, but I'm really glad I took the online course and it was so full. Too full but I used a lot from it. My kids are so stupid that I have to slow down and it gives them stuff. You know I like that we all talk to each other. I mean we need each other because we are in this together.

VH: Why is that? I really love your ideas at the district reading council meeting, and I used your pictures idea right away. I borrowed your FCAT ideas and the kids loved it. I'm really glad my principal is going to make me help other teachers. This reading training makes us better teachers.

VH: What's your favorite thing you learned from the competencies?

Janie: I like direct instruction. I was doing fluency checks before the competencies, but not consistently, and I understood them intuitively but it's nice to know what we are doing is working.

VH: What was your favorite competency?

Janie: Competency 6 has been a lot of work but my husband is great. You know I love the Tri-folds (Cerra-Johansson, 2005) I learned in Competency 2 with you.
She shows me Tri-folds.

Janie: I have a fluency notebook and I keep stuff that works and I've used it so much.

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I'm working on a comprehension notebook for stuff. I was burned out in ESE and I love teaching reading. I'm going to fluency training on the 19th with our district secondary reading coordinator. I guess we're going to have a district wide fluency piece.

VH: What has been the most valuable experience in all of this?

Janie: The most valuable is teacher-sharing ideas. I want fast and furious things that work. I think we should have time off to visit other teacher's classrooms.

VH: That's interesting, I'm hearing that a lot.

Janie: We need time together and to keep us going. That's what is great about the training. The biggest waste of time for me was the assessment part. I hated sitting there and listening to people talk about it. I'd rather practice it. I'd like to see what recommendations are for their assessment. How can we get assessments? I never understood how to do it. I love the *Abecedarian Reading Assessment (*Wren and Watts, 2002). I like one-minute stuff and I can do a whole reading assessment in six minutes. This whole experience has been wonderful; I've been encouraged and supported. Teachers all over the school now come to me for reading advice. I love to read, I love to read to the kids. My personality keeps me going. Direct instruction works best for me. I learned it in Exceptional Student Education courses.

VH: What's your favorite graphic organizer?

Janie: My favorite graphic organizers are thinking maps especially one from ESE. Any of the thinking maps or concept webs is good. I discovered so many in Competency 1 and 2. I feel like I am really taking off.

VH: What do you think is the least helpful part of the competencies?

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Janie: The reading, there isn't enough time and there was too much reading in the online course. I don't have the time for all of that.

VH: What do you think you now need to continue to be successful?

Janie: I don't feel there is ever enough time. We just need more reading teaching time. Time to think about this stuff. I want to stay in touch with everyone. I want to get more involved in the county reading council with you.

Janie was a lot of fun to be around. I had to think fast to stay with her trains of thought because she is such a multi-tasker and she was interrupted often. She answered each question from her students, as well as me, fully, even when interrupted. She stayed focused.

As we talked, more students went to computers. They worked in pairs or small groups. They seemed independent and self-directed. A few students were still reading and answering the questions on the overhead. Janie got up and moved around the room. One student asked me if I wanted to see his PowerPoint presentation. I walked over to his station. He was working on an impressive and well-designed presentation about a character in the book he was reading.

VH: Janie this is impressive.

Janie: Yes, I worked together with the technology specialist and these kids love to do this. It helps their understanding too. I got this idea from one of my 6th grade team members and we work together. You know teacher sharing is the best thing. Also, my principal is so committed to the success of reading. She really leaves it up to us, but expects us to do what is right for our students. I am really happy I had this training. I want to teach reading forever. I will never leave.

Janie moved with me back to her desk. I surveyed her teacher resources and the graphic organizers that were piled on her desk. There were *QARs* (Raphael, 1986) and the tri-folds and concept webs (Novak, 1991) and concept ladders (Gillet and Temple, 1982). There were also numerous FCAT workbooks. They covered the top of her desk and cabinets. Books and papers were everywhere. Bookshelves lined the room with teenage novels.

I think we could improve our sessions if we could see what everyone in other schools is doing. Wouldn't it be great if we could get time off to visit each other's classrooms? I mean it's boring just to see the ones we saw in demonstrations in the competency classes. It drives me crazy to be able to do. I hate to sit in that training and get lectured to.

The 90-minute period comes to an end. Janie invited me to stay for a second observation. She would be doing the same lesson. I stayed to confirm what I had just seen. She repeated the fluency lesson check and starts the students on silent reading.

Reflection

I left Janie's classroom so uplifted that I felt as if I were walking on air. The energy that reverberated from her passion and enthusiasm stayed with me throughout the day. Janie was passionate and committed, but she also had the unfailing support of her principal. Her principal, she had said many times, was aware of reading professional development, and was very informed about reading teacher qualifications. She told her she was excited about placing Janie in a leadership position. Janie is well into Stage 5, and she is beginning to acquire Stage 6 of Guskey's Levels of Use Scale: Re-evaluation. She makes deliberate efforts to

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coordinate with colleagues and is continuously seeking ways to make major

modifications of her teacher strategies. She also scores a 6 on Guskey's Stages of

Concern: Refocusing. Her passion and enthusiasm are evident and her creation of the

Frieda Fluency character indicates she is willing to make major adaptations to her

reading teaching strategies.

I saw Janie again at our last Competency 6 meeting over the summer.

She had been made full Reading Department Chairperson. She was responsible for

training the other teachers on her team. She was excited and had begun taking on

more district professional development assignments.

Luanne's Classroom

Luanne is the last teacher I visited for observations during this study. Luanne

and I took two competencies together: *Competency 4/5*. Luanne is driven and well

organized. I taught reading and English with her two years ago in our former high

school. Also, we had worked on developing a school wide FCAT strategy and

implementation curriculum book for the English and reading teachers. We had been

friends on and off before I started this study. We had also shared an abusive principal

together. She left and I gutted it out for a half-year further before I had had enough.

Our principal had largely ignored our reading professional development. He

seemed to ignore the fact that we were in training on our own time. During the year,

he placed a newly hired, out of field, temporarily certificated teacher in charge of

FCAT reading. This had caused site problems with not only the union, but had split

the Language Arts Department into factions. The principal was newly placed and had

a habit of surprising English teachers with constant classroom walk-throughs.

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Luanne had become embroiled in a bitter grievance battle and opted to move to a

reading teacher position at her current middle school to avoid more bitterness.

I visited her classroom at her new middle school shortly after she transferred.

We had stayed in touch via email. Luanne and I were, and are, professional

colleagues even though we may not be the closest of friends or mentors. She pursued

teaching knowledge with a passion. She had come to teaching after a lifetime in

private business and had entered the profession through an alternate certification

program.

On my first observation, she wanted to clear the air about why she had left our

former high school. Luanne permitted tape recording and I used the audiotapes,

running records and field notes in my talks and observations.

Luanne: I am so glad we are out of there.

VH: Well, me too.

Luanne: That principal knew nothing about reading. Nothing!

VH: Well what have you learned from the professional development?

Luanne: So many things, especially that we can talk to each other. I had a lot of stuff

before the competencies. I keep everything. I like everything I got from you, too.

VH: Thanks Luanne, but I have always thought of you as an excellent reading

teacher and I have learned just as much from you. Your graphic organizers in our

book two years ago really have helped everyone in reading!

Luanne: I know I am. Weren't they great? I keep notebooks full of them.

VH: Yes, you have been very helpful to me over the years. Thanks so much

What's new today?

Luanne: Look, I want you to have this. I developed this little foldable called *My Reading Status and Goals.* The students keep this in their folders through out the year. It has a place for them to write their goals, their grade level expectations and a history of all their FCAT and assessment scores. Then next month at the end I will have them review it again.

VH: This is a really good awareness tool.

The day I visited Luanne, she was reviewing for an elements of story final examination. She was teaching directly from an overhead and a lecture. She had given her advanced students a handout of over 60 literary terms. Her classroom was full of student artifacts posted on all the walls. She had at least three bulletin boards entitled *Reading Rocks.* Luanne taught with excitement and movement. She used a lot of graphic organizers. She handed me a rubric for student assessment labeled *Guided Reading and Literature Circles.* She was expressive and dramatic. Luanne has a fat book full of lessons and it is open on her desk. She showed them to me quickly, then waved me away and asked me to sit in the back of the room. She did not, however, provide me with today's lesson plan.

One by one she reviewed the sheet with her students. She gave them cloze questions. One by one the students struggled with literary term pronunciation. Luanne corrected them quickly and jumped to the next one. She also reminded them that the literary terms were required for passing the gifted Sunshine State Standards at the end of the year exam.

Luanne: Emily knows this one!

Sean: Miss you are making no sense

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Luanne: Ethan you can explain it.

Ethan: No I can't

Luanne. You know we have to be specific on the final Ethan.

Ethan: You have to know why we are using the term.

Luanne: Explain shy?

Ethan: You have to know the answer

Emily: Ms! You are not making sense to me.

Luanne: Look on the final. You have to answer specific questions on the final. There

is going to be more context. There's going to be more thinking involved. So, Hailey

do the next one.

Hailey: I didn't do anything.

Students started chatting with each other.

Luanne: Eyeballs up here immediately.

A student turned to me and started talking.

Student: I'm really a good kid. Do you know religion is in the heart not the knees?

Luanne eyed us disapprovingly. I place my fingers to my lips to indicate to the

student to re-focus on Luanne.

Luanne: All right everyone, we have five minutes, should we do think alouds?

I guess not, we're doing noise alouds

OK which *Reader's Theater* group is going for the last few minutes?

A group gets up and reads their story aloud. *Hanging on to Max* (Bechard, 2002)

Luanne: Let's do Readers Theater. Which group is going today?

I realized I was getting lost in her strategies. This period was almost finished and Luanne was trying to cram everything into one class. It became difficult for me to follow. Luanne moved too fast. She had jumped from term to term, had fluency check bell ringers on the white board. Students were instructed to read Readers Theater (Carrick, 2000) selections for the first 10 minutes. She zoomed through 60 terms in 30 minutes. For even 29 gifted students,. Luanne was moving so swiftly we were all confused. I am reminded of teaching tactics for ESE, slowing way down.

For my second observation, I decided to stay for the next period. Luanne had told me that she wanted me to say one more lesson because she felt she had gotten off track. Luanne started the literature term review again. She went down the list until she got to about number 30. This class was much more unsettled. Luanne had more discipline problems. Direct instruction strategies were engaging a little less than half her students. The others were passing notes and whispering. Luanne constantly mentioned the final exam. Luanne tried singling out students to read from the overhead. They gradually became more engaged. I stayed through two observations but I was not sure what I had just seen in either one. I had to spend time in deep reflection for several days. Something about her lessons was nagging at me. I finally realized that she had just tried to complete the three entirely different reading strategies, Direct Instruction, Readers Theatre, and Reciprocal Teaching, within one class period.

Luanne sat with me during her planning period and we talked. However, she was more interested in showing me their book talk artifacts (Keane, 2002) than talking about reading professional development. The student artifact projects cover

the back walls of her room. She showed me the *Readers Theater* scripts for *SOS Titanic* (Bunting, 1996). The posters showed what would be in a passenger's suitcase. The students had read the story in literature circles two weeks prior. She handed me the rubric document that the students used to evaluate each other. She gave me the oral presentation rubric for book talks stapled to a workbook that covered fluency components. She had tied reading out loud with a character review and plot summary.

I was again reminded of how innovative and creative she is. She has a joyful personality and a beautiful speaking voice. However, I shared with her the confusion I saw among the students. She told me that it was ok because they were gifted and could handle the amount of information flow.

VH: It seems you jammed a lot in to today and you ran out of time. You covered a lot of reading strategies in 45 minutes!

Luanne: I run out of time everyday. We just have so much to cover. We are under the gun to get the curriculum taught.

VH: Do you feel more pressured now that you have finished reading competencies?

Luanne: Always, I always feel the pressure. Reading training just puts more pressure on us. You know I was teaching reading for five years before we had these competencies.

VH: Have the reading competencies helped?

Luanne: Of course! Lots of good stuff. I like the sharing with all of us too. We are a team. We can stay together and do this together.

VH: What about your peers? Are you all in reading training together here at school?

Luanne: My reading department is so weak. Nobody talks to each other here. We are supposed to have a weekly reading teacher meeting, but no one stays or comes.

VH: What about your administration? Do you feel supported?

Luanne: No! Not at all. Clueless! I ordered dictionaries and never got them. You know my principal. He's a former politician. Clueless. Our department doesn't work together. We are supposed to have Friday meetings but no one wants to stay. They just want to go home.

VH: How about assessments?

Luanne: I just use *Gates MacGinitie* and FCAT. I learned a lot, but I knew so much before the competencies!

VH: You didn't try any of the new assessments the district purchased for us? The *Diagnostic Assessment of Reading (*Roswell, Chall, Curtis and Kearns, 2005)?

Luanne: I don't have time to learn them yet. I will. But, not yet, but I will.

VH: What's your favorite reading teaching strategy?

Luanne: I loved the stuff we learned about fluency. It's also so important to track the kids' FCAT scores.

Luanne showed me student records she was keeping.

Luanne: Look at my students' scores. There are huge gains. They are all smart.

Her students have made huge gains and she has only two out of 185 students who did not pass the FCAT.

VH: How's *Competency 6* going?

Luanne: You know I learned a lot doing *Competency 6*. I stretched and worked hard and I realized that I had learned more than I expected in all competencies. They were

demanding. I realized on the video that I was a good teacher. The competencies were eye opening. I am so much more aware. I also realized that my middle school students have no idea what syllabication is. So I am immersing myself in further fluency training.

VH: What are your favorites from the competencies other than fluency?

Luanne: I like the learning about all the books students can read and we can buy.

VH: What do you feel is he least successful part of the competencies?

Luanne: I wish there were more colleagues sharing and we could really use more resource ideas. I want to spend time with other teachers to see what they are doing. I'm disappointed more of my on site colleagues aren't participating in reading or don't know want to participate. Maybe then I could talk more with them.

VH: What about today? Did you get *Readers Theater* from the competency sharing?

Luanne: I got *Readers Theater* directly from her competencies and the kids love it.

VH: It seemed today was a bit of direct, explicit instruction (Roehler, Duffy, Meloth, 1984).

Luanne: Yes I got *Readers Theater* from sharing. They have quarter exams coming and we had a lot to cover. Oh I've been doing direct instruction even before. These kids are so smart. Direct instruction is how I mostly have to teach them. I don't have one particular favorite graphic organizer. I use rubrics for almost every lesson. I have lots of stuff.

Luanne liked to share and talk and was always the center of attention at her table during Competency 1 training. She mothered her group by providing everyone with markers, books, copies of resources and books.

VH: What would you like to see happen next with the reading training?

Luanne: It would be so nice to keep talking to each other after the training is over.

VH: What was your favorite competency or the favorite thing you learned?

Luanne: The online course is my favorite. I learned so much. A little too much reading. But I heard other complaints. But we have to know our research I guess. But the online course was so much reading, which was the thing.

VH: The FOR-PD?

Luanne: Yes, full of stuff, lots of stuff. I hear people have complained about the amount of research and reading. My next-door neighbor even complains. I have no hassle with it and I'm sick of lazy teachers. My next-door neighbor teacher dropped the FOR- PD because she said it was simply too much reading and work. We just need lots of collaboration, isn't it great?

Luanne abruptly stood up from our conversation.

Luanne: Ok, well I'm done; I have to go downstairs to check my mailbox.

Reflection

       Luanne moved very fast and abruptly in the classroom. Her voice was breathless with urgency and concern. Luanne's lesson plans were fraught with time management and hopscotching from strategy to strategy problems. Her attempt to teach 60 literacy terms using Direct Instruction were noble but fell short of the identifying components needed for the instructional design (Hall, 1999): background knowledge, pacing, processing, response monitoring and response feedback (Hall, 1999).   Her attempts at *Readers Theater* implementation were better received. Her students were allowed more self-direction and participation. The posted student

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artifacts from their Titanic projects were print rich evidence that they were engaged.

I reflected for weeks about Luanne's class. I was trying to discern exactly what had

taken place..

She moved too fast and students were unable to stay with her. I assigned her a

Level 3 on Guskey's *Stages of Concern* evaluation. In Level 3, *Stages of Concern,*

the teacher is still focusing on the processes and tasks involved in applying the best

use of the professional development change. She was stepping in and out of Level 2:

decision-making and potential conflicts with existing structures in making the

professional development work at her school site. She had been previously too

concerned with what other teachers were doing in learning to teach reading. She, too,

felt slighted by her administration and resented that she was not being recognized for

stepping up to reading professional development training ahead of her peers.

On Guskey's *Levels of Use* scale, I assigned Luanne a Level 4a: Mechanical.

Her presentation for both lessons tended to be mechanical, disjointed and so fast that

it stayed superficial with no time for insight or reflection. Luanne is positive she is a

good teacher and is using Direct Instruction correctly. However, I saw her give no

time for student processing, refinement, and renewal

CHAPTER FIVE: FIVE INTERPRETATION

Introduction

In this chapter I present the responses of the eight participants as emerging themes emanating from my investigation of the relevant research questions. The reading teachers' voices contain explicit, implicit, and mixed messages about the experiences of reading teacher training. Their experiences, the processes and contexts of their participations, and my observations convey aspects of teacher professional development during the paradigm shift signaled by Scientifically Based Reading Research.

Throughout this study, I sought a richer understanding of the teacher's role in the implementation of research to practice through reading teacher professional development. A confluence of politically driven, well-funded reform that is guiding reading teacher training was not only opportune, but reflexively syntonic. The study was an ontological examination of reading teacher professional development and witnessed a real and urgent need to remediate and raise the reading levels of secondary students. Secondary reading teachers have entered a new paradigm of focus and urgency.

Emerging Themes

The actions, voices, and roles of the reading teachers in this study serve to filter themes about the paradigm of reading teacher reform. The emergent themes are organized around Levels One, Two and Four of Guskey's (2000) three levels of evaluation of successful professional development: *Participants' Reactions, Participants' Learning,* and *Participants' Implementations of New Knowledge and Skills*. These three levels address the pertinent research questions of this study as outlined in Chapter One: Focus of the Study/Research Question: Would Florida secondary reading teachers cognitively embrace and pedagogically implement Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development for classroom use?

Nine themes emanate from the data that address whether or not participants used and implemented Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development. They are assigned within each of the three levels of professional development evaluation as identified by three Levels of Use 1 2, and 4. These levels that were outlined in Chapter Three of this study: Design and Methodology.

Participant Learning

Participant Reaction

Participant Implementation of New Knowledge and Skills (Use)

Themes are characterized by respondent similarities from the data. The following tables display links between research discoveries and emergent themes.

Table 7: Participant Reactions

Participant Reactions	Participant Responses by Total Participants	SBRR Criteria
Change Process: Learning to Teach Reading Using SBRR Strategies	8	X
Becoming Better Informed Through Research	7	X
Coursing/Collaboration	7	X

Table 8: Participant Learning

Participant Learning	Participant Responses by Total	SBRR Criteria
Metacognitive Awareness: Making the Connection from Research to Practice	7	Curriculum Implementation Strategies: Trying what works best
Acquiring Reading Terminology	7	Fluency, Assessment, Comprehension: Literature Circles, Guided Reading, Vocabulary in Context
Pre-Planning/Following a Written Plan	0	

Table 9: Implementation Knowledge Gained From SBRR Professional Development

Implementation	Responses by Total	SBRR Criteria
Use of Graphic Organizers Learned in Training	1	GIST
Implementing New Tools & Strategies	6	Reciprocal Teaching, Vocabulary in Context Fluency Assessment Literature Circles Guided Reading
Developing Expertise	4	Department Chair Reading Specialist Reading Coach Teacher Trainer

Level One: Participants' Reactions

The Challenges of Process

The reading reform movement shapes professional development challenges. No Child Left Behind principles and school reform pragmatic reasons, places secondary classroom teachers at the vortex of change. Before implementation, professional development can unmask teachers underlying assumptions about change and whether the probably consequences for students are congruent or not with teachers' existing beliefs (Little, 1994). While good professional development equips teachers both individually and collectively to act as shapers, promoters, and well-informed critics of reforms, teachers as participants of a reform movement may be required to undertake multiple challenges that exhaust their very abilities to innovate implementation.

Reading teachers are required to assume new roles as instructional leaders. Previous to reading reform, teachers were expected only to follow the directives of their principal and school board. Now under Scientifically Based Reading Research, they must follow new roles outside of the classroom (McDiarmid, 1995). Teachers are expected to continuously plan their own professional development so that it aligns with federal and state mandates. The process can be daunting. Educational reform requires teachers to totally transform themselves (Darling-Hammond, 1995). The teacher voices in this study help to dispel the previous lack of descriptions of restructuring initiatives. Their responses supply a detailed portrait of the learning

demands on teachers and the corresponding professional development responses (Little, 1993).

All teachers attempted the professional development process in varying degrees. Some were more successful than others. Cherise's tears at the end of my observations indicated her exhaustion. In fact she mentioned how frustrating trying to implement her strategies had become. "They just don't get it and I don't know what else to do, I am trying everything." Carolina, who had participated in the least professional development, initially attempted to minimally implement sustained silent reading, but her lesson did not follow an explicit outline of SSR scaffolding. Her required and lengthy trainings were taking their tolls by the second observation. She indicated more than once she was thinking of leaving teaching.

Georgia was trying to assimilate the process of teaching. She was continuously asking for help and always wanted more teaching ideas. Nowhere else was this more clearly indicated than when she asked me to teach instead of observe. Her self awareness gradually rose, and when I saw her at the end of her professional development, she announced that she had ordered in every strategy-based reading curriculum for her students that she could get her hands on. Individual recognition of learner-centered strategies can totally transform a teacher's role (Darling-Hammond, 1990).

Gracie, Claressa, and Janie were enjoying the process of implementation even if they forgot certain components necessary to the lessons. Gracie moved so fast through her learning curve that her chief reaction was to go as high as she could in professional development. She hoped to achieve recognition as a district professional

development trainer, something she accomplished at the close of this study. She is currently looking for a Reading Coach position.

In the initial phase of my interviews and observations, they clearly indicated how they were becoming more and more aware of their students' reading needs. Claressa echoed this best when she said, "it was amazing what you find out when you begin to focus on fluency and assessment." Claressa, Janie and Meryl have become Reading Department Chairpersons and are now "training the trainers" for other schools.

Luanne and Meryl seemed the least flustered by the reading professional development requirements. Luanne took my interview opportunities to continually decry why more teachers weren't taking the reading professional development. She assumed that all teachers would find it valuable and necessary to systemic change and was miffed that her neighboring teachers "didn't want to show up for weekly Friday meetings" or take the reading professional development endorsement track. Meryl was most at ease with the process. Her reaction to the process was nonchalant. "Oh, I have had lots of strategies before. This is just good for us to keep our jobs."

Becoming Informed: The Expert

All eight teaches stated that the professional development had made them better informed through reading research. Teachers reading research is strongly linked to their professional development (Zeuli, 1992). One of the unintended consequences of this study was the revelation that even though the eight teachers responded positively to the value of reading research, all felt the required reading research was as Cherise echoed continuously "just way too much." The only value

all of the teachers found in the professional development research was what they could glean out as immediate and useful. The fact that all teachers immediately latched on to fluency and assessment gives credence to this finding. Fluency assessment may be the most positive immediate and useful strategy for all participants except Carolina. McDiarmid (1995) places student assessment as clearly in the top five professional development expectations for retrained teachers.

Bridging research and practice continues to be a puzzle for practicing teachers (Cuban, 1988). Luanne went so far as to say that even though reading research was valuable and it was nice to know the ideas behind the strategies, she only read what she needed. Claressa seemed to evade the question altogether. When I asked her about the research, she changed the subject or addressed the research in minimal responses. Georgia barely mentioned the required research in reading during the competencies. Gracie had one revelatory aha moment—when she discovered who Vygotsky was. "I am really glad to know who that person was." She said. "It helps a lot to know why we are doing all the reading training a certain way."

Coursing

Professional development change is a highly personal process of individual acceptance, behavioral changes, and reshaping of beliefs that will lead to ownership (Fullan, 1991). The first stream of successful reform, however, is only successful when teachers course, or train together and then collaborate and form other personal networks (Little, 1993). Under mandated professional development, classroom teachers are brought together to develop and review new strategies to urgently solve reading problems. The advantage of involvement in this kind of professional

development improvement process is that participants enhance their abilities to work collaboratively and share in decision-making (Guskey, 2000). Collaborating colleagues is the highest expectation of professional development reform (McDiarmid, 1995).

The camaraderie that seven of the eight participants had developed for and among each other was palpable during my interviews and observations. The most emotional reaction from all teachers was that each reiterated how valuable coursing had become. Janie and Meryl had collaboratively bonded. Both, in independent interviews, stated that they were constantly in touch, even though they taught at different schools. Both taught middle school, and they found that sharing the projects and duties of the reading competencies helped them in completing the training requirements. Claressa, Gracie and I had formed fast collaborative friendships.

Sharing was the chief by-product of participant collaboration. Luanne was constantly offering all, including me, her printed reading lesson plans and strategies she had collected over the years. Meryl told me to talk about *Shared Inquiry* with everyone. During observations, Janie was constantly offering me artifacts and curriculum. Georgia constantly begged everyone for as many strategies as they used and found successful. During one of the competencies she announced to all at least three times, that she would really appreciate it "if they would drop anything they had in the pony mail and she would trade anything she had." Gracie delivered to Claressa over ten boxes of books that she no longer needed. Georgia and Gracie attended the *2005 International Reading Association* convention together. Gracie and Claressa

have lunch or coffee together on a regular basis. Claressa said it best when she stated that she was glad "we were all in this (reading competency training) together."

Evaluating Professional Development Level Two: Participants' Learning

Successful change in reading teacher practices entails developmental growth in feelings and skills (Hall and Loucks, 1979). Teachers need extended knowledge as well as expanded knowledge to implement a shared mission (Guskey, 2000). When teachers start to think about their own thinking regarding instructional goals and other issues related to their instructional effectiveness, they begin to think metacognitively (Hartman, 2001). Metacognitive awareness is especially important Level Four: Professional Development and Metacognitive Awareness

Educational improvement relies on professional development assumptions for teachers of low achieving students. Low-achieving readers need explicit information on how to perform academic mastery. Low achieving students also need more extensive communication about lesson objectives (Doyle, 1979).

Professional development enhances reading teacher metacognition (Israel, Block, Bauserman, Kinnucan-Welsch, 2005). In fact, professional development can provide teachers with a bag of tricks or repertoire of teaching strategies in order to meet the needs of their diverse reader learners. There is much research that suggests most teachers have been least successful in providing explicit guidance and structure for students (Winne and Marx, 1982). The cure may be extensive planning and preparation for teaching using mini-lessons and micro teaching (Haigh, 1981).

Pre-planning and Lesson Plans

Eight participants fell short in lesson planning. Pre-planning is an indicator of robust metacognition (Israel et al, 2005). No participant provided written lesson plans although all teachers offered extensive artifacts and curriculum resources. The lack of planning and thinking about the thinking of the lesson plans could have accounted for the disjointed or unsuccessful implementation of the reading strategies I observed in Luanne's, Gracie's, and Carolina's classrooms.

Luanne attempted three strategies in 45 minutes and clearly had no time to address student needs. Cherise and Gracie had no internal lesson plan structure developed, so they could stop and address all of their struggling readers' comments and questions as they hurried through fluency checks, literature circles and guided reading. Carolina's silent reading lessons were not consistent with the explicit directives of Sustained Silent Reading. Claressa, Janie and Meryl were able to confidently conduct their lessons without lesson plans. They did, however, indicate that they loved to use their classroom strategies often and repeatedly. Their enthusiastic ease of use may have occurred intuitively, based on their extensive prior knowledge or their teaching experience.

The lack of lesson plans, notwithstanding, all participants indicated that they were either beginning to be aware of various reading strategies or were employing them more frequently. The fact that participants iterated or demonstrated a particular strategy they liked "best" indicated that each had begun to bridge the gap from theory to practice. Making the connections from researched theory to classroom

implementation is the first step in metacognition to become a more effective

classroom teacher (Knuth and Jones, 1991).

Metalanguage for Teachers of Reading

Participants were repeatedly exposed to an expanding glossary of reading

teacher terminology in their professional development. Policy jargon can be

impediments to professional development (Education Commission of the States,

2003). I did not find this to be the case during our interviews. In fact, participants

need precision to reconceptualize learning. If jargon has no connection to practice,

policy terminology will adversely affect participants' discourse (Rueda, 1998).

The paradigm shift in reading reform has diverse roots in many domains,

linguistics, psychologists, computer scientists and educators. The reading training in

which participants engaged was replete with terminology from psychology and

literacy. Language that is used to describe a body of knowledge becomes its own

level of cognitive content. Ducrot and Todorov (1979) define this professional

linguistic phenomenon as metalanguage.

All participants were beginning to speak in the metalanguage of reading and

reading-related terms (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2000).

Rather than detract from their professional development experience, using reading

terminology was a representation of beginning empowerment. Janie and Meryl

particularly enjoyed conversing about strategies using reading terminology: fluency,

assessment, phonological awareness, decoding. I was puzzled by Meryl's comment

that she thought learning reading terminology was a total waste of time, when she

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was clearly using its metalanguage during observations and interviews and as she said, in her collaboration with Janie.

Carolina struggled with not only the professional development requirements, but also their uses and implementations. Numerous times she asked me to redefine the difference between fluency and phonemic awareness. Gracie and Claressa conversed often about *Book Talks* and *Literature Circles*. All participants became aware of the value of fluency and assessment. All except Gracie, Carolina and Meryl demonstrated a fluency assessment lesson. All except Carolina were conversant in using fluency and assessment related terminology with their students and with me. Claressa mentioned, "It was good to be able to start understanding what the reading problems of the kids are and what we call them."

Level Four: Participants' Use/Implementation of New Knowledge and Skills

Using Graphic Organizers

Successful reading instruction includes a teacher's conscious use of plans and procedures that their students can apply to make sense of text (National Reading Panel, 2000). Teachers who can activate a students' prior knowledge have the most success (Bruner, 1966). Reading lesson plans that provide graphic and semantic organizers to assist students in drawing relationships, particularly by activating prior knowledge, between texts are most effective (Ausubel, 1968). Secondary students who are below reading grade level challenge teachers to deliver complex content as urgently as possible. Teachers who recognize this urgency and take rapid responsibility for identifying concepts within course materials can overcome literacy

difficulties more rapidly (McCoy and Ketterlin-Geller, 2004). For older readers, graphic organizers can be effective weapons in multi-component research based reading curriculums (Vaughn and Edmonds, 2006).

Six of the eight participants showed me graphic organizers they used as part of their lesson plans. These graphic organizers were used either during observations, or teachers were planning to use them as a next step:

Claressa: *GIST*, Predictions and Outcomes

Gracie: Venn Diagram, Compare/Contrast (Opposites and the Same)

Georgia: *GIST*

Meryl: *Shared Inquiry/ QAR*

Janie: *Tri-folds*

Luanne: Literature Circles Evaluation, Book Talk Rubric, My Reading Status and Goals

The common bond among the six teachers who were using graphic organizers and manipulatives, was peer discovery and sharing during the professional development trainings. All, except Meryl, attributed new graphic organizer awareness to reading competency training, either by learning from each other during sessions or by watchingothers during required professional development presentations. Meryl was the only teacher who said she knew about *Shared Inquiry* and *QAR* beforehand and felt validated in its use.

Implementing New Tools and Strategies

The assumption of any politically mandated professional development is that participants have the necessary tools to move from the training to immediate

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classroom implementation. Initial implementation attempts are rarely problem free, even in a supportive organization and successful ease of use is rarely the case. This theme addresses the primary question of this study: *Did participants implement use of new knowledge and skills?*

From the participant interviews and further reflection on the data, I have constructed the following table. The table combines the participants' Levels of Use (Appendix G) and Stages of Concern (Appendix H) to present a unified overview of the participants in this study. Five of the participants were at highest implementation. Three of the participants were still in the lowest levels. *Levels of Use* indicates the degree to which the participant is attempting to implement knowledge learned in professional development. *Stages of Concern* indicates teacher developing awareness of the implementation process. The following table outlines the level of use and stages of concern.

Table 10: Participants' Levels of Use and Stages of Concern According to Guskey

Participant	Levels of Use Level/Label	Stages of Concern Level/Label
Cherise	2: Self Management 3: Task Management	4b: Refinement
Carolina	1: Orientation	0: Minimal Concern Involved in Change
Claressa	6: Refinement	5: Collaboration
Georgia	5: Integration	5: Collaboration
Gracie	6: Renewal	6: Refocusing
Meryl	6: Renewal	6: Refocusing
Janie	6: Renewal	6: Refocusing
Luanne	4a: Routine	3: Task

Challenges to Implementation

All participants experienced or met identified challenges of professional development within the *Stages of Concern* and *Levels of Use*. These impediments included not only concerns about the amount and quality of reading strategies that worked in the classroom, but a need for more flexibility in reading research demands. All of the participants mentioned the voluminous amount of research they were expected to read in short periods of time. Carolina and Cherise were plagued by frustrations about the quantity of research and materials that they were expected to know. Georgia met the challenge of materials gathering and research head-on. Carolina was particularly aware of the shortness of time she had to complete all of her professional development. Cherise mentioned never having enough time to get mandates completed. All participants, except Carolina, stated that competencies were sufficient in curriculum quality and more than sufficient in quantity. Carolina did not address the quality questions.

All participants demonstrated some flexibility within their lessons. Four of the participants, Carolina, Gracie, Georgia, and Luanne displayed what I perceived as faulty interpretations of contextual adaptations of their lesson plans. These participants were forced to adjust to time and discipline problems before forging ahead. Carolina had no framework for Sustained Silent Reading and did not follow its explicit directives, but was self-aware and asked for assistance with a reading assessment during my observation. Gracie did not actually implement a literature

circle. She was too busy with discipline interruptions. Georgia asked me to demonstrate the *GIST*. She was aware of her misinterpretation, and she was flexible enough to allow me to model it for her. Luanne was too flexible and seemed overly ambitious in attempting three strategies in a 45-minute lesson plan.

The remaining half of the participants appeared much more comfortable and less perturbed by dealing with classroom interruptions that affected continuous flow of the lesson plans. Janie was able to multi-task and carry on numerous conversations in her classroom while effectively addressing her students' needs. Meryl kept *Shared Inquiry* on track and regularly paced. Claressa moved gracefully from task to task, never raising her voice. Her major problem was running out of time. Cherise attempted to meet the directives of fluency checks and assessment, but her continued frustration with her students' learning forced her to resort to lesson plans that she knew before the Competencies: Life Skills.

The Developing Expert

Reading performance is enhanced when teachers continue to experiment with research-based methods, refine new practices, and take advantage of experts, role models and aides in schools (Knuth and Jones, 1991). The final theme reflects the participants' suggestions and requests for further collaboration and more modeling. Seven of the participants expressed repeated desires to gain more knowledge and continue on reading teacher professional development track. Under Scientifically Based Reading Research Reform, reading teachers are expected to become experts. The resultant challenge for staff development curricularists is encouraging the higher order thinking required for mentoring the mentor (Janas, 1996).

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The role of the secondary reading teacher is rapidly evolving and the pressure of professional development reform training is enormous for Florida educators. Reading teachers are expected to produce literate secondary students in a condensed period of time. FCAT pressures weighed heavy on their minds. Meryl and Janie were the only participants who did not repeatedly mention how worried they were about FCAT scores. The participants in this study were expected to produce substantial gains, if not passing scores, on FCAT Reading tests. All of the participants felt pressured to correct their students' lifetime acquired reading problems.

Continued collaboration, well after the professional development experience is complete, is advantageous. Post training collaboration is a predictor of greater success in professional development (Guskey, 2000). Under the new paradigm of reading instruction, teachers will need to continue to participate in action research, further engage in investigation and strive for improved learning. Post collaboration offers much to teachers under pressure to change their teaching styles (Knuth and Jones, 1991).

During participant interviews, Cherise and Georgia specifically requested more modeling strategies. "I don't need any more research. I need to see other teachers do it. I need things that work." Cherise repeated. Georgia specifically requested that I help her teach a class because "I want to see how you do it." Gracie was less concerned with modeling and more concerned with networking into becoming a reading coach or training other reading teachers. Claressa's need to stay in further cooperation was demonstrated when she asked me to join her Reading

department at her new school. Janie and Meryl made conscious and continuous efforts to communicate and collaborate through the competencies and at the close of this study had been appointed reading department chairpersons.

Leadership appointments ensure they will be staying in touch on a district wide basis. Luanne expressed her desire to "Keep sharing strategies. Sharing strategies is the best part of the training." Carolina was the only teacher who appeared disinterested in staying in touch with other reading teachers. She made no mention of further collaboration. Carolina was also the most difficult to interview. Her responses were limited to one or two words accompanied by long stares or silences.

CHAPTER SIX: IMPLICATIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Study

Scientifically Based Reading Research is the cornerstone of massive reading reform efforts. In Florida, the shift to research based practices signals re-training in literacy practices. The reconceptualization of teacher practices for the teaching of reading signals a paradigm shift in the structure of district professional development. Contemporary secondary teachers can expect to undergo continual professional development in reading as part of ongoing in service education. My desire to understand the breadth and magnitude of the conceptual orientation of the reading reform effort in teacher education was the primary motivation for this study.

The research in this study shares the views of eight in-service reading teachers as they prepared for their Florida Reading Endorsement. The participants in this study were all employed teachers of reading in a Southwest Florida school district. All participants were assigned pseudonyms and the school district is not named to protect anonymity. The research was designed to explore the reading teachers' reactions and implementations to their professional development experiences. The emergent themes reflect the context and content of their responses to surveys and interviews. My reflections serve to elucidate the emergent themes from my classroom observations.

The theoretical framework for this study originates in the cognitive, socio-psychological work of Piaget, Vygotsky, and Ausubel. The practical limitations of

this study are purposefully limited by the professional development templates

(Guskey, 2000) that were used to answer the following research question:

Will reading teachers embrace and implement Scientifically Based Reading teacher

professional development reform? The answer from this research is yes for seven of

the participants. The yes is qualified by implementation struggles, site-based

conflicts, moments of empowerment doubt, and ontological frustrations.

The struggles include FCAT success obsessions, time concerns, administrative

pressures or neglect, and the need for further collaboration and mentoring. The

conflicts emerge in site based empowerment, lesson plan conceptualization, and

strategy interpretations. All participants were willing to shoulder the responsibility of

teaching reading at their schools. Seven of the participants completed their Florida

Reading Endorsement. I believe this feat demonstrates great professional fortitude to

persevere. Willingness to take on the enormous tasks involved in reading reform

indicated that they were brave in the face of intense national, state and district focus.

I gathered the research data through informal focus groups, interviews and

classroom observations. I was a participant-observer throughout the research. I was

able to use the field notes, running records, and the transcribed taped interviews to

frame the descriptive responses of the participants. I examined teacher and student

artifacts, graphic organizers, and teaching tools to present the classroom contexts of

this study. I co-participated in some of the reading competencies of the participants.

Discussions

There are further opportunities for research which I gleaned from the

challenges and successes of the respondents' experiences. The teacher voices

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categorize the challenges. I use observer reflection to enumerate the opportunities for further research.

Gender

The most obvious attribute shared by respondents is that they are primarily middle-aged women.There were no male participants during reading teacher professional development. When I piloted the study, only female respondents were available. When I taught a reading competency during the summer months of this study, I had two male teachers, for the first time, in a class of over 30 teacher-learners.

Administrator Neglect

Seven of the eight respondents talked about their principals' roles in the progress of their professional development. At the beginning of the research, the participants' schools appeared to have little of the necessary infrastructure to support reading teacher reform. Gracie was skipped over for an appointment to her school's Reading Specialist position, even though she had completed all of the Florida Reading Endorsement requirements and the other teacher had not. Cherise and Carolina were the least supported. Cherise said her administration took no interest in her except to question her about why her scores were so low. She felt threatened. Carolina's morale appeared low and she displayed minimal interest in the endorsement progress. She said her administrator left her alone for the most part.

Currently, Cherise and Carolina are working under a new principal, who they say, is committed to developing a reading leadership team. In my last interview with Cherise, she said little had changed in practice, except a reading coach had been

assigned to the school. The reading coach was from a middle school, and Cherise felt she knew very little about high school environments. Cherise was considering leaving teaching for a job in business. Carolina is definitely leaving the profession. Gracie experienced both a site and administrator change within a few weeks. She transferred to teach with Cherise and Carolina and she is pro-active in bonding the reading department. The new principal gave her a Reading Department Chairperson position when it became available. She has a take charge style, and she continues to teach professional development for the district.

Cherise, Carolina, Georgia and Luanne experienced a change in their respective site administrations. Luanne continued to be unsupported by her principal at her new school. Meryl and Georgia received full infrastructure support at their new schools, and both are Reading Department Chairpersons. Their principals are both former reading teachers. Claressa moved schools as well, but not before her former high school experienced a complete administrative overhaul. Her current assistant principal is a former reading teacher and Claressa says joyfully, "She knows what's going on in reading." Her school has formed a reading leadership team for support.

The primary problem for all respondents seemed to be that they perceived a lack of interest in the progress of the processes their professional development from their site administrators. If reading reform is so vitally important on a state and national level, it would seem that their efforts should also be recognized by their site administrators. The administrator neglect that the participants reported in the initial phases of the study may realistically demonstrate what Coburn (2001) calls the

difficulty of collective sense making about mandated reading policies in their site based professional communities.

Outside reform policy messages are brought in generally by principals. The participants in this study were receiving messages from district and state level administrators first. This may have added to perceived principal mistreatment. Principal mistreatment includes obstructive and destructive behavior that includes destroying teacher morale (Blase and Blase, 2004). Cherise, Carolina, Gracie and Luanne to some extent, experienced principal mistreatment until the principal was removed from the position, or the participant either gave up caring or changed job locations. Cherise and Carolina had very low morales during my observations

The mandated reading teacher professional development was implemented so swiftly in the district that principals did not have time to filter messages from the Florida Department of Education. Some teachers were assigned to reading after they perceived they had been hired to teach another subject. These teachers were not qualified from the outset. While the professional development may have served to increase knowledge about language strategies, these teachers may not have been well-suited to a reading assignment.

The reading teachers began to experience a personal form of knowledge empowerment that went beyond what their administrators experienced. Gracie, Georgia, Claressa and Cherise used the term *clueless* at least once to describe a site administrator. Teaacher empowerment, while a perceived success of professional development may serve to threaten leaders.

These participants' vision of administrative priorities could have been colored by the availability of reform money, needs based learning, and the individual culture of collegiality at the different schools. There are theoretical views that for professional development to truly be successful, the focus must remain on students learning to read, not principals and administrators who adopt another reading program without equipping teachers with the necessary curriculums and culture of support (Donnelly, 2006). Whether it was because the teachers who experienced the most difficulty had the least amount of teaching experience, or whether it was because teachers became more rapidly empowered than site administrators, principals and administrators cannot be relied upon to fully support reading teachers. As such, administrator support for externally mandated professional development is open to further investigation.

Missing Lesson Plans

Another hurdle was that none of the participants had written lesson plans for their observations. This possible impediment to the implementation success of at least four of the participants should be further addressed in a future study. Lack of a written lesson plan could be a manifestation of gaps that continue to exist. Even though a reading teacher is beginning to develop expertise in what she perceives as the correct literacy strategy, a lesson plan could make a difference in what the teacher thinks is happening, and what is actually being taught.

Carolina, Gracie, Luanne, and Georgia all experienced correct component implementation problems during my observations. Carolina asked her students to get a book and read without utilizing the directives of Sustained Silent Reading. Gracie

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was too busy rushing through the lesson to pay attention to her students' questions during guided reading. She gave them spotty or no answers on specific questions of meaning. Luanne tried to teach three robust strategies (Readers Theater, vocabulary direct instruction, and guided reading) in 45-minute sessions. Each of those strategies alone is prescribed for a minimum of 45 minutes, if not more (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2006). Georgia knew she needed implementation help. Her repeated entreaties for collaborative sharing and asking me to teach during one of my observations showed that she was aware that she did not know how to use GIST correctly, but was willing to learn.

Leaving the Profession

Two teachers, Carolina and Cherise, stated on at least two occasions that they were thinking of leaving the profession. Both of these teachers had been hired to teach another subject area. Carolina had been hired to teach Social Studies, and Cherise had been hired to teach Business. But because of their high school's literacy needs, they were forced to teach reading out of field. This facet is ripe for further research as the *International Reading Association* pursues standards for highly qualified reading professionals. Reading experts must be best fit to teach reading (Barkley, 2004). Should reading teachers be drawn or forced into teaching reading from other content areas or should they be drawn from language arts backgrounds?

Theory to Practice: Research, Time, Use

An ongoing problem for all teachers was time for reflection and research. During mandated reform teachers need time to rethink their own practices and construct new classroom roles and expectations from their students. They are teaching

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in ways that many of them have never taught before (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995). All of the participants stated that reading the required research and articles associated with the professional development placed an added burden on their already short time.

Georgia, Cherise, and Carolina simply put the research aside and grasped what they could from other teachers or from listening. Claressa, Meryl, and Janie made honest attempts to read the background literature, but all three stated the research requirements were simply too much to handle. Gracie did not read much of the research because she felt she already knew it from ESOL classes. Carolina was facing so many more hours in professional development to become highly qualified, that she is thinking of giving up.

All participants commented on the amount of reading research. Cherise repeatedly stated she wanted more hands on strategies. Georgia wanted to be shown the "how to." Gracie skipped lightly over the research issue stating she didn't really need any more theory. Claressa said she was glad to know the research but preferred having immediate classroom strategies. Meryl, Janie and Luanne were in full implementation and seemed not to need any more theoretical basis.

Implications

The teacher voices revealed what they now need most. The strongest implications for this researcher are outlined as follows:

1. Continued collaboration
2. Peer modeling to further preparation and reflection of the use of strategies.

3. Delineation of clear standards for reading professionals to continue empowerment.

All teachers indicated, either implicitly or explicitly, that they would like to continue the collaboration and sharing networks that were created during their competency training. Most of the daunting problems in education are borne from continued isolation of teachers. Isolation at the secondary level is endemic (Barkley, 2004).

Effective peer modeling and extended peer collaboration produce positive change in the classroom and promote teacher learning (Holloway, 1999). The reading teacher voices can be heard calling for a new type of reading professional. These teachers all had large numbers of struggling readers. Dole (2004) posits that the new reading specialist will not be working with students as much as she will be working in collaboration with classroom teachers in a school. No Child Left Behind, Reading First views reading mentors or coaches as viable and important professional development components of successful reading instruction.

All teachers can be heard asking for more peer assistance. Each of the participants filtered the call for more expert assistance in their own way. Gracie, the most proactive for her own professional development has her sights set on on becoming a high school reading coach. She is currently apprenticing with a district coordinator and trains *Competency 1*. Claressa, although invited to attend the *Reading Coaches Boot Camp*, refused the position at her new school because she prefers to teach Journalism and Drama. One of her school site duties, however, is to assist other reading and content area teachers. We collaborated on a reading strategy book for school use. By the fall of this study, Georgia, Meryl, and Janie were all

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Reading Department Chairpersons and were acting as a reading specialist for their schools, even though they each have part time reading coaches. Cherise and Carolina remain classroom teachers and feel the least empowered. They called the loudest for more modeling and mentoring assistance. Both were, at the end of the study, looking for other jobs outside the profession.

The research underpins the need for qualified reading professionals to continue the beginning gains made by Scientifically Based Reading Research based professional development. There are no clear credentials for secondary reading professionals in Florida other than a quick endorsement. There are not advanced definitions of expertise or requirements for reading job titles (Allington, 2006). Clearly, Cherise and Carolina were unhappy teaching reading, but felt they had no choice but to do so to keep their jobs. With little background or prior training in language arts or reading, both were demonstrably unhappy. Georgia, too, did not have any prior training in language arts or reading and was struggling to implement her strategies. She had a conceptual advantage in that she may have been aided by her prior knowledge in corporate professional development training.

A question that could be further explored is that without a common language arts knowledge base, are reading teachers who are recruited from secondary content areas, conceptually and theoretically prepared to implement the actual classroom knowledge and background knowledge? At present, reading competency training for the Florida Reading Endorsement is open to any secondary content area teacher. Is it pedagogically wise that any reading endorsed secondary content area teacher can be assigned to be a reading teacher? Is district in-service training sufficient to overcome

cognitive and implementation deficits? The over riding question that is ripe for further research: Can any secondary teacher be a successful reading teacher?

Conclusion

Reading reform comes on the heels of almost a full century of sometimes-contentious debate among curricularists. While researchers have generally known what works in the teaching of reading, less is known for what works best. Until the last two decades there has been little research at the secondary level. Researcher observations, participant survey responses, and the voices of secondary reading teachers provide teacher educators and professional development curriculum writers with timely answers to the degree of impact on reading teacher retraining. The research results can be used to help answer theoretical questions that inevitably arise during the practical, district level implementation of recently mandated, direct, intensive reading teacher staff development

I discovered that reading teachers were eager to understand and incorporate reading reform into their pedagogical practices. Seven of the respondents' classrooms were busy and vibrant learning places. These participants jumped into the professional development head first and with no reservations. They were frustrated and confused, but they were willing to keep trying, in the face of a perceived lack of support.

The respondents were positive about their training experience. The feeling of knowledge empowerment, that six out of the eight respondents gained, enabled them to struggle onward. They are urgently seeking a way to find what works best for their students. The training was filtering into their classrooms at various levels of use, and

sometimes their perceptions of how to use the strategies were faulty. All of the participants viewed each other as role models and collaborators. All of the participants wanted further mentoring as support and more opportunities to engage in verbal reflection together. In the last part of the research, five of the participants felt administratively empowered when they accepted positions as Reading Department Chairpersons.

My combined role as participant and researcher was a unique experience. I engaged in lengthy periods of reflection. The time I spent in reflection, while necessarily lengthening this dissertation, was valuable to interpretation I experienced an often weighty "stepping in and stepping out" journey. At times this engagement/disengagement was overwhelming. The co-participant-researcher stance required that I spend much time in isolated reflection. This stance seemed, at times, to impede or hinder the construction and framing of this dissertation.

I persevered and gained insights from my peers that continuously inspired me to persist. I am very grateful for their generosity in sharing their teaching and planning time. As a result, I have strengthened my own knowledge about what the teaching of reading.

APPENDIX A: COPYRIGHT PERMISSION LETTER

VIRGINIA E. HARPER

13430 McGregor Blvd.
Ft. Myers, Florida 33919
1-800-245-4425
239-481-5150
navsurvey@aol.com
www.navsurvey.com

September 6, 2004

Dr. Thomas Guskey
College of Education
Taylor Education Building
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506-0001

Dear Dr. Guskey:

This letter will be used to confirm our summer email conversation. I am completing a
doctoral dissertation at the University of Central Florida entitled "A Study of Southwest
Florida High School Reading Teachers and the Implementation of Scientifically Based
Reading Research Instruction." Major Professor: Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe (407) 823-
0386. The instruments to be reproduced and adapted are from your book
Evaluating Professional Development and include
Figure 4.3 Evaluation Questionnaire
Figure 4.4 p. 114 Professional Development Evaluation Form
Figure 5.3 Open-Ended Learning Evaluation Form
The requested permission extends to ~~any future revisions and editions of my dissertation,
including non-exclusive world rights in all languages, and to~~ the publication of my
dissertation by UMI. These rights will in no way restrict republication of the material in
any other form by you or by others authorized by you. Your signing of this letter will also
confirm that you own or your company owns the copyright to the above described
material. If these arrangements meet with your approval, please sign this letter where
indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope.
Thank you for your help and attention.

Sincerely,

Virginia C. Harper
Virginia E. Harper

_____

PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE USE REQUESTED ABOVE:

By: _____   Date: 9/17/04
        Thomas Guskey, PhD

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APPENDIX B: UCF INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL PAGE

University of Central Florida

March 7, 2005

Virginia Harper
13430 McGregor Blvd.
FT. Myers, Florida 33919

Dear Ms. Harper:

With reference to your protocol entitled, "A Study of Southwest Florida Secondary Reading Teachers: The Role and Implementation of Professional Development on Scientifically Based Reading Research" I am enclosing for your records the approved, expedited document of the UCFIRB Form you had submitted to our office. **The expiration date for this study will be 2/17/06.** Should there be a need to extend this study, a Continuing Review form must be submitted to the IRB Office for review by the Chairman or full IRB at least one month prior to the expiration date. This is the responsibility of the investigator.

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year. Should there be any addendums or administrative changes to the already approved protocol, they must also be submitted to the Board through use of the Addendum/Modification Request form. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 407-823-2901.

Please accept our best wishes for the success of your endeavors.

Cordially,

Barbara Ward

Barbara Ward, CIM
IRB Coordinator

Copy: IRB file

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL DISTRICT RESEARCH APPROVAL FORM

| | Close |

Virginia,

The District Research Committee has reviewed and approved your research project entitled "A Study of Southwest Florida High School Reading Teachers: The Role and Implementation of Professional Development on Scientifically Based Researched Professional Development" with the following conditions:

1) It is made clear to subjects that participation is voluntary.

2) You provide my office with a copy of the final results when completed.

Your plan is to interview 10 teachers who participated in Reading Teacher Endorsement Competencies. If you need assistance in identifying those participants, I'm sure the folks in Staff Development would be happy to work with you. They will also be very interested in the results of your study.

Thank you for your interest in conducting educational research in Lee County Schools.

Richard Itzen
Dept. of Evaluation, Testing, and Research
School District of Lee County
(239) 335-1448

APPENDIX D: GRAPHIC ORGANIZER IMPACT OPEN-ENDED

Competency Graphic Organizer Impact (Guskey, 2000, p. 130).

Topic_____

Date_____

Position_____

Grade/content Area: _____

I learned…

Most helpful…   Least helpful…

_____

I would like to learn   Appreciations, Concerns, Suggestions

APPENDIX E: EVALUATION FORM/OPEN-ENDED

Reading Teacher Competency Impact (Guskey, 2000, p. 114)

Program/Competency Title:

Presenter/Coach:

Date:

School:

Position: Teacher: Administrator: Grade Level: Other:

What did you expect from this session?

What did you get from this session?

What do you value most from this experience?

What will you use or do next?

What do you now need?

What worked best in this session?

How could this session be improved?

APPENDIX F: TEACHER IMPLEMENTATION LOG

SBRR Strategies and Graphic Organizers (Guskey, 2000, p. 201)

<u>Researcher Observation Log</u>

School_____
Teacher_____
Grade Level_____

Period Covering: From:_____to_____
Reading Strategy/Competency Implemented:_____

Lesson/Activity:

SBBR Skill or Objective
Instructional Strategies Used:
___Directly from the Competency
___Influenced by SBRR Competency participation
___Came from teacher idea, innovation, or other sources
Materials Used:
___Received/copied from competency, in-service
___Implemented directly from the competency for the lesson
___Obtained from other source

Teachers Reflections:

Researcher's Reflections:

Codes: Observed_____Teacher told me_____Co-Taught with Teacher_____

APPENDIX G: LEVELS OF USE

Levels of Use (Guskey, 2000, p. 201) Researcher Coded Implementation Log

Teacher Code_____School Code_____

Competency_____Graphic Organizer_____Strategy_____

Category	Stage	Label	Description
Use	6	Renewal	Reevaluates the quality of use and seeks major modifications or alterations to improve the impact on students
	5	Integration	Makes deliberate efforts to coordinate with colleagues to achieve a stronger collective impact on students
	4b	Refinement	Varies use within the context to improve the impact on students
	4a	Routine	Establishes an appropriate pattern of use with little preparation or thought given to improving its impact.
	3	Mechanical	Focuses on day-to-day use tends to be disjointed and superficial, with little insight or reflection.
	2	Preparation	Prepares for the first opportunity for use.
	1	Orientation	Seeks information and explores the personal and resource requirements for use
	0	Nonuse	Has no involvement and is doing nothing toward becoming involved

APPENDIX H: STAGES OF CONCERN

(Adapted from Guskey, 2000, p. 183) Impact of SBRR and High School Reading Teacher-Researcher Coded (Observations/Teacher Code:/School Code)

Category	Stage	Label	Description
Impact	6	Refocusing	Focuses on exploring broad benefits from the change, including the possibility of major alterations or adaptations
	5	Collaboration	Focuses coordinating/cooperation with others regarding the change
	4	Consequence	Focuses on how the change affects students which student outcomes are influenced, and which adaptations might be necessary to improve results.
Task	3	Management	Focuses on the processes and tasks Involved in applying the change and the best use of information and resources. Attention centers on efficiency, organization, demands management, scheduling, time.
Self	2	Personal	Focuses on demands of change and ability to meet demands attention centered on role in change process, reward structure decision making, and potential conflicts with existing structures and personal commitments.
	1	Informational	Focuses on learning more detail about change. Unworried about personal involvement, attention focused on requirements of use, characteristics and effects of change
Awareness	0	Awareness	Minimal concern/involved in change

APPENDIX I: RESEARCHER AUTHORED SURVEYS

Alternate Face to Face/Telephone Surveys Teacher Self-Efficacy Perceptions

Teacher Code:_____School Code:_____

Do you have time to implement your reading competency strategies during your

normal school day?

1. Do you have time to talk with colleagues at your school about SBRR instruction?

2. Do you have time to assess and diagnose your students' reading abilities, successes failures?

3. Are you generally enthusiastic about SBRR reading strategies in your classroom?

4. Have you been encouraged by your own administration to participate in reading teacher competencies? Are you afraid or have you been afraid of peer criticism?

5. Does emphasis on testing success discourage/encourage you from or to try new strategies in reading teaching?

6. Does your classroom time or curriculum allow you time to implement graphic organizers?

7. Does your classroom time or curriculum allow you to try new reading strategies?

8. Are you encouraged by your administrators to focus on SBRR?

9. Does your personnel evaluation or personal evaluation forms interfere or affect your ability to implement SBRR?

APPENDIX J: WORK SCHEDULE

January 2005: Committee Meeting: Proposal Defense/IRB Submission

March 2005-October 2005: Data Collection, Analysis, Synthesize, IRB Approval

November 2005-February 2006: Construct, Frame, Write, Edit Dissertation

March 2006-May 2006: Edit, Rewrites, Committee Review, Defense

APPENDIX K: UCF-IRB PROTOCOL AND RELEASE FORMS

Adult Participant Consent Form
February 15, 2005

Dear Teacher:

I am a graduate student at the University of Central Florida under supervision of faculty member, Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe, conducting a study on the impact of scientifically based reading research on secondary classroom reading teachers. The purpose of this study is to enlarge the knowledge about the impact of scientifically based reading teacher education and professional development. Results of this study may help faculty and staff not only at UCF but administrators, reading coaches and lead teachers better understand the implementation of scientifically based reading research in teacher training. It may also assist them to better design instructional practices. These results will help erase the research deficit in how best to train high school reading teachers.

As part of my coursework, I am conducting an interview, the purpose of which is to learn about how educators implement the specialized knowledge of Scientifically Based Reading Research professional development in their classrooms. I am asking you to participate in this interview because you have been identified as a highly successful educator. You have also participated in Reading Teacher Professional Development Competencies. The interview should last no longer than 30 minutes. The schedule of questions is enclosed with this letter. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. Your interview will be conducted by phone or at your office after I have received a copy of this signed consent from you. With your permission I may audiotape the interview. Only I will have access to the tape, which I will personally transcribe. I will remove any identifiers during transcription. The tape will then be erased. Your identity will be kept confidential and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. Results will only be reported in the form of anonymous, coded data.

Participation or non-participation in this study will not affect the teacher's professional evaluation. There are no known or anticipated risks or immediate benefits to the participants. You have the right to withdraw consent for your participation at any time without consequence. No compensation is offered for participation. Interpreted results of this study will be available upon request by December of 2005. If you have any questions about this study, your participation or the results and use, please contact me at 1-800-245-4425 or my advisor, Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe, at 407-823-0386.
Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCFIRB office, University of Central Florida Office of Research, Orlando Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 207, Orlando, FL 32826. The hours of operation are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday except on University

Central Florida official holidays. The phone number is 407-823-2901.Thank you for your participation.
Please sign and return this copy of the letter in the enclosed envelope. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give me permission to report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript to be submitted to my faculty supervisor as part of my course work.

Sincerely,

Virginia E. Harper

Permission/Release
Please return the following in the enclosed envelope.
Thanks again,

_____I have read the procedure described above.

_____I voluntarily give my consent to participate in Virginia Harper's dissertation research study of Southwest Florida High School Reading Teachers: Implementation and Impact of Scientifically Based Researched Professional Development.

____I would like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript submitted to the instructor.
____I would not like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript submitted to the instructor.

_____/_____
Participant   Date

APPENDIX L: ADULT PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM/OBSERVATION

Informed Consent

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in the observation phase of this study.

Title: A Study of Southwest Florida High School Reading teachers: The Implementation and Impact of Scientifically Based Researched Professional Development

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to examine the impact and implementation of reading teacher professional development.

What you will be asked to do in this phase of the study: I am asking your permission to allow me to observe in real time in your classroom as you teach a high school reading class. I will be using a coded reading competency, strategy, modeling behavior, and implementation data capture sheet based on Dr. Thomas Guskey's professional development template. I would like to visit your classroom no more than three periods at different times of the semester.

Time Required: Three high school classroom periods in different weeks of the semester.

Risks: There are no known or anticipated risks.

Benefits/Compensation: There is no compensation or other direct benefit to you for participation.

Confidentiality: Your identity will be kept confidential. Your information will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this number will be kept in a locked file in my office and/or my advisor's office. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any reports.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to Withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw form the study at any time without consequence.

Contact: Virginia Harper, Graduate Student, College of Education, University of Central Florida: 1-800-245-4425. Faculty Supervisor, Dr. Vicky Zygouris Coe, College of Education: 407-823-0386, University of Central Florida,Orlando, Florida 32826.

Participant Consent/Release:
Please sign and return in the enclosed envelope.

_____I have read the procedure for observation described above.
_____I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure
_____/_____
Participant   Date

_____I would like to receive a copy of the final "observation" manuscript submitted to the instructor.

_____I would not like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript submitted to the instructor.

_____/_____
Principal Investigator   Date

APPENDIX M: VERBAL CONSENT LETTER

Hello. My name is Virginia Harper and I am a graduate student at the University of Central Florida in the college of Education. I am working a dissertation supervised by Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe. The research is studying high school reading teachers and the impact and implementation of reading teacher training in Scientifically Based Reading Research. This interview should take less than 30 minutes of your time. Are you a high school reading teacher and would you be willing to answer some questions about this study?

Thank you for your willingness to participate. Your answers will be coded and your results will remain anonymous. You do not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer and you may discontinue participation or withdraw your data at any time without consequence. I will not record your name. I cannot compensate you for your time.

If you have any questions about your participation, you may contact my advisor, Dr. Vicky Zygouris-Coe at 407-823-0386.

If you have any questions about participant's rights, you may contact the University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board at 407-823-2901. May I begin the survey?

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