ANALYSIS OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PROFESSIONAL
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TEACHING STRUGGLING READERS

By

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The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the beliefs and
professional knowledge of preservice teachers about teaching struggling readers. These
descriptions were based on the qualitative methods of questionnaires, autobiographies,
interviews, observations, and document review. This qualitative study was conducted
during a four-month period in 2003. The participants were six elementary education
majors who were employed as tutors in Project UFLI, a federally-funded study of
beginning reading intervention. The study was concerned with participants' beliefs and
professional knowledge in the context of tutoring struggling readers in order to discover
how these beliefs and professional knowledge influenced the preservice teachers'
expectations, instruction, and evaluations of these learners. Separate cases were reported
for each preservice teacher, patterns were identified, and cross-case analysis was utilized.

This study contributed to the knowledge and understanding of preservice teachers'
beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers and how these

beliefs and knowledge influenced their teaching behaviors. Specifically, the findings from this study described how preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers influenced their expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers. The findings from this multiple case study suggest that preservice teachers may not believe they are capable of or responsible for teaching all of their students to read. The preservice teacher beliefs about teacher efficacy and responsibility influenced many teaching behaviors in the current study. These findings illustrate the complex interrelationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, expectations, instruction, and evaluation.

Several recommendations were determined from the results of the current study. Preservice and inservice teachers should explore how their beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors. It is important for teachers to examine their own beliefs, professional knowledge, and practice in order to make changes that lead to more effective instruction for our struggling readers. Teacher educators can utilize this information to improve teacher education programs as teacher education programs have been shown to significantly impact preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge. The results are important as they provide guidance to teacher educators as they teach, support and supervise preservice teachers.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

<u>Background of the Problem</u>

Teacher educators are faced with the daunting task of preparing preservice teachers to teach an increasingly diverse student population in the new millennium. Whether the diversity is ethnicity, race, gender, economic status, or learning differences, teacher education programs must develop teachers who are able to effectively teach all children (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], 2000).

Reading is a lifelong skill that is crucial for success in today's world. It is widely known that children who struggle with reading acquisition perform lower in other subject areas, possess lower self-esteem, present greater discipline problems in school, and are less likely to finish high school (Shanahan & Barr, 1995). Although students in the United States read as well as or better than they ever have before in history, there is still a small population of children who struggle with reading acquisition (Klenk & Kibby, 2000). Teachers of reading must have a deep understanding of how children learn to read and be prepared to teach all children to high levels of literacy. Preparing preservice teachers for the challenges of teaching children who are struggling with reading acquisition must be a crucial priority among educators.

Because preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching children who are struggling with reading acquisition will influence their future teaching decisions and practices as they work with such children (Nierstheimer, Hopkins, & Schmitt, 1996), it is important that preservice teachers and teacher education programs examine these beliefs.

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Statement of the Problem

Teachers of reading must have a deep understanding of how children learn to read and be prepared to teach all children to high levels of literacy. Teacher education programs are constantly striving to improve the preparation of preservice teachers in order to meet the high demands and expectations placed on beginning teachers. Crucial to this effort, teacher educators must explore preservice teachers' beliefs about students, teaching, and learning, as teachers' beliefs influence their judgments and decision-making and exert critical influence on classroom practice (Pajares, 1992). As human beings we have beliefs about everything whether they are implicit or explicit beliefs. Researchers have argued that these beliefs are the basis for all of the choices that we make as individuals (Bandura, 1986; Richardson, 1996; Rokeach, 1968).

Preservice teachers often have an unrealistic optimism and become disillusioned when teaching children who are struggling with reading acquisition (Nierstheimer et al., 1996). This unrealistic optimism may be the result of preservice teachers relying on their own experiences as literacy learners to inform their beliefs about how all children learn (Kagan, 1992). Because preservice teachers may believe that their students will be much like themselves, it may be necessary for them to confront their beliefs about students who are different from themselves. If preservice teachers do not reexamine their beliefs and, therefore, their instruction for struggling readers, the result might be that the struggling reader is viewed as the problem instead of the instruction being viewed as the problem. It may also mean that the preservice teachers may not provide the most appropriate learning experiences for the children that they are teaching and may even be biased toward the students based upon their beliefs.

An area that is important for professors and teacher education programs to consider is preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and the manners in which these beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors. If preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors, it would seem essential for those teaching, supporting, and supervising preservice teachers to be aware of these beliefs and knowledge and the manners in which these beliefs and knowledge influence teaching behaviors. Deeper understanding of these beliefs and professional knowledge may be important to assist teacher educators in preparing preservice teachers to teach all children to read proficiently. These understandings may be useful in the design and implementation of teacher education programs for teachers of reading.

Researchers have reported that teachers do make decisions based upon their beliefs (Fang, 1996; Kagan & Smith, 1988; Lonberger, 1992; Richardson, 1996; Solomon, Battistich, & Hom, 1996; Soodak & Podell, 1994; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000; Winfield, 1986). These decisions and actions have significant impact upon the learning experiences provided for students. Teachers' actions are influenced by their attitudes and beliefs, which then influence student learning and student behaviors (Soodak & Podell, 1994; Wiest, 1998).

Preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers are important to study as these beliefs and knowledge influence the preservice teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers. As researchers and educators attempt to prepare teachers who are able to teach all children to read, it is

important to understand how preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about struggling readers influence their teaching behaviors.

Significance of the Study

This research benefited the research community, preservice teachers, teachers, and teacher educators. This study extended and refined the understandings regarding preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and the manner in which these impact preservice teachers' behaviors. This study may impact the design and implementation of teacher education programs. As researchers uncover more insights into preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, teacher educators will have more information with which to design appropriate preservice and inservice teacher education programs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine the beliefs and professional knowledge of preservice teachers about teaching struggling readers. Specifically, this study was an exploration of the participants' beliefs and professional knowledge in the context of tutoring struggling readers in order to discover how these beliefs and professional knowledge influenced the preservice teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluations of these learners.

Research Questions

Specifically, this study addressed the following questions:

1.   What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

2.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

3.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction, for struggling readers?

4.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

<u>Delimitations and Limitations of the Study</u>

This research was limited to six preservice teachers at one university in Northern Florida. The small number of participants provided the opportunity to deeply probe the research questions being studied. The power of the study relied on the rich descriptions and patterns that described the participants' experiences. Multiple data sources strengthened the power of the data through triangulation. Descriptions of the participants were sufficiently detailed to allow transferability to other settings. However, generalizations are modest as the researcher sought to understand individuals in a specific context.

The researcher had some previous knowledge of the participants and worked with the participants in a supervisory capacity. This may have limited the participants' abilities to be completely forthcoming with responses. The researchers' biases could not be separated from the data. These biases included those as a former classroom teacher, reading resource teacher, graduate student of reading, preservice teacher educator, and researcher of a reading intervention program. These biases also included those of a white, middle-class female. While attempting to describe, analyze, and report the beliefs, professional knowledge, and actions of these preservice teachers, the researcher's identity provided the lens through which all the information was processed.

Definitions

Beliefs and professional knowledge are the attitudes, values, beliefs, and knowledge about teaching, students, content and the education process that students bring to teacher education (Kagan, 1990; Pajares, 1993).

Blending refers to combining the sounds represented by letters to pronounce a word; to sound out (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Decoding refers to the process of translating printed words into an oral representation using knowledge of letter-sound relationships and word structure (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Elkonin boxes refers to a method in which squares are drawn to represent the number of discrete sounds in a word. The student segments the phonemes in the word and determines and writes the letter in the box to represent each of these phonemes.

Encoding refers to changing a message into symbols as in encoding oral language into writing.

Fluency refers to the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Frustration reading level refers to the level at which a reader can read text at less than 90% success rate. The readability of material is too difficult to be read successfully by student even with instruction and support (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Genre refers to different kinds of literary texts, such as informational, instructional, mystery, realistic fiction, historical fiction, biography, fantasy, traditional folk and fairy tales, science fiction, etc. (Fountas & Pinell, 1996).

Independent reading level refers to the level at which a reader can read text at a 95% or higher success rate (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Instructional reading level refers to the level at which a reader can read text between a 90% and 94% success rate. The material is challenging but not frustrating for students to read successfully with instruction and support (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Miscue refers to an oral reading response that differs from the expected response to written text (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Modeling refers to the act of serving as an example of behavior and or technique (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Oral cloze refers to the procedure of restoring omitted portions of an oral message from its remaining context (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Reading disability refers to reading achievement that is significantly below expectancy for both an individual's reading potential and for chronological age or grade level (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Reading Recovery® leveled text refers to reading materials that have been leveled by Reading Recovery® based on a gradient of difficulty in order for teachers to make decisions about materials to select for children to read (Clay, 1991).

Running record refers to the cumulative account of selected behavior, as of that of a student reading as noted by a teacher over time (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Self-correction refers to the use of knowledge of language and context to correct errors in reading (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the sources of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1986).

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This review begins with what researchers have reported about effectively teaching struggling readers. Next is a review of the literature on beliefs and professional knowledge and pre- and inservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge. Next in the review is research that has been conducted on the influence pre- and inservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge have on their teaching behaviors. The final section is a review of the limited research that has been conducted related to the influence that pre- and inservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge have on teaching struggling readers is presented.

Reading Instruction

Effective teacher education facilitates preservice teachers in their development of content area expertise, research-based knowledge about teaching and learning, and pedagogical skills that will enable them to teach effectively to a diverse population of learners (NCATE, 2000; Ross, Lane, & McCallum, in preparation; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996). This focus on rigorous content, theory, and pedagogy will prepare exemplary teachers with expectations for all children to develop high levels of thoughtful literacy skills, critical thinking skills, active learning skills, content knowledge application, and problem solving abilities.

Emergent Literacy

Most literacy researchers and educators agree that learning to read and write is a developmental process that begins long before the commencement of formal schooling (Adams, 1990; Clay, 1991; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Spear-Swerling & Sternberg, 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). This theory of emergent literacy supplanted the previous reading readiness approach in which there was a perceived boundary between what constituted "pretend" reading prior to formal literacy instruction and "real" reading after formal literacy instruction when students were "ready to read" (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). The emergent literacy perspective validated the importance of literacy activities such as storybook reading, chanting, singing, print awareness, and word-play activities that occur in homes and preschool settings prior to formal schooling.

Young children who experienced more of these kinds of literate activities would benefit more from formal reading instruction and learn to read sooner and more skillfully than children who lacked these types of informal learning experiences (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). For these children, reading acquisition had begun well before the onset of formal instruction (Spear-Swerling & Sternberg, 1998). Many children, however, have had limited or have had no experiences with these types of literacy activities prior to formal schooling. For these children, reading acquisition may be slower and more difficult.

Teaching Struggling readers

There are many factors that can influence whether a child will have difficulty learning to read including but not limited to instructional influences, socioeconomic status, speaking a non-standard variety of English, having limited proficiency in English, biological deficits, and cultural differences (Snow et al., 1998). The majority of children

who are struggling with reading acquisition at the completion of first grade will continue to struggle with reading acquisition throughout their school careers (Juel, 1988). Literacy researchers and educators are continually searching for effective strategies to ensure that all children will become literate.

> There is nothing so complicated about learning to read that would keep any child who is not mentally retarded from being able to learn to read near, on, or above grade level, provided this child is given enough instruction and instruction of sufficient quality (Klenk & Kibby, 2000, p. 684-685).

In the first half of the twentieth century, the medical model was used to attempt to determine the cause(s) of reading difficulties by studying variables such as visual acuity, auditory acuity, general physical status, neurological factors, emotional/psychiatric factors, and intelligence (Klenk & Kibby, 2000). The belief was that there must be something inherently wrong with a child who was struggling with reading acquisition. This "deficit hypotheses" argued that the deficit was within the child and caused by environment, experience, or heredity (Johnston & Allington, 1991). Researchers now believe that students who are struggling with reading acquisition do not require qualitatively different instruction than children who are not struggling with reading acquisition (Snow et al., 1998). Instead, children who are struggling with reading acquisition require extra time in quality reading instruction, extensive opportunities to read high-success materials, and specific strategy instruction (Allington, 2001; Strickland, 2000).Therefore, children who are struggling with reading acquisition need more quality reading instruction beginning early in their school careers (Pikulski, 1998).

Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998), in a review of literature for the National Research Council, argued for integrating attention to the alphabetic principle with attention to the construction of meaning and opportunities to develop fluency. The researchers found

that most reading difficulties could be prevented with effective instruction. Their conclusions for effective reading instruction included children reading to obtain meaning from print; frequent opportunities to read; exposure to frequent, regular spelling-sound relationships; instruction on the alphabetic principle; and instruction on the structure of spoken words. Snow et al. concluded that progressing beyond the beginning reading level required an understanding of the alphabetic principle, reading practice, sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to derive meaning from the text, monitoring strategies, and interest and motivation to read for a variety of purposes.

Though criticized for its narrow focus on few topics and for limiting its review to experimental and quasi-experimental evidence (Pressley, 2001), the National Reading Panel's Report (2000) outlined evidence for teaching beginning reading skills in their review of research. The conclusions of the panel were that phonemic awareness instruction was effective in promoting early reading and spelling skills; systematic phonics instruction improved reading, spelling, and comprehension skills; guided oral reading and repeated reading of texts increased reading fluency; a variety of methods of vocabulary instruction should be implemented; comprehension strategies instruction improves comprehension; professional development can influence teachers' instruction in reading; greater community resources can promote literacy; when children have access to books, children are more likely to engage in literate activities which result in enhanced language and literacy skills; whole language interventions at school may promote some general, beginning understandings about reading and writing; literature-driven instruction increased children's autonomous reading; instruction with strong connections between literature and concept learning increased interest and engagement and comprehension

strategies; experiences with literature increased understanding of story structures; comprehension of texts increased when children engage in conversations about literature with peers and teachers; and exposure to a second language can have positive implications for literacy development.

In his criticism, Pressley (2001) advised that the conclusions reached by the Panel are not enough. Pressley argued that the Panel's emphases on discrete skills at specific development levels did not take into account that effective reading instruction occurs over a number of years and changes with the child's development. He contended that "effective literacy instruction is a balance and blend of skills teaching and holistic literature and writing experiences" (p. 4).

Access and Exposure to Print

To become a proficient reader one needs the opportunity to read (Allington, 1977). Allington (1980) observed reading group instruction in twenty-four first and second grade classrooms. He discovered that good readers read an average of 539 words during a reading lesson but poor readers read only an average of 237 words during a reading lesson. Allington argued that poor readers needed to read larger quantities of reading material of they were ever going to become good readers. In addition, Allington explained this reading material must be at the child's instructional level and must be contextual reading as opposed to other reading instruction activities.

After tracking the effects of print exposure in fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students, Cunningham and Stanovich (1991) found that print exposure is a significant unique predictor of spelling, vocabulary, verbal fluency, word knowledge, and general information even after controlling for differences in general ability and phonological

coding ability. These researchers argued that even the child with limited reading skills would build vocabulary and knowledge structures through reading.

Stanovich's (1986) theory of "Matthew Effects" in reading explained that children who experience early success in reading are likely to read more and become even better readers. Conversely, children who struggle with reading acquisition are likely to spend less time reading and achieve even less progress, falling farther and farther behind their peers. Stanovich suggested,

> If the development of vocabulary knowledge substantially facilitates reading comprehension, and if reading itself is a major mechanism leading to vocabulary growth – which in turn will enable more efficient reading – then we truly have a reciprocal relationship that should continue to drive further growth in reading throughout a person's development (p. 380).

His theory of "Matthew Effects" in reading further supports the position that the volume of reading done by students directly affects reading achievement. Stanovich theorizes that the very children who are reading well and who have good vocabularies will read more, learn more word meanings, and read even better while children with inadequate vocabularies who read slowly and without enjoyment read less, and as a result have slower development of vocabulary knowledge, which inhibits further growth in reading.

Effective Teachers

In a review of research examining students' passive failure in reading, Johnston and Winograd (1985) contended that teachers treat less successful students differently than more successful students. These differences in teacher actions for less successful students include giving these children answers, allowing less wait time, interrupting reading more frequently, having lower expectations, paying less attention, and praising less frequently. Johnston and Winograd argued that these differences in teacher actions allow less

successful students to attribute their failure to low ability which, in turn, leads to passive failure in reading. The authors concluded that research and teaching activities should focus on children *learning* to read rather than the *teaching* of reading in order to prevent passive failure in reading.

Allington (2002) argued that what really matters in reading instruction is effective teachers. While studying exemplary teachers through research at the National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement, Allington found that the most important aspects of effective instruction were time spent in actual reading and writing activities; quality and quantity of easily read materials; active instruction that modeled and demonstrated reading and writing strategies; conversational talk; substantive, challenging tasks; and assessment based on effort and improvement. This type of instruction can only occur with effective, knowledgeable teachers.

Allington's (2002) focus on the teacher and instruction is supported by Darling-Hammond's (1999) review of policy evidence in regard to teacher quality and student achievement. Darling-Hammond found that well-prepared teachers can have strong effects on student achievement ameliorating the impact of student poverty level, language background, or minority status. She also concluded that teacher quality variables were more strongly related to student achievement than class size, overall spending levels or teacher salaries.

Early Intervention

Educators have increasingly turned to early intervention in order to help accelerate literacy learning of students who are struggling with reading acquisition (Strickland, 2001). While it is crucial that the classroom teacher provide exemplary instruction and take responsibility for all students in the classroom (Walmsley & Allington, 1995), rising

expectations for young literacy learners has shifted the focus to intensive early

intervention along with exemplary teaching practices (Strickland, 2001). These short-

term, intensive programs of intervention aimed at accelerating literacy development are

becoming preferable to extended remediation efforts such as Title I pull-out programs

(Strickland, 2001). Fortunately, the majority of children struggling with reading

acquisition can become readers if they are provided early and intensive intervention

(Vellutino & Scanlon, 2001). Providing this early intervention to children struggling with

reading acquisition is a crucial priority among educators. Research has shown many

forms of tutoring to be effective with struggling readers (Shanahan, 1998).

Reading Recovery® is a one-to-one tutorial intervention provided by specially

trained teachers developed specifically for children struggling with reading acquisition in

the first years of formal schooling (Pinnell, Lyons, DeFord, Bryk, & Seltzer, 1994).

Reading Recovery® was developed by Marie Clay, a developmental psychologist and

teacher of special education in New Zealand, and her colleagues in 1976 in an effort to

develop an intervention that would accelerate the reading development of the lowest

achieving children up to the reading development of the average achieving children in the

classroom. The lesson framework includes reading and rereading familiar texts; analysis

of student reading through running record techniques; composing, writing, and reading

messages; and reading new and more challenging texts with teacher support. In a study

conducted by Pinell et al. (1994) children who received Reading Recovery® as an

intervention performed significantly higher than other treatment groups and the control

group. In an independent analysis of the effectiveness of Reading Recovery®, Shanahan

and Barr (1995) found Reading Recovery® to be less effective and more costly than had

been claimed. Despite these findings, the researchers recommended the continued support of Reading Recovery® as a successful intervention strategy.

Many researchers have reported that the majority of children struggling with reading acquisition can become readers if they are provided individualized, early and intensive literacy intervention (Hayes, Lane, & Pullen, 1999; Juel, 1991; Pinnell et al., 1994; Vellutino & Scanlon, 2001). These researchers have reported that some students would require longer periods of effective, intensive remediation but that many students could actually be remediated with less intensive and shorter interventions if that intervention was provided early in the child's reading development. Vellutino and Scanlon (2001) concluded that reading difficulties in the majority of children struggling with reading acquisition were caused by experiential and instructional deficits rather than cognitive deficits.

Other tutorial intervention strategies that have utilized volunteers or college students have also proven to be effective in helping children who are struggling with reading acquisition (Baker, Gersten, & Keating, 2000; Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, & Moody, 2000; Fitzgerald, 2001; Hayes et al., 1999; Invernizzi, 2001; Invernizzi, Juel, & Rosemary, 1998; Juel, 1996). Many of these literacy interventions were based upon the design of the Reading Recovery® (Pinnell et al., 1994) framework including rereading familiar texts, word study, writing, and reading an unfamiliar book with the assistance of a tutor who is providing specific strategy instruction. The tutoring models that utilized volunteers or college students offered an affordable form of early intervention that was proven to be successful in raising literacy levels. These studies confirmed that well-designed, reliably implemented interventions could improve the literacy development for

students struggling with reading acquisition. The crucial factor in successful volunteer efforts appeared to be the training and mentoring provided to tutors (Invernizzi, 2001). Elbaum et al. (2000) cautioned that the instruction provided by volunteers or college students was intended to supplement, not replace, the classroom reading instruction.

Research consistently supports the effectiveness of tutoring (Shanahan, 1998). However, tutoring is not a perfect solution and does have some potential drawbacks. One criticism of pull-out programs in general is that students who are receiving interventions during the school day lose ten to fifteen minutes of instructional time just traveling between the classroom and the intervention (Cunningham & Allington, 1994). These researchers suggested that it may be difficult or impossible to make up for this lost time regardless of the effectiveness of the intervention. In order to control for these factors, attention must be focused on limiting the loss of instructional time through transitions as well as careful attention to the decision about which classroom activities will be lost during the intervention. Many schools have chosen to add these intervention programs on to their school day either before or after school in order to address these issues and provided extended learning for struggling children.

Shanahan (1998) warned that if the person providing the tutoring is ineffective, the intervention will be ineffective. Of course, if the intervention is inappropriate or ineffective, trading exemplary classroom instruction for this instruction would be detrimental to student achievement (Shanahan, 1998). Providing extra time in quality reading instruction, extensive opportunities to read high-success materials, and specific strategy instruction (Strickland, 2000) as previously suggested is appropriate and effective intervention.

The researchers included in this review have reported that there are common elements of effective literacy instruction for all readers in general and struggling readers in particular. These common elements include extra quality reading instruction, extensive opportunities to read high-success texts and useful, specific strategy instruction with an effective teacher. In addition to the described reading instruction occurring within the regular classroom, more intensive, short-term intervention programs may also be implemented to accelerate the learning of some struggling readers. While occurring in a smaller group and a more intensive manner, this intervention instruction should not be qualitatively different than the instruction provided to those children who are not struggling with reading acquisition.

<div align="center">Beliefs and Professional Knowledge</div>

As human beings we have beliefs about everything whether they are implicit or explicit beliefs. Researchers have argued that these beliefs are the basis for all of the choices that we make as individuals (Bandura, 1986; Richardson, 1996; Rokeach, 1968). Researchers have reported that teachers, like all human beings, make decisions based upon their beliefs (Bandura, 1986; Fang, 1996; Kagan & Smith, 1988; Lonberger, 1992; Richardson, 1996; Rokeach, 1968; Solomon et al., 1996; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000; Winfield, 1986). These decisions and actions have significant impact upon the learning experiences provided for students. Teachers' actions are influenced by their attitudes and beliefs, which then influence student learning and student behaviors (Wiest, 1998).

Rokeach (1968) theorized that the decisions that people make throughout their lives are based upon their beliefs. His research and theories about beliefs, attitudes and values are often-cited and studied. Rokeach (1968) defined beliefs as "any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable

of being preceded by the phrase 'I believe that …'" (p. 113). Rokeach was interested in the structure of belief systems and conducted a quantitative study on 29 subjects' belief systems using hypnotic procedures. He concluded that some beliefs are more central than other beliefs and that the more central the belief, the more it will be resistant to change. He also concluded that knowledge is a component of belief. Rokeach warned that beliefs should not necessarily be verbal reports taken at face value, but rather inferences made by an observer about the underlying states based on all the things the "believer" is doing and saying.

Bandura (1986), agreed with Rokeach that beliefs are the best indicator of an individual's decision-making. Beliefs are the basis upon which individuals plan, interpret, and make decisions. Bandura argued that beliefs must be studied in context specific situations in order to be useful, as human beings have beliefs about everything. He also argued that some beliefs are more resistant to change than others and that teacher efficacy beliefs are the strongest predictors of motivation and actions.

Pajares' (1993) defined preservice teachers' beliefs as: "the attitudes and values about teaching, students, and the education process that students bring to teacher education – attitudes and values that can be inferred by teacher educators not only from what preservice teachers say but from what they do" (p. 46). Because of the subjective nature of teaching, Kagan (1990) used *beliefs* and *knowledge* interchangeably. Kagan defined *teachers' cognitions* as any of the following: "pre- or inservice teachers' self-reflections; beliefs and knowledge about teaching, students, and content; and awareness of problem-solving strategies endemic to classroom teaching" (p. 421).

For the purposes of this study, these two definitions will be combined. Preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge will be defined as: The attitudes, values, beliefs, and knowledge about teaching, students, content and the education process that students bring to teacher education. Additionally, Pajares' (1993) advice that preservice teachers' attitudes and values should be inferred not only from what preservice teachers say but also from what they do will be heeded.

Because human beings have beliefs about everything and these beliefs are the basis for decision-making and actions (Bandura, 1986; Rokeach, 1968), belief research is an important field of study. Based upon the theory that beliefs are central to human beings' everyday decisions and actions (Bandura, 1986; Rokeach, 1968) and that there need not be any truth or evidence required for a belief (Richardson, 1996), it seems logical that teacher beliefs are central to their classroom decisions and actions. Understanding teachers' beliefs is important for understanding teachers' actions.

<p align="center">Influences of Beliefs and Professional Knowledge on Teaching</p>

Researchers have discovered that teachers make decisions based upon their beliefs. These decisions and actions have significant impact upon the learning experiences provided for their students. This section will describe research that has been conducted on the influence of teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge on teaching behaviors.

In a study of teachers' beliefs about self-efficacy, Ashton and Webb (1986) used the quantitative and qualitative methods of questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and student records to determine if there was a relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement. Forty-eight high school teachers were included in the study. These researchers found that the teachers' self-efficacy was associated with student achievement in both reading and math. Additionally, these

researchers determined that teachers' self-efficacy influenced teaching behaviors such as their use of praise and whether or not they were task-oriented. It is an important finding that there is a relationship between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their teaching behaviors as well as between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and student achievement.

Kagan and Smith (1988) examined the relationship between kindergarten teachers' self-reported beliefs and their classroom practice. Fifty-one kindergarten teachers completed self-report instruments that assessed cognitive style, teaching ideology, classroom behavior, and occupational stress. They were later observed for two hours teaching their kindergarten students. The researchers were specifically interested in whether the teachers believed in a more child-centered or a more teacher-centered kindergarten classroom. Kagan and Smith found the teachers' self-reported beliefs were strongly consistent with the researcher observations and that their beliefs were evident in their classroom practice and classroom environment. The researchers described how the teachers' beliefs were reflected in their teaching behaviors. These behaviors included the teachers' verbal behavior, teachers' position in the room, and students' positions and groupings in the room. Kagan and Smith concluded that teachers with a more child-centered approach to teaching kindergarten held a consistent set of beliefs and behaviors. This study is significant in that it reports how teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge are reflected in teaching behaviors.

Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Loyd (1991) studied the relationship between teachers' beliefs about teaching reading comprehension and their classroom practices. In the study, thirty-nine intermediate elementary teachers, including 30 females and 9 males, were interviewed to determine their beliefs about reading comprehension and how

children learn to read. These teachers were then observed twice while teaching reading comprehension to determine if their beliefs were consistent with their classroom practices. The researchers concluded that the beliefs of the teachers in the study reflected their classroom practices in the teaching of reading comprehension.

In a quantitative study of the relationship between belief systems and the instructional choices of preservice teachers, Lonberger (1992) assessed the beliefs of 37 elementary and special education students enrolled in an introductory reading methods course. The students' beliefs about reading, how children read, and teaching a child to read were assessed through informal questions. Responses were classified by philosophy and frequencies of response by belief system were tabulated. Students later designed, implemented, and were observed teaching a lesson for teaching word recognition. The lessons were then judged to be congruent or incongruent with the preservice teachers' philosophies. Lonberger reported that 84% of the students made instructional choices that were congruent with their beliefs and theoretical orientations to reading and that these orientations evolved during the reading methods course. These conclusions are important in understanding the nature of preservice teacher beliefs and the manners in which these beliefs influence teaching behaviors.

In a quantitative study, Solomon, Battistich, and Hom (1996) assessed the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and classroom practices of 476 teachers in 24 urban and suburban elementary schools through the use of teacher questionnaires and classroom observations during the course of a school year. The researchers reported that teachers' beliefs were consistent with their teaching practices after statistically controlling for school poverty level and students' achievement. Among the findings from the data, Solomon et al. found

that teachers in economically disadvantaged schools emphasized teacher authority and control rather than student autonomy and constructivist approaches. They found that teachers in the poor communities provided less engaging activities and saw themselves as having less influence than teachers in more affluent communities. These findings, that teachers interact with students differently based on their beliefs about students, underscore the need for understanding how teachers' beliefs influence their teaching behaviors.

Stuart and Thurlow (2000) analyzed the beliefs of preservice teachers enrolled in a mathematics and science methods course. Twenty-six students were asked to examine their beliefs and the impact these beliefs had on classroom practice. The researchers included interviews and written responses to journal prompts, mathematics autobiographies, final examination questions, field observations, and semi-structured interviews in their data collection. Stuart and Thurlow challenged the preservice teachers to confront their beliefs through reflection and discussion. They reported that the preservice teachers' beliefs' about teaching were heavily influenced by their childhood experiences. Stuart and Thurlow concluded that the preservice teachers gained a better understanding of the impact their beliefs would have on classroom practice and how that classroom practice would impact student learning. Stuart and Thurlow described how the preservice teachers *thought* their beliefs would influence classroom practice. However, they did not describe how preservice teachers' beliefs actually *did* influence their classroom practice.

In her review of research on attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach, Richardson (1996) concluded that in an interactive relationship, teachers' decisions and actions are

based upon their beliefs. She reported that preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching

result from personal experience, schooling and instruction, and formal knowledge.

However, she concluded that these beliefs could be changed or added to because of

experience and reflection upon that experience. She found in her review of research that

preservice teachers' beliefs are strong and highly resistant to change. Richardson argued

that teacher education programs must facilitate the self-identification and self-assessment

of preservice teachers' beliefs relative to their classroom actions in order to help facilitate

positive change in preservice teachers' beliefs.

In his review of the relationship between teacher beliefs and practices, Fang (1996)

reported that teachers' theories and beliefs are an important part of their general

knowledge. These beliefs can influence teachers' expectations of student performance as

well as teachers' theories about teaching and learning. These, in turn, can have significant

impact on academic performance and student learning. Fang called for further research

on teacher beliefs that addresses the personal experiences of teachers and their influence

on shaping their beliefs.

Researchers have reported that inservice and preservice teachers' beliefs influence

their teaching behaviors (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Fang, 1996; Kagan & Smith, 1988;

Lonberger, 1992; Richardson, 1996; Richardson et al., 1991; Solomon et al., 1996; Stuart

& Thurlow, 2000; Winfield, 1986). These beliefs and professional knowledge include

beliefs about teacher efficacy, responsibility for teaching, pedagogical methods, and

issues of authority and autonomy. The researchers have also reported that teachers'

beliefs are congruent with their teaching behaviors and influence teachers' expectations

as well as student achievement. Obviously, the decisions and actions that are made by

teachers in the classroom have significant impact upon the learning experiences provided for students. It is, therefore, important to more fully understand preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and the manner in which these beliefs and knowledge influence their teaching behaviors.

Influence of Beliefs and Professional Knowledge on Teaching Struggling Readers

As researchers and educators attempt to prepare teachers who are able to teach all children to read, it is be important to understand how preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers influence their teaching behaviors. This section will describe research that has been conducted on the relationship between teachers' and preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers in particular and the influence these beliefs and knowledge have on their teaching behaviors.

Winfield (1986) studied inservice teachers' beliefs about academically at risk students in inner city schools. Winfield studied five inner-urban schools which served predominately minority and low income students. Forty teachers were interviewed for the study, which utilized a case study methodology to examine the schools over a one-year period. Winfield categorized the teachers' beliefs based on whether teachers believed some type of instructional assistance could improve the students' achievement and whether teachers assumed responsibility for improving instruction or shifted responsibility to someone else. By using a cross-classification, Winfield categorized teachers as either: 1) "tutors" who believed they were responsible for and provided the necessary instruction to the lowest readers; 2) "general contractors" who believed the students needed remedial instruction but that it was not their job to provide that instruction; 3) "custodians" who believed that little or nothing could be done to improve

the students' achievement; and 4) "referral agents" who believed students could not learn in the classroom or remedial program and should be referred for psychological testing or special education. Winfield concluded that teachers' beliefs influenced their expectations as well as their instruction for at risk students. This is an important contribution to the study of how teachers' beliefs influence expectations, instruction, and assessment.

McGill-Franzen (1994) reported on earlier research (Allington & Li, 1990; McGill-Franzen & James, 1990) that investigated the relationship between institutional practices and teachers' beliefs about children and their ability to learn to read. Thirty-nine elementary classroom teachers, compensatory education teachers, and special education teachers in six school districts were interviewed about the struggling readers in their classes. The researchers found that special education teachers believed that their students could not perform on grade level and that they could only make six months progress for each year of school. This was reflected in the special education teachers' behaviors, which included a slower pace of instruction, easier materials, repetition, and retention of students. McGill-Franzen reported that teachers held different beliefs about remedial students as opposed to special education students. The teachers believed that remedial students would eventually be able to perform on grade level and that they expected these remedial students to make at least one year's progress for each year in school. This translated to teaching behaviors that included actual opportunities for reading and writing as the basis for literacy instruction. McGill-Franzen called for challenging the beliefs, expectations and instruction of teachers who work with at-risk children. This is an important study of the influence of teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers on teaching behaviors.

Soodak and Podell (1994) investigated teachers decision-making with regard to students experiencing difficulty in reading. The researchers were interested in teachers' causal beliefs and sense of efficacy. The researchers distributed questionnaires to 110 participants that included a case study of a third grade student from a divorced family experiencing difficulty in reading with occasional problems with self-control that disrupted the class. Participants were to list possible ways to address the situation, including which they believed would be most effective and what they believed was the cause of the situation. Teachers also completed a teacher efficacy scale. The researchers found that teachers offer a wide variety of suggestions for addressing a student's problems and a wide variety of causes for the student's difficulties. The teachers did not, however, believe that their efforts would be successful with the student. Additionally, the teachers frequently believed that someone outside of the classroom would be needed to effect change in the situation. The researchers also reported that when teachers believed the home was the cause of the student's problems, they sought parental involvement. When the teachers believed the school was the cause of the student's problems, they sought outside interventions. Finally, the researchers reported that teachers' personal efficacy beliefs influenced their decisions regarding instruction for "difficult-to-teach" students. This study is an important study that describes the influence of teachers' beliefs about efficacy and responsibility on their teaching decisions.

Maxson (1996) reported that there is an intricate, interactive relationship between what teachers believe and teachers' actions such as curriculum decision-making, planning, and experiences that teachers provide for students. Maxson (1996) used a multiple case study design to explore the influence of teachers' beliefs on literacy

instruction for at-risk first graders. The sample included five white, female teachers

teaching at different high-risk schools within the same school district. Maxson collected

data from interviews, observations, questionnaires, and teacher reflections throughout a

school year and made conclusions based upon the constant comparative method. Maxson

concluded that there was a direct relationship between the teachers' beliefs and their

practices and that the teachers held definite beliefs about teaching at-risk students.

Maxson found that the teachers functioned within an instructional paradigm that was

directly influenced by their individual belief systems. She reported that many external

factors such as content and population of students influenced the teachers' beliefs.

Maxson did not report the teachers' beliefs, only that they were related to practice.

Nierstheimer, Hopkins, and Schmitt (1996), conducted a study examining

preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching students who are struggling with reading

acquisition. The preservice teachers included 60 female and 7 male participants. These

preservice teachers were enrolled in a corrective reading methods course with a tutoring

practicum. Features of the Reading Recovery® professional development model were

incorporated into the program. Data sources included questionnaires, videotapes,

interviews, small-group discussions, observations, lesson plans and portfolios. The

researchers conducted within- and cross-case analyses to analyze the data. The

researchers reported that the preservice teachers assigned responsibility for the cause of

reading problems to someone else and assigned the responsibility for teaching struggling

readers to read to someone else. The preservice teachers believed it was not the

classroom teachers' responsibility to teach struggling readers. The preservice teachers

included in the study believed that the parents and home environment or the children

themselves were responsible for the reading difficulties. Additionally, the preservice teachers believed it was the responsibility of a resource teacher or parents to teach these struggling readers. This study is important in describing the relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and their sense of responsibility for teaching struggling readers.

In a study examining preservice teachers' shifting beliefs about struggling literacy learners, Nierstheimer et al. (2000), utilized qualitative methods to re-examine the previously reported (Nierstheimer et al., 1996) study of 67 preservice teachers. The researchers found that after participating in the course, the preservice teachers' beliefs shifted toward "assuming responsibility for helping children with reading problems rather than assigning responsibility to someone else as they had when the course began" (p.1). The researchers concluded that carefully guided tutoring experiences are crucial in preparing effective literacy teachers.

Mallette, Readence, McKinney, and Smith (2000) critically analyzed the written work of two preservice teachers' who had been tutoring struggling readers. The researchers analyzed the preservice teachers' field notes, case studies, reflective writings, and group lesson plans by coding and exploring the relationships in the various sources. Mallette et al. was interested in exploring how the ideologies of the preservice teachers effected the preservice teachers' development of knowledge about teaching struggling readers. The researchers defined ideologies as beliefs embedded in hegemonic relations. They discovered that the preservice teachers' expectations about reading acquisition, success, parental support, reading difficulties, attitude toward reading, assessment, teaching, and education were based upon their white, middle-class, female identities.

These preservice teachers believed their students would be similar to themselves and struggled with these ideologies when the students were not like them. Mallette et al. concluded that it is important for teacher educators to help preservice teachers understand how their knowledge about education is centered in ideologies that are based on their raced, classed, and gendered identities. The researchers called for an exploration of beliefs of preservice teachers' at a deeper level to examine how they reflect ideologies.

Researchers have concluded that teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers influence their teaching behaviors (Mallette et al., 2000; Maxson, 1996; McGill-Franzen, 1994; Soodak & Podell, 1994; Winfield, 1986). Researchers have described how these beliefs and professional knowledge have translated into different expectations and instruction for struggling readers (McGill-Franzen, 1994; Winfield, 1986). These beliefs and professional knowledge also influence teachers' sense of responsibility for teaching struggling readers (Nierstheimer et al., 1996; Soodak & Podell, 1994; Winfield, 1986).

The Winfield (1986) study is an important contribution to the study of how teachers' beliefs about at-risk students influenced their expectations, instruction, and assessment of these students. McGill-Franzen (1994) offered specific details about teachers' beliefs and how these beliefs influenced teaching behaviors. Her research was limited to teachers' beliefs about special education students as opposed to remedial education students. Soodack and Podell's (1994) research described the influence of teachers' beliefs about efficacy and responsibility on their teaching decisions. However, the researchers did not observe actual teaching behaviors to determine how these beliefs influenced actual classroom practice. Maxson (1996) concluded that there was a relationship between teachers' beliefs and teaching behaviors, however, she did not

provide specific details about this relationship. Nierstheimer et al. (1996) found that teachers' beliefs influenced their sense of responsibility for teaching struggling readers, however, they did not explore how this translated into teaching behaviors. Finally, Mallette et al. (2000) were interested in hegemonic relations and the manner in which these influenced preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers. Again, this research did not attempt to explore the manner in which these beliefs influenced teaching behaviors.

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

Researchers included in this review have demonstrated that teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors in general and their teaching behaviors for struggling readers in particular. However, the research on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers is limited. More research is needed in order to more fully understand preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers and how these beliefs and knowledge influence their teaching behaviors. Specifically, more research is needed to explore the relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers and their expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers. The current research study attempted to fill this gap in the research.

This study of preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers and their influence on their teaching behaviors should help researchers explore areas for potential preservice teacher program improvement. Researchers in this review reported that teacher education programs could have a significant impact upon preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge. It is, therefore, a challenge for preservice

teacher educators and researchers to identify the beliefs and professional knowledge of preservice teachers and discover the impact of these beliefs on the teaching of struggling readers in order to identify directions for improvement in teacher education. If preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors, it would seem essential for those teaching, supporting, and supervising preservice teachers to be aware of these beliefs and knowledge and the manners in which these beliefs and knowledge influence teaching behaviors.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the beliefs and professional

knowledge of preservice teachers about teaching struggling readers. The study was an

exploration of the participants' beliefs and professional knowledge in the context of

tutoring struggling readers in order to discover how these beliefs and professional

knowledge influenced the preservice teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluations

of these learners.

General Research Plan

The research plan was to identify six elementary education majors who would be

employed as tutors in Project UFLI, a federally funded study of beginning reading

intervention, and describe how their beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching

struggling readers influenced their teaching behaviors. These descriptions were based on

data collected over a four-month period (February 2003 – May 2003). Included in the

data collection procedures were five sources of data: preservice teachers' background

information sheets, preservice teachers' autobiographies, interviews with preservice

teachers, observations of preservice teachers while teaching struggling readers, and

preservice teachers' written expectations and evaluations of struggling readers (Table 3-

1). This methodology was implemented in order to provide multiple data sources for

attempting to answer the research questions. These questionnaires, autobiographies,

interviews, observations, written expectations and evaluations allowed for triangulation

of the data (Table 3-2). The researcher developed a timeline in order to ensure that all

methods were applied over a four-month period (Table 3-3).

Table 3-1 Methodology Descriptions

Methods	Source	Data
Background Information Sheets	Preservice Teachers	Establish pertinent demographic and background information. Identify preservice teachers' educational background and teaching experiences. Help to refine the interview and observation guide.
Autobiographies	Preservice Teachers	Identify preservice teachers' beliefs about themselves, family, their own literacy experiences and reading habits. Identify preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about good readers, how children learn to read, and their beliefs and professional knowledge about why children have difficulty learning to read. Help to refine the interview and observation guide.
Interviews	Preservice Teachers	Explore research questions in depth and corroborate background information, autobiography, and observational data.
Observations	Researcher	Explore research questions firsthand and gain contextual information.
Expectations and Evaluations	Preservice Teachers	Identify preservice teachers' expectations and evaluations of struggling readers.

Table 3-2 Methodology Matrix

Research Methods	Beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading	How beliefs and professional knowledge influence expectations	How beliefs and professional knowledge influence instruction	How beliefs and professional knowledge influence evaluation
Background Information Sheets	+			
Autobiographies	+			
Interviews	+	+	+	+
Observations			+	
Expectations and Evaluations		+		+

Table 3-3 Timeline of Research Methodologies

Date(s)	Instrument
February 2003	Autobiography
February 2003	Background Information Sheet
February 2003	Expectations and Evaluations of Tutored Students
February 2003	Observation One
February/March 2003	Observation Two
March 2003	Interview One
March/April 2003	Expectations and Evaluations of Tutored Students
March/April 2003	Observation Three
April/May 2003	Expectations and Evaluations of Tutored Students
April/May 2003	Interview Two

A case study approach was utilized with the descriptive data sources from this research. A cross-case analysis was then employed to search for patterns across cases. The researcher generated categories, themes, and patterns and tested emergent understandings while searching for alternative explanations (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The data collection questions were intended to probe the relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional about teaching struggling readers and their teaching behaviors. The following questions guided data collection in this research:

1. What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

2. How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

3. How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction, for struggling readers?

4.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

<u>Qualitative Research</u>

Patton (1990) described necessary assumptions of qualitative research: 1) A holistic approach that seeks to understand in entirety in order to develop a complete understanding of the person or situation rather than experimental research which seeks to isolate and measure narrowly defined variables with prediction and control, 2) begins with specific observations and moves toward the development of patterns that emerge from the cases under study rather than defining variables and hypotheses prior to data collection, 3) seeks to discover and understand in naturally occurring states rather than under controlled conditions with a limited amount of outcome variables.

Miles and Huberman (1994a) included the following in their defense of qualitative methods: Data can be collected in close proximity to a specific situation rather than through mail or over phone; the emphasis can be on specific cases in context; there is the possibility for understanding latent, underlying or non-obvious issues; there is potential for richness, holism, and revealing complexity; data collected over a sustained period makes them more powerful; possibility for locating meanings and for connecting these meanings to the social world.

Most of the current research on teacher beliefs has shifted to a qualitative research design (Richardson, 1996). Interviews and observations are the most widely used data collection in research on teacher beliefs (Richardson, 1996). Case studies involve multiple methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. The goal of these types of designs is not to predict, but to understand the nature of teachers' beliefs.

In the hermeneutic nature of many of the teacher belief studies, researchers were concerned with obtaining rich understandings through an openly dialogic process of repeatedly returning to the text to gain increased understanding and a more compete interpretation (Smith, 1993). There is a relationship between the researcher and the subject matter and the researcher is involved in the explanatory process, which intrudes into the context of the data. According to Richardson (1996), an important trend in these hermeneutic studies of teachers' beliefs is that the data collection is used for purposes of teacher change as well as research. For example, the coursework, autobiographies, reflections, and cultural analysis in the qualitative studies above may serve not only for the researchers to understand the preservice teachers' beliefs, but also for the preservice teachers to change their beliefs based upon their participation in the activities.

Qualitative methods were useful for an in-depth exploration of how beliefs and professional knowledge influenced preservice teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluation in order to fully understand the impact of preservice teachers' beliefs on children who are struggling with reading acquisition.

<u>Grounded Theory</u>

Sociologists Glaser and Strauss introduced the research methodology of grounded theory to researchers in their book, The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967). In grounded theory the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. As such, the researcher takes an inductive stance and strives to derive meaning from the data (Merriam, 1998). The result of this research is the emergence of a theory that is "grounded" in the data. The theory that emerges is usually substantive theory that is useful to practice (Merriam, 1998).

<u>Research Design</u>

The research design is the logic that makes the connections between the collected data and the initial study questions (Yin, 2003). (Table 3-1, Table 3-2). The conceptual framework was designed to answer the question, how do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers influence their teaching behaviors?

The research design for the current study was based on a case study approach. A case study has a distinct advantage when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control" (Yin, 2003) (Yin, 2003, p. 9). Advantages of case study research include providing a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables; studies are conducted in real world situations; the rich and holistic descriptions offer insight and illuminate meanings; and the case study can advance a field's knowledge base (Merriam, 1998).

Case studies can be single or multiple cases. A multiple case study approach may be preferred in order to substantiate conclusions, allow for replication, and expand the external generalizability of the findings (Yin, 2003). The current study employed a multiple case study design and was explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory in nature.

<u>Methods and Procedures</u>

In this multiple-case study design, data were collected from six participants. These participants were elementary education majors at the University of Florida who were employed as tutors in Project UFLI, a federally funded study of beginning reading intervention.

The University of Florida Literacy Initiative is a tutorial intervention designed to improve the literacy development of children struggling with literacy acquisition (Hayes

et al., 1999). This intervention is a comprehensive literacy intervention that combines effective practices from other programs in order to address the needs of children struggling with reading acquisition. The framework of the lesson includes: 1) Gaining fluency through reading high-success familiar texts, 2) measuring progress through running record techniques, 3) writing for reading with an emphasis on analyzing words and constructing their spellings, 4) reading unfamiliar and increasingly challenging text with appropriate instructional coaching from the tutor and, 5) extending literacy with an emphasis on exploring a wide variety of genres. This intervention program trains university students, primarily from the College of Education, to implement the tutoring program. These tutors are trained by university personnel, continuously supervised, and provided with ongoing support through weekly meetings with the authors of the program. Lane and Pullen, the developers of the program at the University of Florida, have conducted internal research on the effectiveness of the program in both one-to-one and small group settings. Based upon their internal research, this intervention program has proven to be consistently effective in improving the literacy development of children struggling with reading acquisition.

Data were collected over a four-month period (February 2003 – May 2003). Included in the data collection procedures were preservice teachers' background information sheets, preservice teachers' autobiographies, interviews with preservice teachers, observations of preservice teachers while teaching struggling readers, and preservice teachers' written expectations and evaluations of struggling readers. Interviews allow preservice teachers to reflect upon recent behavior as well as beliefs and biases.

Preservice Teacher Background Information Sheet

The preservice teacher background information sheet (Appendix A) was designed by the researcher. This questionnaire was designed to provide data describing the preservice teachers' educational backgrounds and teaching experiences. This type of document is a stable source that can be reviewed repeatedly and provides background information and details of experiences that may have shaped preservice teachers' professional knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Preservice Teacher Autobiography

The preservice teacher autobiography sheet (Appendix B) was designed by the researcher. The preservice teachers were asked to identify their beliefs and professional knowledge about themselves, their families, their own literacy experiences and their own reading habits. The preservice teachers were also asked to identify their beliefs and professional knowledge about good readers, how children learn to read, and their beliefs and professional knowledge about why children have difficulty learning to read. This type of document is a stable source that can be reviewed repeatedly and provides background information and details of experiences that may have shaped preservice teachers' professional knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Interviews

Interviews allow participants to reflect upon recent behavior as well as beliefs and professional knowledge. Interviews also allow the researcher to discuss behaviors, beliefs, and professional knowledge in detail. Multiple in-depth interviews with multiple preservice teachers over time allows triangulation of the data across sources and tests issues of reliability and validity (Dilley, 2000). The data collection can be sufficiently in depth to foster thick description of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional

knowledge. Interviews can be useful in order to obtain large amounts of data quickly and allow for immediate follow-up and clarification. Interviews, however, are open to different interpretations, difficult to replicate, dependent on the participants being forthcoming and honest, and highly dependent upon the researcher to be "resourceful, systematic, and honest" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 135).

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with each individual participant. The questions for the interviews were generated from the preservice teachers' background information sheets, autobiographies, written evaluations of struggling readers and observations of the preservice teachers working with struggling readers (Appendixes C and D). To better understand the beliefs, professional knowledge and understandings of the participants, the questions were designed to be open-ended and focused on the research questions in Chapter 2. The researcher conducted each of the teacher interviews at the University of Florida Literacy Initiative Office or at the elementary school site where the preservice teacher was tutoring struggling readers at a time chosen by the preservice teacher. With the permission of the participants (Appendix G), each interview was audio-taped, transcribed, coded, and critically analyzed.

<u>Observations</u>

When combined with interviews, observation allows the researcher to understand the meanings that people hold. Observation allows data to be collected in a natural setting and is useful for describing complex social interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Observation can be useful in obtaining data on nonverbal behavior and communication, providing contextual information, and for obtaining large amounts of data quickly. Observations, however, are open to multiple interpretations, are difficult to replicate,

subject to observer effects, and also dependent upon the researcher to be "resourceful, systematic, and honest" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 135).

Preservice teachers were observed in the context of tutoring struggling readers. Participants were each observed a minimum of three times while tutoring struggling readers. These observations ranged from 30 to 60 minutes. Field notes were collected during and after the observations using the observation guide (Appendix E). Following each observation, participants were debriefed about the observation. During the debriefing the preservice teachers were asked to clarify their rationale for instructional decisions to determine how their beliefs about teaching struggling readers influenced their teaching behaviors. Each debriefing was audio taped. The audiotapes were transcribed, coded, and critically analyzed.

<u>Written Evaluations and Expectations</u>

Observations and interviews were supplemented with analysis of documents constructed specifically for this research. These documents include the preservice teachers' written evaluations and expectations of struggling readers. These documents provided contextual information and facilitated analysis and triangulation (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). This type of data is easy to manage, administer, and categorize for analysis. Despite these strengths, document analysis can also be open to multiple interpretations and is dependent upon the researcher to be "resourceful, systematic, and honest" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 135).

Participants wrote three narrative evaluations of the struggling readers they were tutoring (Appendix F). These evaluations included the preservice teachers' expectations for student progress. These documents were analyzed to identify preservice teachers' expectations and evaluations of struggling readers.These evaluations were written

approximately after the third, seventh, and tenth week of tutoring. These evaluations were coded and analyzed.

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

The researcher developed a system of data management for the case study early in the data collection process. The researcher transcribed interviews, typed notes, and filed documents into computer folders. The researcher created a data base that allows access of the data by other researchers. The data for this investigation included background information sheet data, autobiography data, transcripts from interviews, observational field notes, transcripts from debriefings, written evaluations and expectations, and researcher comments.

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

Data analysis focused on the research questions to: (a) describe the beliefs and professional knowledge of each preservice teacher; and (b) discover how these beliefs and professional knowledge influenced their teaching behaviors.

"Data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned" (Glesne, 1999). The researcher began with reading and rereading the data sources for each preservice teacher and coding for emerging themes. Coding is analyzing (Miles & Huberman, 1994b) and searching for patterns in the data (Shank, 2002). Each preservice teacher's data analysis involved sorting, classifying, and labeling as well as clustering and organizing these emerging classifications. The codes needed to have conceptual and structural order that allowed them to be integrated into a governing structure (Miles & Huberman, 1994b). Open coding was used rather than a predetermined framework in order to ensure themes were not artificially forced onto the data. After initial coding, the data were reviewed again to

search for categories neglected in the initial identification. This process was repeated for each individual participant. These coding structures were compared in order to support the coding system. Each participant's data was reviewed again as new codes and themes emerged.

Next, the researcher combined the original themes from each case study to search for overarching themes. In making connections across the individual preservice teachers, the researcher was careful not to lose the meaning of any individual participant (Miles & Huberman, 1994b).

The next step in data analysis was to extend the description in a systematic manner through identifying, describing and illustrating the themes that emerged (Glesne, 1999).

<u>Case Descriptors</u>

The cases were arranged around the categories of: (a) preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading, (b) preservice teachers' expectations for struggling readers, (c) preservice teachers' instruction for struggling readers, and (d) preservice teachers' evaluation of struggling readers. In the category of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading, nine codes were identified: 1) parental involvement, 2) motivation, 3) readiness, 4) access and exposure to print, 5) socioeconomic status, 6) behavior, 7) reading disability, 8) teacher efficacy, and 9) responsibility. In the category of preservice teachers' expectations for struggling readers, five codes were developed: 1) text level, 2) grade level, 3) reading strategies, 4) reading disability, and 5) behavior. In the category of preservice teachers' instruction for struggling readers, five categories emerged: 1) modeling, 2) wait time, 3) prompting, 4) providing answers, and 5) text. In the category of preservice teachers' evaluation of struggling readers, five codes were identified: 1) text level, 2) grade level, 3) reading

strategies, 4) reading disability, and 5) behavior. The grounded theory developed in the current study was data driven and emerged from the exhaustive data analysis. The identification of themes allowed for cross-case analysis. The researcher used the results from the cross-case analysis to identify conclusions and develop recommendations.

<div align="center">Validity and Reliability</div>

Internal Validity

In order to establish construct validity the researcher needs to use multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2003). In the current study, the triangulation of data was implemented for construct validity by collecting data through multiple sources: preservice teachers' background information sheets, preservice teachers' autobiographies, interviews with preservice teachers, observations of preservice teachers while teaching struggling readers, and preservice teachers' written expectations and evaluations of struggling readers. Findings in a case study that are based upon multiple sources of information that lead to converging lines of inquiry are considered to be more convincing and accurate in case study research (Yin, 2003). The researcher spent four months collecting data through written documents, observations, and interviews. This prolonged engagement adds to the validity of the current study.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent that the research results could be replicated if the study was repeated (Merriam, 1998). The objective of reliability is to "minimize the errors and biases in a study" (Yin, 2003). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that in qualitative research reliability should be thought about in terms of dependability and consistency. This means that the findings based on the data collected make sense and are consistent and dependable. The researcher in the current study developed a database that

can be the subject of a separate, secondary analysis or inspection of the raw data that led to the study conclusions in order to strengthen the reliability of the study. This database includes all of the collected data, case study notes, narratives, and case study documents.

External Validity

External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher chose a multiple case study approach in order to strengthen the conclusions from the study and expand the external generalizability of the findings. The current study includes six case studies. According to case study method (Yin, 2003), each case study was conducted and analyzed individually and each case report was written individually. Subsequently, cross-case conclusions were drawn and the cross-case report was written. The researcher also included rich, thick descriptions in order to help the reader determine transferability of the findings to another situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Researcher Bias

Qualitative research and data analysis are highly time consuming and filled with researcher bias and judgment (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Interviews do involve personal interaction so cooperation is essential. Interviews require good listening skills, questioning techniques, and probing ability. Interviews also require high participation from the participants in the research. The interviewees may be uncomfortable or unwilling to share all that the interviewer hopes to explore. The researcher may not ask questions that evoke long narratives from participants and at times interviewees have good reasons not to be truthful.

Self-report data such as reflections, semantic maps, narratives, and autobiographies may be flawed due to participants responding in a manner they believe desirable by the

researcher. Researchers conducting qualitative research have challenges such as developing a thorough, concise conceptual framework; planning a flexible, yet systematic and manageable design (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Additionally, the researcher may impose her values through the phrasing of questions or interpretation of data. Studies should triangulate interview data with other data gathered though other methods.

Qualitative researchers believe and accept that the investigator can not be separate from what is being studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994a). In fact, in qualitative designs, the researcher's presence in the lives of the participants is fundamental to the qualitative paradigm (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Simply by being present, the researcher is involved in the study. The emphasis is on the socially constructed nature of reality, a close relationship between the researcher and the object of study, and the context that influences the inquiry (MIles & Huberman, 1994).

Entry and Access Into the Field

The researcher was study coordinator for the University of Florida Literacy Initiative. The researcher's position as coordinator made access and entry to the participant preservice teachers and study sites possible. The researcher worked in a supervisory capacity with the study participants. The preservice teacher participants gave their consent to participate in this research study before the researcher began data collection (Appendix G).

Investigator Bias

The researcher had some previous knowledge of the participants and worked with the participants in a supervisory capacity. This may have limited the participants' abilities to be completely forthcoming with responses. The researchers' biases could not be separated from the data. These biases included those as a former classroom teacher,

reading resource teacher, graduate student of reading, preservice teacher educator, and researcher of a reading intervention program. These biases also included those of a white, middle-class female. While attempting to describe, analyze, and report the beliefs, professional knowledge, and actions of these preservice teachers, the researcher's identity provided the lens through which all the information was processed.

<center>Ethical Issues</center>

The researcher was responsible for designing and conducting the study and writing the results in an ethical manner. Wellington (2000) has established a set of eight guidelines that were maintained by the researcher for this study. 1) No parties should be involved without their prior knowledge or permission and informed consent. 2) No attempts should be made to force people to do anything unsafe, or do something unwillingly. 3) Relevant information about the nature and purpose of the research should always be given. 4) No attempts should be made to deceive the participants. 5) Avoid invading participants' privacy or taking too much of their time. 6) Benefits should not be withheld from some participants or disadvantages imposed upon others. 7) All participants should be treated fairly, with consideration, with respect and with honesty. 8) Confidentiality and anonymity should be maintained at every stage, especially in publication.

In this study, participants' names and the schools and students' names have remained anonymous. The researcher assigned pseudonyms to participants to report study results. All participants signed an informed consent prior to the data collection (Appendix G) which was approved by the University of Florida's Institutional Review Board as required for research projects that involve human subjects. The researcher did not allow bias to interfere with the honest reporting of the results. The researcher believes that the

findings illuminate that beliefs and professional knowledge can impact teaching behaviors.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

<u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the beliefs and professional knowledge of preservice teachers about teaching struggling readers. The findings presented in this chapter were based on the following data sources: (a) questionnaires, (b) autobiographies of the participants, (c) interviews with the participants, (d) observations of the participants, and (e) participants' written evaluations and expectations of struggling readers.

Specifically, this study addressed the following questions:

1.   What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

2.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

3.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction, for struggling readers?

4.   How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

This chapter contains four sections. The first section reports the identification of participants for this case study. The second section describes the participants' backgrounds, experiences, and professional knowledge as it relates to reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular. Section three provides thick descriptions of the interviews, observations, evaluations, and expectations of the participants in a case study format. Section four is the cross-case analysis and a summary of the research.

Participant Identification

The six participants consisted of University of Florida Literacy Initiative (UFLI) tutors working in the spring semester of 2003. Announcements were made at tutor meetings about the opportunity to participate in this project. All announcements made clear the strictly voluntary nature of participation in this project. All participants were female graduate students in education and were at least 21 years of age. Each participant was compensated $50 for their participation. Each of the participants signed the University of Florida IRB Informed Consent statement (Appendix G) and complied with all IRB and University of Florida guidelines.

Participants' Background, Experiences, and Professional Knowledge

All of the participants were female graduate students in the college of education at the University of Florida. Four of the subjects identified themselves as Caucasian, one as black, and one as white/Hispanic. All of the participants were unmarried and ranged in age from 20 to 24. All of the preservice teachers had completed a pre-internship. Table 4-1 provides a summary of the background information for each of the preservice teachers included in this study. Descriptive information specific to each participant follows in their individual case studies. Pseudonyms are employed to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Interviews

The preservice teacher participants were interviewed twice at the University of Florida Literacy Initiative office on the University of Florida campus or at the elementary school site based upon the convenience of the preservice teacher. The interviews were conducted in the middle of the study and then again at the end of the study.

Table 4-1 Participants' Backgrounds

Preservice Teachers' Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Race	Graduate specialization	Semester Hours of Reading	Student teaching grade level	Other teaching experiences
Cindy	female	22	white	literacy	21	5	pre-internship
Erin	female	23	white	Interdisciplinary (math/science/ reading/social studies)	12	4	pre-internship
Nancy	female	23	white	math/science	6	4	pre-internship
Laura	female	20	black	literacy	6	2	pre-internship
Drew	female	23	white/ Hispanic	math/science	6	1	pre-internship/ private tutor
Kerry	female	24	white	children's literature	6	4	pre-internship

Observations

Table 4-2 provides a chronological listing of the observations of preservice teachers made over a period of three months. An observation guide was made based upon the structure of the tutoring program the preservice teachers were implementing. The researcher focused on the research questions during the observations. Preservice teachers were debriefed following the observation to gain more insight into their beliefs and professional knowledge and their teaching behaviors.

The researcher took anecdotal notes during each observation. The observations ranged in time from 40 to 45 minutes based upon the tutoring session. The researcher observed each participant at least two times while tutoring struggling readers.

Case Studies

The case study method was utilized in order to explore the professional knowledge

and beliefs of preservice teachers and how that professional knowledge and beliefs

influence their teaching behaviors. Case studies of six preservice teachers were prepared.

Table 4-2 Chronological Listing of Observations

Date	Tutor	Length of Time
2/21/03	Erin	40 minutes
2/21/03	Nancy	40 minutes
2/24/03	Drew	40 minutes
2/24/03	Cindy	40 minutes
2/24/03	Erin	40 minutes
2/28/03	Drew	45 minutes
2/28/03	Kerry	40 minutes
2/28/03	Nancy	40 minutes
2/28/03	Laura	40 minutes
3/3/03	Nancy	40 minutes
3/3/03	Cindy	40 minutes
3/7/03	Laura	45 minutes
3/7/03	Laura	40 minutes
3/17/03	Drew	40 minutes
3/17/03	Nancy	40 minutes
3/24/03	Kerry	40 minutes
3/24/03	Cindy	40 minutes
3/24/03	Erin	40 minutes

These six case studies were designed to generate knowledge relevant to the

research questions with respect to: (a) preservice teachers' beliefs and professional

knowledge about teaching reading, (b) preservice teachers' expectations for struggling

readers, (c) preservice teachers' instruction for struggling readers, and (d) preservice

teachers' evaluation of struggling readers. Each of the case studies was organized around

these four categories. The cases were written based on data reduction from the

background information sheets of the participants, autobiographies of the participants,

interviews with the participants, observations of the participants, and the participants'

written evaluations and expectations of struggling readers.

These categories of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers assisted the researcher in sorting through the data and were useful in developing the description of each case. For the purpose of this study, preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge are defined as the attitudes, values, beliefs, and knowledge about teaching, students, content and the education process that students bring to teacher education. The individual cases describe each of these categories and the patterns for each preservice teacher.

<div align="center">Case Study 1: Cindy</div>

Cindy was a twenty-two year old white female in graduate school at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, specializing in literacy education. She had completed twenty-one semester hours related to the teaching of reading including Language Arts for Diverse Learners, Emergent Literacy, Assessment in Literacy, Children's Literature, Literacy Seminar, and Classroom Reading 2. Cindy had completed field experiences in first, third, and fifth grades. Cindy completed her student teaching in fifth grade. Cindy planned on teaching in grades three to five when she graduated.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Cindy's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations and written evaluations.

Parental involvement. Cindy believed that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition. She believed that some children struggle with reading acquisition due to a lack of parental involvement. In her autobiography, Cindy recalled that her mother spent a lot of time with her reading, telling stories and doing role-play activities. She credited this involvement with her reading success. In her evaluations of struggling

readers, Cindy often mentioned the family of her students and whether or not they were involved in the academic achievement of her students. She also acknowledged that many parents may be working a great deal and not available to assist their students. Cindy believed that parental involvement "makes a huge difference" in students' reading success.

Motivation. Cindy believed that children learn to read if they are motivated to read. She wrote that learning to read will be easier for students who are excited about learning to read. She believed her motivation and desire to read were partly responsible for her success in school. Cindy described two of her students as motivated and hard working. Cindy described her other students as having a poor attitude towards reading, feeling unsuccessful about reading, lacking confidence and avoiding reading.

Readiness. Cindy believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally ready. Cindy recalled that she learned to read without formal instruction. She believed that learning to read came easily to her because she was ready to read. She recalled that there was little reading instruction in her kindergarten class. However, because of her readiness to read and her mother's influence at home, she learned to read without instruction. Cindy described some of her students as not being ready for intensive reading instruction due to their lack of prior reading experiences.

Access and exposure to print. Cindy believed that children learn to read by being given access and exposure to print. Cindy remembered having many books and literacy toys as a child. She remembered her favorite book as a young child was a book of farm poems that her mother had given her as a gift. She wrote about this belief in her autobiography.

Through my experiences, I feel that children learn to read when they are surrounded by an environment rich in text.

In her evaluations of struggling readers, Cindy wrote that many of her students do not have access to books and do not read outside of school. In her autobiography, Cindy wrote about her belief that lack of access to books and reading outside of school are the reasons some children have difficulty learning to read and why she believes they will continue to struggle throughout their lives.

> When kids don't have many experiences with text they are automatically going to be behind the student who has been read to every night or looks at picture books on a daily basis. It seems sad to think that the kids whose parents or teachers don't provide opportunity for textual experiences are in for a lifelong struggle.

Socioeconomic status. Cindy believed that some students struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. Cindy wrote about her belief in her autobiography.

> Even more evident are the difficulties experienced by children in poverty. How can kids learn to read when they are busy thinking about survival and where they are going to get their next meal.

When asked to describe a student that she found it difficult to teach, Cindy described a child who wasn't "encouraged at home either by parents or environment." In an interview, Cindy discussed the reasons that a child's background is important for their reading success.

> I think that a student who comes from a fairly literate family, you know, who keeps books around, who is doing okay as far as economically, socioeconomics, I think that that student is going to have a much easier time applying what they know and the way that they know how to learn to read. And I think a child who doesn't come from that type of background, who might be poor or might not have access to any kind of text, is going to have a much harder time learning how to read.

Behavior. Cindy believed that another reason students struggle with reading acquisition is because of poor behavior. In her evaluations of struggling readers, Cindy often wrote about behavior.

> He has issues. I don't know exactly what is going on there except he has some emotional problems.

> He needs a lot of attention and without it he tends to shut down. This doesn't help his progress in literacy.

> He gets off task really easy. I'm constantly having to redirect him to what he's doing.

> Cindy believed that a teacher would not be able to teach a student to read until

"someone was able get his behavior under control."

Reading disability . Cindy believed that students who continue to struggle with reading acquisition may have a reading disability that prevents them from making progress. Cindy believed these students required additional instruction beyond what she could provide. Cindy did not believe that she could teach a student to read if that student had a reading disability.

Teacher Efficacy. Cindy did not believe that she was capable of teaching all of her students to read. She wrote about one student, "He needs much more help that I am able to provide." In an interview conducted upon completion of the tutoring, Cindy responded that she did not believe that she would be able to teach all of the students in her classroom to read when she became a classroom teacher.

> I think that I'll be able to teach the majority how to read based on what I've been taught here and with UFLI and other things. There's always going to be one student that, you know, I'm maybe not going to know how.

As reported previously, Cindy did not believe that she could teach a student to read if that student had a reading disability. Cindy believed these students required instruction beyond what she could provide.

Responsibility. Cindy believed that it was the responsibility of the resource teachers and the school to teach the struggling students to read. She believed the classroom teacher alone could not teach all of the children in the class to read.

> It's the responsibility of the resource teachers and also, the responsibility of, you know, the school to make sure that they're getting the other help that they need - like pullouts and things like that. I think the school needs to provide someone who can work one-on-one with him every day whether it be special education or something like that.

Table 4-3 summarizes Cindy's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

Cindy submitted three written expectations for the struggling readers she was tutoring. Cindy's expectations were low for all of her struggling readers. She expected each of them to make little progress because they had "too many obstacles to overcome before becoming a good reader."

Text level. Cindy did not expect any of her struggling students to improve significantly in their reading text level. She expected them to improve only one to three Reading Recovery® reading levels. She expected one of her students to achieve only a Reading Recovery® level six. Her highest expectation was for some of her struggling readers to improve from a Reading Recovery® level eleven to a thirteen.

Grade level. Cindy expected all of her struggling readers to remain reading below grade level at the end of the tutoring. Cindy expected her most struggling student to read text at a Reading Recovery® level six and her least struggling reader to read text at a

Table 4-3 Cindy's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with print.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Can not personally teach a student with a reading disability to read.
	Will not be able to teach every child to read proficiently.
Responsibility	It is the responsibility of the resource teachers and the school to teach struggling students to read.

Reading Recovery© level thirteen by the end of the year. According to Reading Recovery®, a first grader would need to read level seventeen to be reading on grade level at the end of the school year (Reading Recovery® Council of North America, 2004).

Reading strategies. Cindy expected all of her students to need additional strategy instruction and practice. She was not specific regarding the type of strategy instruction and practice. She expected that her students would require individualized instruction from a resource teacher in the future in order to make progress. She also did not expect her struggling readers to learn in a group setting. She expected that these students would need individual instruction in order to make progress. Therefore she expected little or no progress from these students.

Reading disability. Cindy suspected that two of her struggling readers had reading disabilities although they had not been tested for reading disabilities. Cindy expected that these students would require instruction beyond what she could provide. She did not expect these students to make progress with her instruction. She expected these two students to qualify for exceptional education.

Behavior. Cindy expected the behavior of her struggling readers to interfere with their progress. Cindy described every one of her students as "easily frustrated." One student she described as "needs a lot of attention," which she expected to interfere with his progress. She described one of her students as having "emotional problems" that would require "much more help that I am unable to provide." She described one student's shyness as an obstacle to her progress. Cindy described two of her students as motivated and hard working. Cindy described her other students as having a poor attitude towards reading, feeling unsuccessful about reading, lacking confidence and avoiding reading.

Table 4-4 summarizes Cindy's expectations for struggling readers.

Table 4-4 Cindy's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text Level	Students will improve one to three Reading Recovery® reading levels.
Grade Level	Students will remain below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Students require additional individualized instruction based on student need.
Reading Disability	Two students will qualify for exceptional education.
	Make little or no progress.
Behavior	Students' poor behavior will interfere with progress.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Cindy's beliefs and professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Cindy's beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations.

Cindy did not believe she, as a future classroom teacher, was capable of teaching all of her struggling readers to read and that it was the responsibility of resource teachers and the school to assist struggling readers with their reading acquisition. She did not believe she could teach a child with a reading disability to read. Cindy's expectations for her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling readers. She had low expectations for her struggling readers. She expected them to make

small text level reading gains and remain reading below grade level. She expected one student would be diagnosed with a reading disability and would make little or no progress.

Cindy's beliefs about `socioeconomic status, readiness, reading disability, motivation and poor behavior were also directly aligned with her expectations for her struggling readers. During the first interview, Cindy reported that one student was meeting her expectations. Cindy described the student's motivation as the reason for her progress. Cindy also reported that some of her students were not meeting her expectations. Cindy described the possible reasons for their lack of success as low socioeconomic status, lack of developmental readiness, possible reading disability, lack of motivation, and poor behavior.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Modeling. The researcher observed Cindy modeling throughout the observed tutoring sessions. Cindy modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending, encoding, and rereading strategies. Cindy used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

Wait time. The researcher observed throughout the observed tutoring sessions that when a student miscued, Cindy would immediately interrupt the student's reading and prompt the student to figure out the word. Then, before the student could respond, Cindy would immediately interrupt again and decode the word for the student. Cindy did not provide any wait time after a miscue to allow for self-correction during the observed tutoring sessions. She also did not allow wait time after a strategy prompt for the student to apply the strategy.

Prompting. The researcher observed that Cindy often prompted students to apply a reading strategy. However, she applied the strategy herself instead of the student. For example, the researcher observed in one tutoring session that a student hesitated on an unknown word and looked at Cindy. Cindy prompted the student, "What can we do to figure that word out?" Before the student could respond, Cindy again prompted, "What if we covered that part up?" Before the student could respond, Cindy gave him the correct word. The student repeated the word and Cindy praised him, "Good job."

The researcher observed Cindy prompt students by rereading the sentence as an oral cloze so the student could guess the word based on context. The students often were able to guess the word with this method.

The researcher observed Cindy prompt a student to look at the pictures and pointed to the picture. However, before the student could respond, Cindy supplied the word. Cindy repeated this pattern of instruction throughout the observed tutoring sessions.

Providing Answers. The researcher observed that Cindy repeatedly supplied the answers to students rather than let the students apply the strategies and skills. While the students read the text, Cindy pointed to the words instead of instructing the child to point to the words. She did not allow the students to figure out unknown words on their own. After prompting a student to decode a word, Cindy would decode the word for him or often just provide the word. In the observed tutoring sessions, Cindy did nearly all of the work for the students

For example, in one tutoring session Cindy asked the student to sound out the word 'make.' Before the student could reply, Cindy made the sounds, "'m' - 'ā' – 'k', 'mmmmm' - 'ā ā ā ā' – 'k'." After Cindy decoded the sounds and blended it together in

this manner, she then said the word. Cindy then praised the child, "Good, very good!" even though the child had not responded. When the same student made another miscue, Cindy immediately interrupted, "No, what is this word?" The student guessed incorrectly. Cindy then sounded the letters out and blended them together. The student did not respond. Cindy gave him the word.

During writing or word work, the researcher observed Cindy prompt students to use letter-sound correspondences with Elkonin boxes. However, just as in the reading of text, Cindy did all of the work for the student. She figured out how many sounds there were in the words and what the sounds and letters were for the Elkonin boxes. Each time Cindy asked the student to count the sounds in the word with her, the student held up an incorrect number of fingers. Cindy did not acknowledge the error or help the student practice counting the sounds. Cindy simply did all of the work herself and did not help the student understand how to do it.

During one tutoring session, Cindy showed the student a story book for the extending literacy step of the UFLI program. Cindy read the book to the student. Two times during the reading, Cindy prompted the student to make a prediction. However, she did not allow the student time to respond and kept on reading.

Text. The researcher noted repeatedly in the observed tutoring sessions that Cindy had the student reading text at his or her frustration level rather than instructional level. In one observation, the researcher noted that the student struggled with every two or three words. He did not make it through any sentence without having to work on a word. When the student finished the book, he threw it across the room. Cindy ignored the behavior. In the observation conference after the session, Cindy recalled the student's reading.

He did pretty well. And he read the new book without getting frustrated which is a big battle for us.

Cindy did not seem to realize the level of frustration the student was experiencing. However, in her final evaluations, Cindy did note that she thought she had all of her students reading text that she estimated to be at least two levels higher than their instructional reading level.

Table 4-5 summarizes Cindy's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4–5. Cindy's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading. Using picture clues. Decoding. Blending. Encoding. Rereading. Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters, Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue. No wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted strategy use.
Providing Answers	Supplied the answers to students rather than let the students apply the strategies and skills.
Text	Provided frustration level text for students.

Influence of Beliefs on Instruction. The influence of Cindy's beliefs and professional knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions. Cindy's beliefs about struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for struggling readers.

Cindy did not believe that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading disability, and poor behavior. These beliefs were directly aligned with her instruction.

Cindy did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the students are not capable of achieving reading proficiency due to all of the previous factors. These factors would also prevent her from being capable of or responsible for teaching them to read.

Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Cindy submitted three written evaluations of the struggling readers she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student.

Text level. In her final evaluations, Cindy wrote that her most struggling reader was reading at a Reading Recovery® text level six. However, she wrote that he should be on a lower level. "Although he made it to this level honestly he should actually be on a lower level." The rest of her struggling students were in a group that she had reading text at a Reading Recovery® level fourteen. However, she wrote that her students' reading levels were probably actually lower than the level on which she had them reading. "I would estimate the actual reading ability to be a couple levels lower."

Grade level. Based on Cindy's final evaluations, all of her struggling readers remained reading below grade level at the end of the tutoring. Although Cindy's group finished on a level fourteen, she estimated their actual reading achievement was "a couple

of levels lower" so they would have been reading well below grade level. Cindy's other student was significantly below grade level at a Reading Recovery® text level six.

Reading strategies. Cindy described the strengths and weaknesses of each her student's reading strategies. Strengths included use of picture clues and storytelling ability. Cindy reported that some of her students had difficulty with the letter-sound relationships, lacked reading strategies, had difficulty recognizing letters, and made careless mistakes. She described some of her students' reading strategies as "low and slowly progressing."

Reading disability. Cindy suspected that two of her students had reading disabilities. Neither student had been evaluated for a reading disability. Cindy speculated about possible reading disabilities in her evaluations of struggling readers. One of Cindy's evaluations included that the student read or wrote words backwards or out-of-order, was a bit confused most of the time, and spelled a word backwards. Cindy concluded, "I think she's dyslexic. I know she hasn't been tested for it."

Behavior. Behaviors that Cindy mentioned in her evaluations of her struggling students were distracted, frustrated, "hyper", needs a lot of attention, temperamental attitude, and poor attitude. Cindy wrote in her evaluations that all of her students were easily frustrated. This frustration would lead them to become distracted. Cindy described several students as "needing a lot of attention." Cindy described one of her students' behavior.

> He needs a lot of attention and without attention he tends to shut down. He has issues. I don't exactly know what is going on there except that he has some emotional problems. His weakness would definitely be his temperamental attitude. He is very hyper.

Cindy concluded that her most struggling reader was frustrated very easily because

of the tutoring program.

> He gets frustrated fairly easily, more so now than when we started tutoring. I attribute this to all of the extra reading instruction he has been given since we began our sessions. He doesn't feel successful in reading and avoids it like the plague. I have to bribe him into reading a book.

Table 4-6 summarizes Cindy's evaluations of struggling readers.

Table 4-6 Cindy's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	Students improved one to three Reading Recovery® reading levels. Students' actual reading level lower than current level.
Grade level	Students remained below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Student uses picture clues. Student good at storytelling. Student lacks reading strategies. Student has difficulty recognizing letters.
Reading Disability	Student reads or writes words backwards or out-of-order. Student might have dyslexia. Student easily confused. Student probably has a reading disability.
Behavior	Student has emotional problems. Student needs a lot of attention. Student is shy. Student is easily distracted. Student is easily frustrated. Student is hyperactive. Student will not participate.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Cindy's beliefs and

professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her

written evaluations. Cindy's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Cindy believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief is evident in her evaluations of her struggling readers. Cindy included in her evaluations of her two most struggling readers that they probably had a reading disability that interfered with their ability to make progress even though they had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability. Cindy also believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was not capable of teaching a child with a reading disability to read. Her evaluation reflected this belief as Cindy believed that the children who were still struggling the most with reading acquisition after her tutoring must have a reading disability and that would explain her inability to teach them to read.

Cindy also believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Cindy reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading progress such as having emotional problems, needing a lot of attention, easily distracted, easily frustrated, hyperactive, and not willing to participate.

Case Study 2: Erin

Erin was a twenty-three year old white female in graduate school at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, with an interdisciplinary specialization including math, science, reading, and social studies. She had completed twelve semester hours related to the teaching of reading including Children's Literature, Emergent Literacy, Language

Arts Methods, and Classroom Reading 2. Erin completed her student teaching in fourth grade. Erin planned on teaching in grades one to three when she graduated.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Erin's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations and written evaluations.

Parental Involvement. Erin believed that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition. She believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement. Erin reported in her autobiography that her mother and grandmother spent a lot of time reading to her and she also attempted to "read" to them. Erin talked about the influence that the parents had on the students that she tutored during an interview.

> You can tell that the parents of the kids from the better educated homes read to them. You can tell that they do. Whereas, the other kids don't have that benefit because maybe their moms and dads have to work until way past their bedtime or something. You never know.

She believed parents should meet with their child's teacher at least once a month to "talk about the different ways you can help your child at home to enhance their school learning."

Motivation. Erin believed that students who are motivated to read will be good readers. She described the "ideal" student she hoped to teach as "one that is very eager to learn and be successful." She also believed that exposing children to various types of reading material and genres will pique their interest in reading and, therefore, motivate them to become good readers. She recalled that when she learned to read it gave her a

sense of power and confidence in herself which motivated her to become an even better reader. Erin believed that the students she was tutoring were motivated.

> They get real excited once we're into the actual session. I think it's mainly that they enjoy feeling like they're doing something when they read a sentence that they didn't think that they could read. I think that's probably it.

Readiness. Erin believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally read. Erin recalled that she learned to read before she began kindergarten. She believed she was ready to read and learned to read without formal instruction because she had been immersed in a print rich environment and was read to on a regular basis.

Access and exposure to print. Erin believed that children learn to read through access and exposure to print. She believed that children should be exposed to all types of genres and reading materials in order to get them interested in reading. "In my opinion, it's very important that they are surrounded by a print rich environment all the time because it makes them more comfortable in reading."

Socioeconomic status. Erin believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. She reported that it was obvious which students came from "no-so-good homes" by the way the recognize letters and their sounds. She believed that students from a low socioeconomic background would not have had prior experience with books and a print-rich environment.

Behavior. Erin believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior. She reported that two of the students in her group were often off task which affected not only their own achievement, but that of the group. She reported that she had to spend more of her instructional time on their behavior in order to ensure they were "on track."

I feel like my teaching is not as good because I'm constantly trying to get one kid sit down or stop making noises and faces. And that's a little frustrating. And I feel like I neglect two of the other kids because I'm always reprimanding the other two."

Reading Disability. Erin believed that some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. She believed these students needed more individual instruction. Erin described a child who was difficult for her to teach during her student teaching experience.

One student who was classified ESE and reads at a first grade level (in the fourth grade), was difficult to teach because he was very unsure about his abilities and he needed more one-on-one help.

When asked why she thought one of her students was struggling so much with reading acquisition, she reported, "I think that he has dyslexia. I haven't been able to think of any other reason." She believed these students needed more instructional time, not significantly different instruction.

Teacher Efficacy. Erin believed that she could teach every child to read proficiently. She confidently reported, "I think every child can learn to read." She believed she was ready to start teaching and believed the UFLI tutoring model "really helped my ability to teach reading a lot." Erin believed that with a combination of ongoing progress monitoring and specific strategy instruction she would be able to teach all of her students to read.

Responsibility. Erin believed that it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to teach struggling readers. She reported that she would like to use the exceptional education teacher as a resource to seek coaching on strategies to help her teach her struggling readers.

Table 4-7 summarizes Erin's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching

reading.

Table 4-7 Erin's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children who are motivated to read will be good readers.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with books.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Can teach every child to read proficiently.
Responsibility	Responsibility of the classroom teacher to teach struggling students to read.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

 Erin submitted three written expectations for the struggling readers that she was tutoring. Erin included expectations specific to her students' reading development. Her expectations were high for all of her struggling readers.

 <u>Text level</u>. Erin expected all of her students to be reading on a Reading Recovery® level 14 by the end of the tutoring. However, Erin confirmed in her interview that she believed level fourteen was considered on-grade-level for the end of first grade.

 <u>Grade level</u>. Erin expected all of her struggling readers be reading on grade level at the end of the tutoring. As previously reported, Erin expected all of her students to be reading on a Reading Recovery® level 14 by the end of the tutoring. Although this is lower than grade level, Erin believed this to be grade level reading. Therefore, Erin had high expectations that all of her tutored students would be reading on grade level by the end of the tutoring.

 <u>Reading strategies</u>. Erin was very specific in her reading strategy expectations. She expected her students to improve their fluency and decoding. She expected her students to improve their ability to independently identify unknown words. Erin expected her students to increase the number of sight words they were able to quickly and accurately identify.

 <u>Reading disability.</u> Erin suspected that one of her struggling readers had a reading disability although he had not been tested for reading disabilities. As with all of her tutored students, Erin expected this student to be reading on a Reading Recovery® level 14 by the end of the tutoring program. She also expected him to improve his decoding and fluency skills.

Behavior. Erin expected her students to become more confident and motivated. She

expected all of her students to enjoy reading and participate. Erin expected her students'

off task behavior to affect their achievement as well as the other students in the tutoring

group as her attention was often on behavior rather than instruction.

Table 4-8 summarizes Erin's expectations for struggling readers.

Table 4-8 Erin's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text Level	All students will read at Reading Recovery® level fourteen.
Grade Level	All students will read on grade level.
Reading Strategies	All students will improve fluency, decoding, sight words.
Reading Disability	One student will be labeled dyslexic.
	Student will make same progress as other students.
Behavior	Students will become motivated, confident, participate, and enjoy reading.
	Students' off task behavior will affect group's achievement.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Erin's beliefs and

professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of

struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations

during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Erin's beliefs

and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and

her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those

expectations.

Erin believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of teaching all of her struggling readers to read and that she was responsible for teaching them to read. Erin's expectations for her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling readers. She had high expectations for all of her struggling readers and expected all of her students to be reading on grade level and improve their reading strategies.

Erin's belief that students who continue to struggle with reading acquisition may have a reading disability was reflected in her expectations. Erin expected one of her students to be diagnosed with a reading disability. However, her high teacher efficacy belief influenced her expectation for him as she expected him to be reading on grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions.

During the first interview, Erin reported that all of her students except one were meeting her expectations. Erin described several elements of the tutoring instruction and specific strategy instruction as the reasons these students were making progress. Erin also reported that one of her students was not meeting her expectations. Erin described the possible reasons for his lack of success as a possible reading disability and the need for more tutoring instruction.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Modeling. The researcher observed Erin modeling throughout the observed tutoring sessions. Erin modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending, encoding, and rereading strategies. Erin used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

Wait time. The researcher observed throughout the observed tutoring sessions that when a student miscued, Erin would immediately interrupt the student's reading and

prompt the student to figure out the word. However, after pointing to the miscue, Erin would allow the student to attempt again or give the student a strategy prompt and wait for the student to attempt the unknown word. Erin usually did not provide any wait time after a miscue to allow for self-correction during the observed tutoring sessions. Erin did always allow wait time after a strategy prompt for the students to apply the strategy.

Prompting. The researcher observed that Erin often prompted students to apply a reading strategy. She prompted students to reread, decode, look for little words within the word, look at the pictures, and segment sounds. She prompted students to think about whether a miscue made sense or sounded correct in the sentence.

Providing answers. The researcher observed in a later tutoring session, that Erin sometimes supplied the answers to students. During the earlier observed tutoring sessions, Erin coached the students and challenged the students to do the work on their own. During these observations, the students were reading text at an appropriate level for instruction. However, in a later tutoring session, the researcher noted that the text was too difficult for the students, which required Erin to provide extensive assistance. Erin provided more coaching and prompting when a student was not successful right away. She attempted to have the students do the work with multiple prompts. However, when the text was too difficult for the students, Erin had to provide many of the answers. The researcher noted that Erin's students still did all of the writing work themselves. Erin let the students apply the strategies and skills during writing. She had the students segment the sounds and write the words on their own. The researcher observed that the students were more successful with this encoding during writing than they were with decoding during reading.

Erin was aware at times that she was providing answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply their knowledge and skills. During one observed tutoring session, after the students read the new book Erin used the whiteboard for decoding practice. Her students were unable to decode the words that she chose. Erin described her frustration after this tutoring session.

> Sometimes I get a little frustrated because I don't feel like I'm able to really help him sound the words out better without giving him the word. That's something I'm really struggling with.

Text. The researcher noted that during the beginning tutoring sessions, Erin's students were reading text at their instructional level. Since the text was as their instructional level, Erin did not have to provide extensive support so that students were able to read the text. The researcher observed Erin coaching the students and providing support so that the students were able to apply the strategies and skills. However, later in the tutoring sessions, the researcher observed students reading books at their frustration level rather than their instructional level. Because the text was too difficult, Erin had to provide extensive support for the students to get through the text. Erin seemed to get frustrated when this would happen as reflected in her words to the student.

> You should know these words. We read this book yesterday. You should be able to read this. You know that word.

During one observed tutoring session the text was so difficult for the student that he was struggling with nearly every word. During the running record the tutor is to simply record the child's reading verbatim with no encouragement, prompting, or input in any way in order to determine if the text is on the student's independent reading level, instructional reading level, or frustration reading level. The researcher observed that when Erin took the running record she provided strategy prompts, praised for correct

reading, nodded her head with each correct word, and pointed out miscues. The

researcher noted that Erin's prompting allowed the student to score instructional level on

the assessment rather than frustration level. Erin was not aware that her prompting was

allowing the students to perform higher on the running record than their actual reading

level. Erin described the student's performance in an interview after the tutoring session.

> He got a 94% on his running record. Overall I think he did fine. He's usually pretty good. You know, he's a good reader.

Table 4-9 summarizes Erin's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4–9 Erin's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading.
	Using picture clues.
	Decoding.
	Blending.
	Encoding.
	Rereading.
	Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters, Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue.
	Wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted strategy use.
Providing Answers	Allowed students to apply the strategies and skills.
	Supplied the answers to students when text was too difficult.
Text	Provided instructional level text for students.
	Provided frustration level text for students.

Influence of Beliefs on Instruction. The influence of Erin's beliefs and professional

knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were struggling with

reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions. Erin's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for struggling readers.

Erin believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of and responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read. Her belief and professional knowledge that she was capable of teaching all students to read is evident in the type of instruction she provided to her students. Erin allowed time after prompts, allowed students to apply the strategies and skills themselves, and provided instructional level text most of the time. This type of instruction was reflective of her high teacher efficacy and responsibility. She believed that she was capable of teaching her students and, therefore, they would be able to apply the strategies and skills that she taught them.

Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Erin submitted three written evaluations of the struggling readers she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student.

Text level. In her final evaluations, Erin reported that her students were reading at Reading Recovery® levels 11, 12, 13, and 14. She wrote that one of her students might actually be able to read higher than a level fourteen if he had been tutored individually. Erin believed that one student that she reported at a level fourteen was actually only reading on a level twelve.

Grade level. In her final interview, Erin reported that "maybe two" of her students were reading on grade level. She believed this was because "they slowed down a lot rather than just kind of guessing on a word just by looking at the first letter." Erin reported that her most struggling reader "might be dyslexic" and was still below grade level.

Reading strategies. Erin described the strengths and weaknesses of each of her student's reading strategies. Strengths included decoding strategies, phonemic awareness, increasing sight word vocabulary, using picture clues, and using anchor words. Erin reported that some of her students had difficulty using context clues and "often guess at words without closely looking at the word when reading a sentence." She described some students' lack of fluency, which "prevent them from having good comprehension of the story." She reported that some of her students have a "difficult time blending the sounds together to make the whole word."

Reading disability. Erin suspected that her student who was struggling the most with reading acquisition have a reading disability. She wrote that her most struggling reader "might be dyslexic" and was still below grade level. Erin speculated in an interview that dyslexia was the reason he was not reading on grade level.

So I think he does have dyslexia that would definitely be what is hindering it. I mean I haven't been able to think of any other reason why.

Behavior. Erin reported that her students' off task behavior affected their achievement as well as the other students in her tutoring group. Positive behaviors that Erin reported in her evaluations included having a good attitude, enjoying reading, getting excited about accomplishments, and participating. Negative behaviors that Erin reported included giving up easily, being talkative, "goofing off quite a bit," and "having a lot of energy."

Table 4-10 summarizes Erin's evaluations of struggling readers.

Table 4-10 Erin's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	Students reading Reading Recovery® level 11, 12, 13, 14.
	Students' actual reading levels higher or lower than current level.
Grade level	Two students reading on grade level.
	Other students reading below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Student uses decoding strategies.
	Student uses phonemic awareness skills.
	Student increased sight word vocabulary.
	Student uses picture clues.
	Student uses anchor words.
	Student has difficulty using context clues.
	Student guesses without strategy use.
	Student lacks fluency.
	Student has difficulty blending.
Reading Disability	Student has dyslexia.
Behavior	Student has a good attitude.
	Student enjoys reading.
	Student excited about accomplishments.
	Student gives up easily.
	Student off task.
	Student energetic.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Erin's beliefs and professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her written evaluations. Erin's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Erin believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief was evident in her evaluations of her struggling readers. Erin included in her evaluations of her most struggling reader that he probably had a reading disability that interfered with his ability to make progress even though he had not

been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability. Erin's belief that she was capable of and responsible for teaching a child with a reading disability to read was reflected in her evaluation as she wrote that this student needed more time for instruction in order to make progress.

Erin also believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Erin reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading progress such as being off task, giving up easily, and being energetic. Erin reported positive behaviors such as having a good attitude and enjoying reading that also reflect her belief that children learn to read if they are motivated. Erin's teacher efficacy belief was strong than these beliefs as she believed that she could teach all of her students to read.

Case Study 3: Nancy

Nancy was a twenty-three year old white female in graduate school at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, specializing in math and science education. She had completed six semester hours related to the teaching of reading including Children's Literature and Emergent Literacy. Nancy completed her student teaching in fourth grade. Nancy completed field experiences in fifth grade, kindergarten, and sixth through eighth grade ESOL. Nancy planned on teaching middle school or fourth or fifth grades when she graduated.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations and written evaluations.

Parental involvement. Nancy believed that parental involvement is critical for reading acquisition. She believed that some children struggle with reading acquisition due to a lack of parental involvement. Her parents believed that school was very important and provided an environment for learning. Nancy believed parents should spend time with their children teaching them to read.

> Parents should try to spend as much time as possible working with their children to develop the skills that they need to be good readers. Unfortunately, not all students get this kind of help and attention at home.

Nancy did not believe that her tutored students' parents were involved in their education.

> I know they're not getting much encouragement at home. They don't talk about reading with their parents or anything like that. That leads me to believe that they don't really to that very often. It doesn't seem like they are very involved.

Motivation. Nancy believed that students learn to read if they are motivated to read. In her background information sheet, Nancy described the "ideal student."

> The ideal student would have a hunger for learning. He would be motivated to look beyond what is being taught to him in the classroom and look for other ways to extend his knowledge. This student would be so motivated to learn that there would be no difficulties in getting the child to know that information that I am presenting.

Nancy believed that students can improve their reading skills with increased effort. "With practice and hard work, students can improve their reading skills."

Nancy described this lack of motivation as the reason one student in her internship was difficult to teach.

During instruction, she would not pay attention, then when it came time to do assignments she would raise her hand and ask for help. In the beginning I would help her, but then I realized that I was not helping other students because I was re-teaching the lesson to her. I told her that if she wanted my help, she needed to pay attention while I was teaching the lesson the first time, because I was not going to teach it a second time for her. Sometimes she would follow along with the lessons, while other times she would not. She had no desire to receive good grades and it was hard to find something to motivate her to do her work.

Nancy believed that her most struggling reader was not motivated.

I pull out a book and he starts moaning. So I say, 'Too bad, you're going to have to read it.'

Readiness. Nancy believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally ready to learn. She believed that she learned to read before she entered school with no instruction because she was ready to read.

My mom told me that I picked up a book one day and began reading it to her. She thought that I had memorized the book from having it read to me, so she took me to the library. She said that I could read all of the books that she gave me, including books that I had never seen before.

Access and exposure to print. Nancy believed that children learn to read by being given access and exposure to print. She recalled having many books in the home and participating in many literacy related activities.

I think that to be a good reader you have to be exposed to reading and books at an early age. This exposure should be regular and meaningful.

Nancy believed that lack of parental support and lack of exposure to books may be the reasons students struggle with reading acquisition.

Students that are poor readers are definitely missing something that does not allow them to read as well as other students in their classes. This reason could be that they do not have the support at home to help them. It could also be that they do not get enough exposure to books.

Socioeconomic status. Nancy believed that some students struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. She described a student she found it difficult to teach during her student teaching experience.

> This was a fourth grade student who was 12 years old, three years older than most of the other students. She came from a low-income home, in which she lived with her grandmother and four or five other children. After many attempts to contact her grandmother, we realized that she was not getting the support she needed at home.

Nancy's belief that students from low-income homes would automatically be lower achieving was evident in her background information sheet. "Teachers need to be aware of the discrepancy between home environments and try to close the gap between the low and high readers in their class."

Behavior. Nancy believed that students struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior. She described one student as temperamental and giving up too easily. "His misbehavior prevents him from doing what he is supposed to do and learning what he should be learning." She believed another students was only "pretending" not to be able to read in order to get attention.

Reading disability. Nancy believed that some students who continue to struggle with reading acquisition may have a reading disability. Nancy did not believe that she could teach a student with a reading disability to read. She also did not believe that the classroom teacher could teach a child with a reading disability to read. She believed that one of her students might have a reading disability. She believed that something within the child was preventing the child from reading.

> The other little girl that's in his class is pretty good at reading so you know it's obviously not something the teacher's doing. It's just something within him.

Teacher efficacy. Nancy did not believe that she was capable of teaching all of her students to read. She repeatedly wrote that her struggling students needed "special help." Nancy wrote about her inability to teach one student.

I think that he needs a lot of outside help. This special help is not something that I can spend as much time as he needs.

Responsibility. Nancy believed it was the responsibility of the resource teachers and parents to teach struggling children to read. In an interview Nancy described what she would do if she had a struggling reader in her classroom that was not responding to her instruction.

If I've already tried, maybe he'd go to the reading resource teacher or some other resource teacher. And, like, definitely talk to the parents and say, 'look this is very important for your child to be able to do' and try to get that parent interaction so that they're getting the help they need at home. I would talk to the parents and say, 'Look, it's going to be really helpful for your child if you read with them at home.' And just hope that they realize that it's a really big deal.

In her description of the "ideal" student she hoped to teach, Nancy placed responsibility for student success onto parental support. "He would come from a home in which his parents, or other caretaker, would provide the support that he needs to excel in school and other areas." This parental responsibility for school success was also contained in an evaluation of a tutored student. "I think that with continued help from home, she would be caught up to her fellow classmates." And in her autobiography Nancy wrote, "Parents should spend as much time as possible working with their children to develop the skills that they need to be good readers."

Nancy also believed it was the responsibility of the student to learn to read. She repeatedly mentioned that if the students would only work harder they would learn to read. In her evaluations of tutored students, Nancy repeatedly wrote that if the children would really try to read, they could do it.

As long as she concentrates and really tries to read, she can do very well. She is excited to learn so I'm sure that she'll catch up.

I think he has a lot of promise if he would just concentrate and try to read.

Table 4-11 summarizes Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

Nancy submitted three written expectations for the struggling readers she was tutoring. Nancy's expectations were low for all of her struggling readers.

Text level. Nancy did not expect any of her struggling students to improve significantly in their reading text level. She expected them only to improve a few Reading Recovery® text levels. She was not specific with the text levels.

Grade level. Nancy expected all of her tutored students to remain reading below grade level at the end of the tutoring. She did not expect significant improvement.

Reading strategies. Nancy expected all of her students to need additional strategy instruction and practice. She expected some of her students to need more instruction on "learning the sounds of letters and letter combinations." She was not specific regarding any other type of strategy instruction and practice. However, she described it as being "specialized instruction."

Reading disability. Nancy expected one of her students to be diagnosed with a reading disability. He was in the process of being screened for a reading disability. She expected that this student would require some kind of "specialized instruction" that neither she nor the classroom teacher could provide.

Behavior. Nancy expected the behavior of some of her struggling readers to interfere with the reading progress. Nancy described the behavior of two of hers students

Table 4-11 Nancy's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is critical for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with print.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Can not personally teach a student with a reading disability to read.
	Will not be able to teach every child to read proficiently.
Responsibility	Responsibility of the resource teachers and parents to teach struggling students to read.
	Responsibility of struggling reader to learn to read.

as a "major problem that holds back progress." She expected these students to make little or no progress until their behavior was "kept under control."

Table 4-12 summarizes Nancy's expectations for struggling readers.

Table 4-12 Nancy's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text Level	Students will improve a few Reading Recovery® text levels.
Grade level	Students will remain reading below grade level.
Reading strategies	Students will require additional "specialized" instruction.
Reading disability	Students will qualify for exceptional education.
	Students will make little or no progress.
Behavior	Students' poor behavior will interfere with progress.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations.

Nancy did not believe she, as a future classroom teacher, was capable of teaching all of her struggling readers to read and that it was the responsibility of resource teachers and the parents to assist struggling readers with their reading acquisition. She did not believe she could teach a child with a reading disability to read. Nancy's expectations for

her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling

readers. She had low expectations for her struggling readers. She expected them to make

small text level reading gains and remain reading below grade level. She expected one

student would be diagnosed with a reading disability and would make little or no

progress.

Nancy's beliefs about motivation and poor behavior were also directly aligned with

her expectations for her struggling readers. During the first interview, Nancy reported

that some of her students were meeting her expectations. Nancy described the students'

motivation and memory as the reasons for their progress. Nancy also reported that some

of her students were not meeting her expectations. Nancy described the possible reasons

for their lack of progress as the students' lack of motivation, poor behavior, and possible

reading disability.

<u>Instruction for Struggling Readers</u>

<u>Modeling</u>. The researcher observed Nancy modeling throughout the observed

tutoring sessions. Nancy modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending,

encoding, and rereading strategies. Nancy used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and

Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

<u>Wait time</u>. Throughout the observed tutoring sessions when a student miscued,

Nancy would immediately interrupt the student's reading and prompt the student to figure

out the word. Then, before the student could respond, Nancy would immediately interrupt

again and decode the word for the student. Nancy did not allow any wait time after a

miscue to allow for self-correction during the observed tutoring sessions. She also did not

allow wait time after a strategy prompt for the student to apply the strategy.

Prompting. The researcher observed that Nancy often prompted the student to decode words. This is the only strategy that the researcher observed Nancy prompt students to use. However, after prompting students to decode the word, Nancy would either immediately individual, one-on-one the word or sound the word out for he student and then the student would say the word.

Providing answers. The researcher observed Nancy repeatedly providing the answers to students rather than allowing students to apply the strategies and skills. While students read text, Nancy did not allow them to figure out unknown words on their own. She would either provide the word immediately for the student or make the sounds in the word for the student and have the student guess the word. In one observed lesson a student was writing on the whiteboard and made a mistake. Nancy took the board, erased the letter and wrote the correct letter herself. During writing work Nancy would segment the words into sounds and make all of the sounds for students. Nancy repeated this pattern of supplying answers through all observed lessons.

Text. The researcher noted during every observed lesson, Nancy had the students reading text at their frustration level rather than instructional level. In one observation, the researcher noted that the student struggled with nearly every word in the text. Nancy had to supply the words or make the sounds in the word and blend them together for the student. During this same observed session, the running record book had a pattern that the student had memorized. She was able to read this portion of the book, but not the rest of the text. She made up the words that were not part of the pattern. Nancy recorded this book at her instructional level although the researcher noted it was frustration level. Nancy recalled the student's reading of this text after the tutoring session.

She did a pretty good job. She's really good at remembering words. She's really good.

Nancy did not seem to realize that the text was too difficult for the student.

Table 4-13 summarizes Nancy's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4–13 Nancy's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading.
	Using picture clues.
	Decoding.
	Blending.
	Encoding.
	Rereading.
	Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters,
	Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue.
	No wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted students to decode.
Providing Answers	Supplied the answers to students rather than let the students apply the strategies and skills.
Text	Provided frustration level text for students.

Influence of beliefs on instruction. The influence of Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions. Nancy's beliefs about struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for struggling readers.

Nancy did not believe that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading

disability, and poor behavior. These beliefs were directly aligned with her instruction. Nancy did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the students are not capable of achieving reading proficiency due to all of the previous factors. These factors would also prevent her from being capable of or responsible for teaching them to read.

Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Nancy submitted three written evaluations of the struggling readers she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student.

Text level. At the end of the tutoring sessions, Nancy's students were reading on a Reading Recovery® text level four through eleven. In her final evaluations, Nancy wrote that her most struggling reader was reading at a Reading Recovery® text level four. However, she wrote that he should be on a lower level.

> He has progressed to the 4th reading level, however he seems very frustrated when reading books on this level for the first time. He may have to be moved back down to the 3rd level again.

Grade level. All of Nancy's students completed the tutoring sessions reading below grade level. All of Nancy's students were reading level eleven and below.

Reading strategies. Nancy described the strengths and weaknesses of each of hers student's reading strategies. Strengths for some students included using picture clues, decoding, and encoding. Nancy reported that some of her students had difficulty with letter-sound correspondences, sight words, and blending sounds together to form words.

Reading disability. Nancy suspected that one of her students had a reading disability. He was being evaluated for a reading disability. Nancy described him as

"having a lot of troubles with reading and with all the extra help that he gets it seems that he should be progressing more than he is."

Behavior. Behaviors that Nancy mentioned in her evaluation of struggling readers were energetic, uncooperative, temperamental, unwilling to try, "dancing around the table," "staring into space," not paying attention, loses interest, gives up easily, "shuts down," inattentive, discouraged, and frustrated. Nancy wrote in her evaluations that each of her students became easily frustrated and would stop participating in the lessons.

Table 4-14 summarizes Nancy's evaluations of struggling readers.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Nancy's beliefs and professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her written evaluations. Nancy's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Nancy believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief is evident in her evaluations of her struggling readers. Nancy included in her evaluations of her most struggling readers that he probably had a reading disability that interfered with his ability to make progress even though he had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability. Nancy also believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was not capable of teaching a child with a reading disability to read. Her evaluation reflected this belief as Nancy believed that the child who was still struggling the most with reading acquisition after her tutoring must have a reading disability and that would explain her inability to teach him to read.

Table 4-14 Nancy's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	Students are reading on Reading Recovery® text levels four through eleven.
	Students' actual reading level lower than current level.
Grade level	Students reading below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Students use picture clues. Student uses decoding skills. Student uses encoding skills. Student has difficulty with letter-sound correspondences. Student has difficulty with sight words. Student has difficulty blending sounds.
Reading Disability	Student struggles with reading. Student may have a reading disability.
Behavior	Student is energetic. Student is uncooperative. Student is temperamental. Student is unwilling to try. Student not interested. Student gives up easily. Student "shuts down." Student inattentive. Student discouraged. Student frustrated.

Nancy also believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Nancy reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading progress such as being energetic, uncooperative, temperamental, unwilling to try, uninterested, inattentive, discouraged, frustrated, and unwilling to put forth effort.

Case Study 4: Laura

Laura was a twenty year old black female in undergraduate school at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, specializing in literacy education. She had completed six semester hours related to the teaching of reading including Children's Literature and Emergent Literature. Laura completed Project Book Talk, a field experience reading to small groups of preschool children. She had completed no other field experiences or student teaching. However, she was currently in a student teaching experience in second grade. Laura planned on teaching second or third grade when she graduated.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Laura's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations and written evaluations.

Parental involvement. Laura believed that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition. She believed that children struggle with reading acquisition due to a lack of parental involvement. Laura recalled in her autobiography that her family emphasized the need for education, especially reading. Laura recounted that her mother always encouraged her to learn new things. Laura's father is an avid reader, often reading two to three books simultaneously throughout the week.

Laura believed it was important to educate parents about the importance of reading to their children.

> If the family believes that education is very important and that you can't really go anywhere in life without education, then I think that the parents will strive to read to their child.

Motivation. Laura believed that children learn to read if they are motivated to read. She believed that good readers are interested in books.

I believe that good readers are curious about books before they read them. They try to find out about some background information about the book, by reading the back or doing some other brief research.

Laura also believed that motivation could help a child overcome difficulties with reading acquisition.

It's all about motivation. If they want to read, then they're going to do well.

Laura described motivation as the reason one of her tutored students was reading on grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions.

I think that she just really enjoys reading. She's excited about books. She tries to see the positive things. I think that helps.

Laura described motivation as the reason one of her tutored students was not reading on grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions.

She has problems because she doesn't want to make the effort to try. She just doesn't care about reading so she doesn't get any better.

Laura believed that the reading specialists' role is to give struggling readers "a lot of encouragement and high motivation."

Readiness. Laura believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read. She believed that she learned to read before she entered school with no formal instruction because she was ready to read.

My parents started reading to me soon after I was born. When I began school I already had a good understanding of letters, words, sentences, and the general rules of reading. I remember wanting to read all kinds of books.

Access and exposure to print. Laura believed that children learn to read by being given access and exposure to print. She recalled that her parents began reading to her as soon as she was born and credits this with her ease of reading acquisition and love of reading. Laura described why she believes some children have difficulty with reading acquisition.

If children are not read to consistently at a young age they may have difficulties understanding the rules of reading: where to begin reading, when to pause and stop, what words need capital letters, etc.

Socioeconomic status. Laura believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. In an interview she described the differences between her students that she considered "lower middle class" and her students that she considered "middle class."

I think that background makes a huge difference because the lower middle class don't read as much at home and they want to do something else. And the higher middle class read more and have more and their parents try to help them become more excited about learning. Whereas, the lower middle class have to concentrate on the more practical things and don't worry about learning. They just do what they have to do so they can get on with life. So, I think it makes a huge difference.

Behavior. Laura believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior. She believed that the poor behavior of one person in a group setting influenced the others in the group as well.

I think behavior makes a huge difference, huge difference. I think they play off of each other a lot too because when one is having a bad day then it affects their motivation to learn and then the others they just get discouraged too.

Reading disability. Laura believed that some students who continue to struggle with reading acquisition may have a reading disability that prevents them from making progress. Laura did not know what type of instruction these students would require. She did not believe that she could teach a child to read if that student had a reading disability.

Teacher efficacy. Laura stated in an interview that she believed that she could teach every child to read proficiently. She hesitantly described her ability to teach all of her students to read.

I think so. I think that, yeah. I think it would be easier to work with them in smaller groups. I'm not sure if I'd be able to figure out how to work with struggling readers in a whole class instruction or something like that. But I think I'd be able to help them.

Laura stated later in the interview that she did not believe that she could teach a child to read if that child had a reading disability.

Responsibility. Laura believed that it was the responsibility of the reading resource teacher to teach struggling readers because the classroom teacher "wouldn't have time for that." In an interview, she described the classroom teachers' responsibility for struggling readers.

> They need to make sure there is no public humiliation because that is the biggest problem. They should model the habit of independent reading time and reading with a partner.

Laura believed that struggling readers "need help with the specific areas that they're struggling in" and that as a classroom teacher she "won't have time to help them each with their individual problems." Laura also believed it was the responsibility of the struggling reader to learn to read. She believed that students often "just weren't trying."

> She has problems because she doesn't want to make the effort to try. She just doesn't care about reading so she doesn't get any better.

Table 4-15 summarizes Laura's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

Laura submitted three written expectations for the struggling readers that she was tutoring. Laura had high expectations for the student she was tutoring individually and low expectations for the students she was tutoring in a small group.

Text level. Laura expected one of her students to be reading on grade level by the end of the tutoring session although she was not aware which text level was considered to be first grade level text by the end of the school year. She did not expect the students in her group to make significant progress in text level during the tutoring sessions.

Table 4-15 Laura's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.
	Motivation is the most important fact in reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with print.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Will not be able to teach every future student to read proficiently.
	Will not be able to teach a child with a reading disability to read.
Responsibility	Responsibility of the reading resource teacher to teach struggling readers to read.

Theme	Belief
	Responsibility of the struggling reader to learn to read.

Grade level. Laura expected one of her students to be reading on grade level by the end of the tutoring session. She did not expect the students in her group to be reading on grade level by the end of the tutoring sessions.

Reading strategies. Laura expected her students to improve in their use of strategies, self-correction, and reading rate. She expected her students to improve their sight word vocabulary, comprehension, and decoding skills. She expected her most struggling reader to be able to recognize letters and be able to blend the sounds.

Reading disability. Laura did not expect any of her students to be diagnosed with a reading disability.

Behavior. Laura expected her students' poor behavior to interfere with their individual progress as well as the progress of the group. Laura expected her students to be more interested, put forth more effort and develop a better attitude toward reading

Table 4-16 summarizes Laura's expectations for struggling readers.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Laura's beliefs and professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Laura's beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations.

Table 4-16 Laura's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text Level	One student will read at least a Reading Recovery® reading level seventeen.
	Other students will make limited progress in reading text levels.
Grade Level	One student will read at grade level.
	Other students will remain below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Students will improve use of strategies. Students will improve self-correction. Students will improve reading rate. Students will improve sight word vocabulary. Students will improve comprehension. Students will improve decoding skills. Most struggling student will be able to recognize letters and blend sounds.
Reading Disability	Students do not have a reading disability.
Behavior	Students' poor behavior will interfere with individual progress as well as the progress of the group. Students will be more interested. Students will put forth more effort. Students will develop a better attitude toward reading.

Laura did not believe she, as a future classroom teacher, was capable of teaching all of her struggling readers to read and that it was the responsibility of resource teachers to assist struggling readers with their reading acquisition. Laura's expectations for her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling readers. She had low expectations for all except one of her struggling readers. She expected them to make small text level reading gains and remain reading below grade level.

Laura's beliefs about motivation and poor behavior were also directly aligned with her expectations for her struggling readers. During the first interview, Laura reported that some of her students were meeting her expectations. Laura described the students' motivation as the reason for their progress. Laura also reported that some of her students were not meeting her expectations. Laura described the possible reasons for their lack of progress as the students' lack of motivation and poor behavior.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Modeling. The researcher observed Laura modeling throughout the observed tutoring sessions. Laura modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending, encoding, and rereading strategies. Laura used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

Wait time. The researcher observed throughout the observed tutoring sessions that when a student miscued, Laura would immediately interrupt the student's reading and prompt the student to figure out the new word. She did not allow any wait time for the student to self-correct. Laura's prompt was always, "what's that word?" Laura sometimes would pause for the student to respond after the prompt. Other times she would simply provide the word immediately after the prompt.

Prompting. The researcher observed that when a student miscued, Laura would prompt the student to look at the word again by saying, "What's that word?" If the student did not respond or responded incorrectly, Laura would supply the word. If a student hesitated on a word, Laura would prompt the student, "You know that word." She did not model, explicitly teach, or prompt the student for other strategies to identify the unknown word. The researcher observed Laura prompting students to encode words

during writing word work. However, each of these times, Laura sounded out the words herself.

Providing answers. The researcher observed Laura repeatedly providing the answers to the students rather than allowing students to apply strategies and skills. When students hesitated during reading, Laura would say, "You know that word." If the student did still did not correctly identify the word, Laura would provide the word. If a student miscued during reading, Laura would say, "What's that word?" Again, if the student did not correctly identify the word, Laura would supply the word. During writing, Laura would provide the correct number of sounds and the sounds in each word and the student would simply write the letters. The student only had to know the letter-sound correspondences and did not have to segment the words into sounds.

Text. The researcher noted during every observed lesson, Laura had the students reading text at their frustration level rather than instructional level. Because the text was too difficult, Laura had to provide extensive support for the students to read the text. Laura blamed the students' lack of ability to read the text on their motivation. During one observed tutoring session a student struggled on every couple of words. Laura explained that the student "wasn't even trying" and "wanted me to give her all of the answers." Laura expressed her frustration at a student's lack of ability to read a text.

> She just doesn't want to make the effort to try. She just gets frustrated and wants to give up instead of trying to work through it.

During the running record the tutor is to simply record the child's reading verbatim with no encouragement, prompting, or input in any way in order to determine if the text is on the child's independent reading level, instructional reading level, or frustration reading level. The researcher observed that when Laura took running records, she provided

prompts, praised for correct reading, nodded her head, pointed out miscues, and said

"yes" when words were read correctly. The researcher noted that Laura's prompting

allowed the student to score instructional level on the assessment rather than frustration

level.

Table 4-17 summarizes Laura's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4–17 Laura's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading. Using picture clues. Decoding. Blending. Encoding. Rereading. Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters, Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue. No wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted strategy use.
Providing Answers	Supplied the answers to students rather than let the students apply the strategies and skills.
Text	Provided frustration level text for students.

Influence of Beliefs on Instruction. The influence of Laura's beliefs and

professional knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were

struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions.

Laura's beliefs about struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for

struggling readers.

Laura did not believe that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally

capable of or responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read due to the

students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading disability, and poor behavior. These beliefs were directly aligned with her instruction. Laura did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the students are not capable of achieving reading proficiency due to all of the previous factors. These factors would also prevent her from being capable of or responsible for teaching them to read.

Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Laura submitted three evaluations of the struggling readers that she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Her final evaluations were also discussed in the final interview.

Text level. In her final evaluation, Laura reported that one of her students was reading at a Reading Recovery® level 20. She did not report the specific text level of the students in her group. She did say in her final interview that the group was "at a much lower level" than her individual student.

Grade level. In her final interview, Laura reported that one of her students was reading on grade level. All of the students in Laura's group were reading below grade level.

Reading strategies. Laura described the strengths and weaknesses of each of her student's reading strategies. Strengths included fluent reading, decoding, sight word vocabulary, taking risks, and good comprehension. Weaknesses included not using strategies, guessing, skipping, no sight word vocabulary, no comprehension, and lacks letter recognition.

Reading disability. Laura reported that, to her knowledge, none of her tutored students had been diagnosed with a reading disability.

Behavior. Laura reported that her students' behavior affected their achievement as well as the other students in her tutoring group. Positive behaviors that Laura reported included enjoying reading new books and being excited about getting to read. Negative behaviors that Laura reported included not being focused, not concentrating, fidgeting, getting off topic, does not enjoy reading, gives up easily, gets upset, distracted, ignores instructions, and disrupts the group.

Table 4-18 summarizes Laura's evaluations of struggling readers.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Laura's beliefs and professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her written evaluations. Laura's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Laura believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Laura reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading progress such as not being focused, not concentrating, fidgeting, getting off topic, does not enjoy reading, gives up easily, distracted, and disruptive. Laura reported positive behaviors such as enjoying reading a new book and being excited about reading that also reflect her belief that motivation is the most important factor in reading acquisition.

Table 4-18 Laura's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	One student is reading on Reading Recovery® text level twenty.
	Other students reading non-specific text level significantly lower than twenty.
Grade level	One student reading on grade level.
	Other students reading below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Student reads fluently.
	Student decodes.
	Student improved sight word vocabulary.
	Student takes risks.
	Student has good comprehension.
	Student does not use strategies.
	Student guesses.
	Student skips words.
	Student has no sight word vocabulary.
	Student has no comprehension.
	Student lacks letter recognition.
Reading Disability	Students do not have reading disability.
Behavior	Student is excited about reading.
	Student not focused.
	Student not concentrating.
	Student fidgeting.
	Student off topic.
	Student does not enjoy reading.
	Student gives up easily.
	Student gets upset.
	Student is distracted.
	Student ignores instructions.
	Student disrupts the group.

<u>Case Study 5: Drew</u>

Drew was a twenty-three year old white/Hispanic female graduate student at the

University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, specializing in math and science. She had

completed six hours related to the teaching of reading including Children's Literature and

Emergent Literacy. Drew had tutored a middle school student in reading privately for two years. She completed field experiences in first and second grades. She completed her student teaching in first grade. Drew planned on teaching in grades kindergarten through grade three upon graduation.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Drew's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations, and written evaluations.

Parental involvement. Drew believed that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition. She believed that children struggle with reading acquisition due to a lack of parental involvement. Drew recalled in her autobiography that "the closeness and stability of my family are factors that affected my education." Drew credits her parents as the "most important part of my literacy experiences."

Motivation. Drew believed that children learn to read if they are motivated to read. She recalled her own enthusiasm for reading and writing in elementary school. She believes students will be motivated if they have authentic purposes for reading and writing. She recalled that "school assignments took the joy out of reading for me." Drew's belief in the power of motivation is evident in her description of the "ideal" student.

> The ideal student would want to learn. This student would participate in group discussions and have enthusiasm for class activities. The student would be helpful to their classmates and not be physically or verbally abusive to others. This is all I could ask of a student, that they are eager to learn and are respectful of others.

Readiness. Drew believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read. Drew described that she learned to read without formal

instruction. She wrote that "I feel like learning to read was something that just happened because I was developmentally ready." She also believed that children need to have an authentic purpose for reading.

> I believe that children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to and when they have a need for it. If a child is developmentally ready to read, but has to reason no read why would they have an interest in it. I believe that a purpose and developmental readiness are the underlying reasons children learn to read. Many children exhibiting reading difficulties at an early age may not be developmentally ready to read. When asked why they need to be able to read many children have no other answer than for school purposes, so they see no authentic purpose for reading.

Access and exposure to print. Drew believed that children learn to read by being given access and exposure to print. She believed that children will struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with books. She recalled that her parents surrounded her with books, tapes, writing materials, and literacy experiences. She credits this with her readiness to read.

Socioeconomic status. Drew believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. She described her belief about the influence of socioeconomic status in an interview.

> I think it's real important. If they're at home and there's always noise and something going on. They're always moving. They're always going somewhere. I don't think they have time to sit down and read. I don't think they see anyone else sitting down and reading. They don't realize how important it is.

Behavior. Drew believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior. She believed that the poor behavior of one student in a group could affect the achievement of the other students. She described her students' frustration, reluctance to participate, attitude, and inattentiveness as barriers to their success.

Reading disability. Drew believed that some students have difficulties with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.

There are other students that have difficulties reading, because they have learning disabilities that affect their information processing. These students may be developmentally ready and have a purpose for reading, so their difficulties in processing would be very frustrating.

She believed that her students who were not reading on grade level by the end of the tutoring sessions should be referred for testing for a reading disability.

Teacher efficacy. Drew did not believe that she was capable of teaching all of her students to read. She described the reasons that she would not be able to teach all of her students to read in an interview.

I think that there's always going to be a few students that I may not get to the level that I want to get them to. I mean it may be for various reasons. They may not be developmentally ready or may have a learning disability that hasn't been identified.

Responsibility. Drew believed it is the responsibility of the reading specialist and the special education teachers to teach struggling readers to read. She described her belief about the responsibility of the classroom teacher for teaching struggling readers in an interview.

They need to be understanding. They need to modify objectives from them. They need to know that singling them out or having them read alone or aloud or anything like that is going to make them feel embarrassed.

Table 4-19 summarizes Drew's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

Drew submitted three written expectations for the struggling readers she was tutoring. Drew's expectations were low for all of her struggling readers.

Text level. Drew expected her struggling readers to make "slow progress" in the level of text they were able to read. She was not specific with text levels. She expected

Table 4-19 Drew's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to literature.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with books.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Will not be able to teach every child to read proficiently.
	Will not be able to teach a child with a reading disability to read.
Responsibility	Responsibility of reading specialist and special education teacher to teach struggling readers to read.

one student in the group would not ever be able to pass a running record even on a familiar book.

Grade level. Drew expected her struggling readers to be continue to be reading below grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions.

Reading strategies. Drew expected her students to continue to struggle with the use of reading strategies. She was not specific except in regard to one student's trouble remembering sight words.

He will continue to have trouble reading as long as his memory continues to be as episodic as it is now. He often forgets sight words from one page to the next, and looks back onto a page with the word to remember the situation in which he read it earlier.

Reading disability. Drew expected one of her students to be diagnosed with a reading disability. She expected that he needed individual instruction by the special education teacher in order to make progress in reading.

Behavior. Drew expected the behavior of some of her struggling readers to interfere with their reading progress. This negative behavior included temper tantrums, inattentiveness, unwillingness to participate, and lack of confidence.

Table 4-20 summarizes Drew's expectations for struggling readers.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Drew's beliefs and professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Drew's beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and

her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations.

Table 4-20 Drew's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text level	Students will make "slow progress" in the level of text.
Grade level	All students will be reading below grade level.
Reading strategies	All students will continue to struggle with use of strategies.
Reading disability	One student will be diagnosed with a reading disability.
	Student will require individual instruction by the special education teacher.
Behavior	Students' poor behavior will interfere with reading progress.

Drew did not believe she, as a future classroom teacher, was capable of teaching all of her struggling readers to read and that it was the responsibility of resource teachers to assist struggling readers with their reading acquisition. She did not believe she could teach a child with a reading disability to read. Drew's expectations for her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling readers. She had low expectations for her struggling readers. She expected them to make "slow progress" in their text level reading gains and remain reading below grade level. She expected one student would be diagnosed with a reading disability and would make little or no progress.

Drew's beliefs about readiness, poor behavior, and reading disability were also directly aligned with her expectations for her struggling readers. During the first

interview, Drew reported that some of her students were meeting her expectations. Drew described the students' readiness as the reason for their progress. Drew also reported that some of her students were not meeting her expectations. Drew described the possible reasons for their lack of progress as the students' poor memory, poor behavior, and possible reading disability.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Modeling. The researcher observed Drew modeling throughout the observed tutoring sessions. Drew modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending, encoding, and rereading strategies. Drew used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

Wait time. The researcher observed throughout the observed tutoring sessions that when a student miscued, Drew would immediately interrupt the student's reading and prompt the student to figure out the unknown word. She did not allow wait time for the student to self-correct. The researcher observed that Drew also did not allow wait time after strategy prompts and questions. She would provide the answer or prompt again or ask another question. If the student did not respond immediately, Drew would supply the answer or prompt again or ask another question.

Prompting. The researcher observed Drew prompting students for strategy use. She prompted students to decode, look at the pictures, use the context, break the word into parts, and reread. The researcher also observed Drew prompt students by rereading the sentence as an oral cloze so that the students could guess the word based on context.

Providing answers. The researcher observed that Drew usually supplied the answers to students rather than allowing students to apply the strategies and skills. The researcher observed that if the student did not respond right away, Drew would supply

the answer herself or sound out the word for the student. The researcher noted that Drew

supplied more answers for the students at the lower text levels than the students at higher

text levels.

During one observed lesson, the researcher observed Drew helping a student read a

new book. The student was struggling on nearly every word. After a miscue Drew did not

allow any time for self-correction. She immediately pointed to the word and began to

sound it out. There was no wait time in between her prompts or questions.

> Look at that word. That's a 'b' sound. That says 'b' –'an'-'d'. So what is the word?
> What is the word? The word is band.

The researcher noted that the student was not even looking at the text during this

interaction.

Text. The researcher noted that Drew's students were reading text at their

frustration level. During the running record, the researcher observed that Drew recorded

the child's reading verbatim with no encouragement, prompting, or input in any way. The

student did not pass the running record. However, later in the lesson the researcher

observed the child reading in a text so difficult for him that in one eight word sentence he

only knew two of the words. Drew had to provide extensive assistance in order to finish

the text. The child was clearly frustrated smashing his hands into his face, pulling his

hair, and sucking his fingers. Drew did not seem to realize that the book was too difficult

for the child. After the session she explained why she thought the student would pass the

running record on this book the next day.

> I chose it because I knew he wasn't going to pass the running record today at a
> level seven. This book had fewer words and it seemed to be a lot easier level seven
> than the one he was reading for the running record today. So hopefully he'll be able
> to pass this running record tomorrow. He struggled with a lot less words than he
> did the other one.

Table 4-21 summarizes Drew's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4-21 Drew's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading.
	Using picture clues.
	Decoding.
	Blending.
	Encoding.
	Rereading.
	Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters,
	Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue.
	No wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted strategy use.
Providing Answers	Supplied the answers to students rather than
	let the students apply the strategies and skills.
Text	Provided frustration level text for students.

Influence of Beliefs on Instruction. The influence of Drew's beliefs and

professional knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were

struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions.

Drew's beliefs about struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for

struggling readers.

Drew did not believe that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally

capable of or responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read due to the

students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental

readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading

disability, and poor behavior. These beliefs were directly aligned with her instruction.

Drew did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers

to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the students are not capable of achieving reading proficiency due to all of the previous factors. These factors would also prevent her from being capable of or responsible for teaching them to read.

<u>Evaluation of Struggling Readers</u>

Drew submitted three written evaluations of the struggling readers she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student.

<u>Text level</u>. In her final evaluations, Drew reported that one of her students was reading a Reading Recovery® text level 12, one student a level 19, and the four students in her small group a level 9. Drew reported that two of the students in the small group were actually reading below level 9 if they were not in the group.

<u>Grade level</u>. Drew reported that one of her struggling readers was reading on grade level. The four students in Drew's small tutoring group were all reading well below grade level at a level 9 or below and one student was near grade level at a level 12.

<u>Reading strategies</u>. Drew described the strengths and weaknesses of each of her student's reading strategies. Strengths included using picture clues and decoding. Weaknesses included phonemic awareness, semantics, memory, self confidence, letter-sound correspondences, blending, self-correcting, sight word vocabulary, and fluency.

<u>Reading disability</u>. Drew suspected that her student who was struggling the most with reading acquisition had a reading disability. She wrote about her future expectations for him in her final evaluation.

> I expect that he will stay below grade level in reading and will be placed in a class where he will receive more individual attention.

In the final interview Drew talked about the kind of instruction this student will need.

> I think he's going to need some further help. He probably needs pretty intensive or small group help. He may end up being in special education for a learning disability or maybe even emotional because I think he might need some emotional help.

Behavior. Drew reported that her students' behavior affected their progress in reading. Positive behaviors that Drew reported included that her students enjoyed reading and had a good attitude when they were successful. Negative behaviors that Drew reported included getting frustrated and discouraged easily during reading, inattentiveness, refusing to participate, lack of self-confidence, attitude, temper tantrums, and throwing books.

Table 4-22 summarizes Drew's evaluations of struggling readers.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Drew's beliefs and professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her written evaluations. Drew's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Drew believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief is evident in her evaluations of her struggling readers. Drew included in her evaluations of her most struggling reader that he probably had a reading disability that interfered with his ability to make progress even though he had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability. Drew also believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was not capable of teaching a child with a reading disability to read. Her evaluation reflected this belief as Drew believed that the child who was still struggling the most with reading acquisition after her tutoring must have a reading disability and that would explain her inability to teach him to read.

Table 4-22 Drew's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	Reading Recovery® levels 19, 12, and 9. Two may be reading lower than current group level of 9.
Grade level	One student reading on grade level. Five students reading below grade level.
Reading Strategies	Student uses picture clues. Student decodes. Student lacks phonemic awareness. Student does not use semantics. Student has poor memory. Student lacks letter-sound correspondences. Student can not blend. Student does not self-correct. Student has small sight word vocabulary. Student lacks fluency.
Reading Disability	Student probably has reading disability. Student will qualify for special education.
Behavior	Student has enjoys reading. Student has a good attitude. Student gets frustrated. Student gets discouraged. Student is inattentive. Student refuses to participate. Student lacks confidence. Student has a bad attitude. Student has temper tantrums Student throws books.

Drew also believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they

lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and

behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Drew

reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading

progress such as being frustrated, discouraged, inattentive, lacks confidence, bad attitude,

and refusal to participate. Drew reported positive behaviors such as enjoying reading and

having a good attitude that also reflects her belief that children learn to read if they are motivated.

<div align="center">Case Study 6: Kerry</div>

Kerry was a twenty-four year old white female graduate student at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, specializing in children's literature. She had completed six semester hours related to the teaching of reading including Emergent Literacy and Language Arts for Diverse Learning. Kerry completed her student teaching in fourth grade. She completed field experiences in first, second, and fifth grades. Kerry planned on teaching in first grade upon graduation.

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Kerry's beliefs and professional knowledge were compiled from her autobiography, background information sheet, interviews, observations, written expectations, and evaluations.

Parental involvement. Kerry believed that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition. Kerry believed that good readers begin with parent involvement before formal schooling begins. As the youngest member of the family, Kerry remembered that her mother was able to spend a lot of time with her during the days before she went to school. Reading was always valued in Kerry's house. She credited this parental involvement with the ease of her reading acquisition. She believed that some children struggle with reading acquisition due to a lack of parental involvement. She believed that both of her tutored students' parents were involved in their children's education.

> I know that one student takes all of his stuff home with him and he works on stuff at home. He told me that he practices with his mom and stuff like that. I think the

other student gets practice reading at home. I know his parents are involved in his education.

Motivation. Kerry believed that children learn to read if they are motivated to read. Kerry recalled that reading came very easily to her and that she has always enjoyed reading. She believed this was probably because she never had to struggle with reading. Kerry believed that children need to have positive experiences with reading and books so that they will be motivated.

> I also think that to be a good reader, you have to have positive experiences with books and reading. Children who are forced to read or who are reading things that they are not interested in will not make as much progress.

Kerry believed that both of the students she was tutoring were motivated to learn.

> I would say I have one that is very motivated and one I think is motivated. One student is very self-motivated. He enjoys what he's doing and he loves the extending literacy when we bring in all kinds of things. And the other it's kind of hard to tell because he kind of holds back a lot. But I think he is motivated also.

Readiness. Kerry believed that children will learn to read when they are developmentally ready. She recalled that as she first began reading, she was actually reciting books she had memorized. She does not remember when she actually connected the words on the page with what she was saying, but was able to read on her own by the time she was four without formal instruction. She believes this is because she was developmentally ready to read.

Access and exposure to print. Kerry believed that children learn to read by being given access and exposure to print. Kerry strongly believed "that reading to children will help them to become better and avid readers." She recalled everyone in her family reading to her before she learned to read.

> I believe that a good reader first begins in the home. Children who are read to, sung to, and talked to as much as possible will have it much easier when it comes to learning to read.

Kerry believed that children will struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with books.

> Many children have not been exposed to books and texts before. These early experiences (or lack of) keep snowballing until the child is virtually unable to pass due to a lack of reading skills.

Socioeconomic status. Kerry believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of the influence of their socioeconomic status. She believed that parents of low-income students would not be able to assist their children.

> I see kids that come in and they don't know how to look through a book or how to find things in a book. And the parents are not educated enough to help.

Behavior. Kerry believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior. She believed that lack of attention and problems staying focused would limit reading achievement.

Reading disability. Kerry believed that some students who continue to struggle with reading acquisition may have a reading disability that prevents them from making progress. Kerry believed these students needed practice and someone to listen to them read. She believed that she could teach a child to read if that student had a reading disability.

Teacher efficacy. Kerry believed that she would be able to teach all of her future students to read proficiently.

> I think with a combination of reading instruction and then being able to work with small groups and use these strategies that will be helpful for struggling readers in my classroom so that they can catch up.

> I feel that many children have problems with reading because most classrooms teachers teach one way of reading and if that way doesn't work, too bad. It is important that students are taught a variety of steps and strategies they can use to get through words and books.

Responsibility. Kerry believed that it is the responsibility of the parents and the

classroom teacher to teach struggling readers to read.

> I'm a big believer that it starts at home. If kids don't have exposure to songs and
> nursery rhymes and books at home, it's going to be a lot harder for them when they
> get to school. And I don't think it necessary should be all the classroom teacher's
> responsibility. I think parents need to step up and help too.

Table 4-23 summarizes Kerry's beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching

reading.

Expectations for Struggling Readers

Kerry submitted three written expectations for the two struggling readers that she

was tutoring. Kerry's expectations were high for both students.

Text level. Kerry expected her students to be able to read grade level text by the

end of the tutoring sessions. She expected their progress in text levels to slow as they

texts became longer and more difficult.

Grade level. Kerry expected both of her students to be reading on grade level by the

end of the tutoring sessions.

Reading strategies. Kerry expected her students to improve their reading strategies

as they began to pay better attention. She also expected their sight word vocabulary to

improve with more reading practice.

Reading disability. Kerry did not expect any of her students to be diagnosed with a

reading disability.

Behavior. Kerry expected her students to remain easily distracted and need to be

reminded to stay focused. She expected her students to become more confident.

Table 4-23 Kerry's Beliefs and Professional Knowledge About Teaching Reading

Theme	Belief
Parental involvement	Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.
Motivation	Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.
Readiness	Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.
Access and exposure to print	Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.
	Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with print.
Socioeconomic status	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.
Behavior	Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.
Reading disability	Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability.
Teacher efficacy	Will be able to teach every student to read proficiently.
Responsibility	Responsibility of parents and classroom teacher to teach struggling readers.

Table 4-24 summarizes Kerry's expectations for struggling readers.

Influence of beliefs on expectations. The influence of Kerry's beliefs and professional knowledge on her expectations was evident in her written expectations of struggling readers, her descriptions of her students' achievement of her expectations

during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Kerry's beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both her expectations for struggling readers and her explanations for her students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations.

Table 4-24 Kerry's Expectations for Struggling Readers

Category	Expectations
Text level	Students will read grade level text.
	Progress in text levels will slow as text becomes longer and more difficult.
Grade level	Students will read on grade level.
Reading strategies	Students will improve their use of strategies.
	Sight word vocabulary will improve.
Reading disability	Students do not have a reading disability.
Behavior	Students will remain easily distracted.
	Students will become more confident.

Kerry believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of teaching her struggling readers to read and that she was responsible for teaching them to read. Kerry's expectations for her struggling readers were directly aligned with these beliefs about teaching struggling readers. She had high expectations for both of her struggling readers and expected both of her students to be reading on grade level and improve their reading strategies.

During the first interview, Kerry reported that both of her students were meeting her expectations. Kerry described the tutoring as the reason for their progress. This expectation illustrates the influence of her teacher efficacy belief on her expectations.

Instruction for Struggling Readers

Modeling. The researcher observed Kerry modeling throughout the observed tutoring sessions. She modeled fluent reading, using picture clues, decoding, blending, encoding, and rereading strategies. Kerry used the whiteboard, magnetic letters, and Elkonin boxes to model these strategies.

Wait time. The researcher observed throughout the observed tutoring sessions that when a student miscued, Kerry would immediately interrupt the student's reading and prompt the student to figure out the word. However, after pointing to the miscue, Kerry would allow the student to attempt again or give the student a strategy prompt and wait for the student to attempt the unknown word. Kerry usually did not provide any wait time after a miscue to allow for self-correction during the observed tutoring sessions. Kerry did always allow wait time after a strategy prompt for the students to apply the strategy.

Prompting. The researcher observed that Kerry often prompted students to apply a reading strategy. She prompted students to reread, decode, look for little words within the word, look at the pictures, and segment sounds. She prompted students to think about whether a miscue made sense or sounded correct in the sentence. Kerry always allowed time for the student to apply the strategy.

Providing answers. The researcher observed that Kerry rarely supplied the answers to students. Kerry's students did the work themselves and Kerry let the students apply the strategies and skills. She had the students figure out unknown words on their own. Kerry would provide more coaching when a student was not successful right away. However, she only gave the students the word once or twice when it seemed the student was not going to be able to figure out the word. During the writing portion of an observed lesson, the researcher observed that the student was not participating when Kerry was working

on segmenting the word into sounds. Kerry immediately stopped and told the student,

"Oh, no, you do it with me." Kerry and the student did the segmenting together and then

Kerry had the student segment the word on his own.

Text. The researcher noted that Kerry's students were reading text at their

instructional level. Since the text was at their instructional level, Kerry did not have to

provide extensive support so that the students were able to read the text. During the

running record, Drew recorded the child's reading verbatim with no encouragement,

prompting, or input in any way. The researcher noted that this correct implementation of

the assessment technique allowed Kerry to know the students' correct instructional level.

Table 4-25 summarizes Kerry's instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4-25 Kerry's Instruction for Struggling Readers

Category	Instruction
Modeling	Fluent reading.
	Using picture clues.
	Decoding.
	Blending.
	Encoding.
	Rereading.
	Materials: whiteboard, magnetic letters,
	Elkonin boxes, various texts.
Wait Time	No wait time after miscue.
	Allows wait time after questions or prompts.
Prompting	Prompted strategy use.
Providing Answers	Tutor did not provide the answers to students.
	Students apply the strategies and skills.
Text	Provided instructional level text for students.

Influence of Beliefs on Instruction. The influence of Kerry's beliefs and

professional knowledge on her instruction while she was teaching children who were

struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions.

Kerry's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her instruction for struggling readers.

Kerry believed that she, as a future classroom teacher, was personally capable of and responsible for teaching all of her struggling readers to read. Her belief and professional knowledge that she was capable of teaching all students to read is evident in the type of instruction she provided to her students. Kerry allowed wait time after prompts, allowed students to apply the strategies and skills themselves, and provided instructional level text. This type of instruction was reflective of her high teacher efficacy and responsibility. She believed that she was capable of teaching her students and, therefore, they would be able to apply the strategies and skills that she taught them.

Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Kerry submitted three written evaluations of the struggling readers that she was tutoring. Her evaluations included the strengths and weaknesses of each student. Her final evaluations were also discussed in the final interview.

Text level. In her final evaluation, Kerry reported that one of her students was reading at a Reading Recovery® level 20 and the other student was reading at a level 17 at the end of the tutoring sessions.

Grade level. Both of Kerry's students were reading on grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions.

Reading strategies. Kerry described the strengths and weaknesses of her students' reading strategies. Strengths included good memory, good decoding, reads with expression and intonation, good reading rate. Weaknesses included rushing through reading, not self-correcting, small sight word vocabulary, and difficulty understanding letter blends and vowel combinations.

Reading disability. Kerry reported that, to her knowledge, none of her tutored students had been diagnosed with a reading disability.

Behavior. Kerry reported that her students' behavior affected their reading achievement. Kerry reported that being determined was a positive behavior. Negative behaviors that Kerry reported included being frustrated, having difficulty concentrating, becoming easily distracted, having anxiety, and a reluctance to read.

Table 4-26 summarizes Kerry' evaluations of struggling readers.

Table 4-26 Kerry's Evaluation of Struggling Readers

Category	Evaluation
Text level	Students reading on Reading Recovery® levels 17 and 20.
Grade level	Students reading on grade level.
Reading strategies	Student has good memory. Student decodes. Student reads with prosody. Student has good reading rate. Student rushes through reading. Student not self-correcting. Student has small sight word vocabulary. Student has difficulty with letter blends and vowel combinations.
Reading disability	Students do not have reading disability.
Behavior	Student is determined. Student becomes frustrated. Student having difficulty concentrating. Student easily distracted. Student has anxiety. Student is reluctant to read.

Influence of Beliefs on Evaluations. The influence of Kerry's beliefs and professional knowledge on her evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in her

written evaluations. Kerry's beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with her evaluations of struggling readers.

Kerry also believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with her evaluations of her struggling readers. Kerry reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with her students reading progress such as being frustrated, having difficulty concentrating, easily distracted, and reluctant to read. Kerry reported positive behaviors such being determined that also reflect her belief that children learn to read if they are motivated. Kerry's teacher efficacy belief was stronger than her beliefs about motivation and behavior as she believed that she could teach all of her students to read.

<div align="center">Cross-Case Analysis</div>

The case study approach utilized in the present study was a multiple case study design. As described in Merriam (1998), the researcher performed two stages of analysis in this multiple case study. First, the researcher performed a within-case analysis, where each case was viewed as a comprehensive case in and of itself. The researcher began cross-case analysis upon completion of the analysis of each individual case. In this cross-case analysis the researcher attempted to see "processes and outcomes that occur across many cases, to understand how they are qualified by local conditions, and thus develop more sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994b). Comparative analysis of the six cases yielded similar as well as discrepant cases and were used to form more general explanations among the cases of the preservice teachers.

The following research questions were answered based upon the analysis of the data collected from the background information sheets of the participants, autobiographies of the participants, interviews with the participants, observations of the participants, and the participants' written expectations and evaluations of struggling readers.

Research Question 1: What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

The participants' beliefs and professional knowledge identified in the data collected were classified into nine categories. These categories are: 1) parental involvement, 2) motivation, 3) readiness, 4) access and exposure to print, 5) socioeconomic status, 6) behavior, 7) reading disability, 8) teacher efficacy, and 9) responsibility. Because it is necessary to classify and organize the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge in a manageable system for data analysis, the interpretation included in these descriptions of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge may be simplified representations of complex belief systems. The researcher has attempted to describe and represent the beliefs and professional knowledge of these preservice teachers accurately while attempting to understand the influence of these complex interactions.

All of the preservice teachers shared some common beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching readers. Some of the common beliefs shared by all participants included the beliefs that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition, children learn to read if they are motivated to read, children learn to read if they are developmentally ready to read, and children learn to read through access and exposure to

print. They also shared the beliefs that children struggle with reading acquisition without one of the aforementioned conditions or because of their socioeconomic status, poor behavior, or because they have a reading disability. These common beliefs and professional knowledge were probably based upon their similar experiences learning to read, successful school careers, and their similar professional preparation as students in a teacher education program at one public university.

The participants differed in some of their other beliefs and professional knowledge. Some participants believed that it was the classroom teacher's responsibility to teach struggling readers. Some participants believed it was the responsibility of the resource teachers to teach struggling readers. Still others believed parents were at least partially responsible for this task. One participant believed that the struggling reader was responsible for learning to read.

Only two of the participants believed that they would be able to teach all of their students to read proficiently. The other four participants believed that they would be able to teach the majority of their students to read proficiently. They did not believe that they would be able to teach all of their struggling readers to read and they did not believe they would be able to teach a student with a reading disability to read.

Table 4-27 summarizes the beliefs and professional knowledge of the six participants.

Research Question 2: How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

The participants' expectations for struggling readers were classified into five categories. These categories are 1) text level, 2) grade level, 3) reading strategies, 4)

Table 4-27 Preservice Teachers' Beliefs and Professional Knowledge about Teaching
Reading

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge	Cindy	Erin	Nancy	Laura	Drew	Kerry
Parental involvement is important for reading acquisition.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children struggle with reading acquisition because of lack of parental involvement.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children learn to read if they are motivated to read.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Motivation is the most important factor in reading acquisition.				+		
Children learn to read when they are developmentally ready to read.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children learn to read through access and exposure to print.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children struggle with reading acquisition if they are not provided access and experience with print.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children struggle with reading acquisition because of their socioeconomic status.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Children struggle with reading acquisition because of poor behavior.	+	+	+	+	+	+
Some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability	+	+	+	+	+	+
Can not personally teach a student with a reading disability to read.	+		+	+	+	
Will not be able to teach every child to read proficiently.	+		+	+	+	
Can teach every child to read proficiently.		+				+
Responsibility of the classroom teacher to teach struggling students to read.		+				+

Table 4-27. Continued

Beliefs and Professional Knowledge	Cindy	Erin	Nancy	Laura	Drew	Kerry
Responsibility of the resource teachers to teach struggling readers to read.	+		+	+	+	
Responsibility of the school to teach struggling readers to read.	+					
Responsibility of the parents to teach struggling readers to read.			+			+
Responsibility of the struggling reader to learn to read.			+	+		

reading disability, and 5) behavior. Participants' expectations were classified as high

expectations or low expectations based upon their expectations for text level progress and

grade level reading achievement. Two of the participants had high expectations for all of

their struggling readers. Three participants had low expectations for all of their struggling

readers. One of the participants had high expectations for the individual student she was

tutoring and low expectations for the students she was tutoring in a small group.

Table 4-28 summarizes the six participants' expectations for struggling readers.

Table 4-28 Preservice Teachers' Expectations for Struggling Readers

Expectations	Cindy	Erin	Nancy	Laura	Drew	Kerry
All students will make significant improvement in reading text levels.		+				+
All students will be reading on grade level.		+				+
One or more students will be diagnosed with a reading disability.	+	+	+		+	
Poor behavior will interfere with progress.	+	+	+	+	+	+

The influence of the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge on

their expectations was evident in their written expectations of struggling readers, their

descriptions of their students' achievement of their expectations during an interview, and in the debriefing sessions after the observations. Preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both their expectations for struggling readers and their explanations for their students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations. The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read also expected all of their struggling readers to learn to read on grade level. These two preservice teachers had high expectations for all of their students and believed they were responsible for teaching them to read. When the students met their expectations, these preservice teachers believed that their instruction was responsible for the students' progress. When the students did not meet their expectations, these preservice teachers believed that they were responsible for providing the students more instruction to meet their needs. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' teacher efficacy and responsibility beliefs on their expectations for struggling readers.

The four preservice teachers who did not believe that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read also expected their struggling readers to remain below grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions. These preservice teachers had low expectations for almost all of their students and believed that it was the responsibility of a resource teacher or the parents to help these students learn to read. Two of the preservice teachers' believed that the struggling reader shared the responsibility for learning to read. When the students met these preservice teachers' expectations, the preservice teachers believed that the student was ready and motivated to learn. When the students did not meet these preservice teachers' expectations, the

preservice teachers described reasons intrinsic to the students such as not motivated to learn to read, low socioeconomic status, lack of developmental readiness, possible reading disability, or poor behavior.

The preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility were directly aligned with their expectations for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had high expectations for their struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had low expectations for their struggling readers. When the students met these preservice teachers' expectations, the preservice teachers believed that the student was ready and motivated to learn. When the students did not meet these preservice teachers' expectations, the preservice teachers described reasons intrinsic to the student such as not motivated to learn to read, low socioeconomic status, lack of developmental readiness, possible reading disability, or poor behavior.

Table 4-29 illustrates the relationship between the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and their expectations for struggling readers.

Research Question 3: How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction for struggling readers?

The preservice teachers' instruction for struggling readers was classified into five categories. These categories are 1) modeling, 2) wait time, 3) prompting, 4) providing answers, and 5) text. After analyzing the preservice teachers' instruction, the researcher then classified the participants as coaches or supplier. The coaches provided instruction that allowed for student application and challenged students to apply the new strategies

and skills at higher levels. The students tutored by the coaches were active and engaged

in the activities. The suppliers provided all the answers for students and did not allow

students to practice and apply the strategies and skills. The students tutored by the

coaches were passive learners.

Table 4-29 Relationship between Preservice Teachers' Beliefs and Professional
Knowledge and their Expectations for Struggling Readers

	High Teacher Efficacy = High Expectations	Low Teacher Efficacy = Low Expectations
Student meeting expectations	– Tutor responsible – Instruction responsible – Student motivated – Student ready to read – No learning disability	– Student responsible – Student motivated – Student ready to learn
Student not meeting expectations	– Tutor responsible – Need additional instruction – May have learning disability	– Student responsible – Resource teacher responsible – Parent responsible – Student not motivated – Student has low socioeconomic status – Student not ready to read – Possible reading disability – Poor behavior

Only one preservice teacher included in the study, Kerry, could be classified as a

full-time coach. Kerry modeled and prompted for strategy use and allowed wait time after

prompts for student application of the strategies and skills. She did not, however, provide

wait time after a miscue for a student to possibly self-correct. Kerry provided

instructional level text for her students so that they were able to read and practice skills at

the appropriate level without becoming frustrated.

One other preservice teacher, Erin, was classified as a part-time coach as she modeled and prompted for strategy use and allowed wait time after prompts for student application of the strategies and skills. Like Kerry, she did not provide wait time after a miscue for a student to possibly self-correct. However, unlike Kerry, Erin did not provide instructional level text for her students throughout all of the tutoring sessions. In the earlier tutoring sessions, Erin did provide instructional level text so that her students were able to read and practice strategies and skills. However, by the end of the tutoring sessions, Erin was providing frustration level texts to her students. While using frustration level texts, Erin's students were not able to read and practice skills at the appropriate level without becoming frustrated. This caused Erin to provide higher and higher levels of support and provide more of the answers to her students as the text was too difficult for them to read and apply their knowledge and skills. She continued to prompt students to apply strategies and skills themselves. However, the frustration level of the text made this difficult. For this reason, Erin was classified as a part-time coach.

The remaining four preservice teachers were all classified as suppliers. All four of these preservice teachers modeled and prompted for strategy use. However, they did not provide wait time after prompts or miscues for student application of the strategies and skills. These preservice teachers did not provide instructional level text for their students. Because of this, students were not able to read and practice skills at the appropriate level without becoming frustrated. All four of these preservice teachers provided extensive levels of support and supplied answers to their students rather than allowing them to read and apply their knowledge and skills. For these reasons they were classified as suppliers.

Table 4-30 summarizes the six participants' instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4-30 Preservice Teachers' Instruction for Struggling Readers

Instruction	Cindy	Erin	Nancy	Laura	Drew	Kerry
Model	+	+	+	+	+	+
Prompt strategy use	+	+	+	+	+	+
Allow wait time after miscue						
Allow wait time after prompt		+				+
Allow students to apply strategies and skills		+				+
Provide instructional level text		+/-				+

The influence of the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge on their instruction while they were teaching children who were struggling with reading acquisition was evident during the observed tutoring sessions. The preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with their instruction for struggling readers.

The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read were the two participants classified as coaches, who allowed wait time after prompts, allowing students to apply the strategies and skills, and providing instructional level text most of the time. These two preservice teachers were also the participants who believed that they were responsible for providing the students instruction to meet their needs. This type of instruction was reflective of their high teacher efficacy and responsibility. These preservice teachers believed that they were capable of teaching their students to read. Therefore, their students would be able to apply the strategies and skills that they taught them. This illustrates the influence of their teacher efficacy and responsibility beliefs on their instruction for struggling readers.

The four preservice teachers who did not believe that they were personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read were the four participants classified as suppliers. These preservice teachers did not believe that they were personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading disability, and poor behavior. These beliefs were directly aligned with their instruction. These preservice teachers did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the preservice teachers would not be able to teach the students to read due to all of the previous factors. These factors would prevent the preservice teachers from being capable of or responsible for teaching the students to read. This illustrates the influence of their teacher efficacy beliefs and responsibility beliefs on their instruction for struggling readers.

The preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility were directly aligned with their instruction for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided instruction that allowed for student application and challenged students to apply the new strategies and skills at higher levels. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they supplied all of the answers for students and did not allow students to practice and apply the strategies and skills.

Table 4-31 illustrates the relationship between the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and their instruction for struggling readers.

Table 4-31 Relationship between Preservice Teachers' Beliefs and Professional
Knowledge and their Instruction for Struggling Readers

	Coach	Supplier
Preservice Teacher Belief or Professional Knowledge	− Able to teach all students to read − Responsible for teaching all students to read	− Not able to teach all students to read − Not responsible for teaching all students to read
Preservice Teacher Instruction	− Model − Prompt strategy use − Allow wait time after prompt − Allow students to apply strategies and skills	− Model − Prompt strategy use − Do not allow wait time after prompt − Do not allow students to apply strategies and skills

Research Question 4: How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

The preservice teachers' evaluations of struggling readers were classified into five categories. These categories are 1) text level, 2) grade level, 3) reading strategies, 4) reading disability, and 5) behavior. The preservice teachers reported the strengths and weaknesses of their students in these written evaluations. The participants included in their evaluations the text level, whether or not the student was reading on grade level, and the strengths and weaknesses of their reading strategies. All of the participants also included evaluations of student behavior in their reports including conclusions that behavior had interfered with student progress. Four of the preservice teachers included in

their evaluations that their students who continued to struggle with reading acquisition probably had some type of reading disability.

The influence of the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge on their evaluations of struggling readers was discovered in their written evaluations. The preservice teachers' beliefs about teaching struggling readers were directly aligned with their evaluations of struggling readers. All of the preservice teachers believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with the preservice teachers' evaluations of their struggling readers. All of the preservice teachers reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with their students reading progress such as being distracted, frustrated, uncooperative, temperamental, discouraged, disruptive, unwilling to try, giving up easily, or unwilling to participate. The preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge was reflected in these evaluations of struggling readers' motivation and behavior.

All of the preservice teachers' believed that some children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief is evident in their evaluations of their struggling readers. Five of the six participants had students who continued to struggle with reading acquisition at the end of the tutoring sessions. Of those five participants, four of them included in their evaluations that their most struggling readers probably had a reading disability that interfered with their ability to make progress even though they had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability. The preservice teachers' belief that children who continue to struggle with

reading acquisition must have a reading disability would explain for the preservice teachers the students' lack of progress and their inability to teach them to read.

This is significant because of those five participants who believed at least one of their students had a reading disability, only one of those believed she was capable of or responsible for teaching a child with a reading disability to read. As reported in the previous sections, when the preservice teachers did not believe they were capable of or responsible for teaching a child to read, their expectations were low and their instruction provided excessive support with little opportunity for student growth in reading achievement. This illustrates the complex relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and their expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers.

Table 4-32 illustrates the relationship between the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and expectations, instruction and evaluation of struggling readers.

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

The preservice teachers included in this study had both distinct and common beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers. The researcher has attempted to describe and represent the beliefs and professional knowledge of these preservice teachers accurately while attempting to understand the influence of the complex interactions on teaching behaviors.

Table 4-32 Relationship between Preservice Teachers' Beliefs and Professional
Knowledge and their Expectations, Instruction, and Evaluations of Struggling
Readers

Preservice Teacher Beliefs	– Able to teach all students to read – Responsible for teaching all students to read	– Not able to teach all students to read – Not responsible for teaching all students to read
Preservice Teacher Behavior	– High expectations – Instruction with opportunity for student practice and application – Challenge students – Accept responsibility for progress	– Low expectations – Instruction with no opportunity for student practice and application – Do not challenge students – Responsibility of students for progress (motivation, readiness, socioeconomic status, behavior, reading disability)

Common beliefs shared by all participants included the beliefs that parental

involvement is important for reading acquisition, children learn to read if they are

motivated to read, children learn to read if they are developmentally ready to read, and

children learn to read through access and exposure to print. They also shared the beliefs

that children struggle with reading acquisition without one of the aforementioned

conditions or because of their socioeconomic status, poor behavior, or because they have

a reading disability.

The preservice teachers also differed in some of their beliefs and professional

knowledge. Some participants believed that it was the classroom teacher's responsibility

to teach struggling readers. Some participants believed it was the responsibility of the

resource teachers to teach struggling readers. Still others believed parents were at least

partially responsible for this task. Two of the preservice teachers' believed that the

struggling reader shared the responsibility for learning to read.

Only two of the participants believed that they would be able to teach all of their students to read proficiently. The other four participants believed that they would be able to teach the majority of their students to read proficiently. They did not believe that they would be able to teach all of their struggling readers to read and they did not believe they would be able to teach a student with a reading disability to read.

The preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility directly influenced their expectations for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had high expectations for their struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had low expectations for their struggling readers.

The preservice teachers' efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility also directly influenced their instruction for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided instruction that allowed for student application and challenged students to apply the new strategies and skills at higher levels. Their students were active and engaged in the activities. This type of instruction was reflective of their high teacher efficacy and responsibility. These preservice teachers believed that they were capable of teaching their students to read. Therefore, their students would be able to apply the strategies and skills that they taught them.

When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to

print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading disability, and poor behavior, they supplied all of the answers for students and did not allow students to practice and apply the strategies and skills. Their students were passive learners. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the preservice teachers would not be able to teach the students to read due to all of the previous factors. These factors would prevent the preservice teachers from being capable of or responsible for teaching the students to read. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs on instruction for struggling readers.

The preservice teachers' beliefs that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior directly influenced the preservice teachers' evaluations of their struggling readers. All of the preservice teachers reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with their students reading progress such as being distracted, frustrated, uncooperative, temperamental, discouraged, disruptive, unwilling to try, giving up easily, or unwilling to participate.

The preservice teachers' belief that children struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability also influenced their evaluations of their struggling readers. Five of the six participants had students who continued to struggle with reading acquisition at the end of the tutoring sessions. Of those five participants, four of them included in their evaluations that their most struggling readers probably had a reading disability that interfered with their ability to make progress even though they had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability.

This is significant because of those five participants who believed at least one of their students had a reading disability, only one of those believed she was capable of or

responsible for teaching a child with a reading disability to read. As reported in the previous sections, when the preservice teachers did not believe they were capable of or responsible for teaching a child to read, their expectations were low and their instruction provided excessive support with little opportunity for student growth in reading achievement. This illuminates the complex relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and their expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This chapter is a review of the current study. First, the purpose, literature, and

methods are reviewed. A summary of the results related to the research questions is

included and the limitations of the present study are presented. Implications for teacher

education are discussed. And finally, recommendations for further research conclude this

chapter.

Overview of the Study

In this study, the researcher identified six elementary education majors, who would

be employed as tutors in Project UFLI, a federally funded study of beginning reading

intervention. The researcher described the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional

knowledge about teaching struggling readers. The researcher described the preservice

teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers. The researcher

then detailed how the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about

teaching struggling readers impacted their teaching behaviors. Common beliefs and

teaching behaviors were illuminated.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the beliefs and professional

knowledge of preservice teachers about teaching struggling readers. This study was an

exploration of the participants' beliefs and professional knowledge in the context of

tutoring struggling readers in order to discover how these beliefs and professional

knowledge influenced the preservice teachers' expectations, instruction, and evaluations

of these learners.

Specifically, this study addressed the following questions:

1. What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

2. How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

3. How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction, for struggling readers?

4. How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

Review of Literature

The literature review for this study was grounded in research that investigated teaching struggling readers, beliefs and professional knowledge, preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, influence of beliefs and professional knowledge on teaching behaviors, influence of beliefs and professional knowledge on teaching struggling readers, and influence of beliefs and professional knowledge on teacher expectations. A need for further research on the manner in which preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers impact their teaching behaviors was established.

Review of Methods

The methods used for this study consisted of case studies of six preservice teachers who were employed as tutors in Project UFLI, a federally funded study of beginning reading intervention, and describe how their beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers influenced their teaching behaviors. These descriptions were based on data collected over a four-month period (February 2003 – May 2003). Included in the data collection procedures were five sources of data: preservice teachers' background information sheets, preservice teachers' autobiographies, interviews with

preservice teachers, observations of preservice teachers while teaching struggling readers, and preservice teachers' written expectations and evaluations of struggling readers. This methodology was implemented in order to provide multiple data sources for attempting to answer the research questions.

A case study approach was utilized with the descriptive data sources from this research. A cross-case analysis was then employed to search for patterns across cases. The researcher generated categories, themes, and patterns and tested emergent understandings while searching for alternative explanations (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The data collection questions were intended to probe the relationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional about teaching struggling readers and their teaching behaviors. The researcher subjected all of the data from all of the data sources to data reduction. Miles and Huberman (1994b) define data reduction as " the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up filed notes or transcriptions" (p. 10). The researcher identified patterns that emerged during coding, reduction, and analysis (Appendix H). These patterns became the basis for the descriptive case study narratives written by the researcher and the findings reported about the research questions.

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

The findings included in this section relate to the four research questions presented in Chapter 3. These findings are based upon the case studies of the six preservice teachers as described in the individual case studies and cross-case analysis presented in Chapter 4. The findings support previous research presented in Chapter 2. In addition, new knowledge was gained from the current study.

<u>Question One</u>

What are preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching reading in general and teaching struggling readers in particular?

All of the preservice teachers shared some common beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching readers. These common beliefs and professional knowledge were probably based upon their similar experiences learning to read, successful school careers, and their similar professional preparation as students in a teacher education program at one public university (Richardson, 1996; Stuart & Thurlow, 2000). Some of the common beliefs shared by all participants included the beliefs that parental involvement is important for reading acquisition, children learn to read if they are motivated to read, children learn to read if they are developmentally ready to read, and children learn to read through access and exposure to print. They also shared the beliefs that children struggle with reading acquisition without one of the aforementioned conditions or because of their socioeconomic status, poor behavior, or because they have a reading disability.

The participants differed in some of their other beliefs and professional knowledge. Some participants believed that it was the classroom teacher's responsibility to teach struggling readers. Some participants believed it was the responsibility of the resource teachers to teach struggling readers. Still others believed parents were at least partially responsible for this task. Two of the preservice teachers' believed that the struggling reader shared the responsibility for learning to read. This is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Nierstheimer et al., 1996; Soodak & Podell, 1994; Winfield, 1986).

Only two of the participants believed that they would be able to teach all of their students to read proficiently. The other four participants believed that they would be able

to teach the majority of their students to read proficiently. They did not believe that they would be able to teach all of their struggling readers to read and they did not believe they would be able to teach a student with a reading disability to read. This is consistent with the findings of Soodak and Podell (1994). The current study adds to the strength of this conclusion through observational data not included in the previous study.

Question Two

How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their expectations for struggling readers?

Preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influenced both their expectations for struggling readers and their explanations for their students' successful or unsuccessful achievement of those expectations. This is consistent with the findings of other researchers (McGill-Franzen, 1994; Winfield, 1986)

The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read also expected all of their struggling readers to learn to read on grade level. These two preservice teachers had high expectations for all of their students and believed they were responsible for teaching them to read. When the students met their expectations, these preservice teachers believed that their instruction was responsible for the students' progress. When the students did not meet their expectations, these preservice teachers believed that they were responsible for providing the students more instruction to meet their needs. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and responsibility beliefs on their expectations for struggling readers.

The four preservice teachers who did not believe that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read also expected their struggling readers to

remain below grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions. These preservice teachers had low expectations for almost all of their students and believed that it was the responsibility of a resource teacher or the parents to help these students learn to read. Two of the preservice teachers' believed that the struggling reader shared the responsibility for learning to read. When the students met these preservice teachers' expectations, the preservice teachers believed that the student was ready and motivated to learn. When the students did not meet these preservice teachers' expectations, the preservice teachers described the reasons intrinsic to the student such as not motivated to learn to read, low socioeconomic status, lack of developmental readiness, possible reading disability, or poor behavior. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' beliefs about teacher efficacy and responsibility on their expectations for struggling readers.

The preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility were directly aligned with their expectations for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had high expectations for their struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had low expectations for their struggling readers.

<u>Question Three</u>

How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their instruction, for struggling readers?

Consistent with the research reviewed in chapter two, the preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influenced their instruction for struggling readers in

several ways (Johnston & Winograd, 1985; McGill-Franzen, 1994; Winfield, 1986). The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read allowed wait time after prompts and allowed students to apply the strategies and skills. Their students were actively engaged learners. These two preservice teachers were also the participants who believed that they were responsible for providing the students instruction to meet their needs. This type of instruction was reflective of their high teacher efficacy and responsibility. These preservice teachers believed that they were capable of teaching their students to read. Therefore, their students would be able to apply the strategies and skills that they taught them. The conclusions of the current study are strengthened through observational data not included in previous studies.

The four preservice teachers who did not believe that they were personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible reading disability, and poor behavior did not allow wait time after strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to apply the strategies and skills. Their students were passive learners. Their beliefs were directly aligned with their instruction. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the preservice teachers would not be able to teach the students to read due to all of the previous factors. These factors would prevent the preservice teachers from being capable of or responsible for teaching the students to read. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' beliefs about teacher efficacy and responsibility on their instruction for struggling readers.

The preservice teachers' teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility directly influenced their instruction for struggling readers. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided instruction that allowed for student application and challenged students to apply the new strategies and skills at higher levels. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided all the answers for students and did not allow students to practice and apply the strategies and skills.

Question Four

How do preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their evaluation of struggling readers?

The influence of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge was evident in their evaluations of struggling readers. This is consistent with the conclusions of Winfield (1986). All of the preservice teachers believed that children struggle with reading acquisition because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior. These beliefs about motivation and behavior were directly aligned with the preservice teachers' evaluations of their struggling readers. All of the preservice teachers reported behaviors and motivation factors that interfered with their students reading progress such as being distracted, frustrated, uncooperative, temperamental, discouraged, disruptive, unwilling to try, giving up easily, or unwilling to participate.

The preservice teachers' who believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their students to read believed that they would be able to teach their students to read proficiently in spite of these behavior and motivation factors. These beliefs about behavior and motivation contributed to the other preservice teachers' low

teacher efficacy for teaching struggling readers as they believed that these factors would prevent them from being able to teach all children to read proficiently. This illustrates the influence of preservice teachers' beliefs about teacher efficacy and responsibility on their evaluations of struggling readers.

All of the preservice teachers' believed that children may struggle with reading acquisition because they have a reading disability. This belief is evident in their evaluations of their struggling readers. Five of the six participants had students who continued to struggle with reading acquisition at the end of the tutoring sessions. Of those five participants, four of them included in their evaluations that their most struggling readers probably had a reading disability that interfered with their ability to make progress even though they had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of reading disability.

This is significant because of those five participants who believed at least one of their students had a reading disability, only one of those believed she was capable of or responsible for teaching a child with a reading disability to read. When the preservice teachers did not believe they were capable of or responsible for teaching a child to read, their expectations were low and their instruction provided excessive support with little opportunity for student growth in reading achievement. These findings illuminate the complex interrelationship between preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, expectations, instruction, and evaluation.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the findings of the current study.

1. The majority of the preservice teachers did not believe they were capable of or responsible for teaching all of their students to read.

Four of the six preservice teachers believed it was the responsibility of someone other than the classroom teacher to teach struggling readers. Each of these preservice teachers who assigned responsibility to someone else for teaching struggling readers also had low teacher efficacy. These preservice teachers believed that they could not teach all struggling readers to read and that they could not teach a child with a reading disability to read.

2. When the preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had higher expectations.

The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read also expected all of their struggling readers to learn to read on grade level by the end of the tutoring sessions. These two preservice teachers had high expectations for all of their students and believed they were responsible for teaching them to read.

3. When the preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they had lower expectations.

The four preservice teachers who did not believe that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read expected their struggling readers to remain below grade level at the end of the tutoring sessions. These preservice teachers had low expectations for almost all of their students and believed that it was the responsibility of a resource teacher or the parents to help these students learn to read. Two of the preservice teachers' believed that the struggling reader shared the responsibility for learning to read.

4. The preservice teachers who believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all struggling readers to read accepted responsibility when the students made significant progress in reading.

These preservice teachers believed that their instruction was responsible for the students' progress in reading. They did not cite student factors as the reason for the students' achievement.

5. Preservice teachers' who did not believe that they were capable of or responsible for teaching all struggling readers to read did not accept responsibility when the students made significant progress in reading.

These preservice teachers cited causes intrinsic to the student as the reason for progress in reading. These preservice teachers believed that the student was ready and motivated to learn when the students made progress in reading. They did not cite their instruction as a reason for the students' achievement.

6. The preservice teachers' who believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read accepted responsibility when students did not make significant progress in reading.

These preservice teachers cited teacher and instruction as the reasons for the lack of achievement. When the students did not make progress, these preservice teachers believed that they were responsible for providing more instruction to meet their students'. They did not cite student factors as the reason for the lack of reading progress.

7. The preservice teachers who did not believe that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read did not accept responsibility when students did not make significant progress in reading.

These preservice teachers placed the responsibility for lack of achievement on the students. They cited student factors when the students did not make progress in reading. These preservice teachers described the possible reasons for lack of achievement as the struggling readers were not motivated to learn to read, had low socioeconomic status, lacked developmental readiness, possibly had a reading disability, or had poor behavior. They did not cite their instruction as a reason for the students' lack of achievement even though they often had placed students in frustration level texts and failed to allow students the opportunity to practice targeted strategies.

8. When preservice teachers believed that they were capable of and responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided support that challenged students and allowed them to be active, engaged learners.

The two preservice teachers who believed that they were personally capable of teaching all of their struggling readers to read allowed wait time after prompts and allowed students to apply the strategies and skills. This type of instruction was reflective of their high teacher efficacy and responsibility. These preservice teachers believed that they were capable of teaching their students to read. Therefore, their students would be able to apply the strategies and skills that they taught them.

9. When preservice teachers believed that they were not capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling readers to read, they provided excessive support during instruction and created passive learners.

These preservice teachers did not allow wait time after miscues or strategy prompts and supplied the answers to students rather than allowing the students to practice and apply the strategies and skills themselves. These preservice teachers did not believe

that they were personally capable of or responsible for teaching all of their struggling

readers to read due to the students' lack of parental involvement, lack of motivation, lack

of developmental readiness, lack of exposure to print, low socioeconomic status, possible

reading disability, and poor behavior. This type of instruction reflects the belief that the

preservice teachers would not be able to teach the students to read due to all of the

previous factors. Therefore, the preservice teachers would need to provide excessive

support due to the students' lack of ability to apply these strategies and skills.

10. Preservice teachers' assigned the blame to a reading disability when students

who were struggling with reading acquisition made little or no progress.

Five of the six participants had students who continued to struggle with reading

acquisition and had made little or no progress by the end of the tutoring sessions. Of

those five participants, four of them included in their evaluations that their most

struggling readers probably had a reading disability that interfered with their ability to

make progress even though they had not been tested or diagnosed with any type of

reading disability thus shifting the responsibility for failure to an undocumented trait.

11. Preservice teachers believed that children struggle with reading acquisition

because they lack motivation to read and because of poor behavior.

All of the preservice teachers reported behaviors and motivation factors that

interfered with their students reading progress. The reported behavior and motivation

factors included being distracted, frustrated, uncooperative, temperamental, discouraged,

disruptive, unwilling to try, giving up easily, or unwilling to participate.

Implications

Implications for Preservice Teachers and Teachers

Several recommendations were determined from the results of the current study. Preservice and inservice teachers should explore their own beliefs and professional knowledge and how they influence their teaching behaviors. By examining their own beliefs, professional knowledge, and practice they can make changes that lead to more effective instruction for our struggling readers. Preservice teachers and inservice teachers should consider how their own backgrounds, prior school experiences, professional preparation, and experiences shape their own belief systems and how these belief systems interact with their own expectations, instruction, and evaluation of struggling readers.

Preservice and inservice teachers should specifically examine their teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility. Determining their teacher efficacy beliefs and beliefs about responsibility for teaching struggling readers is an important aspect of understanding how their beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors.

Implications for Teacher Educators

Teacher educators continually strive to better prepare preservice teachers to teach all children to read. The current study provides a descriptive analysis of preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and how those beliefs and professional knowledge influence teaching behaviors. This description of preservice teacher beliefs and professional knowledge provides a framework for understanding some preservice teacher behaviors. The influence of these beliefs and professional knowledge on teaching behaviors is likely to have consequences for the learning outcomes of students who are struggling with reading acquisition.

In order to promote growth among preservice teachers, teacher educators should challenge preservice teachers to make their beliefs explicit, to challenge the adequacy of those beliefs, and provide extended opportunities for preservice teachers to examine and integrate new information into their existing belief systems. As the preservice teachers included in this study were graduating the month the study concluded, it would be unlikely that there would be any change in their beliefs about responsibility or teacher efficacy prior to their entry into the classroom. It is, therefore, important for teacher educators to identify preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge early in their preparation program and provide experiences for students to understand and reflect and inform these beliefs and professional knowledge. If preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge about teaching struggling readers are developed based upon their professional preparation and their personal experiences, teacher educators can utilize this information to design more effective teacher education programs.

If teacher educators are going to develop teachers who are able to effectively teach all children to read, they must work to ensure that preservice teachers' feel confident in their ability to teach all readers. Every teacher needs to feel personally capable of and responsible for teaching every one of their students to read. By empowering all of our preservice teachers with the knowledge and skill and responsibility to teach all readers, teacher educators will help to improve teacher efficacy and responsibility of our preservice teachers.

While further study is needed into preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge and the manner in which they influence teaching behaviors, the current study

will contribute to the knowledge base and assist others in developing and improving teacher education programs.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Further Study</div>

Research on the manner in which preservice and inservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influences their teaching behaviors exists, however, it is not extensive. Specifically, there is little research on the manner in which preservice teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge influence their teaching behaviors for struggling readers. There are several research options that would enhance the findings of the current study.

Researchers could investigate in greater depth a more specific aspect of teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, such as teacher efficacy and the manner in which it influences teaching behaviors. This research might focus on inservice teachers in order to determine what is happening in existing classrooms.

Researchers could examine the complex interaction between teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge, teaching behaviors, and reading achievement.

Researchers could increase the number of participants in order to strengthen the generalizability of the findings. This type of research might include some quantitative measures such as checklists, surveys, and teacher beliefs inventories in addition to the qualitative instruments in order to possibly draw stronger

APPENDIX A
BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET

Name_____

Age_____ Race _____

Telephone_____ e-mail _____

Area of graduate specialization:

How many semester hours have you taken that relate to teaching reading?

Describe briefly each course, field experience, or training you have taken that were specifically related to literacy.

Please describe any other experiences you have had learning about reading, teaching reading, or tutoring reading.

In what school did you complete your student teaching?

In what grade(s) did you complete your student teaching?

Were there some children that you found difficult to teach? Describe one of those children in detail.

In what other school(s) have you had field experiences? (Indicate grades you worked with at each school.)

In what grade(s) do you want to teach during your first five years?

Describe the "ideal" school you hope to teach in.

Describe the "ideal" student you hope to teach.

APPENDIX B
AUTOBIOGRAPHY GUIDE

Please write an autobiography describing yourself and your family. Please describe your own experience learning to read and your school literacy experiences. Please describe your life as a reader and your reading habits. Describe your beliefs about good readers and how children learn to read. Finally, describe your beliefs about why children have difficulty learning to read.

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW ONE GUIDE

Name: _____ Date_____

Do you have any students who are meeting or exceeding your expectations?

 How?

 What do you think accounts for that?

Do you have any students who are not meeting your expectations?

 How?

What do you think accounts for that?

What do you believe needs to be done to help this (these) student(s) meet your

expectations?

Do your students like reading?

How do you know?

What do you think accounts for that?

Do you have students who are able to read a word one time and not the next?

What do you think accounts for that?

Are your students motivated to learn?

How?

In what ways?

What do you think accounts for that?

Do you believe your students are able to sound out words independently in order to

identify unknown words?

Why or why not?

What do you think accounts for that?

Do you believe your students are capable of using various strategies independently

in order to identify an unknown word?

Why or why not?

What do you think accounts for that?

Do you think you have influenced your tutored students' reading achievement?

Explain.

Do you think the classroom teacher has influenced your tutored students' reading achievement?

Explain.

What type of home backgrounds do your tutored students come from? How do you think their background influences their reading achievement?

Explain.

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW TWO GUIDE

Now that you have completed the tutoring experience, do you believe that as a classroom teacher you will be able to teach all of the students in your classroom to read proficiently?

If not, why not? And who will be responsible for teaching the children you are not able to teach to read proficiently?

If yes, describe how.

Do you have any tutored students that you now believe are reading approximately on grade level?

Who?

Why do you think they made such good progress?

Do you have any tutored students that you believe are still not reading on grade level?

Who?

Why do you think these students did not make sufficient progress to be reading on grade level?

From your perspective, what do you think these students need in order to become proficient readers?

Some tutors have tutored students that they felt had too many obstacles to overcome in order to become proficient readers during the tutoring program. Some of these students have been referred to ESE. Whose responsibility do you think it is to teach these struggling students to read?

What do you think these students need in order to become proficient readers?

Do you think classroom management is important when teaching students to read?

Why or why not? In what ways?

Tell me about your classroom management skills.

Describe your expectations for future school progress for each of the students that you tutored.

Do you think that you've made a difference in your tutored students' future school success?

Explain.

Describe what you believe is the role of the reading specialist in regard to struggling readers?

Describe what you believe is the role of the special education teacher in regard to struggling readers?

Describe what you believe is the role of the classroom teacher in regard to struggling readers?

How important is a child's background for reading success? Explain.

As a classroom teacher, do you think you will be able to teach all of your children to read proficiently regardless of their background?

If so, how?

If not, why not?

From your perspective, describe what you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the UFLI tutoring program for teaching struggling readers.

Why do you believe that?

APPENDIX E
OBSERVATION GUIDE

Tutor: Date:

School: Student:

Session #:

Gaining Fluency:

Measuring Progress:

Writing for Reading:

Reading a New Book:

Extending Literacy:

Observation Debriefing:

Tell me about your student's performance today.

What do you think accounts for that?

Did your student meet your expectations today?

   How/Why not?

Tell me about your teaching today.

Did you have to make any modifications to the lesson today? Why?

Why did you _____(anything that stood out)?

APPENDIX F
WRITTEN EVALUATION AND EXPECTATION GUIDE

Describe your student and his or her reading abilities. Include the student's strengths,

weaknesses, and your expectations for this student's progress in reading development.

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Student:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida, conducting research on the beliefs of preservice teachers under the supervision of Dr. Richard Allington. The purpose of this study is to analyze preservice teachers' beliefs about struggling readers.

If you choose to participate in this study, I will collect all data from a short autobiography written by you, a background information sheet, two interviews with you, observations of you while you are teaching struggling readers, debriefing sessions following the observations, and your written evaluations of struggling readers. The data will be collected from January through May 2003, while you are tutoring struggling readers. The focus of these activities is preservice teachers' beliefs about struggling readers. If you participate, the interviews and debriefing sessions will be audiotaped. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. Interviews will be conducted at the UFLI office after I have received a copy of this signed consent from you. Only I will have access to the tape, which I will personally transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. If you participate, your name will be removed from all data records, a pseudonym will be assigned to protect your confidentiality, and all audiotapes will be destroyed after data analysis is complete. All background information, autobiographies, observations, written evaluations, and interviews will remain confidential to the extent provided by law.

There are no known risks for your participation in this study. Potential benefits may include identifying your beliefs about struggling readers and the opportunity to reflect upon these beliefs. Your participation is strictly voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without consequence. For your participation in this study, you will receive $50 compensation. I expect that your participation will not require more than four hours of your time.

I will be willing to discuss this study with you at any time and will answer any questions that arise. Please call me at (407) 695-2728 or my supervisor, Dr. Richard Allington, at 2403 Norman Hall, (352) 392-9191 with any questions or concerns. At the completion of this study, I would like to discuss the findings with you. If you would like to participate in this study, please sign and return to me this copy of the letter. The second copy is 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 dissertation. Any questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UFIRB Office, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone (352) 392-0433. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at anytime without penalty.

Sincerely,

Tabatha Scharlach

     I have read the procedure described above for the study of preservice teachers' beliefs about struggling readers. I agree to participate in the study, and I have received a copy of this description.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

CODES

Beliefs
      Parental involvement
      Motivation
      Readiness
      Access and exposure to print
      Socioeconomic status
      Behavior
      Reading disability
      Teacher efficacy
      Responsibility

Expectations
      Text level
      Grade level
      Reading strategies
      Reading disability
      Behavior

Instruction
      Modeling
      Wait Time
      Prompting
      Providing answers
      Text

Evaluation
      Text level
      Grade level
      Reading strategies
      Reading disability
      Behavior

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tabatha Dobson Scharlach was born in Jacksonville, Illinois, to Robert and Sharon Dobson. She graduated from the University of Central Florida with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. She returned to the University of Central Florida to receive a Master of Education degree in elementary and early childhood education.

Tabatha was previously a primary classroom teacher in Lake County, Florida, and Seminole County, Florida. She has worked as a reading resource teacher for children in grades two through five. Tabatha has taught preservice teachers in undergraduate coursework and has worked as a reading researcher and as a professional developer.

Tabatha, her husband, and two children reside in Orlando, Florida. She is currently the Research Coordinator for Reading First Professional Development and Florida Literacy and Reading Excellence at the University of Central Florida.