Literacy Coaching and Preschool Teacher's Implementation of Literacy Instructional Practices

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LITERACY COACHING AND PRESCHOOL TEACHER’S IMPLEMENTATION OF LITERACY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

Literacy Coaching and Preschool Teacher’s Implementation of Literacy Instructional Practices

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Literacy coaching has gained prominence during the past decade as a professional development strategy for changing teacher practices. The purpose of this study was to identify whether a coaching intervention increased teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine if there was a relationship between teacher’s stages of concern and their level of implementation of literacy instructional practices. Teachers participated in a six-week literacy coaching intervention. The study was a pre-post intervention group mixed methods design with both quantitative and qualitative measures. The participants of the study included eight preschool teachers and one literacy coach. Data sources included an online Stages of Concern questionnaire that teachers completed at the beginning and at the end of the study. Researcher assessed teacher’s implementation of five targeted literacy practices (Phonological Awareness, Reading, Vocabulary, Writing, and Oral Language/Extended Conversations) during classroom observations with a Teacher Implementation Rubric. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the teachers and literacy coach. Results of the data indicated a statistically significant change in teacher’s
implementation of literacy instructional practices. The teachers improved on their overall implementation of five targeted literacy practices. There were also statistically significant differences at two of the teacher’s stages of concern. Stage 3 (Management) decreased and Stage 6 (Refocusing) increased in overall concern. This study has implications for early childhood literacy coaching and the implementation of literacy instructional practices.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Literacy coaching has gained prominence during the past decade as a professional development strategy for changing teacher practices and student outcomes (Dole, Liang, Watkins, & Wiggins, 2006; L'Allier, Elish-Piper, & Bean, 2010; Roller, 2006). The push for highly-qualified teachers has lead to educational research designed to determine the most effective types of professional development (Dole et al., 2006). Professional development composed of primarily educational workshops has resulted in gains in knowledge, but has not been shown to be very effective in helping teachers transfer learning into practice (Showers & Joyce, 2002).

A transfer of learning to practice requires professional development that includes theory, demonstration, practice, and coaching (Showers & Joyce, 2002). Coaching is emerging as an effective professional development strategy (Dole et al., 2006). It is not a new strategy (Joyce & Showers, 1981, 1982; Showers & Joyce, 1996); however, there has recently been renewed interest in its implementation.

Coaching, within an educational setting, is a form of job-embedded, ongoing professional development support that takes place primarily in a teacher’s classroom and is designed to help teachers acquire, enhance, or refine specific teaching behaviors (International Reading Association, 2004). A coach (master teacher) works one-on-one with other teachers. Coaches often perform a variety of roles including being a content expert, promoting reflective teaching, and facilitating collaboration (Mraz, Kissel, Algozzine, Babb, & Foxworth, 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). One of the key
elements of coaching is that it allows coaches to differentiate instruction in meeting the unique needs of each individual teacher. It is recommended that coaching be on-going, relevant, intense, and allow teachers time to practice, reflect, and change teaching instruction within a safe environment (Showers & Joyce, 2002; Stover, Kissel, Haag, & Shoniker, 2011). Coaches should be facilitators and collaborators, not evaluators (Stover et al., 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Coaching within a non-evaluative role allows coaches to partner with teachers in the process of change (Stover et al., 2011).

One specific type of coach is the literacy coach. The main role of a literacy coach is to improve literacy instructional practices through teacher support, assessment, and leadership (International Reading Association, 2004; Mraz et al., 2011; Toll, 2005, 2009). Responsibilities of literacy coaches could include selecting reading materials, co-teaching, and modeling lessons (Kissel, Mraz, Algozzine, & Stover, 2011; Mraz, Algozzine, & Watson, 2008; Mraz et al., 2011). Generally, literacy coaching is designed to help teachers improve instructional practices that will increase student language and literacy outcomes (Powell, Steed, & Diamond, 2010).

It has been recommended that literacy coaches have a strong background in literacy theory and content, classroom teaching experience, skills in engaging teachers in changing literacy practices, and an understanding of the school’s culture (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011; Bean, 2009). In a study by L’Allier and Elish-Piper (2006) the highest student reading gains came from classrooms supported by coaches with reading endorsements. Coaches should have specialized knowledge across grade levels and the ability to work successfully with adult learners. They need to be able to help teachers reflect and solve problems, explain the results of assessments, develop plans for
differentiated instruction, model instruction, and provide teachers with options on how to improve reading instruction (L'Allier et al., 2010). Bean (2009) stated that effective coaches are deliberate and flexible, intentional and opportunistic, as well as available and accessible. Coaches are more successful when they become the literacy leaders within their schools as they work with administrators and teachers on decisions related to literacy instruction (L'Allier et al., 2010).

The needs of teachers (i.e., adult learners) vary greatly. Teachers have a variety of educational backgrounds and teaching experience. Therefore, coaches need to be respectful of how each adult learns best. To be effective coaches must take time to build relationships (Bean, 2009). Some of the essential skills of a coach are the ability to establish trust, maintain confidentiality, respect teacher's expertise, and communicate effectively (Knight, 2009; Rainville & Jones, 2008). Literacy coaching has been shown to have a higher level of effectiveness when teachers have multiple opportunities to reflect on their teaching (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011).

Coaches perform a variety of tasks depending on the school, district, and state in which they are employed. They are often required to determine the amount, sequence, and duration of content instruction provided to each teacher (Powell, Steed, et al., 2010). Although it is often assumed that literacy coaches spend the majority of their time working directly with teachers and students, research has demonstrated otherwise. In one study, only 28% of the coaches’ time was spent working with teachers and students (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007). Other studies have documented similar results ranging from 29% to 48% (Bean, Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, & Zigmond, 2010; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2010; Scott, Cortina, & Carlisle, 2012). It has been recommended
that at least 50% of coach's time be spent working directly with teachers (L'Allier et al., 2010). When teachers received higher amounts of coaching, students had greater gains on reading assessments (Bean et al., 2010).

The majority of the research on literacy coaching has focused on identifying the roles and responsibilities of coaches (Deussen et al., 2007; Dole et al., 2006; Kissel et al., 2011; Lynch & Ferguson, 2010; Mraz et al., 2008; Rainville & Jones, 2008); and the amount and type of coaching teachers received (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Powell, Diamond, Burchinal, & Koehler, 2010; Scott et al., 2012; Shidler, 2009; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Recently researchers have examined the impact of coaching on teacher knowledge and pedagogical practices (Blachowicz, Obrochta, & Fogelberg, 2005; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Hsieh, Hemmeter, McCollum, & Ostrosky, 2009; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Neuman & Wright, 2010) and student outcomes (Bean et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Cusumano, Armstrong, Cohen, & Todd, 2006; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Feighan & Heeren, 2009; Garet et al., 2008; Mohler, Yun, Carter, & Kasak, 2009; Shidler, 2009).

There are many factors that can influence coaching. Some of these factors include school leadership (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011), coaches experience (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011), teacher’s openness and willingness to change (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011; Bean, 2009), and the number of non-coaching tasks a coach is required to complete. There is often an assumption that coaching leads to changes in classroom practices that increase student learning. The results of this assumption have been mixed. Coaching does not always result in higher student achievement (Cusumano et al., 2006; Garet et al., 2008). Coaches sometimes encounter challenges or barriers that prevent them from being
effective in helping teachers change student outcomes (Lynch & Ferguson, 2010). One
of the challenges of coaching experienced teachers (more than 10 years) is that traditional
coeaching methods are not always seen as adding value to the teaching experience
(Atteberry & Bryk, 2011). Coached teachers willing to try new strategies and create
student centered curriculum have changed instructional practices (Vanderburg &
Stephens, 2010).

Therefore, coaches have the potential to be agents for change as they instruct,
influence, and inspire improvements in teacher practices (Bean, 2009). Additionally,
teachers have indicated that they value coaches and that coaching has changed their
beliefs and practices (Bean et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). However, the
dynamics of the teacher-coach relationship can be influenced by how engaged or active a
teacher is in the process and their ability to master the practices (Powell, Steed, et al.,
2010). Teachers may not be able to change instructional practices until their individual
concerns are addressed.

**Concerns-Based Adoption Model**

Educators have been challenged to implement research based practices in order to
improve student outcomes (Roach, Kratochwill, & Frank, 2009). First, the research
based practices need to be identified and then implemented. However, implementation
(with fidelity) of new practices and programs is not always achieved due to many
complex factors such as a teacher's willingness to change instructional practices (Roach
et al., 2009). Hord and Hall (2006) proposed that change facilitation or making change
happen required six distinct functions. First, a shared vision of change must be
developed and communicated. Second, resources must be provided to support the
implementation of the change. Third, educators need support and professional
development to learn how to implement change. Fourth, they need to understand the
change required followed by periodic checks on implementation. Fifth, continuous
assistance is required for implementation. Sixth, an environment must be created that is
supportive of the change.

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) is a useful framework that can help describe teachers’ concerns and behaviors during the implementation of a new innovation (Hall & Hord, 2006). The model is based on the premise that teachers’ concerns must be addressed before they can effectively implement a new innovation. Teachers’ level of use or implementation of the innovation will vary and the CBAM can help to identify any additional supports that may be needed to move teachers along the continuum of implementation.

The CBAM has been used in studies on the adoption of technology (Al-Rawajfth, Soon Fook, & Idros, 2010; Newhouse, 2001; Overbaugh & Lu, 2009; Rakes & Casey, 2002; Watzke, 2007), professional development initiatives (Saunders, 2012), national standards (Faircloth, Smith, & Hall, 2001), and implementation of mathematical curriculum (Christou, Eliophotou-Menon, & Philippou, 2004; Tunks & Weller, 2009).

The CBAM is composed of three components: Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, and Innovation Configuration.

Stages of Concern

The Stages of Concern includes the following:

Stage 0 – Awareness: During this stage, a teacher is either unaware of the innovation or unconcerned about the innovation.
Stage 1 - Informational: At this stage, the teacher has expressed interest in the innovation or a desire to learn more about the innovation.

Stage 2 - Personal: The personal stage focuses on the teacher’s concern about how the innovation will affect them personally.

Stage 3 - Management: The teacher is concerned about how and what to implement, in addition to management of the available resources.

Stage 4 - Consequences: During this stage, a teacher wants to know how the innovation will impact students.

Stage 5 - Collaboration: At this stage the teacher is interested in collaborating with others and sharing information on the innovation.

Stage 6 - Refocusing: Teachers are focused on the benefits of the innovation. They are beginning to think of ways to improve and refine the innovation (Loucks & Hall, 1979).

The stages of concern fall into four main categories. Category one, “unrelated”, corresponds to Stage 0. Category two, “concern for self”, includes Stage 1 and Stage 2. Category three, “concern for task”, is comprised of Stage 3. Category four, “concern for impact”, includes Stages 4, 5, and 6. Having an understanding and awareness of teachers’ concerns at each stage can help determine the specific support strategies that may be needed in order to increase higher levels of implementation. An individual's peak and secondary stages of concern can be identified using the Stages of Concern questionnaire. This information can then be used to direct coaching efforts that address teacher's stages of concern.
Levels of Use

The second component of the CBAM is Levels of Use which determines whether the innovation is being implemented and to what extent it is being implemented. The level of implementation may range from teachers actively resisting the innovation to being fully engaged in the innovation. The Levels of Use component focuses on the actual behaviors and actions of the teacher in relationship to the innovation. The Levels of Use are as follows:

Level 0 (Nonuse or Unaware): During this level, the teacher has little or no involvement in the use of the innovation.

Level I (Orientation): The teacher is gaining information on the innovation.

Level II (Preparation): The teacher is preparing to use the innovation.

These first three levels are based on nonuse of the innovation. The next five levels are based on actual use of the innovation.

Level III (Mechanical Use): Use of the innovation by the teacher is disjointed and mechanical. There is little thought or reflection on the innovation use.

Level IVa (Routine Use): Use of the innovation by the teacher is routine. No changes are being made to improve practices or student outcomes.

Level IVb (Refinement): Use of the innovation by the teacher includes strategies to improve student outcomes. Teachers use student performance data to guide implementation practices.

Level V (Integration): Use of the innovation includes collaboration or coordination with other colleagues to increase impact on student outcomes.
Level VI (Renewal): Use of the innovation is being reevaluated. Major changes are being initiated to increase student outcomes. New goals are being developed.

Movement to higher levels along the Levels of Use continuum is generally demonstrated by an action that signals increased commitment to utilization of the innovation. A focused interview procedure is conducted to determine the Levels of Use. Coaching has the potential to move teachers to higher Levels of Use by providing support and guidance during the implementation process.

**Innovation Configuration**

An Innovation Configuration or rubric (created by the leaders of the innovation) charts the implementation of the innovation on specific tasks or behaviors. The rubric provides a basis for measuring performance on a rating scale continuum (unacceptable practices to optimal practices) for the essential elements of implementation. Elements are described in discrete behavioral terms. Performance ratings using the rubric are generally obtained through classroom observation of the innovation.

The Innovation Configuration can then be used to demonstrate whether teachers are implementing practices with low, medium, or high fidelity. Fidelity of implementation has been shown to have a positive effect on student performance (George, Hall, & Uchiyama, 2000). Scale scores from an Innovation Configuration can be summarized to determine implementation fidelity by each teacher. The scores help to identify the components of an innovation that are being successfully implemented and the components that need additional support. The CBAM provides a comprehensive model for determining the implementation of an innovation.
Historical Overview of Literacy Coaching

Historical Information

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title 1 provided funding for reading education for at risk students. Title 1 teachers or reading specialists were hired to teach struggling students to read. Children were pulled out of their regular classrooms and given additional reading instruction. Unfortunately, this model failed to improve the overall reading proficiency of at risk students (Dole, 2004; Dole et al., 2006). The 2000 ESEA (Title 1) also provided resources for at risk students; however, the strategy for improving student outcomes in reading had changed. The new focus was on making sure all teachers were qualified to teach reading using research-based programs and strategies. Informal assessment was to be used to help teachers monitor student progress throughout the year and data were to guide instructional practices. Classroom teachers were seen as a critical component in achieving student academic gains.

The 2000 ESEA legislation also led to a shift from having a traditional reading specialist (working with students) to hiring reading or literacy coaches (working with teachers) (Dole et al., 2006). Federal grant funds have been awarded to states and school districts (i.e., Reading First, Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy) to improve reading and student achievement (Mraz et al., 2008). Reading First was a formula grant awarded to states and districts between 2002 and 2008 to provide early reading instruction to children in Kindergarten through third grade (United States Department of Education, 2009). Reading First grants targeted children from families with incomes below the poverty line (United States Department of Education, 2009). Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program awarded discretionary grants to six states in 2010 to
advance literacy skills in children from birth to grade 12 (United States Department of Education, 2012).

It has been recommended that literacy coaching focus on supporting teachers in using instructional teaching strategies that have been shown to be effective in building young children’s language and literacy skills (National Institute for Literacy, 2008). The National Early Literacy Panel conducted an extensive meta-analysis of early literacy research to identify the specific instructional practices and types of interventions that were predictive of later literacy achievement (National Institute for Literacy, 2008). Approximately 500 research studies were analyzed. Eleven variables were identified. These included phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, writing, print knowledge, reading readiness, vocabulary, and oral language. The most effective instructional practices were found in code-focused, shared reading, language-enhancement, and parent-home interventions. Each type of intervention improved specific types of literacy skills (i.e., shared reading enhanced print knowledge and oral language skills). Interventions that combined multiple skills such as teaching phonological awareness skills with early decoding skills had the strongest student outcomes (National Institute for Literacy, 2008). Therefore, coaches must keep abreast of the latest early literacy research in order to facilitate teacher’s implementation of effective literacy instructional practices.

Currently the majority of literacy coaches work at the elementary level with a smaller percentage of coaches at the preschool, middle school, and high school levels (Roller, 2006). Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy, a federal literacy initiative, focuses on improving the literacy outcomes of children from birth to high school graduation (United States Department of Education, 2012). The initiative has included
early childhood as a special focus for literacy coaching (United States Department of Education, 2012).

Early childhood literacy coaching should be focused on emergent literacy which is defined as a child's knowledge of reading and writing skills before they learn how to actually read or write (Mohler et al., 2009). A major emphasis needs to target children from families with limited resources. Researchers have found a correlation between parents with low socioeconomic status and smaller vocabularies (Hart & Risley, 1995; Mohler et al., 2009). These parents had fewer conversations with their children (Hart & Risley, 1995; Mohler et al., 2009). In fact, Hart and Risley (1995) determined that children from families on welfare heard approximately 616 words each hour compared to children from working class families who heard 1,251 words. Children from professional families heard 2,152 words. It was calculated that the cumulative difference in vocabulary words heard by children from welfare families versus professional families over a four-year period was over 30 million words (Hart & Risley, 1995).

The lack of literacy exposure in the early years can result in children who are less prepared for school (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). As a result these children struggle to keep up with their peers in academic pursuits (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). A strong correlation was found between literacy development and school achievement (Strickland & Riley-Ayers, 2006). According to the Center on Children and Families at Brookings, only forty-eight percent of economically disadvantaged children are ready for school compared to seventy-five percent of children from families with moderate to high incomes (Isaacs, 2012). Therefore, literacy coaching efforts targeting the instructional
practices of preschool teachers is critical in bridging the achievement gap of at risk children.

**Statement of the Problem**

Resources have been, and currently are being, dedicated to increasing the literacy levels of economically disadvantaged children. These efforts have produced mixed results (Bean et al., 2010; Cusumano et al., 2006; Dole et al., 2006; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Garet et al., 2008). The problem was that the most effective methods for increasing the literacy levels of young children are yet to be determined. It has not been discovered why some types of professional development are effective at changing instructional practices while other types are not effective. Coaching is emerging as a professional development method that is designed to improve student outcomes by enhancing teacher’s literacy instructional skills (Bean et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011). Some researchers have documented positive results by relating literacy coaching to student outcomes; whereas, other research has not shown significant results (Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Cusumano et al., 2006; Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011; Garet et al., 2008). Therefore, determining the types of coaching that enhance teacher’s literacy instructional practices merits further study (Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Powell, Steed, et al., 2010).

Research was also needed to determine what factors predicted a teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices. A related topic was whether teacher’s concerns during the coaching process impacted their ability to implement instructional literacy practices. A greater understanding of the dynamics of the literacy coaching process would increase the knowledge base in this area.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify whether a coaching intervention increased teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine if there was a relationship between teacher’s level of concern and their level of implementation of literacy instructional practices. The research questions for this study included:

1. Does a coaching intervention increase a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?
2. Does the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching, or educational level predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?
3. Does the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum (pre-post) predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?
4. Does the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum change during a literacy coaching intervention (pre-post)?
5. What types of literacy coaching activities do teachers and coaches perceive to be the most effective in changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices?

Significance of the Study

Literacy coaching has gained significant prominence in the past decade (Dole et al., 2006). A considerable amount of federal funding has been allocated to increasing student outcomes in reading and writing through professional development and coaching (Bean et al., 2010; Shidler, 2009). Researchers have studied the roles and responsibilities
of coaches and how they spend their time (Kissel et al., 2011; Lynch & Ferguson, 2010; Mraz et al., 2008). They have examined the relationship between coaching and student outcomes (Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Hindman & Wasik, 2012; Mohler et al., 2009); however, few studies have assessed whether coaching could improve a teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices.

There was a gap in the literature in determining whether a teacher’s level of concern correlated to the teacher’s level of implementation of targeted literacy instructional practices. Research was needed to determine if a literacy coaching intervention changes a teacher’s level of concern. Additionally, the researcher sought to determine what types of coaching practices were perceived by preschool teachers and coaches to be the most effective in changing teacher’s instructional literacy practices. Therefore, this study expanded the knowledge base on literacy coaching and factors related to teacher’s implementation of literacy practices.

It was predicted that a teacher’s stage of concern was related to the teacher’s level of implementation of literacy teaching practices. It was anticipated that coaching would increase teacher’s level of implementation and teacher’s stage of concern continuum would change during the literacy coaching intervention. Higher amounts of coaching would lead to higher levels of teacher implementation practices. Based on the literature it was projected that the types of coaching that would be perceived as the most effective would include modeling lessons, co-teaching lessons, and conferencing (Bean et al., 2010; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011).

There were many potential benefits from this study. First, the identification of the most effective types of coaching practices can direct future coaching efforts and
maximize limited resources. Second, determining whether there was a relationship between teacher’s stages of concern and implementation of literacy instructional practices can provide direction in the creation of specific coaching strategies that address teacher concerns and resistance to coaching. The multi-faceted components of this study added to the knowledge base on literacy coaching. The results of the study can provide useful information to organizations implementing literacy coaching initiatives.

**Limitations of the Study**

Data collection was limited to coaches and teachers in preschool programs in one segment of a southwestern state. The sample was a convenience sample of targeted schools and programs in a high risk area. Some of the results were based on self-reports and observations which might have been influenced by personal biases. The length of the study might have limited some of the findings as different results may have been obtained with a longer multi-year study.

**Definition of Terms**

**Coaching:** A form of job-embedded, ongoing professional development support that takes place primarily in the classroom and is designed to help teachers acquire, enhance, or refine specific teaching behaviors (International Reading Association, 2004; Toll, 2005).

**Literacy:** Includes the ability to listen, speak, read, and write (National Institute for Literacy, 2008).

**Emergent literacy:** A child's knowledge of reading and writing skills before they have learned how to read and write words (National Institute for Literacy, 2008).
Types of Coaching Activities (Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Scott et al., 2012)

- Observe – watching the teacher and classroom activities
- Co-plan Lesson – plan a lesson with the classroom teacher
- Co-teach Lesson – teach with the classroom teacher
- Model a Lesson – demonstrate a lesson for the teacher
- Share resources – provide the teacher with resources and materials
- Create Action Plan – create an action plan with the teacher that includes changing specific environmental or instructional practices
- Conference – Pre or Post – having a discussion with the teacher about any of the coaching activities and providing feedback from teacher observations
- Change Physical Environment – physically change the classroom environment
- Work Directly with Students – work directly with students or a student
- Assessment data (collect or discuss) – collect or discuss specific assessment data

Literacy Content Focus (National Institute for Literacy, 2008)

- Phonological Awareness: Being able to hear and play with smaller sounds in words. Teaching behaviors or instructional materials that focus on phonological awareness skills: Initial sounds in words, rhyming, letter sounds, and syllables in words.
- Reading: Is a process of deriving meaning from text. Teaching behaviors or instructional materials that include: Shared reading, read aloud, dialogic reading, interactive reading, and/or children’s independent reading activities.
- Dialogic reading: Interactive method of reading with children. An adult helps children become the teller of the story through questioning and prompts.
- Vocabulary: Teaching behaviors or instructional materials that include introducing and using new and challenging words.

- Writing: Ability to represent language in a textual form. Teaching behaviors or instructional materials that include: Pre-writing skills activities, modeling writing, dictating children’s words, opportunities to write in journals or make signs.

- Oral Language/Extended Conversations: Speaking and listening in order to communicate or converse with others. Talking with children individually or in small groups. Meaningful conversations focused on the home-school connection.

**Stages of Concern (George, Hall, & Stiegelbauer, 2006)**

- Awareness: Teachers have little concern or involvement with the innovation.

- Informational: Teachers have a general interest in the innovation and would like to receive more information about it.

- Personal: Teachers want to know how the innovation will affect them personally.

- Management: Teachers are interested in the process and tasks of the innovation and how they can manage its implementation. This may include gathering data and implementing the innovation efficiently.

- Consequence: Teachers are focused on the innovations impact on students and how they can refine the innovation to have positive impacts on students.

- Collaboration: Teachers are interested in how other teachers are implementing the innovation, share information on the innovation, or cooperate with other teachers in implementing the innovation.

- Refocusing: Teachers consider the benefits of the innovation and think of additional ways that might make it work even better.
Levels of Use (Hall, Dirksen, & George, 2006)

The first three levels are based on nonuse of the innovation and the next five levels are based on actual use of the innovation.

- Level 0 (Nonuse or Unaware): During this level the teacher has little or no involvement in the use of the innovation.
- Level I (Orientation): The teacher is gaining information on the innovation.
- Level II (Preparation): The teacher is preparing to use the innovation.
- Level III (Mechanical Use): Use of the innovation by the teacher is disjointed and mechanical. There is little thought or reflection on the innovation use.
- Level IVa (Routine Use): Use of the innovation by the teacher is routine and no changes are being made to improve practices or student outcomes.
- Level IVb (Refinement): Use of the innovation by the teacher includes strategies to improve student outcomes and use data to direct implementation.
- Level V (Integration): Use of the innovation by the teacher includes collaboration or coordination with other colleagues to increase impact on student outcomes.
- Level VI (Renewal): Use of the innovation by the teacher is being reevaluated and major changes are being initiated to increase student outcomes and new goals are being developed.

Innovation Configuration or Rubric: A method of charting the implementation of an innovation on specific tasks or behaviors. The rubric provides a continuum from unacceptable practices to optimal practices for the essential elements of implementation (Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006; Loucks & Hall, 1979).
Summary

This chapter provided an introduction on coaching and specifically, literacy coaching. Research on the topic was summarized. A description of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model and its three main components (Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, and Innovation Configuration) was presented. This was followed by a historical overview of literacy coaching and the statement of the problem related to this study. The research questions and purpose of the study were described as well as the significance of the research and limitations to the study. The chapter concluded with a definition of key terms.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter includes a review of the related literature in the focus areas of literacy coaching and the Concerns-Based Adoption Model. The purpose of this chapter is to provide detailed information on studies related to the main topics. The literature review process is described followed by the criteria for selection of included studies. The studies related to literacy coaching are organized by four main topics: Roles and Responsibilities of Literacy Coaches, Amount and Type of Literacy Coaching, Literacy Coaching Impact on Teacher Knowledge and Practices, and Literacy Coaching and Student Outcomes. This is followed by a review of studies related to the implementation of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model within educational settings. The chapter concludes with a summary of the information given.

Literature Review Search Procedures

A systematic search through the following databases: Academic Search Premier, Educational Full Text (H.W. Wilson), Education Research Complete, ERIC, Professional Development Collection, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and Teacher Reference Center was conducted. The following descriptors were used: literacy coaching, literacy, coaching, mentoring, early childhood, preschool, stages of concern, and concerns-based adoption model. Next, a search of the bibliographies of identified articles was conducted to identify additional references.

Criteria for Selection

The articles selected for inclusion in this review on literacy coaching needed to have a focus on young children (preschool or elementary school), professional
development (training or coaching/mentoring), and/or early literacy. The main focus was on research published in the past five years (2007-2012). The articles related to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model were selected from studies on the implementation of educational innovations.

**Review and Analysis of Literature Related to Literacy Coaching**

The studies have been grouped by the following topics: Roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches, amount and types of coaching, literacy coaching impact on teacher knowledge and practices, and literacy coaching and student outcomes. This is followed by a review of several studies focused on Concern-Based Adaption Model in educational settings.

**Roles and Responsibilities of Literacy Coaches**

The roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches has been studied to determine both the perceptions of what various groups think a literacy coach should be doing contrasted with what coaches are actually doing. Differences have been found between perceptions and reality.

Mraz, Algozzine, and Watson (2008) conducted a study to explore the perceptions and expectations of principals, teachers, and school-based literacy specialists regarding the roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches. The study took place with eighty-five teachers, six principals, and eight literacy coaches from six high-risk elementary schools. Participants completed a survey on roles and responsibilities. Additionally, the school principals, one teacher from each school, and the lead literacy coaches participated in semi-structured interviews.
A conceptual framework was developed following an analysis of the qualitative data (Mraz et al., 2008). Principals’ perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches were different than the teachers and the literacy coaches perceptions in regards to student assessment and instruction. The principals perceived that coaches should be less involved in assessing and instructing students and more involved in working with teachers. Other roles such as coordinating the schools reading program and being a resource to classroom teachers were important to all three groups. The differences on the written survey were minimal; however, the interviews reflected some distinct differences between the three groups. Teachers and literacy coaches strongly expressed that the job of a literacy coach needed to be more clearly defined to promote more consistency across schools and school districts. They also recommended that the literacy coach’s job description be clearly articulated to principals and teachers so that expectations matched actions. The researchers also recommended that coaches be engaged in ongoing professional development to keep up-to-date on research based practices.

Lynch and Ferguson (2010) sought to identify the roles, beliefs, and practices of literacy coaches. They were also interested in identifying any barriers or issues related to coaching. Thirteen coaches from Ontario working in Kindergarten to sixth grade classrooms were interviewed for 35 to 45 minutes.

Coaches described their roles to include designing lessons, observing teachers, providing feedback, co-teaching, modeling lessons, sharing teaching strategies, analyzing data, and working with students and teams of teachers. The three most common activities were related to planning and presenting lessons. These activities included designing
lessons, modeling lessons, observing teachers, and debriefing with teachers. The coaches performed higher amounts of data analysis at the higher grades.

Some of the barriers to coaching that were identified included non-involvement by the principals, resistant teachers, too many schools or classrooms to coach, role uncertainty, and limited resources. Coaches also wanted more time with the teachers and stated that teachers needed release time to meet with them. Coaches shared that resistant teachers often had a fear that they were being evaluated. Other teachers were only interested in receiving materials. Furthermore, these resistant teachers were not interested in receiving strategies to improve teaching.

The interviewed coaches provided some suggestions on how to overcome the barriers. The suggestions included providing feedback only if requested and valuing the teacher’s perspective during the process. These strategies were designed to decrease teacher resistance to coaching. Coaches also stated that finding common ground, taking time to develop relationships, and having principals’ support coaching was critically important to success. Furthermore, the coaches indicated that it was important to clarify the coach’s roles, limit the number of teachers to five to ten per coach, provide release time for teachers, offer teachers professional development, and develop professional networks.

In another study, Kissel, Mraz, Algozzine, and Stover (2011) examined the roles and perspectives of twenty early childhood literacy coaches. The coaches completed a survey to identify specific behaviors that should or should not be high priorities of a person in a coaching role. The survey also included two open ended questions asking
coaches to describe current responsibilities and indicate any recommended changes to future coaching roles. Five of the coaches participated in interviews.

The results of the study indicated that coaches gave high priority ratings to identifying areas of strength, establishing rapport with teachers, discussing curriculum, using student data to inform instruction, and identifying student strengths and needs. The researchers categorized these high-priority roles into three main categories: coach as a content expert, coach as a promoter of self-reflection, and coach as a professional development facilitator. A low priority role was the coach as a facilitator of the school-wide literacy community. Most coaches did not view community outreach as an important component of their roles and responsibilities.

The roles and responsibilities of coaches have been shown to vary. Barriers to coaching have also been identified. Coaches have stated that having clear roles and responsibilities are essential to coaching.

**Amount and Types of Literacy Coaching**

Researchers have sought to identify how much coaching teachers are receiving and the specific types of coaching teachers are being given. Factors that influence the amount of coaching have been identified. Coaching practices such as the literacy content covered, types of improvement plans being developed, and coaching activities have also been explored. According to Shidler (2009) more coaching did not lead to higher student outcomes.

Scott, Cortina, and Carlisle (2012) conducted a study to determine the amount of time coaches spent working directly with teachers and students. They also looked at conditions that facilitated successful coach-teacher interactions. One hundred and five
coaches from Michigan Reading First schools participated in the study (only 37 provided coaching log data). Data were collected from a coach’s questionnaire, knowledge survey, coaching logs, and teacher questionnaire. Three thousand and thirty-eight interactions were analyzed. Results indicated that only 16% of the coach’s time was spent teaching or coaching teachers and 13% of their time was spent working directly with students. Coaches were more likely to model lessons and put greater emphasis on the topics of reading comprehension and phonological awareness in classrooms where the teachers had less knowledge of literacy practices. In contrast, coaches shared research findings and spent more time planning with more knowledgeable teachers. The rest of the coach’s time was spent in assessments, planning, team meetings, and other administrative tasks. Overall, teachers were satisfied with the coaching they received and saw coaches as a resource for improving literacy practices. However, resistant teachers rated coaches less favorably. Teachers also indicated they preferred meeting with the coach in a small group rather than one-on-one. They stated a preference for professional development activities that included hands-on activities. Modeling and co-teaching were seen as important practices in relationship to implementing literacy instruction practices in the classroom.

In a longitudinal study, Atteberry and Bryk (2011) examined the factors that influenced the level of coaching teachers received. The study included 250 kindergartens, first and second grade teachers in 17 schools within eight different states. The teachers attended a 40-hour workshop series on literacy practices and received approximately two coaching sessions per month. The scope, frequency, and distribution of coaching tasks were explored along with the differences in coaching based on various attributes of both
the teachers and the coaches. These attributes included the level of teaching experience, literacy expertise of teachers, and teacher’s willingness or resistance to engage and implement innovative practices. The influences of the school leadership, school norms, and teacher autonomy within the school were also assessed. Data were collected from coaching logs and surveys of teachers and coaches. Teachers received 13 to 39 hours of coaching over five semesters for a total of 3,703 coaching sessions. The average coaching session was 73 minutes.

The results from the study indicated that teachers with a more positive orientation to coaching, more autonomy, and a willingness to engage in innovative practices received more hours of coaching. Some teachers with less teaching experience (less than 10 years) also received more coaching. Coaches that had coached longer also provided more direct coaching to teachers. Not surprisingly, teachers at schools where coaches had higher numbers of teachers to coach received less coaching. The school leadership and climate also influenced the level of coaching. Schools with higher commitment and support for coaching received higher levels of coaching. The researchers recommended that future studies determine the impact of coaching on teacher instructional practices and student learning.

Powell, Steed, and Diamond (2009) examined the coaching practices of five literacy coaches within 31 Head Start classrooms. Sixty-eight classroom teachers participated in the study. They attended five full-day workshops on literacy topics and received coaching for approximately 12 months. A coaching log was kept to determine the coaches’ literacy content coverage, pedagogical emphasis, and the progression of improvement plans. Global classroom quality was also measured using the ECERS-R:

Two hundred and eight coaching sessions were conducted and 1,504 improvement plans developed. Ninety percent of the improvement plans focused on literacy topics and most of the plans featured whole group instruction. The highest numbers of improvement plans were developed in the area of letter-word knowledge and the least were in the area of phonological awareness. It was recommended that future research focus on identification of the essential features of coaching.

In another study Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) sought to determine what coaching practices were helpful for teachers. The researchers analyzed interviews from 35 teachers that had received coaching for three years. The teachers taught kindergarten to fifth grade and were participating in the South Carolina Reading Initiative. The teachers in this study attended bi-monthly study groups and received coaching. This study was one of the few studies that looked at what teachers valued about coaches and the specific changes teachers made in beliefs and practices due to coaching. The researchers used constant comparative methodology for the qualitative analysis.

The researchers identified three main ways teachers valued coaches. First, teachers indicated that coaches were collaborators and helped them collaborate with other teachers. Second, coaches were supporters in the classroom as they provided encouragement, demonstrations, and facilitation. Third, the coaches were teachers of research-based practices. Teachers also valued the fact that coaches were accessible and helped them with many different tasks. They stated that they were more comfortable with taking risks and had become more reflective of their teaching. The teachers saw coaches as a resource that helped them understand “why” they were using certain
instructional practices. Teachers also increased their understanding of educational theories and research-based techniques. They noted a change in their beliefs and then a change in practices as they learned new ways to teach.

Four types of teacher changes were identified. Teachers were empowered to try something new, they used more authentic assessments, their teaching was based on educational theory and research, and instruction focused on the needs of the students. Teachers perceived a change in their teaching practices as they became a student-centered facilitator. They indicated a shift in theory and the philosophy of teaching which led to a shift in practices. Teachers saw themselves differently (i.e., less controlling). They valued the coaches’ support and appreciated that coaches were not in an evaluative position. The researchers concluded that the coaches were able to encourage growth throughout the study which promoted the implementation of research based practices. They also indicated a need for more research on the specific actions and communication techniques coaches utilize to change teaching practices.

Shidler (2009) was interested in determining if the amount of coaching a teacher received impacted teacher efficacy and student outcomes. The three year study featured different types of coaching each year. The first year focused on specific emergent literacy content and teaching methods. The teachers received 40 hours of instruction on translating theory to practice. During the second and third years a less specific coaching model was used and coaching time was increased. The participants included 12 Head Start classrooms and 360 children in Central Florida. Ninety percent of the children were considered economically disadvantaged and the children were ethnically diverse.
The assessment used included the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III (PPVT-III) and the Alphabet Letter Recognition assessment. Non-parametric and hierarchical linear modeling procedures were used to analyze the data. The results during year one included a significant correlation between alphabet letter recognition skills and hours of coaching received. The results of the study indicated that there was no correlation with the PPVT-III gain scores and coaching. During Year 2 and 3, there were no significant correlations for any of the variables. The teachers’ years of teaching or education levels did not make any statistically significant differences for any of the outcomes.

This study suggested that more coaching time is not always effective in impacting student outcomes. In fact, too much coaching time may result in a reliance on the coach and prevent teachers from taking charge of their classroom. The type and quality of the coaching seemed to be an important factor. The focused coaching approach (Year 1) on specific content and methods (moving from theory to practice) was the only approach that improved student outcomes in this study. There may also be a saturation point where coaching is no longer effective in changing teacher practices.

Hindman and Wasik (2012) sought to determine whether two years of language and literacy coaching was more effective than one year of coaching on teacher and student outcomes. Participants included 16 Head Start teachers in the intervention group that were teaching 626 preschoolers and 10 Head Start teachers in the control group teaching 357 preschoolers. Teachers in the intervention group received specific training on literacy and language topics, three hours of coaching per week, and literacy materials for their classrooms. Classroom environments were assessed with the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) tool (Smith & Dickinson, 2002) and the
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). The children were assessed with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test II and PALS Alphabet Knowledge and Beginning Sounds Awareness subtests.

Results of the study indicated that the first year of coaching was linked to gains in quality of teacher literacy environments and quality of instructional interactions. The second year of coaching demonstrated additional gains in quality of instructional interaction. Children had greater gains on vocabulary with a second year of coaching. Gains for the children on alphabet knowledge and sound awareness were similar for both years of coaching.

**Literacy Coaching Impact on Teacher Knowledge and Practices**

Several researchers have examined how coaching has impacted teacher practices by comparing the differences between professional development with and without coaching. Teachers receiving coaching have consistently outperformed teachers receiving only professional development coursework.

Neuman and Wright (2010) compared two different types of professional development (coaching and coursework) to determine the impact on teacher knowledge and literacy practices. One hundred and forty-eight teachers were randomly assigned to three different groups. Fifty-eight teachers were assigned to the coursework group, 58 teachers to the coaching group, and 32 teachers to the control group. The coursework group attended a 3-credit college course on early language and literacy. The coaching group was coached weekly for 10 weeks and a coaching log was kept at each session. Teachers completed the Teacher Knowledge Assessment of Early Language and Literacy Assessment a 70-item test. The ELLCO (Early Language and Literacy Classroom
Observation) tool (Smith & Dickinson, 2002) was used to assess the classroom environments. Additionally, a sample of the teachers (n=54) were randomly selected and interviewed using 12 open-ended questions.

The results of the study were analyzed using ANOVA for the quantitative data and typological analysis for the qualitative data. There were no significant differences in the teachers’ scores on the knowledge assessment. The results of the ELLCO indicated significant differences (coaching group had higher scores than the other two groups) on the overall classroom literacy structural environment, especially in the writing area. There were no significant differences between the three groups on psychological supports or teaching strategies. Analysis of the coaching logs indicated that coaches spent more time on improving the environment and less time on helping teachers implement literacy teaching strategies. The researchers implied that the dosage and duration of the intervention may have been insufficient to adequately change teaching practices.

Neuman and Cunningham (2008) conducted a study to determine the impact of professional development and coaching on early childhood providers’ knowledge and practices in the area of language and literacy. Child care providers from 304 child care programs (centers and home-based settings) participated in the study. They were randomly assigned to one of three groups: 86 participants were in the college coursework group, 85 participants were in the college coursework plus coaching group, and 133 participants were assigned the control group. The college course was a three credit class on early language and literacy. Coaching was conducted weekly on-site for 60 to 90 minutes per teacher for 15 weeks.
Teacher knowledge was assessed with the Teacher Knowledge Assessment of Early Language and Literacy Development created by the researchers. The quality of the language and literacy practices in the child care centers or homes was measured with the ELLCO (Smith & Dickinson, 2002) or CHELLCO [Child/Home Early Language and Literacy Observation] (Neuman, Koh, & Dwyer, 2008). The fourteen coaches attended a two day coaching institute. The results were analyzed using two-way ANOVA with treatment and settings as independent variables. There were no significant differences between the groups on the knowledge assessment. There were significant differences favoring the coaching group on the classroom observations on quality improvement in the book area, writing area, physical environment, and support for learning and teaching strategies for teachers from both center and home-based care. Coaching in this study had a positive impact on the physical environment and instructional literacy practices of child care teachers.

In a single subject intervention study conducted by Hsieh et al. (2009) the researchers assessed the effects of coaching on teacher’s use of literacy teaching strategies. Participants were five early childhood teachers in either child care centers or public elementary school Pre-kindergarten programs. The design was a multiple baseline across three clusters of teaching strategies. A coaching cycle of collaborative planning, practice during observation, reflective feedback followed by additional collaborative feedback was used. Literacy intervention clusters related to vocabulary, phonological awareness, alphabet principle, and print concepts were taught to each teacher in a series of sessions by a coach. Teachers had to reach a criterion of using 80% of the strategies
components before they could move onto the next cluster. An observation checklist was used to determine how each teacher was meeting implementation criteria.

Implementation of the literacy strategies increased for all five teachers, although the rate of acquisition varied. The average score of a teacher’s maintenance levels was higher than their baseline average score. Teachers were satisfied with the coaching and children had significantly higher scores on literacy assessments. This is one of the few studies to examine the effects of coaching as a stand-alone approach to professional development.

**Literacy Coaching and Student Outcomes**

The impact of literacy coaching on student outcomes is of great interest to funders and stakeholders (Dole et al., 2006; Garet et al., 2008). Studies are just beginning to emerge that measure the relationships between teachers receiving coaching and improved student outcomes. Findings of the studies were inconsistent. A few studies have demonstrated no significant student outcomes following coaching (Cusumano et al., 2006; Garet et al., 2008). Other studies have shown promising results (Bean et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011).

The impact of two different professional development interventions on early reading instruction were studied by the United States Department of Education (Garet et al., 2008). The Early Reading Professional Development Intervention Study examined the impact of two types of professional development (training at a reading institute and training plus coaching) on the knowledge and practices of 270 second grade teachers. The teacher’s professional development was correlated to the reading achievement of their at-risk students.
Participation in the reading institute resulted in increased teacher knowledge; however, the two intervention groups’ student test scores were not significantly higher than the comparison groups. The impact of coaching was also not statistically significant.

Cusumano et al. (2006) sought to determine the impact of professional development (with and without coaching) on preschool teachers and their student’s literacy skills. A total of 41 teachers participated. Twelve teachers took a college level literacy course and received coaching, 10 teachers took only the college course, and 19 teachers (comparison group) did not attend the college course or receive coaching. There were 386 preschool children in the study. The college course focused on explicit instruction in talking, playing, writing, reading, and learning the code. Coaching consisted of seven 50 minute coaching sessions during a five to seven week period. Children’s literacy skills were assessed with the subtests of Picture Naming, Alliteration, and Rhyming from the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI) assessment. Classrooms were observed using the Early Literacy Observational Checklist (ELOC). This assessment evaluates both the environment and the teacher interactions supportive of literacy practices such as read-aloud and open-ended questions.

The evaluation employed a quasi-experimental nonrandom design with a convenience sample. Data were collected over a two to three month time period. The results were analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling to control for differences between children and classrooms. At the child level, the variables of age, gender, race, school attendance, and home social economic status (SES) were used. At the classroom level, the variables included teachers’ years of experience, highest education level, site
SES, number of students in the classroom, and literacy training participation. The researchers also looked at the number of coaching sessions teachers received.

The results indicated that older children and children from homes with higher SES had higher scores on the IGDI. At the classroom level, higher scores on the ELOC tied to higher growth on Picture Naming. Teacher participation in the college literacy course accounted for 3% of the variance in children’s Alliteration scores. Therefore, positive gains were tied to participation in the 15-week college literacy course. Coaching was not found to contribute to children’s skill attainment. This result should be noted with caution due to the small amount and short duration of the coaching. Additionally, the preschool classroom environment and interactional patterns appeared to be a contributing factor in children’s literacy development. Also many types of literacy materials and activities (beyond just books) seemed to influence the development of phonological awareness.

Carlisle and Berebitsky (2011) compared professional development (with and without coaching) on first grade teachers’ attitudes, their instruction, and student outcomes. They specifically examined teacher’s views of the school climate including support of principal and collaboration opportunities. The participants included fifty-four first grade teachers in Michigan receiving coaching within Reading First schools. Thirty-four teachers received professional development and coaching; whereas, 20 teachers only received professional development. Nine hundred and eighty-one first grade students were included in the study. The professional development was composed of nine seminars on reading and writing instruction (27 hours of professional development). Coaches visited classrooms, worked with teachers one-on-one, provided literacy
resources, and modeled instructional practices during the school year. The teachers were observed teaching, completed a survey, and administered the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills) to their students.

The results of the study indicated that the teachers from both groups had similar views on the school climate. The teachers receiving coaching spent significantly more time using small group instruction than the teachers that did not receive coaching. Students in the classrooms of coached teachers were less likely to be designated as “at-risk” in the spring of the year or in other words the students showed greater improvement during the school year. These students also had greater gains on the DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency. The researchers recommended that future research examine the types of coaching that are the most effective in changing teacher’s instructional practices.

In a study conducted by Elish-Piper and L’Allier (2011) the researchers sought to determine if coaching improved kindergarten through third grade teacher’s instructional practices and whether this led to greater student achievement in reading. A secondary question was whether the coaches’ literacy certification or the amount of coaching a teacher received were predictors of student gains. The participants included 12 coaches, 121 kindergartens through third grade teachers, and their 3,029 students. Coaches kept structured coaching logs for five months and students were assessed with DIBELS.

The results of the study indicated that the average student made statistically significant gains on the DIBELS and some of these gains could be attributed to teacher and classroom variations. Coaching certifications were not a significant predictor of student reading gains. The number of coaching hours a teacher received was a predictor of student gains for the second grade students. The types of coaching that seemed to
have the greatest positive impact included conferencing hours, administering and discussing assessments, modeling lessons, observing, and focusing on the content area of comprehension (Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2011).

Mohler, Yun, Carter, and Kasak (2009) conducted a study to determine the impact of professional development and coaching on prekindergarten children’s literacy outcomes. Twenty-two state preschool classrooms and twenty-four teachers participated in the study. The children in the classroom were designated as coming from low socioeconomic status homes. The intervention included the implementation of a new curriculum, literacy coaching, print and language rich environments, and professional development for teachers. The children were assessed using three measures: Early Growth Indicators, Desired Results Developmental Profile, and the Emerging Literacy Survey. The results included significant differences between the experimental and control conditions in the areas of letter recognition and word knowledge. No differences were found for beginning sounds. There were significant differences on the ELS on all subtests except Letter Naming.

Bean, Draper, Hall, Vandermolen, and Zigmond (2010) sought to determine how coaches spent their time and if there was a relationship between what coaches did and student outcomes. They also looked at whether teachers valued coaches and which types of teachers received more coaching. The participants were 20 Reading First coaches in Pennsylvania. Each coach worked with between 7 and 27 first to third grade teachers. A retrospective time diary was used to examine how coaches spent their time. The assessment on the coaching activity was documented over a three week period. Coaches participated in five phone interviews and shared their coaching activities from the past
24-hour period. Type of coaching activity and time spent in each activity were recorded. Coaching activities were grouped into five main categories: working with teachers, planning and organizing, management, school related activities and working directly with students. Classroom teachers (n=264) completed a teacher survey and children were assessed using DIBELS and the Terra Nova assessment reading subtest.

Coaches spent the largest amount of time working with individual teachers (23.6%). Overall, coaches spent 35.7% of their time working directly with teachers and students. The majority of time was spent on higher intensity activities such as modeling and co-teaching. Teachers had a positive response to coaching and stated that coaches provided valuable information and feedback on how to solve issues with students. There was a significant relationship between the amount of coaching received and student outcomes. Teachers receiving more coaching had higher student outcomes. Coaches had a greater focus on increasing student outcomes than on improving teacher instructional practices. It was determined that coaches spending higher amounts of time on management and administrative tasks were viewed more negatively by teachers. Therefore, it appears that more coaching time spent working directly with teachers and students leads to greater student outcomes.

**Review and Analysis of Literature Related to Concerns-Based Adoption Model**

A number of studies have been conducted related to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model. These studies have focused on the participant’s level of concern as they were involved in changes related to the implementation of a new innovation. As stated earlier, the levels of concern are as follows: Awareness, Informational, Personal, Management, Consequence, Collaboration, and Refocusing. As a person moves up the
levels of concern continuum they generally demonstrate higher levels of implementation of the innovation.

Al-Rawajfth et al. (2010) explored teachers’ stages of concern in relationship to the implementation of E-learning (electronic learning) professional development. Differences by gender and teaching experience were examined. The Concerns-Based Adaption Model (CBAM) was used to identify the needs and concerns of teachers in an effort to support them more effectively. Teachers completed the Stages of Concern questionnaire composed of 35 questions related to the seven stages of concern.

The results of the study indicated that the majority of teachers were at the personal concern stage, followed by the collaboration and informational stages. This implies that teachers were primarily concerned with how E-learning was affecting them personally. There were no differences on the level of concern based on gender and only one difference emerged for years of teaching experience. Teachers with the least amount of teaching experience (1 to 5 years) were at a higher level of concern (collaboration) than teachers with more years of experience. The researchers stated that this outcome may be due to the fact that the innovation was E-learning and teachers newer to the field would have experienced higher levels of technology integration during their coursework. These findings were correlated with implementation levels and the integration of E-learning was at a moderate level of use.

Newhouse (2001) applied the CBAM to the adoption of portable computers in Australian classrooms during the 1990’s. Fifty-one staff members completed the Stages of Concern questionnaire and Level of Use interviews. Six teacher case studies were also developed to more fully describe teachers’ responses to this innovation. The results of
the questionnaire indicated that a majority of the staff were at the level of awareness followed by personal, management, and refocusing levels of concern. The Levels of Use interview indicated that the average level of use was also low which matched the stage of concern (awareness). A few teachers were implementing the innovation at a higher level. The researchers developed a model to help explain teachers’ responses to computers. They stated that the CBAM was very useful in gaining a greater understanding of the effects of the innovation on teachers and responding to teacher concerns.

In a study by Faircloth et al. (2001), the CBAM was used to determine family and consumer science teachers concerns about implementing new national standards for family and consumer science education. One hundred and eight-three teachers from the state of Georgia completed the Stages of Concern questionnaire. A majority of the teachers were in the personal concern stage. This finding indicated that the teachers were unsure about their ability to implement the standards. The researchers stated the results have guided state and local officials in providing additional support and education to teachers on the standards and their implementation.

Saunders (2012) conducted a study to determine the level of concern of vocational teachers during a four-year vocational education and training professional development initiative that required teachers to change instructional practices. The CBAM provided a framework for understanding teachers’ implementation of the innovation. Twenty-seven vocational teachers from 11 college campuses in Western Australia participated in the study. The participants completed the Stages of Concern questionnaire and a Levels of Use interview. Individual profiles were created. The peak stage of concern and the combination of the first and second highest stages of concern were identified.
The results indicated that collaboration was the peak stage of concern for this group. The second highest concern varied and included personal, management, and refocusing. The Levels of Use interview confirmed that all of the teachers were implementing the innovation, but at three different levels (Routine, Refinement, and Integration). Routine users had established a regular pattern of use although they typically had no plans to change or improve. The refinement users were involved in planning and changing the way they used the innovation to improve student outcomes and the integration users were coordinating with others to improve student outcomes. The researchers stated that the refinement group had the greatest potential for influencing change and supporting others.

This study provided insight on how participants of a professional development initiative aimed at changing instructional practices were experiencing and implementing change. The results were later used to add components (i.e., peer coaching) to the vocational teacher’s professional development plans. Therefore, the CBAM results can be useful for assessing the impact of an innovation and inform directions for future implementation strategies.

**Review of Literature Summary**

The research on CBAM has demonstrated that participants can be at different stages of concern depending on the type and length of the innovation. The Levels of Use have generally correlated with the Stages of Concern. Little research could be found on Innovation Configuration. The CBAM studies have provided information to organizations about the implementation of new innovations and the next steps needed.
The studies on literacy coaching have shown that the roles and responsibilities of coaches vary, although the focus of coaching is generally on changing teacher instructional practices. The types of coaching teachers received were similar; however, the emphasis varied across studies. The amount of time coaches actually spent working directly with teachers and students was surprisingly less than 50% of their time (although higher levels are recommended). In most studies, more coaching appeared to be correlated to greater changes in teachers’ practices and increased student outcomes. Many of the recent studies on literacy coaching have shown some positive outcomes for students; however, a few have not. Research on the specific coaching activities that result in changes in instructional teaching practices still merits additional research. Additionally none of the studies has examined how a teacher’s affect can impact their implementation of literacy practices. Therefore, this study adds to the knowledge base by examining these factors.

**Summary**

This chapter provided a review of the literature related to literacy coaching and the Concerns-Based Adoption Model. The criterion for selection of included studies was presented. Detailed information was given on studies related to the main topics. The review of literacy coaching indicated that although there are some common roles and responsibilities among literacy coaches, the role can vary greatly depending on the location and priorities of the initiative. The amounts and types of coaching also differed and the results were inconclusive on how much and what kinds of coaching are the most effective. Literacy coaching can impact teacher knowledge and in some cases teacher practices, but the results have been mixed. Likewise, some coaching initiatives
demonstrated positive student outcomes whereas others did not. The Concerns-Based Adoption Model has been used successfully to identify teacher concerns during the implementation of a new innovation. The usefulness of also determining teachers’ level of use and fidelity of implementation of an innovation is promising and merits further study.
CHAPTER 3
METHODS

This chapter includes discussion on the methods that were used for this study. The participants, setting, and assessment instruments are described. The research design and procedures are given followed by information on how the data were analyzed.

Research Questions

Few empirical studies have been conducted that examine the specific coaching practices that are linked to changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices. Therefore, the research questions for this study were as follows:

1. Does a coaching intervention increase a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

2. Does the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching experience, or educational level of the teacher predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

3. Does the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum (pre-post) predict the teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

4. Does the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum change during the literacy coaching intervention (pre-post)?

5. What types of literacy coaching activities do teachers and coaches perceive to be the most effective in changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices?

Literacy coaches were defined as individuals selected to support classroom teachers on implementing specific literacy instructional practices such as phonological awareness, reading, print awareness/writing, and oral language. Phonological awareness
was described as being able to hear and play with smaller sounds in words. Reading was the process of deriving meaning from text. Print awareness was noticing print, knowing how to handle a book and following the words on a page. Writing was representing language in a written textual form and oral language involved speaking and listening to communicate or converse with others.

The hypothesis of this study was that there would be a statistically significant difference in teacher’s implementation of instructional literacy practices following a coaching intervention. The prediction was that the coaching strategies of conferencing, co-teaching, and modeling would be perceived as the most effective in changing teacher practices. A teacher’s level on the stages of concern would correlate to implementation of instructional teaching practices and a teacher’s level of concern would change during the coaching process. The dependent variable for this study was the scores from the Stages of Concern Questionnaire and Teacher Implementation Rubrics. Interviews with the coach and lead preschool teachers provided greater depth and understanding to the quantitative data collected and helped to identify teacher’s level of use of targeted literacy instructional practices.

**Participants**

The participants for this study were eight lead preschool teachers and their literacy coach in an urban location in a southwestern state. The teachers were drawn from two community child care centers and two Head Start centers that serve families with limited resources. Two preschool classrooms from each center were included in the study for a total of eight preschool classrooms. The participants included four lead teachers from the two community child care centers and four lead teachers from the two
Head Start centers. The teachers received literacy coaching at least once a week (~4 hours/week) during a six week period.

Lead teachers from the targeted child care centers were invited to participate in the study. An information sheet and consent form (approved by the university’s Institutional Review Board) was given to each potential study participant. All of the teachers signed the consent form. If the form had not been signed the teacher would not have been included in the study.

Each teacher was assigned a unique identification number for coding and analysis purposes. The first two digits of the ID number represented a code for each center (11 to 14). The second two digits of the ID number represented a code for each teacher (21 to 28). The last two digits represented whether the assessment was pre (31) or post (32). For example, a teacher from the second center completing the post assessment received the code of 12-24-32.

**Setting**

The setting for the study was two community child care centers (four community-based preschool classrooms) and two Head Start centers (four Head Start preschool classrooms). The literacy coaching intervention took place at each site. All of the child care/Head Start centers taught children from limited resource families.

**Intervention**

Teachers received literacy coaching at least once a week (~4 hours/week) during a six week period. The literacy coaching focused on implementing instructional practices in phonological awareness, dialogic reading, writing, vocabulary, and oral language/extended conversation within the preschool classrooms. The coach
collaborated with the teachers to create and implement action plans related to the targeted literacy focus areas.

**Instruments**

**Stages of Concern Questionnaire**

The Stages of Concern questionnaire (George, Hall, and Stiegelbauer, 2006; online version from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2013) was composed of 35 questions using Likert scale of 0 (irrelevant) 1, 2 (not true of me now) 3, 4, 5 (somewhat true of me now) and 6, 7 (very true of me now). Questions addressed the users concern, attitudes, or reactions to a specific innovation (in this case implementation of targeted literacy instruction). For example, questions included: “I am concerned about how the innovation (implementation of targeted literacy instruction) affects students” or “I am concerned about my inability to manage all that the innovation (implementation of targeted literacy instruction) requires.”

The questionnaire provided a profile of each respondent's level of concern at each stage (Awareness, Informational, Personal, Management, Consequence, Collaboration, and Refocusing). The questionnaire was available in an online version and took the participants approximately 10 minutes to complete. The researcher received a license agreement to reprint and distribute the Stages of Concern Questionnaire from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). See Appendix A: SEDL License Agreement. The online version provided results from the questionnaires in data summary sheets. Teachers logged-in to the questionnaire and completed it at their convenience. The questionnaire was completed at the beginning and end of the study. See Appendix B: Stages of Concern Questionnaire.
The Stages of Concern Questionnaire measured individuals concerns about a new innovation (Hall, George, & Rutherford, 1986). Previous research has indicated that the instrument is reliable and valid (Hall et al., 1986; Hall & Hord, 2006). The Cronbach alpha coefficients of internal consistency range from .64 to .83 with six of the seven coefficients above .70 (Hall et al., 1986). The test-retest (Pearson-$r$) coefficients ranged from .65 to .86 (Hall & Hord, 2006).

**Levels of Use Interview**

Teachers completed a focused interview with the researcher on their perceptions about literacy coaching. Teachers were asked to share any concerns and/or benefits they received from having a literacy coach. They were asked to identify the specific types of coaching activities that were the most and least helpful. The teacher’s level of use with implementing literacy instructional practices was assessed as they were asked to describe any changes they had made in practices based on the literacy coaching intervention. The interviews lasted 15 to 30 minutes and were conducted at the end of the study at the teacher’s place of employment. At the end of the interview, teachers were asked to complete an exit survey which included questions on number of years teaching preschool, highest level of education, gender, ethnicity, and if they had completed any reading or literacy endorsements. See Appendix C: Teacher and Coach Interview Questions/Exit Surveys.

The coach was also interviewed on her coaching experience as it related to changing teacher instructional practices. The coach was asked to describe her role as a coach and share any successes. She was asked to describe any challenges or barriers to coaching such as teacher resistance. The coach shared specific coaching activities that
she believed were the most effective in changing teacher’s instructional literacy practices. She was also asked to comment on whether she perceived that a teacher’s level of concern impacted their levels of implementation of literacy instructional practices. At the end of the interview, the coach was asked to complete an exit survey which included questions on the number of years coaching, highest level of education, gender, ethnicity, and if she had completed any reading or literacy endorsements. The interview with the coach took 40 minutes to complete. See Appendix C.

**Innovation Configuration or Teacher Implementation Rubrics**

The innovation configuration, to be hereafter referred to as Teacher Implementation Rubrics, was developed by the researcher based on similar measures contained within the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised; ECERS-R (Harms et al., 1998) and Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation; ELLCO (Smith & Dickinson, 2002) on specific literacy practices. The rubric was piloted by five literacy coaches. Changes to the original rubric were made prior to the study based on feedback from the literacy coaches. The rubric, included a seven point scale continuum with (1) representing no implementation and (7) representing optimal implementation. The Teacher Implementation Rubric was completed by the researcher at the start of the study and again at the end of the study during an observation of each classroom teacher. A research assistant was trained by the researcher on how to score the Teacher Implementation Rubrics during observation assessments. The research assistant completed the rubric at 75% of the pre-observations and 100% of the post-observations. At the end of each observation the researcher and research assistant determined a mutually agreeable score for each item.
The Teacher Implementation Rubric addressed the five literacy content areas that were the focus of the literacy coaching intervention:

- **Phonological Awareness**: Teaching behaviors related to the development of phonological awareness skills such as initial sounds in words, rhyming, letter sounds, and/or syllables in words.
- **Reading**: Teaching behaviors related to shared reading, read aloud, dialogic reading, interactive reading, and children’s independent reading activities.
- **Vocabulary**: Teaching behaviors related to introducing and using new and challenging words.
- **Writing**: Teaching behaviors related to pre-writing skills activities, modeling writing, dictating children’s words, and children’s opportunities to develop writing skills.
- **Oral Language/Extended Conversations**: Teaching behaviors related to the frequency of talking with children individually or in small groups including meaningful conversations that focus on the home-school connection.

See Appendix D: Teacher Implementation Rubric.

**Coaching Log**

The coach completed coaching logs following each coaching session to document the amount of time spent coaching, the type of coaching given, and the literacy content focus of each session. See Appendix E: Coaching Log.

**Time Commitments**

The estimated time for completing the online Stages of Concern questionnaire was approximately 10 minutes. The post Levels of Use teacher and coaches’ interviews
lasted 15 to 40 minutes. The Teacher Implementation Rubric was completed by the research team during two-hour classroom observations (pre and post). The coaching logs were completed in approximately 5 to 10 minutes following each coaching session.

**Procedures**

Once written consent was obtained, each teacher was invited to complete the online Stages of Concern questionnaire. The teachers completed the online Stages of Concern questionnaire at the start and end of the study. The researcher completed the Teacher Implementation Rubrics on each classroom at the beginning and end of the study period. The research assistant assessed 75% of the pre-observations and 100% of the post-observations using the Teacher Implementation Rubrics. Following each observation a mutually agreed upon score was determined for each item. Teachers and the literacy coach were invited to participate in an interview at the end of the study.

**Research Design**

The design was a pre-post intervention group mixed methods design with both quantitative and qualitative measures. The research study was approved by the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). See Appendix F: Social/Behavioral IRB – Exempt Review.

**Social Validity**

Interviews were conducted at the end of the study to assess social validity. The literacy coach and eight preschool classroom teachers were interviewed. Questions focused on the level of use of the innovation and the type of coaching activities that participants attributed to making the greatest changes in teacher instructional practices. A list of the questions asked during the interviews can be found in Appendix C.
Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics provided a summary of the amount, type, and the content focus of coaching the teachers received. A confidence interval of <.05 was used. The following is a summary of the analysis proposed for each question.

1. Does a coaching intervention increase a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)? A chi square 2 x 7 test of independence was planned to be used to determine any statistically significant changes on teacher’s implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices. However, due to insufficient data points a paired samples t-test was used instead.

2. Does the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching experience, or educational level of the teacher predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)? Pearson r was used to determine any relationships between each of the following (amount of coaching, type of coaching, literacy content of coaching, years of teaching experience, educational levels of teachers) and implementation of literacy instructional practices.

3. Does the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum (pre-post) predict the teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices (pre-post)? Pearson r was used to determine any relationships. If correlated, linear regression would have been applied.

4. Does the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum change during the literacy coaching intervention? A dependent (paired samples) t-test was used to
determine any statistically significant changes on the teacher's level on the Stages of Concern continuum (pre to post).

5. What types of literacy coaching activities do teachers and coaches perceive to be the most effective in changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices? The information from the interviews underwent a qualitative analysis to determine social validity, common themes, and similarities and differences between the information shared by the preschool classroom teachers and the literacy coach.

The threats to internal validity were minimized by using a standardized questionnaire. Coach/teacher bias was considered as a possible impairment to the study. Likewise, not following study procedures would have affected the results. These two risks were mitigated by training the research assistant and having two researchers jointly conduct the majority of the Teacher Implementation Rubrics assessments. Informing preschool teachers about the focus of the research study may have promoted greater emphasis on teaching language and literacy to the children during the intervention.

The results of this study determined the effectiveness of a literacy coaching intervention on preschool teachers’ implementation of five targeted literacy practices. It was anticipated that the intervention would demonstrate statistically significant results and add to the knowledge base on literacy coaching. It was further proposed that the CBAM would shed light on teachers concerns, level of use, and implementation of the five specific literacy practices. The information from this study will be used to inform literacy coaching practices and maximize coaching efforts in areas that promote the greatest levels of implementation of literacy strategies.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the results of the research study. Data from the pre-post intervention group mixed method study featuring quantitative and qualitative measures are presented. First, descriptive information on the participants, the settings, and the intervention is given. Second, data from the pre-post Teacher Implementation Rubrics are discussed along with qualitative responses from the participant interviews. Third, a summary of the factors that may have been predictive of implementation of literacy instructional practices are noted. Fourth, descriptions of the stages of concern continuum in relationship to implementation of literacy instructional practices are shared. Fifth, the results from the pre-post Stages of Concern questionnaire and qualitative responses are discussed. Sixth, the information from the teachers and coaches interviews is summarized regarding the coaching strategies perceived to be the most effective. Seventh, information on the literacy coaching experience, positive aspects and benefits of coaching, and the coach’s insights are outlined.

Descriptive Information of Participants

Eight female preschool teachers in a southwestern state participated in the study. Four of the teachers taught at Head Start locations and had Bachelor degrees. One of the Head Start teachers also had a reading endorsement. The remaining four teachers taught at community child care sites. All of these teachers were high school graduates and three of them had completed some college classes. Participant teachers had taught for varying lengths of time. Two teachers had taught less than one year, two had taught from one to five years, two between six and 15 years and two for over 16 years. Four of the teachers
were Caucasian, two Latino, one African American, and one was Asian. Each teacher received between 20 and 22 hours of coaching during the six week intervention (approximately 4 hours per week). For reporting purposes, the teachers will hereafter be designated as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8.

The literacy coach had been employed as a coach for less than one year. She had completed some college education classes in early childhood and had 13 years of early childhood teaching experience and 16 years of administrative experience in early childhood. She had received specific training on literacy (5 day training) and coaching (4 day training) prior to the study commencement.

**Settings**

The study participants taught at four different child care settings. The four settings included two Head Start (HS) centers that served children from ages 3 to 5 years old and two community child care (CCC) centers that served children from 3 months to 12 years. Table 1 provides an overview of the enrollment, percentage of low socioeconomic status (SES) families, and the ethnicity of the children in the targeted classrooms.

Table 1

*Child Care Setting Demographics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Low SES</th>
<th>Ethnicity in Targeted Classrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS* #1</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS* #2</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC* #1</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC* #2</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Head Start (HS), Community Child Care (CCC)
**Other included Asian and multi-race children
All of the children attending the Head Start centers were from low socioeconomic status (SES) homes, per federal Head Start requirements. The four targeted Head Start classrooms had two teachers per classroom and were classified as inclusive classrooms (included children with disabilities). Three of the community child care classrooms had one teacher and one classroom had two teachers. All of the classrooms included children with disabilities.

**Intervention**

Each of the teachers received coaching over a six week period. The weekly coaching included the coach observing each teacher for about three hours to examine implementation of the five targeted literacy practices. These observations sometimes included having the coach model literacy practices for the teacher and/or interact with the children in the classroom. Following the observation the coach would meet with each teacher for one hour to discuss the observation, share information/resources, and create action plans for implementing the targeted literacy practices during the upcoming week.

During the first coaching conference each teacher was asked to do a self-evaluation using the Teacher Implementation Rubric. Following the self-evaluation the coach shared the rubric results from the pre-observation. The Rubric served two purposes. First, the rubric was used as an evaluation tool for measuring implementation levels and second, the rubric was designed to be an instructional tool that helped teachers understand the progression of implementing best practices in the five targeted areas.

Each week a different literacy practice was emphasized so that the content focus of the coaching would be consistent across teachers. The first week focused on phonological awareness, the second week reading, the third week vocabulary, the fourth
week writing, the fifth week oral language/extended conversations and the sixth week reinforced consistent implementation of all five practices.

During each conference the coach would share feedback from the observation (focusing on the teacher’s current literacy practices and next steps). Teachers were given an information sheet about the targeted literacy practice (e.g., phonological awareness) to ensure that the information being shared by the coach was consistent across teachers. Then the coach facilitated the development of a weekly action plan. The action plans included specific practices the teachers would implement each day during the upcoming week.

During the first week, action plans focused on phonological awareness. The second week action plans focused on reading, but still included phonological awareness. The third week action plans emphasized vocabulary and included phonological awareness and reading. Writing was added in the fourth week and oral language/extended conversation in the fifth week; however, the coach stated that after the third week the coaching conferences would include discussions on all five of the targeted literacy practices. The coach helped the teachers understand how many of the literacy areas overlapped. For example, vocabulary words could be emphasized and explained during reading of a book (as could rhyming words or initial sounds) and the book reading could be followed up with a corresponding writing activity and extended conversations. Notwithstanding the overlap, the targeted weekly literacy instructional practice was emphasized.

The main types of coaching strategies used by the coach during the conferences were modeling a lesson, sharing resources, and creating action plans. The amount of
time spent on each of these three areas varied depending on the perceived needs of the individual teacher or as the coach stated “how the teacher learned best.” The coach also helped to change the physical environment for one teacher and co-planned lessons with teachers during the final week of coaching.

Research Questions

This study included five research questions related to literacy coaching and teacher’s implementation of literacy instructional practices.

1. Does a coaching intervention increase a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

2. Does the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching, or educational level predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

3. Does the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum (pre-post) predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?

4. Does the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum change during a literacy coaching intervention (pre-post)?

5. What types of literacy coaching activities do teachers and coaches perceive to be the most effective in changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices?

Teacher Implementation Rubric

The purpose of the first question was to determine if the six week coaching intervention increased teacher’s overall level of implementation on five targeted literacy instructional practices from pre-assessment to post-assessment. A Teacher
Implementation Rubric was used to measure teacher’s implementation of five targeted literacy practices that included phonological awareness, reading, vocabulary, writing, and oral language/extended conversations. The rubric was administered before and after a six week literacy coaching intervention. Preschool teachers were observed at the beginning and end of the study for approximately two hours by the researcher. A research assistant observed 75% of the pre-observations and 100% of the post-observations. During the assessment observations, the teachers were rated on a scale from 1 to 7 on implementation of the five targeted literacy practices. A score of 1 would indicate that the practice was not implemented and a score of 7 would imply an optimal level of implementation (See Appendix D). Following the observation the researcher and the research assistant discussed their independent observation scores and determined a mutually agreeable score for each item. Scores from the five items were then combined for an overall implementation score (from 7 to 35). The data were used to analyze research question one: “Does a coaching intervention increase a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?”

The researcher had originally planned to conduct a chi square 2 x 7 test of independence to determine any statistically significant changes on teacher’s implementation of the five targeted literacy instructional practices; however, after the chi square test was run, it was determined that there were insufficient data points for this type of analysis (five points were needed for each cell). Therefore, a paired sample t-test using SPSS 19.0 was used to determine any statistically significant differences on the overall implementation scores teachers received on the Teacher Implementation Rubric from pre to post-assessment.
The eight teacher’s pre-observation scores ranged from 9 to 29 and the post-observation scores ranged from 22 to 35. The change in overall scores from pre to post was statistically significant (p <.002). (See Table 2). The teachers improved on their overall implementation of the five targeted literacy practices.

Table 2

*Teacher Implementation Rubric (TIR) Pre-Post Observations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIR (n=8)</th>
<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIR</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>6.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changing Literacy Instructional Practices – Qualitative Review

The interviews with the teacher provided some additional insights into specific practices teachers had changed and how literacy coaching had impacted their teaching. During the interviews teachers were asked to identify whether having a literacy coach changed or did not change their literacy instructional practices in the five targeted areas. The teachers stated that their practices had either changed or been enhanced (i.e., doing more or different activities) for each of the five areas. Following is a summary of the information the teachers shared about each of the five targeted literacy instructional practices, phonological awareness, reading, vocabulary, writing, and oral language/extended conversations. All of the sections also include information from the coach’s interview on the types of coaching the literacy coach found to be the most effective for each practice.
**Phonological awareness.** Most of the teachers were already implementing some phonological awareness activities at the start of the study; however, it appears that coaching was instrumental in increasing the amount, variety, and frequency of these activities. T5 said, “We were already doing a lot of phonological awareness activities, but it (coaching) has made it more engaging – fun.” T1 shared that she had “created more activities to get the kids involved with sounds and saying different words throughout the day.” T7 had noticed that the children in her classroom had gained a greater understanding of phonological awareness when stating, “Now the kids will tell you ‘I have three syllables in my name’ or they will clap it out, and they know what that word (syllable) means.”

The literacy coach commented that her most successful coaching strategy for teacher implementation of phonological awareness was having the teachers practice the activities until they gained sufficient comfort level to use the activities with the children. She also stated that modeling the strategies helped a couple of teachers understand how to implement the practices successfully in their classrooms.

**Reading.** Teachers liked learning about the importance of reading aloud to children reading (T2, T3, T4, and T6). Coaching promoted using dialogic reading prompts to facilitate greater engagement of the children during the reading experience. T2 and T3 stated that story time was more interactive and children now had greater interest in books. T5 mentioned how interactive reading was helping children make more “connections to the real world or how the students had experienced something.” T1 shared that the children were more involved in reading and stated “it actually builds on
their knowledge of words like the vocabulary that we use and makes them want to read. I can actually see them after we read, wanting to pick up books.”

Teachers noticed a difference in the actual reading experience. T4 said, “They want to hear the book and after a while they read/retell it to me.” T7 commented that she was asking the children more questions that extended the book into their day-to-day lives. She articulated how the book *The Lonely Firefly* by Eric Carle became more meaningful to the children and they had had empathetic responses to the firefly when discussing the question, “What if you didn’t have any friends?”

The coach noted that her main coaching strategy for reading was to first conduct a focused observation of the teacher reading a book and then provide the teacher with feedback based on the observation. This strategy appeared to be the most successful in helping the teachers enhance their reading literacy practices and to use dialogic reading prompts to promote interactive reading experiences.

**Vocabulary.** Teachers stated that they had gained a greater understanding of the importance of using new and challenging words with the children (T1 and T2). They also shared that they and the children were talking more and using the vocabulary words. T6 communicated how she was “making sure that I incorporate the words beyond the read aloud (especially in dramatic play). I try to encourage them to retell the story by prompting them with the vocabulary words and bringing it up for multiple days.” T5 had added written vocabulary words to her environment in a meaningful way. She had labeled items in the classroom that were ‘transparent’ (vocabulary word for a unit on light and shadow) to help the children understand the word. This teacher was also trying to increase parent involvement by asking them to incorporate the vocabulary words into
conversations at home. T3 was having the children pick words out of the dictionary that they wanted to learn more about. T8 had spent more time extending the words that the children heard or said to help them understand the meaning of the word.

Several teachers detailed specific examples of how they had used vocabulary words in their classrooms. T1 said that she would show a picture that represented the word and then demonstrate the word and try to connect an action with the word. She explained, “When you show the children ‘ducked’ (teacher demonstrated a ducking action) then it becomes more familiar to them and they will grasp it better.” She had also spent a lot of time talking to the children about the word ‘leader’. She read books about people who were leaders and talked about how the children could be leaders in the classroom and at home and played games like ‘follow the leader’ with the children. She stated that practicing with the children in multiple ways had made a big difference in helping them understand the meaning of new words.

T2 had put a list of the vocabulary words on the classroom door to encourage the parents to incorporate the words into conversations with their children at home. She shared that one of her vocabulary words was balanced. She went on to say, “the kids did not know what balanced was so I put a piece of tape on the floor and I tell them ‘try to keep your balance on the tape without falling over’ and then I did journaling with them.” These examples illustrate how teachers were implementing vocabulary into their classrooms.

The coach indicated that some of the teachers enjoyed playing with words and used complex speech with the children. For these teachers, the practice of implementing vocabulary in the classroom came quite naturally. In contrast, two of the teachers found
it harder to integrate vocabulary words into their daily routine. The coach perceived that these teachers felt it was an added burden, and they had a harder time incorporating vocabulary into their classrooms. Therefore, the coach encouraged the teachers to focus on the vocabulary words from their book reading to increase their comfort level with the introduction of vocabulary.

**Writing.** The greatest amount of feedback was given about implementing the literacy practice of writing. Several of the teachers indicated their children had a great excitement for writing especially as the teachers had added or expanded their writing centers and placed writing materials throughout the classroom (T1, T5, and T8). T1, T6, and T8 communicated that they were modeling writing more often. T4 shared how the children in her classroom loved writing especially with the new materials. The children were now asking her to spell words or to write words on index cards for them to copy. She further stated, “The boys are getting more involved in writing especially in the block area. I have the clipboards over there and they look in a book, and they are writing dimensions down and that kind of stuff in the blocks.”

T1 and T6 noted that the children were really attracted to the writing area and that by putting writing materials in each of the centers the children became more involved in writing during the day. T7 had added a large dry erase board to the classroom and noticed the children really enjoyed writing on the board. T3 said that the children were now including writing with their art work, “instead of drawing pictures they start writing letters or words with the sand. Or they try to write their names with the sand art.” T2 was journaling with her children every day. She would ask the children questions, and they would dictate a response, and then she would write it down. She had also added a
favorite word box to the classroom. She commented, “I ask the kids what their favorite word is and write them on index cards and I have them (the children) go look in the box for the word.” Overall the teachers were implementing additional writing strategies.

The coach detailed that her strategy for coaching writing was to first understand how and what writing opportunities children and teachers had in the program and then move teachers to the next level. For some programs, the addition of writing materials made a huge difference as children were very excited about having more writing experiences in the classroom.

**Oral language/Extended conversations.** Coaching appeared to help the teachers understand the importance of having extended conversations with children. T7 said, “For one thing I just feel more comfortable having extended conversations. It (coaching) reminded me how important it was to have those conversations.” T1 had started to have extended conversations with the children during snack and lunch, whereas, previously she would just walk around and help the children during meals. She shared that the children were more settled during meals and that “they are eating more- they are not all over the place- it is a lot better– we love the conversations during snack and lunch time.” T2 had observed children talking more since she focused on extended conversations. T8 noted she was extending conversations with an emphasis on the children’s home experiences.

T5 was surprised that the children were actually imitating and extending conversation after observing that she and her teaching assistant purposefully extended conversations. T3 shared that she had a greater understanding of “what a conversation is” and that “instead of just saying that’s nice and walking away, now I sit there and I ask
them what they were trying to tell me.” T1 communicated the challenge of trying to find time for extended conversations with children and also teach large numbers of children. T1 and T7 noted a conflict between managing the classroom, promoting academics, and also taking time for real conversations.

The coach commented that modeling conversations was an extremely important coaching strategy for several of the teachers to help them understand what an extended conversation looked like. She said that she tried to help the teachers understand that extended conversations were essential for developing a bond or connection with each child. The coach and teachers articulated that they had seen positive changes to the literacy instructional practices in the classroom.

**Factors Related to Implementation of Literacy Practices**

The researcher was interested in determining if there were factors (such as type of coaching received) that were related to the implementation of literacy instructional practices. During the study, the literacy coach kept weekly coaching logs that included the number of minutes of coaching each teacher received, the type of coaching strategies that were used, and the literacy content focus of coaching. These logs were submitted to the researcher. Teacher’s years of teaching experience and educational levels were documented on the interview exit surveys. The information from the coaching logs and exit surveys were used to answer question two: “Does the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching experience, or educational level of the teacher predict the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?” The purpose of this question was to determine if there were any specific factors that predicted teacher’s levels of implementation.
Pearson $r$ was used to determine any relationships between amount of coaching, type of coaching, literacy content of coaching, years of teaching experience, educational levels of teachers and the implementation of literacy instructional practices. There were no statistically significant outcomes for any of the factors.

**Stages of Concern Questionnaire and Teacher Implementation**

The teachers completed an online Stages of Concern questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study. All eight of the teachers completed the pre-survey and seven of the teachers completed the post-survey. The information from the Stages of Concern questionnaire was compared to data from the Teacher Implementation Rubric to address question three: “Does the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum (pre-post) predict the teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices (pre-post)?” Pearson $r$ was used to determine any relationships. There were no statistically significant outcomes between stages of concern and level of implementation on the Teacher Implementation Rubric.

The data from the Stages of Concern questionnaire were also used to answer the fourth question, “Does the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum change during the literacy coaching intervention?” The purpose of this question was to determine if the literacy intervention changed teacher’s stages of concern. It was anticipated that there would be changes from pre to post.

A dependent (paired samples) t-test was used to determine any statistically significant changes on the teacher's level on the stages of concern continuum (pre to post). There were statistically significant differences at two of the stages of concern. Stage 3 (Management) decreased in overall concern ($t = 2.59, p<.041$) and Stage 6
Refocusing showed a marked increase in concern ($t = -3.33, p < .016$). A decrease in management reflected less concern about the process, tasks, and management of the intervention. An increase in refocusing indicates the teachers were considering the benefits of the intervention or thinking about additional ways of implementing literacy practices that might work even better for them in the future. This was a positive outcome as it indicated teachers were moving to make the implementation of literacy practices their own.

Appendix G: Stages of Concern Comparison Chart provides an overall summary of the pre and post stages of concern levels for the seven teachers that completed both the pre and post questionnaire. Overall, Stage 0 (Unconcerned), Stage 1 (Information), Stage 3 (Management), and Stage 4 (Consequence) showed decreases. Stage 2 (Personal), Stage 5 (Collaboration), and Stage 6 (Refocusing) demonstrated increases. Comments on these changes can be found in Chapter 5.

Some additional insights into the participants concerns can be found from the interviews. The teachers were asked the following question, “Did you have any concerns about having a literacy coach (in connection with changing literacy instructional practices in your classroom)? If yes, what were your concerns?” Five of the eight teachers (T1, T2, T5, T7, and T8) indicated they had some initial concerns. These concerns included not understanding the purpose of coaching as it was a new experience (T1, T2). T5 was concerned about “whether the coaching would clash with current program practices.” T5, T7, and T8 mentioned a concern about whether they would have enough time to do one more thing.
All of the teachers with concerns stated that they had dissolved after a couple of weeks. T5 stated, “We found a lot of ways to kind of fit things in with the way our program works. Time – it didn’t take up very much extra time it was mostly ways to make what I am already doing more successful.” T7 shared that at first she wasn’t sure how she would manage coaching along with everything else; however, she further explained that the time taken had helped her to implement literacy strategies in her classroom so it was a very positive and beneficial experience.

The coach was asked to share her perceptions on the level of teacher’s concerns during the study. She indicated that she perceived the teacher’s level of concerns were high at the beginning of the study. Several teachers were worried about being able to be successful in making changes and also how coaching would impact them personally. The coach commented that as she pushed the partnership, she was able to help them get through their concerns and move forward. She noted that the teacher’s concerns had decreased as the project progressed; however, outside forces such as an upcoming federal review or personal issues impacted teacher’s concerns throughout the project.

**Interviews**

Post study interviews were conducted with each of the eight preschool teachers and the one literacy coach. The interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. The interviews were designed to identify the types of literacy coaching activities that were perceived to be the most effective in changing teachers’ literacy instructional practices. The information from the interviews also provided insights into teacher’s and coach’s perceptions about the coaching intervention and addressed question five, “What types of
literacy coaching activities do teachers and coaches perceive to be the most effective in changing teachers’ instructional literacy practices?”

During the interviews teachers were asked to identify the specific type of coaching activities that had been the most effective in changing their literacy instructional practices. Each of the teachers identified two specific coaching activities. Seven out of the eight teachers (T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8) mentioned that immediate feedback during the conferences with the coach was the most effective coaching activity in changing instructional literacy practices. T6 stated, “I liked the conferences - being able to sit down and talk about what we were doing. I really liked the strategies because some of them were new things that I hadn’t done yet with my kids.”

Three teachers stated the resources/information received was effective in changing literacy instructional practices (T1, T2, T6) and that the children were really enjoying having new materials and activities. T1 communicated that the information sheets helped her understand certain topics and “it would keep me on track by reading it and knowing this is what the coach is saying and this is what the kids are getting from it.”

Two teachers indicated modeling by the coach was effective (T1, T8). T1 stated that “modeling -with her (coach) telling me how to do it and then physically going in there and showing me how to do it properly” helped her understand how to implement practices and also be able to view how the children were reacting to what the coach was doing. T4 and T7 discussed how creating action plans was helpful in changing literacy practices. T3 and T5 said having the Teacher Implementation Rubrics were the most effective and helped them know where they were headed. T5 explained, “having a rubric to see what an exemplar example would be or look like helped me with goal setting - just
having an idea what I needed to do to get there and having it specific to literacy.” An overview of the emergent themes from the teacher interviews can be found in Appendix H: Emergent Themes.

The teachers were also questioned about any coaching strategies that were “least helpful”. None of the teachers identified any coaching strategies that were least effective. All of the teachers stated that all of the coaching had been helpful. During the interviews the teachers were asked to share information on their experience with their literacy coach and any positive aspects or benefits of coaching.

**Experience with Literacy Coach**

The teachers responded that their experience with their literacy coach had been positive, and that they enjoyed working with the coach. T3 appreciated how the coach was descriptive and went into depth and “explained all of the steps really thoroughly” in relationship to implementing specific literacy strategies. T5 stated, “Coach was amazing. I felt like she was very open, and I was comfortable talking to her about anything even beyond just literacy. She gave a lot of good suggestions.” T2 said, “She was very helpful to me, she taught me a lot things I never knew before.” T6 was appreciative of having someone watch her “consistently enough to see the variety of different things that you are doing in your room day-to-day, and to say this is what you are doing really well, and let’s push it to the next level.” The teachers commented that they appreciated the experience of having a literacy coach and would recommend it to others.

**Positive Aspects and Benefits**

Teachers shared positive aspects or benefits to having a literacy coach. T1 mentioned how the coach had given her different ways or strategies to keep children
engaged. T3 noted that having a literacy coach had helped her teaching and benefited the children especially in the area of writing and during story time. T3 and T6 mentioned that the coach helped to draw out what they were already doing, and take it to the next level. Teachers offered that the coach also encouraged them to be more intentional in their teaching. T7 stated:

For the kids it changed the way I am reading books. I am more engaged with them – I ask them more questions during the books I am not rushing to try to get through it – I understand that you can take those moments with them and it has given them access to different materials because I have a word basket in our reading center and they have loved that - reading letters - just those little tiny things have enhanced the learning experience for them.

Social Validity

The social validity of the intervention was demonstrated by the teacher’s positive responses to the literacy coaching experience and the fact that the intervention improved teacher’s literacy instructional practices. The goals and outcomes of the intervention were acceptable to the teachers and coach involved in the project. The project was socially relevant and useful as literacy acquisition is a critical factor related to future academic success. The teachers receiving the services shared a number of positive aspects and benefits to receiving literacy coaching and stated they would recommend the project to others. T7 stated, “I think it is a great program and I hope it will continue.” T4 shared, “I really enjoyed it. It was a great experience. I would do it over again.”
Interview with Literacy Coach

The literacy coach was interviewed to share her insights on her role as a coach, the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective coach, and any reflections on teacher resistance and challenges to coaching. She also shared some additional comments on the overall coaching experience.

**Role as a coach.** The coach described her role as “being a partner and forming a partnership between her and the teachers.” The coach articulated that she needed “to share information and provide ideas for implementation of literacy practices.” She said it was important to help the teachers “feel safe enough to share what was working and not working in their classrooms.”

**Knowledge and skills.** The coach explained that a variety of knowledge and skills was needed for her to be successful. First, the “understanding that people communicate in a variety of ways and to understand we all learn differently” was very important. Additionally, knowledge of child development and literacy was essential as was her experience as a classroom teacher. She stated her “classroom experience was more valuable than her administrative experience, as the classroom experience provided her with a background on the variety of ways that literacy can happen in the classroom.”

**Teacher resistance.** The coach noted that she had some initial resistance from some of the teachers. The resistance was not overt but more subtle – she could sense it from the teacher’s body language. With time the resistance decreased and disappeared. She grew to understand how each teacher learned best and a relationship of trust grew and developed between herself as the coach and the teachers.
Challenges. The challenges faced by the coach included time and rescheduling coaching sessions due to holidays and in-service days. She also faced a challenge at a couple of centers when they did not have extra staff coverage, and she was unable to meet individually with the teacher. Therefore, time and scheduling conflicts were perceived as the greatest barriers to coaching during this study.

Coaching experience. The coach shared that one of the most essential parts of the coaching experience was to build on each literacy practice as a new one was added. This helped both her and the teachers see that there are many aspects of literacy that overlap. She told the teachers “if you are worried about getting writing in – sit down and read a book, and see how you can naturally get to vocabulary and extended conversations and writing that vocabulary.” She noticed that with the action plans initially the teachers were only focused on one area (i.e., phonological awareness); however, by about the third week the teachers understood how all of the literacy practices tied together, and they were taking a more balanced approach to the implementation of literacy practices in the classroom.

Summary

In this chapter the results of the study were shared. The researcher found statistically significant differences in the combined scores on the Teacher Implementation Rubric from pre to post-assessment demonstrating that teachers had improved in their overall implementation of the five targeted literacy practices. Specific examples of how teachers were implementing each of the literacy practices were shared. There were no statistically significant outcomes for any of the factors related to the implementation of
literacy practices or for teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum in relationship
to changes in scores on the Teacher Implementation Rubric.

There were statistically significant changes on the Stages of Concern
questionnaire (pre to post) at both Stage 3 (Management) and Stage 6 (Refocusing). Teachers also gave qualitative responses related to their concerns during the coaching intervention. Finally, the teacher’s post interviews identified that immediate feedback during the teacher-coach conferences was perceived to be the most effective coaching strategy in promoting changes to literacy instructional practices. Social validity was demonstrated by the positive feedback given from the teachers during the interviews and the fact that the intervention improved teacher’s literacy instructional practices. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings presented in this chapter.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Literacy coaching is a professional development strategy designed to change teacher instructional practices and likewise student outcomes. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results of a literacy coaching intervention on the implementation of literacy instructional practices by preschool teacher participants. The study was designed to determine whether a literacy coaching intervention increased teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices. The researcher also sought to determine if there was a relationship between teacher’s stages of concern and their level of implementation of literacy instructional practices. Few studies have assessed whether coaching improves a teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices. Therefore, this study adds to the knowledge base on literacy coaching and the implementation of literacy instructional practices.

In this chapter the results from each of the five research questions are discussed. Then, implications for the field of early childhood literacy coaching are shared. Next, the limitations of the study are presented, followed by future directions and recommendations for additional research.

Overview of the Study

The researcher conducted the study with eight lead preschool teachers within eight classrooms at two Head Start and two community child care centers. A pre-post intervention mixed method design with quantitative and qualitative measures was conducted. Some of the key factors of the literacy coaching intervention were that it was intense, relevant, and allowed teachers to practice, reflect, and change teaching
instruction within a safe environment as recommended by Stover et al. (2011). This study followed several of the guidelines suggested by Lynne and Ferguson (2010). These procedures included clarifying the coach’s role with teachers and administrators, limiting the number of teachers coached to less than ten per coach, and facilitating release time for teachers to meet individually with the coach. The intervention featured a coaching approach focused on specific literacy instructional practices which was consistent with the procedures of Shidler (2009).

Five research questions were addressed. Question 1 examined whether a coaching intervention increased a teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices from pre to post. It was predicted that statistically significant changes in teacher’s implementation of literacy practices would be demonstrated. The coaching intervention did increase teachers overall level of implementation on five targeted literacy instructional practices. A few of the teachers’ scores on individual items (i.e., phonological awareness) were slightly lower from pre to post-assessment; however, all of the teachers overall scores increased. This finding demonstrated that the teachers were providing a more balanced approach to teaching literacy to the children in their classrooms.

Hsieh et al. (2009) found that implementation of literacy practices can be increased, but the rate of acquisition and implementation varies by teacher. This was confirmed in the current study. The rate of acquisition and implementation varied from teacher to teacher. The research by Hsieh et al. is one of the few studies to examine coaching as a standalone approach to professional development. This study also
examined coaching as the primary professional development approach and demonstrated effectiveness in improving teacher’s literacy instructional practices.

Question 2 explored whether factors such as the amount of coaching, type of coaching, content focus of coaching, years of teaching experience, or educational levels would predict teacher’s level of implementation of the five targeted literacy instructional practices. There were no statistically significant outcomes for this question. There are two main factors that contributed to these results. The first factor was the small sample size which makes it more difficult to detect differences, and the second factor was that the intervention featured one coach who provided consistent amounts of coaching, types of coaching, and content focus across participants. Other studies showing differences featured a larger number of coaches providing a greater variety of coaching services across multiple locations (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011; Scott et al., 2012; Shidler, 2009).

Question 3 was designed to determine if the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum predicted the teacher’s level of implementation of five targeted literacy instructional practices from pre to post. It was predicted that a teacher’s stage of concern would be related to the teacher’s level of implementation; however, there were no statistically significant findings in this area. Although teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices increased and teacher’s stages of concern changed, a correlation between the two was not found. Again, this may have been attributed to the small sample size and having one coach providing consistent coaching to all of the teachers in the study.

Question 4 examined whether the teacher’s level on the stages of concern continuum changed during the literacy coaching intervention from pre to post. It was
predicted that the teacher’s level of concern would change, and the results of the study confirmed this predication. The teacher’s level of concern did change during the literacy coaching intervention at two stages. The level of concern at Stage 3 (Management) decreased and at Stage 6 (Refocusing) increased. Several factors may have contributed to these changes. First the one-on-one support of the coach was probably influential in decreasing teacher’s management concerns. Having weekly support and resources appeared to have helped the teachers manage the tasks needed for implementation of the targeted literacy practices. Likewise, as the teachers gained expertise and confidence in their abilities, they were able to refocus on ways to take what they had learned and make it even better. The coaching intervention seemed to have increased the teacher’s interest in refocusing on the next steps needed to improve their implementation of literacy practices.

As shown in Appendix G, the combined teacher’s stages of concern changed at all of the stages although the differences were only significant at Stages 3 (decrease) and Stage 6 (increase). Stage 0 (Unconcerned), Stage 1 (Information), and Stage 4 (Consequences) decreased, although not significantly, which may indicate a trend toward teachers having less overall concern or need for information about the intervention. It also appears that the teachers were not very focused on the impact of the intervention on the students. This may have resulted from the fact that the focus of the intervention was on the teacher and their implementation of practices; however, it may be useful in the future to provide greater emphasis on helping the teachers understand how their instructional practices impact their students.
Stage 2 (Personal) and Stage 5 (Collaboration) had slight increases in concern levels. The Head Start sites were preparing for an upcoming federal review at the end of the study, which may have impacted some of the teacher’s personal concern levels. Additionally, the interest in collaboration was beginning to increase, perhaps due to involvement in the coaching partnership. Changes in the study groups’ placement along the stages of concern continuum provided some useful insights into teacher’s concerns during an intervention.

For example, teachers’ concern for information can be addressed by sharing the goals, objectives, and benefits of participation at the very beginning of an intervention. Participants’ questions about involvement in the intervention must be discovered and answered quickly. Throughout an intervention, coaches need to be sensitive to teacher’s personal concerns, which are often influenced by forces outside the intervention. Strategies should be incorporated into the intervention that facilitates management of tasks and procedures. Additionally, teachers may need help in understanding the connection between their actions and student outcomes. It is recommended that coaches encourage collaboration between participants, as networking can lead to sharing of resources and expertise.

Question 5 explored the types of coaching activities that teachers and coaches perceived to be most effective in changing teachers’ literacy instructional practices. It was projected that the types of coaching strategies that would be perceived as most effective would be modeling, co-teaching lessons, and conferencing as documented in other studies (Bean et al., 2010; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Lynch & Ferguson, 2010). In this study, the coaching strategy that was perceived to be the most effective by the
teachers at changing literacy practices was receiving immediate feedback while conferencing with the coach following an observation. Secondary strategies identified by the teachers included modeling, receiving resources/information, creating action plans, and using a rubric. Co-teaching lessons was not identified as a strategy in this study, which was not surprising, as the coaching log indicated this strategy was not used by the coach during this intervention. It should be noted that the frequency of coaching activities was not controlled in this study. Teachers were asked to share the specific coaching activities that they perceived to be the most helpful. Study participants may have identified coaching activities that they preferred or were received more frequently. In the future, it may be advisable to formulate more concise questions about each type of coaching strategy.

The three primary coaching activities (conferencing, modeling, and observing) used by the coach in this study were consistent with activities identified by Lynn and Ferguson (2010) and Elish-Piper and L’Allier (2011) as having potential for impacting teachers. This study also identified additional coaching activities (i.e., creating action plans and using a rubric) that were viewed as effective in changing literacy instructional practices by the teachers. Other researchers included the creation of action plans (Powell, Steed, et al., 2010), but the use of the Teacher Implementation Rubric was unique to this study. The Teacher Implementation Rubric was used as both an instructional tool and as an assessment tool. Teachers indicated that the rubric helped them understand a progression of implementation and gave them direction on what was expected at the highest level of implementation. The Teacher Implementation Rubric provides an
effective tool for measuring and monitoring teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices.

Results obtained from this study revealed that taking time to develop relationships with teachers was important. The coach identified time and scheduling conflicts as the main barriers to coaching. These barriers were also identified by Lynch and Ferguson (2010). Concerns from the teachers about the intervention at the beginning of the study included time, not understanding the purpose of the study, feeling unsure about what to expect from this new experience and concern about whether the intervention would clash with current program practices. Fortunately, the teacher’s concerns and resistance did not last long in this study. All of the teachers were able to move forward and change literacy instructional practices.

The coach indicated that her role was to be a partner with the teachers. Stover et al. (2011) concurred that non-evaluative coaching allows coaches to partner with teachers. The non-evaluative role of the literacy coach in this study seemed to help the coach develop trust and collaboration. The teachers stated that their experience with their literacy coach had been positive, and that there were benefits to having a coach. Benefits included the teachers learning different literacy strategies, enhancing the learning experience of their children, and increasing their level of implementation of literacy instructional practices.

There were some similarities between this study and the study conducted by Vanderburg and Stephens (2010). In this study, the researcher also found that the literacy coach was supportive in providing encouragement and demonstrations of literacy practices. Teachers in this study valued the coach, and appreciated that she helped them
with management as well as literacy tasks. Teachers also stated that the coach was instrumental in helping them gain an understanding of “why” certain literacy instructional practices were recommended for implementation. The interviews from this study provided insights into the participants’ experience with the literacy coaching intervention. Overall the teachers expressed that they had enjoyed the experience and stated that it had changed their literacy practices.

**Implications for the Field**

This study demonstrated 20 to 22 hours of focused literacy coaching over a six week period resulted in higher levels of implementation on five targeted literacy instructional practices by eight preschool teachers. This amount of coaching time is relatively small in relationship to making significant changes to instructional practices. Therefore, a focused literacy coaching intervention can have a positive impact on teacher’s literacy instructional practices. Improvements in teacher’s literacy instructional practices also have the potential to benefit students’ acquisition of literacy skills.

The Teacher Implementation Rubric offers potential as an instructional and assessment tool for facilitating and measuring teachers’ implementation of literacy instructional practices. The Teacher Implementation Rubric is easy to use and could be modified and expanded to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

There are many potential benefits from this study. First, the identification of the most effective types of coaching practices can direct future coaching efforts and maximize limited resources. Coaching practices should include immediate feedback based on observations, modeling, providing resources/information, creating action plans, and using assessment tools such as the Teacher Implementation Rubric. Second, this
study added to the knowledge base on literacy coaching and provided useful information for organizations implementing literacy coaching initiatives. Coaching initiatives need to have a focused approach on specific content. Coaches must have clear roles and responsibilities, build trusting relationships, and form partnerships with teachers. It is important for coaches to differentiate their coaching to meet the individual learning and communication needs of teachers. Teachers’ concerns must be acknowledged and addressed. Third, the information from the interviews provided a basis for the social validity of continuing to implement the literacy coaching intervention in the future.

**Limitations**

Several limitations to this study should be noted. First, data collection was limited to eight preschool teachers and one coach in a southwestern state. However, the participating teachers had diverse backgrounds with a wide range of teaching experience. Second, the sample was a convenience sample, but included classrooms from different types of settings. Third, some of the results were based on self-report or observation which may have been influenced by personal biases. Two researchers conducted the majority of the observations to decrease this concern. Fourth, the six week length of the study may have limited some findings that could have been identified in a longer term study. Therefore, findings from this study can serve as the basis for future studies of longer duration.

**Future Directions and Recommendations**

Past research has focused on roles and responsibilities of literacy coaches, amount and type of literacy coaching, the impact of literacy coaching on teacher knowledge and practices, and literacy coaching in relationship to student outcomes. Limited research
was found on changing teacher’s literacy instructional practices. This study added to the knowledge base in this area; however, additional research is needed to determine whether significant changes in teacher’s literacy instructional practices also increase student literacy outcomes. It will be important to examine both teacher implementation levels and student outcomes in the future. Several studies (Bean et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Cusumano et al., 2006; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Garet et al., 2008) have been conducted on the impact of coaching to improve student outcomes, but in those studies the researchers did not determine if the teacher’s literacy instructional practices actually changed during the interventions. There was no determination of what the teachers were actually doing (or not doing) differently to cause the observed outcomes. A highly consistent implementation of literacy instructional practices seems warranted in order to improve student outcomes, therefore, both factors must be examined in future studies.

It is recommended that the literacy coaching intervention should be replicated and expanded to additional sites and a variety of settings with a larger sample size using the Teacher Implementation Rubric as the assessment tool. The Teacher Implementation Rubric could be expanded to include additional literacy instructional practices such as alphabet knowledge and print awareness. It is recommended that researchers examine whether teacher’s level of implementation of literacy instructional practices are maintained over time. It may also be useful to determine the specific features of coaching that have the greatest contribution to increasing literacy instructional practices.

The impact of family involvement, the most effective methods for extending literacy instruction, and the impact of literacy resources to the home should also be
assessed. Future research could determine what types of teacher practices promote family involvement in children’s language and literacy development. Additionally, the impact of the Stages of Concern should continue to be explored within coaching interventions. Future studies should investigate the relationship between increasing teachers’ implementation of literacy instructional practices and student literacy outcomes.

**Conclusion**

This study was unique in that it focused on measuring the teacher’s implementation of five literacy instructional practices using a Teacher Implementation Rubric as an assessment tool. A statistically significant improvement was demonstrated in teacher’s overall implementation of literacy instructional practices in a relatively short amount of time. Therefore, this study supports the efficacy of literacy coaching for improving teachers’ literacy instructional practices.
APPENDIX A: SEDL LICENSE AGREEMENT

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To: Teresa Byington (Licensee)
2285 Pacini Ct.
Henderson, NV 89052

From: Nancy Reynolds
Information Associate
SEDL
Information Resource Center-Copyright Permissions
4700 Mueller Blvd.
Austin, TX 78723

Subject: License Agreement to reprint and distribute SEDL materials

Date: February 13, 2013

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Thank you, again, for your interest in using SEDL's Stages of Concern Questionnaire (Stages). If you have any questions, please contact me at 800-476-6991, ext. 6546 or 512-381-6548, or by e-mail at nancy.reynolds@sedl.org.

Sincerely,

Nancy Reynolds for SEDL

[Signature]  February 26, 2013

Agreed and accepted:

Signature: [Signature]  2-16-13

Printed Name: Teresa Byington

Date signed
APPENDIX B: STAGES OF CONCERN QUESTIONNAIRE (SoCQ 075)

Please answer each of the following questions as it relates to Teaching Targeted Literacy Instruction to preschoolers.

Replace the word “faculty” with “teachers” for Questions 5, 10, & 29.

“Students” are the children in your current classroom (Questions 1, 11, 19, 22, 24, & 32).

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine what people who are using or thinking about using various programs are concerned about at various times during the adoption process.

The items were developed from typical responses of school and college teachers who ranged from no knowledge at all about various programs to many years’ experience using them. Therefore, many of the items on this questionnaire may appear to be of little relevance or irrelevant to you at this time. For the completely irrelevant items, please circle “0” on the scale. Other items will represent those concerns you do have, in varying degrees of intensity, and should be marked higher on the scale.

For example:

This statement is very true of me at this time. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
This statement is somewhat true of me now. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
This statement is not at all true of me at this time. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
This statement seems irrelevant to me. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please respond to the items in terms of your present concerns, or how you feel about your involvement with Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. We do not hold to any one definition of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction so please think of it in terms of your own perception of what it involves. Phrases such as “this approach” and “the new system” all refer to the same innovation. Remember to respond to each item in terms of your present concerns about your involvement or potential involvement with Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.

Thank you for taking time to complete this task.
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<td>0</td>
<td>Irrelevant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not true of me now</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat true of me now</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very true of me now</td>
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</table>

Circle one number for each item.

1. I am concerned about students’ attitudes toward Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I now know of some other approaches that might work better than Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I am more concerned about another innovation. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I am concerned about not having enough time to organize myself each day (in relation to Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction). 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I would like to help other faculty in their use of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I have a very limited knowledge of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I would like to know the effect of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction on my professional status. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I am concerned about conflict between my interests and my responsibilities. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I am concerned about revising my use of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I would like to develop working relationships with both our faculty and outside faculty using Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. I am concerned about how Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction affects students. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I am not concerned about Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction at this time. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. I would like to know who will make the decisions in the new system. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. I would like to discuss the possibility of using Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. I would like to know what resources are available if we decide to adopt Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I am concerned about my inability to manage all that the Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction requires. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. I would like to know how my teaching or administration is supposed to change. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. I would like to familiarize other departments or persons with the progress of this new approach. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Irrelevant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not true of me now</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Somewhat true of me now</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Very true of me now</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am concerned about evaluating my impact on students (in relation to Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I would like to revise Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction’s approach.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am completely occupied with things other than Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I would like to modify our use of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction based on the experiences of our students.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I spend little time thinking about Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I would like to excite my students about their part in Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I am concerned about time spent working with nonacademic problems related to Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I would like to know what the use of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction will require in the immediate future.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I would like to coordinate my efforts with others to maximize the effects of Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I would like to have more information on time and energy commitments required by Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I would like to know what other faculty are doing in this area.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Currently, other priorities prevent me from focusing my time on Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I would like to determine how to supplement, enhance, or replace Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I would like to use feedback from students to change the program.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I would like to know how my role will change when I am using Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Coordination of tasks and people (in relation to Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction) is taking too much of my time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I would like to know how Implementation of Targeted Literacy Instruction is better than what we have now.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your help!

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Stages of Concern Questionnaire (SoCQ 075) is available in the following SEDL publications:


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APPENDIX C: TEACHER AND COACH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

EXIT SURVEYS

Teacher Interview Questions

1. Describe your experience with your literacy coach.

2. Did you have any concerns about having a literacy coach (in connection with changing literacy instructional practices in your classroom)? If yes, what were your concerns?

3. Were there any positive aspects or benefits to having a literacy coach? If yes, please describe.

4. What specific types of coaching activities have been the most helpful?

5. What specific types of coaching activities have been the least helpful?

6. Please describe how having a literacy coach has changed (or not changed) your literacy instructional teaching practices in each of the following areas:
   a. Phonological Awareness (rhyming, initial sounds, understanding syllables)
   b. Dialogic Reading (prompts and questioning)
   c. Vocabulary (introduction of new and challenging words)
   d. Writing (materials, strategies to promote writing)
   e. Extended Conversations (making home-school connections)

7. Is there anything else you would like to share about literacy coaching and literacy practices in your classroom?

8. Please complete the following exit survey.

   Thank you for your time!
Participant ID _______________

Teacher Exit Survey - Please complete the following

1. How many years have you been employed as a preschool teacher?
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1 to 5 years
   c. 6 to 10 years
   d. 11 to 15 years
   e. More than 16 years

2. What is your highest level of education?
   a. Some high school
   b. High school graduate or GED
   c. Some college
   d. Associate degree
   e. Bachelors degree
   f. Masters degree
   g. Doctoral degree

3. Do you have any additional reading or literacy endorsements?
   a. No
   b. Yes, please list ________________________________

4. What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male

5. What is your ethnicity?
   a. Caucasian/White
   b. African American
   c. Hispanic or Latino
   d. Asian or Pacific Islander
   e. Native American
   f. Two or more races
      Other, please specify __________________________
Coaches Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your role as a coach?

2. What knowledge and skills do you feel you needed to work successfully with teachers (i.e. adult learners)?

3. What are some of the successes you have had as a literacy coach?

4. During your coaching experience have you experienced resistance from teachers? If so, why do you think the teacher(s) were resistant and what did you do about it?

5. What are some of the challenges or barriers you have had as a literacy coach?

6. What types of coaching activities do you believe have been the most effective (and least effective) in changing teacher’s literacy instructional teaching practices in the following areas?
   a. Phonological Awareness (rhyming, initial sounds, understanding syllables)
   b. Dialogic Reading (prompts and questioning)
   c. Vocabulary (introduction of new and challenging words)
   d. Writing (materials, strategies to promote writing)
   e. Extended Conversations (making home-school connections)

7. Do you think a teacher’s level of concern impacted their ability to implement instructional literacy practices at higher levels? Why or why not?

8. Do you have any suggestions on how the literacy coaching program could be improved?

9. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with literacy coaching?

10. Please complete the following exit survey. Thank you for your time!
Coach Exit Survey - Please complete the following

6. How many years have you been employed as a coach?
   a. Less than 1 year
   b. 1 to 5 years
   c. 6 to 10 years
   d. 11 to 15 years
   e. More than 16 years

7. What is your highest level of education?
   a. Some high school
   b. High school graduate or GED
   c. Some college
   d. Associate degree
   e. Bachelors degree
   f. Masters degree
   g. Doctoral degree

8. Do you have any additional reading or literacy endorsements?
   a. No
   b. Yes, please list ________________________________

9. What is your gender?
   a. Female
   b. Male

10. What is your ethnicity?
    a. Caucasian/White
    b. African American
    c. Hispanic or Latino
    d. Asian or Pacific Islander
    e. Native American
    f. Two or more races
        Other, please specify ________________
APPENDIX D: TEACHER IMPLEMENTATION RUBRIC

Literacy Focus Areas

- Phonological Awareness: Teaching behaviors related to the development of phonological awareness skills focusing on initial sounds in words, rhyming, letter sounds, and/or syllables in words.
- Reading: Teaching behaviors related to read aloud, dialogic reading, interactive reading, and informal reading.
- Vocabulary: Teaching behaviors related to introducing and using new and challenging words.
- Writing (print knowledge, writing skills): Teaching behaviors related to pre-writing skills activities, modeling writing, dictating children’s words, and children’s opportunities to develop writing skills.
- Oral Language/Extended Conversations: Behaviors related to the frequency of talking with children individually or in small groups including meaningful conversations that focus on the home – school connection.

*During an observation of a teacher’s instructional literacy practices rate the teacher’s level of implementation for each of the following.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonological</td>
<td>No phonological activities are observed.</td>
<td>A limited amount of phonological</td>
<td>There are some attempts at phonological</td>
<td>Phonological awareness activities are</td>
<td>A variety of playful phonological</td>
<td>A variety of playful phonological</td>
<td>Children are given numerous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>activities are observed.</td>
<td>awareness activities but the children</td>
<td>awareness activities but the children</td>
<td>awareness activities are included but</td>
<td>awareness activities are observed but</td>
<td>awareness activities are observed but</td>
<td>opportunities to engage in a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>are not building sound awareness.</td>
<td>are not building sound awareness.</td>
<td>the scope of the activities is limited.</td>
<td>some of the children are less engaged.</td>
<td>some of the children are less engaged.</td>
<td>variety of phonological awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The concepts are not adequately</td>
<td>The appropriate terms are not used</td>
<td>The appropriate terms are not used</td>
<td>activities and the appropriate terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>described.</td>
<td>(i.e. syllable, rhyming, initial sound)</td>
<td>(i.e. syllable, rhyming, initial sound)</td>
<td>are used (i.e. syllable, rhyming, initial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading/</td>
<td>No formal book reading is observed.</td>
<td>One book reading is observed but there is no discussion and children are not engaged in the reading.</td>
<td>One book reading is observed with limited discussion and moderate engagement by children.</td>
<td>One book reading is observed with children and teacher discussing the book with a few children less engaged.</td>
<td>One or more book reading is observed with children and teacher discussing the book.</td>
<td>Two or more book readings are observed with children and teacher engaged in discussing the book and making meaningful connections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>No vocabulary activities are observed.</td>
<td>A limited amount of vocabulary activities are observed.</td>
<td>There are some attempts to introduce new words.</td>
<td>New words are introduced and discussed briefly.</td>
<td>New and challenging words are discussed and heard multiple times.</td>
<td>New and challenging words are discussed in meaningful ways throughout the day.</td>
<td>Children are given numerous ways to use new and challenging words in meaningful ways. There is active engagement in vocabulary development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Area</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing/Teacher and Children</td>
<td>No writing by teacher or children is observed.</td>
<td>A limited amount of writing is observed by either the teacher or the children.</td>
<td>Some writing is observed by both the teacher and the children.</td>
<td>A moderate amount of writing is observed by both teachers and children.</td>
<td>Children and teachers are observed writing as part of teacher-directed activities.</td>
<td>Children and teachers are observed writing as part of teacher-directed activities and spontaneous activities.</td>
<td>Writing is seen in numerous types of activities by both teachers and children. Children are supported in their efforts to write in multiple ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Language/Extended Conversation</td>
<td>No extended conversations are observed between teachers and children.</td>
<td>A limited amount of extended conversations are observed between teachers and children.</td>
<td>There are some attempts at extended conversations although the talk is primarily informational.</td>
<td>A moderate number of extended conversations are seen between teachers and children within a few settings.</td>
<td>Extended conversations are seen between teachers and children within multiple settings. Teachers promote peer to peer conversations.</td>
<td>Extended conversations are seen between teachers and children and peer to peer in multiple setting. They include a focus on making the home-school connection.</td>
<td>Numerous extended conversations are seen between teachers and children and peer to peer in multiple setting. They include a focus on making the home-school connection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX E: COACHING LOG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Start time</th>
<th>End time</th>
<th>Total time (minutes)</th>
<th>Type of Coaching</th>
<th>Amount of Time (minutes)</th>
<th>Content Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/12/12</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The table continues with more dates and times.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Type of Coaching</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Content Focus of Coaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Observe – watching the teacher and classroom activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonological Awareness – Teaching behaviors that focus on phonological awareness skills such as initial sounds in words, rhyming, letter sounds and syllables in words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Co-plan Lesson – plan a lesson with the classroom teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reading – Teaching behaviors focused on shared reading, read aloud, dialogic reading, interactive reading, and/or children’s independent reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Co-teach Lesson – teach with the classroom teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vocabulary – Teaching behaviors that include introducing and using new and challenging words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Model a Lesson – demonstrate a lesson for the teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Writing – Teaching behaviors that include pre-writing activities, modeling writing, dictating children’s words, opportunities to write in journals, make signs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Share resources – provide the teacher with resources and materials</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Extended Conversations – Teaching behaviors focused on speaking and listening in order to communicate or converse with others. Talking with children individually or in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Create Action Plan – create an action plan with the teacher that includes changing the specific environmental or instructional practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Conference – Pre or Post – having a discussion with the teacher about any of the coaching activities and providing feedback from teacher observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Change Physical Environment – physically changing the classroom environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Work Directly with Students – interact with students or a student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Assessment Data – collect or discuss – collect or discuss specific assessment data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social/Behavioral IRB – Exempt Review
Deemed Exempt

DATE:    December 12, 2012
TO:      Dr. Michelle Tannock, Educational & Clinical Studies
FROM:    Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects
RE:      Notification of IRB Action
          Protocol Title: Literacy Coaching and Preschool Teacher’s Implementation of
          Literacy Instructional Practices
          Protocol # 1211-4303M

This memorandum is notification that the project referenced above has been reviewed as indicated in
Federal regulatory statutes 45CFR46 and deemed exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b)2.

PLEASE NOTE:
Upon Approval, the research team is responsible for conducting the research as stated in the exempt
application reviewed by the ORI – HS and/or the IRB which shall include using the most recently
submitted Informed Consent/Assent Forms (Information Sheet) and recruitment materials. The official
versions of these forms are indicated by footer which contains the date exempted.

Any changes to the application may cause this project to require a different level of IRB review.
Should any changes need to be made, please submit a Modification Form. When the above
referenced project has been completed, please submit a Continuing Review/Progress Completion
report to notify ORI – HS of its closure.

If you have questions or require any assistance, please contact the Office of Research Integrity –
Human Subjects at IRB@unlv.edu or call 895-2794.

Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects
4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451047 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1047
(702) 895-2794 • FAX: (702) 895-0805
APPENDIX G: STAGES OF CONCERN COMPARISON CHART

Stages of Concern Comparison Chart (n=7)

This chart compares the teachers Stages of Concern Pre Literacy Coaching and Post Literacy Coaching.
### APPENDIX H: EMERGENT THEMES

*Emergent Themes from Teacher Interviews*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most effective coaching activities at changing your literacy instructional practices</td>
<td>Feedback during conferencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resources/information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating action plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having a rubric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least effective coaching activities</td>
<td>None identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about the intervention</td>
<td>Time needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not understanding the purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New experience – not sure what to expect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whether clash with program practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience with literacy coach</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coach was descriptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive aspects or benefits of coaching</td>
<td>Learned different literacy strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefitted children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Took teacher to next level of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Become more intentional at teaching literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced the learning experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


VITA

TERESA BYINGTON, M.S.

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension
8050 Paradise Road, Suite 100
Las Vegas, NV  89123

(702) 940-5421

EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION (UNCE)  2006-present
Associate Professor/Area Extension Specialist, Early Childhood Education
► As the Area Extension Specialist for Early Childhood Education in southern Nevada, my main responsibility is to incorporate research-based information to help facilitate healthy development of young children (newborn to age 8). I develop research-based curriculum and fact sheets, provide quality informal education, and conduct research in Early Childhood Education. I train and coach child care teachers and directors and oversee programming designed to address the issue of childhood obesity by targeting preschoolers, parents, and childcare providers.

WASHAKIE SCHOOL DISTRICT  (WY)  2000
School Board Member

GILBERT SCHOOL DISTRICT  (AZ)  1998-1999
Grants Specialist
► Identified funding sources, trained educators, and reviewed grant proposals.

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION  (UT)  1990-1997
Extension Associate Professor in Family & Consumer Sciences
► Developed child-care training curriculum, conducted child-care training, and administrated grants.

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION, PROJECT CARES  1991-1994
Project CARES (Children At Risk Extended Schools) Director
► Directed nine school age child-care programs. Administered grants, funding, staffing, training, and curriculum development.

DAVIS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  (UT)  1983-1990
Family and Consumer Science Teacher, Central Davis Junior High School
► Taught 7th and 9th grade Family and Consumer Science classes

CONSULTING

ASQ (Assessing School Age Care Quality) Advisor  1996-1998
School-Age Child Care Project, Wellesley College, MA
Provided staff development and program improvement to child care centers.

Grant writing  1997-1998
Ogden & Provo School Districts
21st Century Learning Center Grants
EDUCATION

University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
PhD, Special Education with Emphasis in Early Childhood  
In progress

Utah State University  
Master of Science, Family & Consumer Science  
1987

Brigham Young University  
Bachelor of Science, Home Economics Education  
1983

GRANT RELATED ACTIVITIES


Byington, T. (3/12-10/12) Child Development Associate Competency Training. Funded by the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority, $12,099.


Byington, T. (7/11-6/12). Silver State Stars QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement System) Mentoring. Funded by Office of Early Care and Education/Child Care Development Block Grant Funds, $65,000.


Sigman-Grant, M., Lindsay, A., & Byington, T. (02/09-02/13). All 4 Kids: Resiliency in an Obesogenic Environment. Funded by USDA, National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA), competitive Agriculture & Food Research Initiative (AFRI) grant, $1,100,000.


Byington, T. (3/10-10/11). Early Head Start- CDA (Child Development Associate) and Mentoring Project. Funded by Sunrise Children’s Foundation, $50,000.


Byington, T. (07/09-06/11). Silver State Stars QRIS (Quality Rating Improvement System) Mentoring Program. Funded by Office of Early Care and Education/Child Care Development Block Grant Funds, $150,000.

Byington, T., Sigman-Grant, M., & Lindsay, A. (02/09-02/11). Models of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) and Evaluation Demonstration Project. Funded by USDA, FNS, $100,000.
Byington, T. (11/1/09 – 10/31/10), Mentoring and Professional Development Project. Funded by United Way of Southern Nevada, $18,635.

Byington, T. (10/1/09-4/30/10), CCSD Mentoring Project, Funded by Clark County School District, $6,000.


Abstracts


**Curriculum**


**SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**


AWARDS & HONORS

2012 USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Partnership Award for Mission Integration of Research, Education or Extension (All 4 Kids Program)
2012 National Jeanne M. Priester Award for a statewide/multi-state program (sponsored by NIFA/USDA) (All 4 Kids Program)
2012 Western Extension Directors Association Award (WEDA) of Excellence – Multi State Research (All 4 Kids Program)
2012 Family Health & Wellness Award, 3rd Place National Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (All 4 Kids Program)
2012 Family Health & Wellness Award, 2nd Place Western Regional Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (All 4 Kids Program)
2012 Florence Hall Award, 3rd Place Western Regional Award, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (All 4 Kids Program)
2008 Zenith Award, Southern Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children. The award is given to an individual that goes above and beyond in their contributions to the Early Childhood Community.