THE IMPACT OF TEACHER PERCEPTIONS AND PREPAREDNESS OF READING PROSODY IN ELEMENTARY READING INSTRUCTION: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

With a

Major in Educational Leadership in the

Department of Graduate Education

Northwest Nazarene University

by

Kristi Graber

April, 2022

Major Professor: Serena Morales, Ph.D.

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT

DISSERTATION

This dissertation of Kristi Graber, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership with a major in Educational Leadership and titled "The Impact of Teacher Perceptions and Preparedness of Reading Prosody in Elementary Reading Instruction: A Mixed-Methods Study," has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies.

Major Professor DocuSigned by: Serena Morales 36CFE6CFAC83462... Dr. Serena Morales Date 4/10/2022 | 19:16:48 PDT

Committee Members DocuSigned by: Dr. Terah Moore 0AF92960ABC34B4... Dr. Terah Moore Date 4/14/2022 | 08:57:40 PDT

DocuSigned by: Dr. Terri Sorenson B2E282AACB7C4B9... Dr. Terri Sorenson Date 4/14/2022 | 10:33:44 MDT

Doctoral Program Director DocuSigned by: Heidi Curtis 18C507285A124B4... Dr. Heidi Curtis Date 4/14/2022 | 11:31:40 MDT

Discipline's College Dean DocuSigned by: LoriAnn Sanchez 1F6287564ACC4DC... Dr. LoriAnn Sanchez Date 4/14/2022 | 12:03:58 MDT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the many people who have been involved in this journey along the way. Anything is truly possible when you have the right people there to support you!

My friends who constantly encouraged me by providing a sounding board that I needed to continue this process. Knowing that those around me believed in me and had faith that I would finish this helped in the darkest times. Thank you for allowing me to disappear into writing when I needed to and allowing me the time and space that I needed during the process. The phone calls, porch drops of lotus teas, food, and supportive notes all make a difference. Specifically, to Tracy and Danielle, thank you for being my people. I will always be grateful for your unwavering friendship while sharing this journey. The quote "A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down" really sums up this adventure.

Many thanks go to my doctoral committee who guided and helped me through every step of the process. I would like to thank Dr. Serena Morales for your input and transparent guidance throughout this process. Thank you for your steadfast support and truly being the mentor that I needed. We were definitely well matched for each other! Thank you to Dr. Moore and Dr. Sorensen for investing in my journey and reading through drafts to ensure that this study would come to completion.

Thank you to my family who has supported me through this journey, even those times when I disappeared. Thank you to my mom, for listening and encouraging me along the way. You have always said that I could do this, telling me to hold firm to the tenacity and stubbornness within me; in doing so, nurtured my belief that I could finish this undertaking. I will always be grateful for your steadfast support.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the two people who have meant and will always be an integral part of my life. Although they are no longer here, their presence continues to be felt and I will always have guidance in their memories. I must also dedicate the completion of this project to my support system at home: M., C., and P., the true survivalists of the many days of writing.

ABSTRACT

Reading prosody builds a bridge between fluency and comprehension. The purpose of this parallel explanatory study was to examine the impact of EPP training on teacher's pedagogical knowledge and instructional choices in fluency and prosody in the classroom. Through a survey instrument, respondents provided input on their EPP coursework, fieldwork, and feelings of preparedness to enter the teaching field. In addition, six qualitative questions provided further insight into the research questions from the participant perspectives and allowed for triangulation of the data.

The results from the *t*-test and multiple regression analysis indicated that training in fluency instruction was a statistically significant predictor of teachers' pedagogical choices for teaching students reading comprehension skills, incorporating a variety of pedagogical choices to increase each fluency component, making instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations, and instructional decisions in reading prosody. The qualitative data further reflected the impact of EPP preparation on reading prosody when participants completed an EPP program without fluency coursework or fieldwork.

The research findings determine that most early career teachers have limited fluency preparation and a lower perception of preparedness in reading prosody directly impacted instructional decisions by teachers not choosing to teach or address the skill in their classrooms. This study informs how teachers desire increased training to improve their students' fluency proficiency and a greater knowledge base of teaching strategies in reading prosody. Considerable implications for educators exist in adjustments in reading pedagogy for the classroom, professional development provided by school districts, and independent professional development available to teachers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter I

Introduction

An elementary teacher receives her class list of the new students, each with different learning profiles and various reading skills. Every student will enter the classroom with the expectation that they will become readers. Reading is one of the foundational academic skills that must be explicitly taught (Boakye, 2017; Duke et al., 2021; Vaughn & Fletcher, 2021). In the elementary years, mastering sight word automaticity and decoding to improve fluency are the groundwork for comprehension (Fuchs et al., 2009). However, research establishes that many teachers have insufficient reading and instruction knowledge (Clark et al., 2017; Pittman et al., 2020). How a teacher approaches teaching foundational skills in the classroom, such as fluency and word-reading, defines the instruction the student will need to improve their reading (Duke et al., 2021; Hindman et al., 2020).

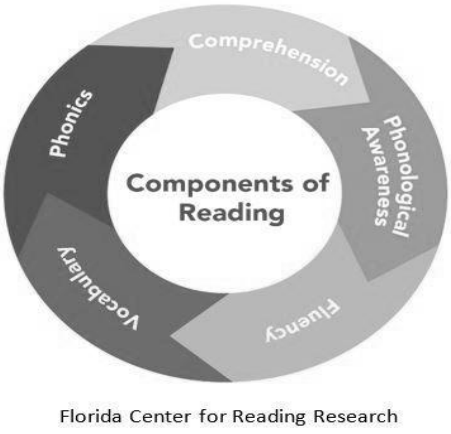
Current approaches for teaching reading often overemphasize the fundamental skills of fluency: accuracy, rate, and automaticity, to increase reading proficiency (Allington, 2009; Applegate et al., 2009; Hicks, 2009; Kuhn, 2020; Lipson et al., 2011; Murray et al., 2012; Nichols et al., 2009; Rasinski, 2004; Samuels, 2007). These approaches may result in students with word automaticity but decreases the critical elemental of comprehension in reading development, attributing to the underdeveloped ability to read with expression (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Reading comprehension is not an automatic skill, even with rapid word-reading and strong fluency (Duke et al., 2021). Although research demonstrating instruction in prosody increases both reading comprehension and fluency, a teacher identifying fluent reading primarily with rapid word reading will focus on teaching skills to improve the oral reading rate (Allington, 2009; Applegate et al., 2009; Griffith & Rasinski, 2004; Hicks, 2009; Lipson et al., 2011;

Murray et al., 2012; Nichols et al., 2009; Rasinski, 2004; Samuels, 2007). Research demonstrates the correlation of instructional practices to encourage prosodic reading development during early reading stages with a higher rate of fluency development (Calet et al., 2017; Holliman et al., 2017; Wolf, 2008).

The National Reading Panel explored the efficacy in current instructional approaches for teaching foundational reading and phonic skills by analyzing over 100,000 studies researching reading skill development in 2000 (Reynolds et al., 2011).The National Reading Panel results classified five components of efficient instruction in reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, and each component needed to be taught for students to effectively develop reading proficiency (National Reading Panel, 2000). Since its publication, the research has significantly impacted best practices for teaching foundational reading skills and continues to be the reference for instructional decisions (Ehri & Flugman, 2018; National Reading Panel, 2000).

Figure 1

The Five Components of Reading



Note. (Florida Center for Reading Research, n.d.)

Continuing research in each of the reading components identified in the National Reading Panel (NRP) report explores the impact of each domain. The evidence for systematic and explicit teaching using guidance from NRP findings is published in current reading science research (Foorman et al., 2016; Gersten et al., 2017; Kim & Snow, 2021; Petscher et al., 2020). Rosenblatt (2013) and Treiman and Altmiller (2021) contributed to the research of explicitly teaching phonemic awareness and alphabetic elements of phonics. Ehri (2020) continued research in fluency by exploring the increase of sight word memory to increase automaticity and reading accuracy. Fluent readers, according to Reutzel and Cooter (2012), have mastered the skill to effortlessly read orally at a natural rate in an unconscious manner analogous to speaking; this enables the reader to focus on the story concepts and understand the content. Penner-Wilger (2008) describes fluency's underlying qualities as accuracy, automaticity, and prosody. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, 2000) explained that fluency is the reader having the capacity to comprehend the text during reading; and embedded within that explanation as one component of fluency is reading prosody (Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2015; Erekson, 2010; Holliman et al., 2017; Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2016; Son & Chase, 2018).

Prosodic reading is a multi-faceted skill demonstrated by vocal pitch changes (varying between low and high pitch), duration (length of sound), pauses, and stress (accent of one syllable of the word to convey meaning). A natural rhythm in oral reading characterizes prosody, creating cohesion of text and meaning (Chan et al., 2019; Schwanenflugel et al., 2004; Wade-Wooley & Heggie, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

Teaching children to read utilizing all five reading components is the responsibility of elementary school teachers (Durrance, 2017; Gischlar & Vesay, 2018; Meeks et al., 2017). An elementary teacher's beliefs about literacy instruction (Ciampa & Gallagher, 2017) and any deficiencies in the teacher's content knowledge about reading development impact students' achievement (Berkeley et al., 2016; Durrance, 2017; Meeks et al., 2017). According to education professionals both inside and outside the profession, improvements in teacher preparation are needed (Gelfuso et al., 2015; Ortlieb & McDowell, 2016; Zeichner et al., 2015). Many Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) fail to incorporate an adequate number of pedagogical courses in reading and corresponding fieldwork experiences to equip pre-service teachers to develop the necessary techniques and understanding of the content they need to be successful in teaching reading acquisition (Stark et al., 2016). It is common for an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) to combine reading and writing methods courses into one survey course, and many institutions offer little preparation on the actual structure of how students acquire the skill of reading (Clark et al., 2017; Moats, 2014). Teachers are ill-equipped to teach reading acquisition skills they have not learned, and deficiencies in teacher knowledge about reading development impact student achievement (Berkeley et al., 2016; Durrance, 2017; Meeks et al., 2017). If available research suggests early career teachers perceive they are underprepared to give high-quality literacy teaching in their classrooms (Al Otaiba et al., 2012; Bogard et al., 2017; Greenberg et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2019; Scales et al., 2018), then teachers might have low self-efficacy in their ability to deliver instruction in prosodic reading.

Researchers continue to explore the complexities of teaching literacy as a new teacher (Noll & Lenhart, 2013; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Gelfuso et al., 2015; International Literacy

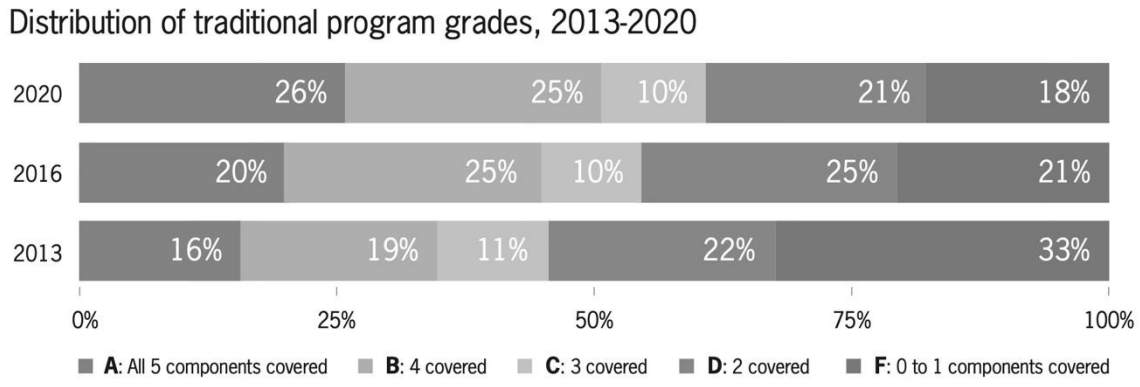
Association, 2015; Kim & Snow, 2021; Washburn et al., 2016). Noll and Lenhart (2013) presented a case study of two first-year teachers which detailed the reliance on the EPP training received for teachers making instructional decisions in fluency and prosody assessments. The investigations into the crucial impact of field experiences in improving teacher abilities to administer and understand various formative and summative assessments conducted by Gelfuso et al. (2015) and the International Literacy Association (2015) added to the corpus of research. Teaching reading requires a high level of instructional skill, but teachers reported little-to-no instruction in their educator preparation programs on pedagogical approaches considered essential for foundation reading skill development (Binks-Cantrell et al., 2012; Brindle et al., 2016; Griffith, 2017; Wijekumar et al., 2019). The varied levels of teacher knowledge in reading development and how to teach reading is considerable (Kim & Snow, 2021). This knowledge impacts teacher practices and produces teachers without the ability to implement quality reading instruction in their classrooms (Griffith, 2017; Kim & Snow, 2021; Wijekumar et al., 2019). As a result, the EPP standards are receiving more attention and critiques with the purpose of developing more knowledgeable and skilled teachers who will favorably influence student reading achievement. (Clark et al., 2017; Durrance, 2017; Meeks et al., 2017).

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) examined 1200 EPPs and found that 26% of EPPs provided instruction in all five components of reading identified by the NRP in the 2020 review (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2020). . In addition, greater than half of EPPs taught at least four components of reading in the 2020 Teacher Prep Review (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2020). Addressing the each reading component within EPPs increased by ten percentage points since 2014, with 228 college programs improving their teaching training instruction (Durrance, 2017; National Council on Teacher Quality, 2016), yet

understanding how the skills of fluency and prosody impact reading development remains low, as only 53% of programs address those reading components (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2020). Most new teachers are graduating from EPPs without adequate knowledge in reading prosody and how to make pedagogical decisions in their classroom practice.

Figure 2

NCTQ 2020 Teacher Preparation Program Ratings



Note. Percentage of teacher preparation programs addressing each component of reading (National Center for Teacher Quality, 2020) used with permission.

Background

Extensive early literature investigating prosodic reading skills established a correlation between reading comprehension, fluency, and prosody (Schreiber, 1980; Dowhower, 1987; Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Young & Bowers, 1995; Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Reading comprehension deficits have been explored at various reading acquisition levels (Alvarez-Canizo et al., 2015; Baroody & Diamond, 2012; Ding & Liu, 2014), as has the connection between prosodic fluent reading as it impacts comprehension (Paleologos & Brabham, 2011; Khor et al., 2014; Son & Chase, 2018).

Prosody integrates into a language management tool – organizing discourse into operable or memorable chunks (T. Shanahan, personal communication, March 15, 2021). Students read sentences without prosodic input in the primary grades and still understand the simple text. The simple text becomes increasingly complex as students move higher in grade levels. Written language becomes more complicated, and utterances and propositions longer and more embedded (T. Shanahan, personal communication, March 15, 2021).). This complexity is linked to the fourth-grade slump, or the transition from primarily reading narrative text in the early elementary (first and second grade) and increasing the standard of expository text comprehension in the intermediate elementary years (third through fifth grade) (Sanacore & Palumbo, 2009; Wanzek et al., 2010). Students may struggle with this transition because the word-level reading skills necessary to comprehend such text have not been developed (Wanzek et al., 2010). The decrease in fourth grade NAEP assessment scores indicate that student reading performance decrease in the fourth grade as the expectation of reading skill complexity increases (Best et al., 2008; Chall & Jacobs, 2003; Kucan & Palinscar, 2011; NAEP, 2019; Sanacore & Palumbo, 2009).

A defining element of the theory of automaticity is the evidence of fluent reading is the demonstration of reading with accuracy and speed (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). After the National Reading Panel highlighted the component of fluency as a critical reading skill, districts and schools began to include it in their curricula (Kuhn et al., 2010). With the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act in 2004 and the continuation of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, the element of fluency primarily became defined as rate and accuracy in isolation, overlooking the component of prosody (Kuhn et al., 2010).

Current research demonstrates that prosodic reading is more than just expressive oral reading; it is critical because proficient readers interact with the texts they read, allowing comprehension to become a priority (Rasinski et al., 2017; Rupley et al., 2020). Dr. Timothy Rasinski encourages teaching decisions to promote fluency skills that are not primarily based on a high oral reading rate (Rasinski et al., 2017). Nonetheless, when assessing fluency in the classroom, it is common to use measures of a rapid reading rate and timed drill passages to determine proficiency (Cahill & Gregory, 2011; Campbell & Hlusek, 2015). Districts use the benchmark scores of oral reading rate to determine grade-level proficiency from nationally normed measures such as Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), AIMSweb Standard Reading Assessment Passages (Achievement Improvement Monitoring System), DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), and GORT (Gray Oral Reading Test), all which omit prosody from the fluency score, instead concentrating on accuracy (words correct per minute) and reading rate (speed) (Deno, 1985; Dynamic Measurement Group, 2009; NCS Pearson, Inc., 2011; Pearson Education, Inc., 2012). These measures do not consider prosody's contribution to reading fluency, and, additionally, a high reading rate does not necessarily correlate to an efficient reading of a passage (Rasinski et al., 2017; Valencia et al., 2010).

Children need explicit, systematic, and practical reading instruction in each of these reading core competencies with implicit teacher feedback and opportunities for guided practice in the classroom to increase reading skills (Durrance, 2017; Jones et al., 2019). A new teacher with a lack of clear understanding with regard to prosody's role in the developmental reading process (Rupley et al., 2020; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012), paired with priority placed on a rapid reading rate for the standard of grade-level reading proficiency (Rasinski et al., 2017; Valencia et al., 2010) may lack the skills and confidence to critically assess their own teaching

and to stray from the expectation of rapid oral fluency to integrate prosody (Lenski et al., 2013; Noll & Lenhart, 2013). Training students to read fast contradicts the development and mastery of expert reading skills (Rasinski, 2006; Bessemans et al., 2019). The perception of fluency as learned in their EPP program assumes a substantial role in the teacher's instructional decisions. This study intends to explore the understanding of reading prosody and perceptions of fluency stemming from EPP preparation in reading instruction of early-career elementary teachers. .

Theoretical Framework

The National Reading Panel identified fluency (expressive reading, natural reading rate, and automaticity in word reading) as a critical component necessary for reading proficiency (National Reading Panel, 2000). An effective teacher with strong competence in reading development and pedagogical knowledge may report a positive self-efficacy for teaching students to read with prosody. A teacher needs to provide engaging and repeated practice activities to encourage readers to develop fluency (Rasinski, 2010). Exploring teacher perceptions of their own effectiveness in teaching students to develop fluent reading skills, pairing rate, and accuracy with an emphasis on reading prosody can be beneficial (Clark & Newberry, 2019). To implement effective instruction, teachers must anticipate their abilities to effectively meet the diverse reading development levels of their students (Clark & Newberry, 2019). Reading pedagogy courses and field experiences vary by EPP, and every experience can influence teacher self-efficacy (Clark & Newberry, 2019). Teachers' beliefs influence their instructional actions and techniques; therefore, high self-efficacy is required to reach higher levels of learning and instruction (Peker & Erol, 2018). Albert Bandura, a social cognitive psychologist, defined self-efficacy as "confidence in one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to accomplish certain attainments" that characterizes one's

assessment of their personal ability to accomplish the task (Bandura, 1997, p.3). Self-efficacy influences a teacher's internal thoughts about their teaching ability. Self-efficacy manifests itself in various ways, affecting our ideas, emotions, behaviors, and motivation; it is a driving factor in determining how we see life events. People with higher self-efficacy often don't question their ability to recover from a health setback, for example, recover faster, and people who think about quitting smoking stop more readily (DiClemente et al., 1985).

Self-efficacy theory explains a person's self-confidence within a specific context (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Teachers' self-efficacy relates to teachers' goals and the level of challenge and effort they devote to attaining their goals. A teacher with high self-efficacy may see the class reading at only 30% proficiency in the fall, but then implements systematic instruction to which students respond, resulting in the class increasing to 85% proficiency in the spring. The anticipation of perceived goals controls most human behavior, including attempts to attain goals or degrees of proficiency and the social feedback regarding behaviors (Bandura, 1993). Teachers' self-efficacy influences teachers' performance, quality of instruction, level of confidence in their abilities, and potentially determines instructional success (Bandura, 1986). Teacher self-efficacy in reading may be tied to student performance. Teachers may have strong self-efficacy in one aspect of fluency, such as reading rate, but poor self-efficacy in another aspect of reading, such as prosody. Teachers' levels of self-efficacy in content or domain specific areas vary depending on the necessary level of ability required to teach the material (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

The self-efficacy theory guides this study by investigating the probability of new teachers making instructional decisions in reading prosody if they perceive they have been adequately prepared by their EPP, increasing their teaching efficacy. Self-efficacy is a task-specific type of

self-esteem (Lunenburg, 2011). Task-related self-efficacy motivates people to put more effort and perseverance into completing complex tasks, increasing the possibility that the tasks will be finished (Axtell & Parker, 2003). Teachers with high self-efficacy often have higher-performing students, thus increasing their self-confidence (Bandura, 1993; Goddard et al., 2000). Based on this hypothesis, preservice teachers who display self-assurance in their ability to teach reading often employ additional tactics to ensure their students are proficient readers (Bandura, 1993). It's also true in the other direction. If their students are not proficient readers, teachers with lower self-efficacy as reading teachers may use fewer approaches. Teachers who lack confidence or self-efficacy would not attempt various strategies to encourage student achievement if success is not achieved the first time (Bandura, 1993). This study's instrument questions ask specifically about teacher preparation in instructional decision making and exposure to various teaching methods in both fieldwork and pedagogical content knowledge to gauge levels of new teacher self-efficacy.

Influence of Self-Efficacy in Teaching

Student performance influences teachers' choices and the instructional decisions they pursue (Calderhead, 1996). A high level of student reading performance increases teacher efficacy, and the teacher will continue to make effective instructional decisions based on student achievement (Henson et al., 2001). Self-efficacy impacts motivation, learning ability, and performance because people typically try to acquire and learn tasks if they think they will be successful (Lunenburg, 2011).

Impact of Self-Efficacy on Variables of the Study

The principles of the self-efficacy theory explained the variables of perceptions and preparedness and directed research questions in this study. The researcher tested the principles of

self-efficacy theory by investigating the research questions to determine if the ideologies apply to early career teachers. The researcher used the self-efficacy theory to address both research questions to examine if there was a statistically significant difference between early career teachers' perceptions of fluency and prosody and their feelings of preparedness to teach it. Self-efficacy defines a teachers' confidence and beliefs in their abilities and is a vital component to effective teaching (Peker & Erol, 2018).

Research Questions

This study examined early career teacher's perceptions of readiness to teach prosody, their perceptions of fluent reading, and the preparation to teach prosody received in teacher training. This study examined whether educator preparation programs effectively teach new teachers to provide instruction that develops students' prosodic reading skills (Berkley et al., 2016; Clark et al., 2017; Durrance, 2017). Exploring new teachers' knowledge of how to integrate prosody in instruction purposely may provide insight into early reading preparation in EPPs.

This mixed-methods study analyzed teacher perception of readiness to teach prosody, the pedagogical training received, and the teacher perception of fluent reading, if it includes prosody. This investigation was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from educator preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?
2. In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

Table 1

Application of Theoretical Framework to Research Questions

Self-Efficacy	
Research Question	Link to Theory
Research Question #1	
In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?	Students with proficient fluency rates are often identified as displaying high reading rate and accuracy rates, as measured by district benchmark assessments- this will increase teacher self-efficacy (Hasbrouck & Tindall, 2017). If this perception of fluency is learned in the educator preparation program as the marker of proficient fluency, a teacher will make instructional decisions to increase student performance. Reading prosody is marked by a slower reading rate (Rasinski, 2010), lowering teacher self-efficacy if perceived as not proficient in reading.
Research Question #2	
In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?	Early career teachers begin to develop self-efficacy beliefs during their teacher preparation programs, and these views are unlikely to modify once established. (Bandura, 1997). The perceived preparedness as learned by a teacher in their training program may impact their instructional decisions to teach and develop student reading prosody.

Description of Terms

Several terms are standard within the peer-reviewed literature surrounding reading prosody. The following terms provide clarification for this particular research study:

Automaticity. The immediate recognition of words without decoding (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008).

Benchmark levels. The standard or point of reference establishing grade-level reading fluency (Dynamic Measurement Group, 2009).

Comprehension. The connection of ideas between the reader and the text interchange reader knowledge with text information (Moore et al., 2016). Readers use a variety of abilities to comprehend what they read, including vocabulary knowledge, text structure, and reading methods (Sayeski et al., 2015).

EPP. Educator Preparation Provider. The EPP includes initial licensure programs (undergraduate) and advanced programs (graduate) aligned to state standards. The programs are dedicated to the instruction and preparation of PreK-12 teachers (CAEP, 2020).

Foundational Reading Skills. The skills required for successful and fluent reading. These skills are decoding, phonological awareness, and sight word identification (Scarborough, 1998).

Fluency. The demonstration of oral reading with speed, accuracy, and prosody (Calet et al., 2015).

Pacing. The rate at which a text is read, recorded as words per minute (WPM) (Morris et al., 2018).

Phonemic awareness. The understanding of the connections in oral language between letters and sounds (Ehri & Flugman, 2018).

Phonics. The association between the visual representation of the letters and the particular phonemes (Ehri & Flugman, 2018).

Pre-service teacher: A future educator pursuing licensure through a teacher training program (Hoffman et al., 2019)

Prosody. The expressiveness and vocal intonation that encourages comprehension during reading, demonstrated by reading with feeling and conveying meaning (Rupley et al., 2020). The evidence of prosody is an oral reading characterized by vocal pitch changes, appropriate pausing, and syllable stress (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004).

Teacher automaticity. A teacher's capacity to use teaching techniques and strategies in such a way that they become automatic, as well as their capacity to display flexibility and fluidity in their teaching actions (Danielson, 2015).

Significance of the Study

This study contributes valuable insight involving the integration of reading prosody into the definition of fluency identified by a teacher and is recognized as an area that would benefit from additional research (T. Rasinski, personal communication, March 15, 2021). This study explored if teachers perceive they completed their EPPs with sufficient knowledge to deliver instruction encouraging reading prosody development and if that preparation directly impacts the pedagogical choices made during in the classroom. Each element of fluency is essential for reading development (accuracy, speed, expression, and comprehension), but no single element in isolation is enough for fluent reading (Kuhn et al., 2010). All educators, especially preservice and novice teachers, must receive specific instruction on the importance of reading prosody concerning comprehension and automaticity. These literacy competencies facilitate learning and prepare early readers to become fluent, comprehensive readers (Brown, 2014).

When teachers enter the classroom, the importance of achieving the grade-level proficiency for reading rate in a curriculum-based measurement is a high priority, despite research indicating that training students to read fast contradicts the growth of needed foundational literacy skills (Meeks et al., 2017; Bessemans et al., 2019; Rasinski, 2006). This research explored if the current level of knowledge of prosody in beginning teachers enables them to make the pedagogical choices necessary to scaffold the transition from learning to read in early elementary (first and second grade) to reading to learn (where prosody becomes an avenue for comprehension once students can segment and phrase with automaticity) in the third and fourth grades.

Overview of Research Methods

This investigation utilized an explanatory parallel mixed-methods research design. This two-phase research design begins with quantitative and qualitative data collection, then continues to analyze all the data, culminating with a data interpretation (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Specifically, the quantitative phase was created to answer the study's research questions by analyzing the numerical data collected to characterize and comprehend the study's background or experiences (Babbie, 2010; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The open-ended qualitative questions were created to describe the quantitative findings in greater detail with emergent coding.

Quantitative data were collected through The Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey (Salinger et al., 2010) developed for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) 2010 "Study of Teacher Preparation in Early Reading Instruction.” By exploring preservice teachers' understanding of the five key components of instruction in early reading, the entire survey instrument gives a substantial quantity of information on all aspects of reading. The

decision was made to use just the questions from the survey that were relevant to reading prosody and fluency. The isolated instrument questions provided the information needed to respond to the research questions. The Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment was used to collect quantitative data in the form of Likert Scales on reading prosody perceptions (Beachy, 2017).

The qualitative phase immediately followed the quantitative questions and consisted of six validated, open-ended questions. The study's results were analyzed to see how well and to what extent the qualitative findings explained and complemented the quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

The exploration of reading prosody's role concerning fluency and comprehension is addressed in the Chapter 2 literature review. The literature study examines teachers' perceptions of teacher preparation and pedagogical choices that promote students' oral prosody growth in reading.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Introduction

A teacher's confidence to teach is contingent on their education, training, and professional development (National Literacy Trust, 2015; Robinson, 2017). In early career teachers, that confidence is often based on the knowledge gained from experiences in their educator preparation program. This study aimed to explore the relationship between preparation to teach reading prosody and perceptions of reading fluency for early career teachers in the classroom. Teacher efficacy is influenced by teacher confidence, and student achievement is influenced by teacher efficacy (Bostock & Boon, 2012). Teachers with high efficacy in reading prosody would teach with expressive, fluent reading; however, it is unknown if teachers believe they have the pedagogical skills to teach reading prosody in the primary classroom.

Although research on fluency, phonics, and decoding skills is extensive, the implementation of teaching methods to encourage the development of reading prosody, particularly its impact on teacher pedagogical decisions in the elementary classroom, is underrepresented in the literature. A global search of studies on the teaching of reading prosody in elementary school produces only a few research studies (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Lopes et al., 2015; Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2017). Other researchers focused on acquiring the specific prosodic features during reading: focus, the link between fluency and prosody, and text complexity (Schwanenflugel et al., 2015; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2016; Paige et al., 2017).

New teachers often juxtapose a lack of preparedness in teaching early reading, which is paired with feelings of stress from the priority placed on a high reading rate performance by their students in district assessments (Firmender et al., 2013; Reis et al., 2011; Sayeski et al., 2015). A literature review found that most elementary curricula teach decoding and automaticity apart

from prosody (Rasinski, 2010), so specific training on the intricacies of prosody for teachers is needed (Geva et al., 2017; Rasinski, 2010). Since research demonstrates that teachers significantly influence how much a student learns (Wanzek et al., 2010), an investigation of the impact of teacher training on prosody on elementary reading instruction was explored.

Educator Preparation

EPPs are responsible for providing teachers with the techniques, skills, and methodologies they'll need for success in their future classrooms. This preparation must be rigorous and aligned with the research in reading and reading development (Moats, 2020). The National Reading Panel (2000), which provided essential research on the information needed for reading acquisition success in the school, recognized phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension as essential components of effective reading education. It is typical for these essential components to not be included in EPPs or professional development, which influences the deviation away from this research being applied in classroom reading instruction (Moats, 2020). Surveys of EPPs produce evidence detailing the misalignment between how prospective teachers are taught how to provide reading instruction and what type is consistent with the research (Moats, 2020; NCTQ, 2020). EPPs have the critical task of preparing teachers to feel competent in methods and practices to successfully teach each of the five essential reading elements on their first day of teaching. Although fluency is a critical component of reading, it is a complex skill that requires teachers to be trained in all dimensions (Rasinski, 2004). The dimensions of fluency include comprehension, prosody, and reading rate, and classroom instruction must systematically integrate each dimension (Paige et al., 2014; Rasinski, 2004). Teachers often teach fluency as a one-dimensional skill, prioritizing word reading rate to the detriment of prosody and comprehension (Kuhn et al., 2010). Teachers may

not be prepared to develop reading routines of increasing student gains in prosodic reading and automaticity (Rasinski, 2004).

The International Literacy Association (2015) asserted that reading teachers should have a solid understanding of foundational reading skills and should continue to build their capacity to be effective classroom teachers. The National Reading Panel (2000) noted teachers must have extensive instruction in the five reading components to instruct students effectively. Although reading proficiency is fundamental for academic success, preservice teachers' coursework may include only 3–9 credit hours in reading, including both foundational and content-area reading (Moats, 2020; NCTQ, 2020). During the 2020 National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) investigation, only 53% of the 1,047 educator preparation programs evaluated in 2020 taught fluency content knowledge (NCTQ, 2020). This information translates into a substantial deficit for teachers understanding the significance of reading prosody, which is just one dimension of fluency (Klauda & Guthrie, 2008; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003).

The NCTQ also evaluated the texts chosen to teach reading instruction by an EPP in 2020. The *Teaching Reading Sourcebook*, by Bill Honig et al. (2018), is recognized as an "exemplar text" by the NCTQ, covering all five effective reading instruction elements. The Honig et al. text is the primary text in 94 out of the 1047 teacher preparation programs reviewed and contains written explicit lessons on how to assess and define fluency and prosody. Honig et al. (2018) described prosody as having a clear connection to comprehension and defines instruction in fluency to "focus on ensuring that word reading becomes automatic so that readers have sufficient cognitive resources to understand what they read" (p. 321). In contrast, a "not acceptable" rated text of *Literacy for the 21st Century: A Balanced Approach,* by Gail E. Tompkins et al. (2019), is utilized in 235 teacher preparation courses. This text refers to prosody

as “using voices to add meaning to words” (p. 194) and defines fluency as “how many words correct read in a minute" (Tompkins et al., 2019, p. 196).

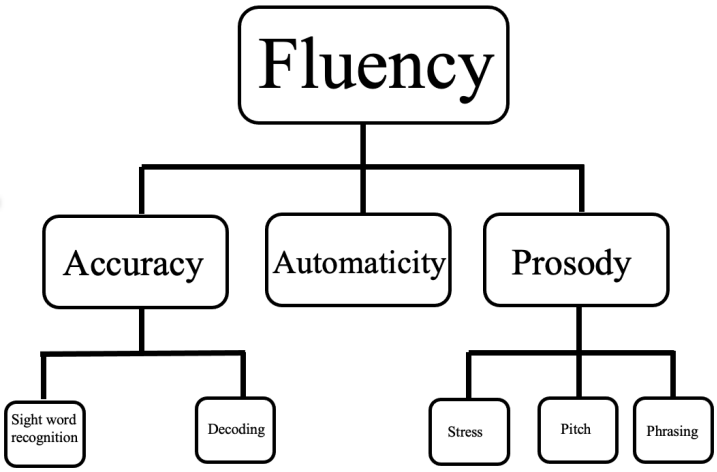
Since a teacher's confidence to teach is contingent on their training (Robinson, 2017) it is reasonable to engage in a line of questioning if the primary text chosen by the majority of EPPs to instruct future teachers inadequately defines fluency and prosody. The adequate preparation of teachers by the EPP in each element of fluency is essential for proficient reading development.

Defining Prosody

Prosody's link within the characteristics of fluency demands a rigorous review of teachers' competence to teach reading prosody after completing their EPP program. This exploration necessitates succinct definitions of fluency and prosody. Fluency is commonly measured by reading accuracy and speed, thanks partly to the seminal investigations conducted and the automaticity theory proposed by LaBerge and Samuels (1974). Schools and teachers often integrated fluency teaching in their literacy programs after the National Reading Panel identified that the critical component of fluency was essential to create a proficient reading program (2000). The National Reading Panel (NRP) defines fluent reading as reading "orally with speed, correctness, and suitable expression," and "fluency requires the rapid use of punctuation and the determination of where to place emphasis or where to pause" (NICHD, 2000a, p. 1). The defining characteristics of active fluent reading detailing prosody by the NRP are: "Readers group words quickly in ways that help them gain meaning from what they read. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural as if they are speaking" (NICHD, 2000a, p. 22).

Figure 3

Components of Fluency



After the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 and the implementation of state curricular standards, fluency came to be defined only as a measurement of accuracy and rate (Kuhn et al., 2010). This occurred despite research demonstrating that reading with prosody is evidence of a skilled reader. During oral reading, a skilled reader demonstrates fluent prosodic and expressive reading with intonation (variation of high and low tones of voice), stress (vocal emphasis on one syllable to create meaning), phrasing (a segment of speech), proper pausing (breath and grammatical pausing), and phrase lengthening (intonation and syllable stress) in addition to rate and accuracy (Dowhower, 1987, 1991; Schrauben, 2010; Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). Dr. Timothy Rasinski (2012) describes a definition summarizing these fluency characteristics of the reader utilizing the voice to convey the meaning of the text to the listener.

A significant objective of reading is to understand what one is reading. The connection between inferencing, reading comprehension, and fluency is visible when prosodic reading skills are present (Dowhower, 1987; Samuels, 2012; Young & Bowers, 1995; Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). However, until the last decade, prosody has continued to be overlooked or referred to as a

byproduct of oral reading (Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012). The early literature investigating the practical reasons for overlooking prosody include barriers to measure oral prosody accurately (Smith, 2004), lack of clarification in defining prosody (Cowie et al., 2002), and a misperception of the significance of prosody in the development of reading (Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012).

Prosody, frequently assumed to be a byproduct exhibited by a fluent reader, is often referred to as phrasing and intonation. One of the earliest mentions of the prosodic rhythm and melodic patterns in defining fluency is found in the acoustic descriptors defined by Dowhower (1991) and has expanded to include integrating word reading with semantic information (Rupley et al., 2020). Fluent prosodic reading correlates to higher reading achievement in the reading rates of 5-and 6-year children (Holliman et al., 2017), and incorporating prosody into reading curricula as an identified reading skill is necessary but is still difficult to assess (Kuhn et al., 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012). Prosody has been argued to be one element of the defining standard of a fluent reader, with accuracy and automaticity being the other two (Kuhn et al., 2010). It has also been argued to be a separate skill from the structure of fluency which integrates as reading maturation develops (Cowie et al., 2002).

Ineffective prosodic reading is a barrier to efficient word reading for most primary age readers (Rasinski, 2010; Schwanenflugel et al., 2015; Son & Chase, 2018). Evidence of barriers in prosodic reading is seen in students who pause frequently and for too long during oral reading, causing disruptions in phrasing and morphological and decoding deficits (Holliman et al., 2017; Noltemeyer et al., 2014; Paige et al., 2012). The result is inefficient skills to construct meaning in the text or convey it expressively (Bessemans et al., 2019; Gross et al., 2018; Holliman et al., 2017). Prosody is necessary for developing multisyllabic decoding, particularly in English, as the

word's meaning can change with syllabic stress. Syllable stress will change nouns to verbs; for example, RE-cord versus re-CORD or DE-ssert versus de-SERT (Bessemans et al., 2019). This advanced syllabic decoding process is evident during both silent and oral reading, demonstrating the impact of prosodic reading on the text phrasing (Breen et al., 2019; Gross et al., 2013). The quality of prosodic syllabic stress is influenced by a student's reading comprehension level (Breen et al., 2016).

Fluency in reading requires practice among various text difficulty levels and interests (Rasinski et al., 2017). New teachers should know the instructional method of repeated reading to increase prosody and comprehension (Rasinski et al., 2017). This routine helps struggling readers improve reading skills and increase engagement when the teacher effectively guides them through the routine (Rasinski et al., 2011; Rasinski et al., 2017). Modeling prosodic oral reading and offering consistent opportunities for repeated reading with high-interest texts are beneficial teaching methods to raise reading competency levels (Rasinski et al., 2017).

Defining Fluency

Experts define fluency with many dimensions, emphasizing rate, accuracy in decoding, automaticity in word identification, and expressive prosody (Hapstak & Tracey, 2007). Fluency is characterized as the absence of issues with word identification that could obstruct comprehension (Harris & Hodges, 1995). According to Reutzel and Cooter (2012), fluent readers will naturally read effortlessly, analogous to speaking, enabling the reader to concentrate on the story concepts to facilitate comprehension. Penner-Wilger (2008) describes fluency's fundamental qualities as prosody, automaticity, and accuracy. Different literature areas assigning variations of definitions to fluency can cause uncertainty of new teachers' functional explanation, causing them to question how to integrate prosody instruction purposefully.

The accurate word reading skill required in fluency follows the development of reading automaticity. After becoming a skilled reader, reading fluency occurs with high accuracy and speed at which decoding becomes automatic, allowing the brain to focus more on understanding. There is an identified need for further examination by reading researchers in adolescent reading fluency by exploring the intermediate and secondary grade levels and the impact of reading prosody in those levels (Paige et al., 2012; Rasinski, 2006; Rasinski et al., 2009).

The findings of the National Research Panel placed the role of fluency as a critical pillar of proficient reading practice, and teachers need to put a strong focus developing the skill (NRP, 2000; Schilling et al., 2007). However, emphasizing fluency has resulted in instructional and evaluation approaches that have limited its utility as a tool for assisting children in improving their reading skills (Moats, 2020). Teachers typically are inadequately prepared to utilize formative assessments and need to have focused training research-based measures to inform instruction (Moats, 2020). The DIBELS measurement provides the teacher with information regarding their student's fluency, but it measures only two components of fluency: rate and accuracy (Good & Kaminski, 2002) Since the DIBELS measures fluency by isolating the reading rate, it does not provide a complete indicator of the student's reading skill (Good & Kaminski, 2002). Training students to increase their reading rate comes at the expense of other reading skills required for automaticity, including comprehension and prosody (Meisinger et al., 2009). This practice creates "speed readers:" students who can read at high rates within their one-minute benchmark with very few accuracy errors but have little understanding of the passages' context. Despite the evidence of low comprehension, training students to read quickly is the primary focus for evidence of reading proficiency in those types of assessments.

When given a passage to read, teachers accurately predicted that students would interpret the evaluation as reading for speed and ignore prosody if they were not told otherwise (Bessemans et al., 2019). However, children demonstrate multiple prosodic markers during oral reading when instructed to slow down and read with prosody (Bessemans et al., 2019). The students read slower with more volume and vocal pitch changes, with increased word accuracy. When instruction removed the expectation of increasing the reading rate, students interpreted the task to improve their comprehension of the text and vocabulary (Bessemans et al., 2019). Because state-mandated assessments prioritize speed and accuracy, shifting this instructional focus away from typical assessment reading behavior improves reading prosody and increases comprehension of the text (Kuhn et al., 2010; Overstreet, 2014).

It's critical to return to a complete definition of fluency and a more profound knowledge of the element (in all its aspects) to encourage students to become fluent and competent readers with increased comprehension. Fluent reading entails not just reading quickly and accurately, but also reading with prosody and comprehension to achieve greater levels of expressive and profound fluency. Reading that is expressive has a solid link to gains in reading achievement (Rupley et al., 2020).

Scientific developments in the reading domain have proven that reading prosody demonstrated during oral reading increases reading comprehension, and, additionally, frequent engagement in oral reading activities is recommended to increase reading prosody development (Akyoll & Garrison, 2011; Cypert & Petro, 2019; Keskin et al., 2019). The practice of focusing on a prosodic read aloud creates a relationship between the method of reading and the analysis of texts (Cypert & Petro, 2019). Additional instructional methods to encourage expressive fluency include small group instruction which enables routines that allow the teacher to model reading a

text with expression. During a choral reading, the teacher should stress the tone of a character's voice, encouraging students to imitate their oral reading with the facial expressions of the characters in the illustrations and match prosodic expressivity to punctuation, while self-monitoring voice pitch to the punctuation cues (Boushey & Behne, 2019).

Opposite of oral reading is silent reading, where fluent readers recognize words automatically without voicing them (Rasinski, 2004). A student who can read orally with intonation will develop a prosodic silent reading voice, further increasing comprehension (Breen, 2014). The student will swiftly arrange words utilizing phrasing or grammatical structures, reducing the cognitive load, and enabling comprehension to occur. This process encourages students to read independently and for longer durations of time (Osborn & Lehr, 2003). Sustained silent reading is a typical routine that preservice teachers are trained in during their EPPs (Hasbrouck, 2006). These routines are commonly used as an independent and unassisted reading time, without emphasis on prosodic reading practice (Hasbrouck, 2006). The goal of silent reading during reading instruction should not dissuade oral reading practice as an instructional choice (Rupley et al., 2020). The focus on silent reading routines without prosody is one example of the preservice training teachers receive in their EPP compared to what practices these teachers should receive in their EPPs (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019; Espinoza et al., 2018).

Elements of Fluency: Rate

The current criterion for fluency proficiency includes demonstrating a high reading rate, or speed reading, within a timed interval in schools (Tichá et al., 2009; Nese et al., 2013). The oral reading rate, which incorporates both speed and automaticity, is the quantifiable measurement of correct words read in one minute (Hudson et al., 2005). Automaticity is more

challenging to quantify than speed because it pertains to how the reader says each word in a passage without decoding, a task that cannot be accurately measured (Paige et al., 2014). When students feel that good reading is associated with fast reading (a focus on speed at the expense of comprehension), “barking at print” (decoding with little to no understanding of what the text says) becomes a common vocal characteristic of their reading (Kuhn et al., 2010; Samuels, 2007). Reading without comprehension is insufficient because the purpose of reading is to comprehend the meaning of the reading material.

When phonemics, phonics, and decoding do not interrupt thinking, students with higher fluency rates have more memory to focus on comprehension (Pardo, 2004; Rasinski, 2003). Fluency instruction can take many forms, reader's theater, or teacher read-alouds can be implemented as one example (Pardo, 2004). As students become more versed in fluent reading, they can process the reading material, increasing their comprehension. A teacher modeling oral fluency utilizing a read-aloud encourages students to recognize the concept of fluency and how it is vital for improving comprehension (Pardo, 2004).

Teachers often omit prosody in reading fluency, instead concentrating almost exclusively on reading rate (speed) because improvements in automaticity are determined by gains in reading rate (Rasinski, 2006). Benchmark scores mark grade-level proficiency in reading fluency by measuring rate, accuracy, and automaticity; it is not unreasonable then to suspect that students would perseverate on reading at a quick rate (Rasinski, 2006). The CBM (Deno, 1985), DIBELS (Dynamic Measurement Group, 2009), AIMSweb Standard Reading Assessment Passages (NCS Pearson, Inc., 2011), and GORT (Pearson Education, Inc., 2012) are valid measures of nationally normed oral reading fluency tests utilized by school districts to identify and define reading problems and to analyze the effects of interventions. CBM, DIBELS, AIMSweb, and GORT do

not consider prosody's contribution to reading fluency; however, a fast-reading rate also does not correlate to fluency or increased comprehension (Valencia et al., 2010; Rasinski et al., 2017).

A student's reading rate is critical, but a high rate should never take precedence over the skill of understanding the text (Prescott-Griffin and Witherell, 2004). Steps to increase a student's reading rate should be taken if their reading pace is too slow and hampers their comprehension or dissuades them from reading. Students with low fluency rates should receive intervention and instruction to increase their reading rate, creating a broad focus for intervention and assessments to assist the student growth in each attribute of fluency (Hasbrouck, 2006). Most strategies to increase the reading rate, such as choral reading (reading aloud in unison), echo reading (proficient reader orally reads first, followed by student), poetry reading (recitation of prose and rhyme), and reader's theater (every reader has a separate part), also benefit prosody development (Prescott-Griffin & Witherell, 2014).

Elements of Fluency: Automaticity

An individual demonstrating automaticity can complete a task without thinking about each step (Gray, 2004). Automaticity is evident in every aspect of our lives, from driving a car to typing on a computer keyboard. When it comes to reading, automaticity refers to a reader's capacity to do complex tasks without the use of cognitive resources. When a student has automaticity in decoding or word reading, the cognitive processes of working memory and attention are accessible to be reallocated for prosodic reading or comprehension. Automaticity allows the reader to read more quickly while also conserving cognitive energy by allowing the reader's attention to be focused on comprehension (Deeney, 2010). Reading with automaticity looks effortless since the reader recognizes words and phrases stored in their memory bank without having to think or phonetically decode them (Gray, 2004). To allow fluent readers

to fully integrate the numerous types of information they take in while reading, automatic word recognition is required (Kuhn et al., 2010).

For emergent readers to become competent and fluent, the theory of automaticity is applied, which describes the ability to detect and process information without hesitation (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Automaticity is the skill necessary for decoding, which is the precursor for reading prosody development (Chall, 1996; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). Furthermore, genuinely fluent readers frequently understand the text during the reading process; a lack of fluency makes it difficult to recognize words, causing the reader must expend excessive mental processes in order to decode (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Schrauben, 2010).

All readers begin without a knowledge of the alphabetic principle, words, or grammatical structure. As alphabetic concepts become proficient when acquired through systematic phonics instruction, students begin to accurately recognize familiar words and decode new words (Birsh & Carreker, 2018). Eden and Moats (2002) elucidated the reciprocal relationship between word reading and phonological awareness. The orthographic process encourages learning letter sound and symbol correspondence, and then reading the symbols as words in print. This skill enables students to recall words, signaling the beginning of automaticity (Eden & Moats, 2002).

Automaticity is evident when words are read without hesitation in a passage. The student demonstrates the comprehension of word concepts and meaning by not needing pauses to think about what they are reading. Reading with automaticity frees up cognitive process move from phonetic decoding to more complex vocal expression or intonation skills (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). The automaticity theory describes cognitive processes becoming available to demonstrate prosody during oral reading as the cognitive load reduces (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). If a

student is still decoding and reading word by word, this can constrain reading prosody's development if the cognitive resources are not available (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974).

Decoding and automaticity are the foundational skills of reading fluency and must be mastered to develop prosody (Rupley et al., 2020; Young & Bowers, 1995). Intonation variance, a characteristic of prosodic reading, will be expressed with reading automaticity (Lopes et al., 2015; Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Paige et al., 2017). Research literature indicates that the early development of reading with intonation at the first-grade level is a powerful indicator that the student will have acquired fluent prosodic reading by the third grade (Schwanenflugel et al., 2015). This early prosodic development indicates that classroom routines, including partner reading and repeated reading strategies, substantially influence proficient reading and should be used in the classroom. Repeated reading allows students to pull meaning from text, and the routine enhances prosody by focusing on exhibiting oral prosodic skills rather than speed. Modeling reading prosody with an expert reader demonstrates expressive reading and vocal pitch variation during the reading process. This instructional method is vital in these beginning stages of reading acquisition primarily because a student may more easily reproduce prosodic reading after watching an expert model reader demonstrate it (Schwanenflugel et al., 2015).

Elements of Fluency: Accuracy

Students' accuracy is measured by counting how many words they read correctly and how many errors they make while reading aloud for one minute. The continual misreading of keywords or large portions of text disrupt comprehension (Deeney, 2010). DIBELS and AIMSweb assessments provide critical information regarding student fluency performance; the data includes only two aspects of fluency – accuracy and rate – determined by how many correct words are read in sixty seconds (Dynamic Measurement Group, 2009; NCS Pearson, Inc., 2011).

These two indicators have accurately predicted student reading performance in correlational studies evaluating the spring Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores against fall CBM (curriculum-based measures) benchmark (Andren, 2010; Merino & Beckman, 2010). Another study concluded that the CBM-R demonstrated the highest overall accuracy identifying student reading proficiency in first grade. The CBM-R accurately identified the most significant number of proficient 1st-grade students not at risk and the lowest error rate in the overidentification of students (January et al., 2016).

The Multi-Dimensional Fluency Scoring Guide (MFSG), a measure for evidence of prosodic reading, was used to assess reading fluency in 250 first through third-grade students (Paige et al., 2014). Prosody and word-reading accuracy explained 65% of the student score variance in the silent reading task. The authors also noted the accumaticity indicators of smoothness when reading and pacing (smooth pacing) emerged first in early readers. Prosody, indicated by expression and phrasing (referred to as expressive phrasing), lagged behind smooth pacing. These results suggested that students can focus on the prosodic reading properties as they control the decoding/word reading process. The authors also found that prosody mediated word automaticity and reading comprehension, suggesting its importance to making meaning. The take-away from these results indicate that the development of high-frequency word reading and phonic decoding processes facilitates prosodic reading by releasing cognitive processes enabling the reader to focus cognitive attention on comprehension (Birsh & Carreker, 2018).

Elements of Fluency: Prosody

The demonstration of prosody while reading a passage orally provides evidence that the student comprehends the meaning of the written text and monitors the words within it (Rasinski et al., 2020). While speaking, one naturally uses melodic elements in their voice to communicate

emotion of a message, and students who demonstrate prosodic reading reflect this melodic language during reading (Rasinski et al., 2020). Research demonstrates significant relationships between reading comprehension and measures of oral reading prosody (Rasinski et al., 2011). Fluent prosodic reading correlates to higher reading achievement in 5-and 6-year-old students (Holliman et al., 2017). Incorporating prosody into reading curricula as an identified reading skill is necessary but still difficult to assess (Kuhn et al., 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012).

Beginning readers present long and ungrammatical pauses when aligning their oral reading skills to an adult model of prosodic features. Their demonstrated reading rate is slow and reflects a flatter vocal intonation than that of their fluent reader counterparts (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2006; Suárez-Coalla et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2019; Lalain et al., 2014). When low-performing readers focus primarily on increasing word reading speed, it hinders the development of expressive reading prosody because of ungrammatical pauses. This occurrence supports the hypothesis that lower decoding skills and automaticity directly impact reading fluency (Godde et al., 2019). Different authors noted the significance of using cognitive resources by emergent or beginning readers while decoding, thus decreasing comprehension, and prosodic skills, confirming Samuel's theory of automaticity (Suárez-Coalla et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2019).

Ineffective prosody is a barrier to efficient reading for most primary age children (Rasinski, 2010; Schwanenflugel et al., 2015; Son & Chase, 2018). Evidence of barriers in prosodic reading appear when students pause frequently and for too long during oral reading, causing disruption phrasing and morphological and decoding deficits, resulting in inefficient skills to construct meaning in a text (Bessemans et al., 2019; Gross et al., 2017; Holliman et al.,

2017; Noltemeyer et al., 2014; Paige et al., 2012). The quality of prosodic syllabic stress relates to reading comprehension and is evident when the student vocally places the appropriate syllabic stress during reading (PER-fect vs. per-FECT) (Breen et al., 2016). Prosodic reading should be routinely practiced, deterring word-by-word reading that hinders readers from learning how to organize words into meaningful units that aid understanding (Birsch & Carreker, 2018).

Fluency in reading requires practice among various text difficulty levels and topics (Rasinski et al., 2017). New teachers should be knowledgeable of instructional methods of repeated reading to increase prosody and comprehension (Rasinski et al., 2017). The repeated or dyad reading routine is structured to utilize the teacher in a coaching role to effectively guide students while modeling prosodic reading. These routines deliver a model of proficient reading for a struggling reader aiding in the improvement of reading skills, thus increasing engagement (Rasinski et al., 2011; Rasinski et al., 2017). A teacher modeling prosodic oral reading and offering consistent opportunities for repeated reading with high-interest texts are all teaching methods to raise reading competency levels (Rasinski et al., 2017).

Elements of Reading Prosody

Reading fluency is not an isolated skill. Reading proficiency is the product of automatic decoding to gain comprehension and read with prosody; students need to be fluent decoders (Penner-Wilger, 2008). This automaticity allows readers to comprehend the text they read and demonstrate prosodic reading (Lerner, 2006; Reutzel & Cooter, 2012). This complex skill of prosody creates a perception of fluent and expressive reading when a reader demonstrates oral reading with a high rate of speed and accuracy (Penner-Wilger, 2008). Like a mathematical formula, fluent prosodic reading is a reading formula: word automaticity multiplied by prosody results in fluency (Paige et al., 2012).

Figure 4

Dr. Rasinski's Description of Fluency

Decoding Automaticity	**X**	**Prosody**	**=**	**Fluency**
word knowledge phonics decoding		expression volume phrasing smoothness		reading with comprehension and inferencing

Note. Image-based on the summation of Dr. Rasinski's research

A defining element of reading prosody is to segment words into smaller units to facilitate reading comprehension. The rhythm of speech, the rise and fall of syllabic structures, combined with pauses' duration and position, contribute to the phrasing process. This chunking or phrasing organizes the text into segments for the reader and enables comprehension during the oral reading process (Kuhn et al., 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009). Recent studies demonstrate that chunking facilitates suprasegmental phonological awareness, a foundational reading skill. Suprasegmental phonology refers to intonation patterns, stress placement, pitch, and speaking rate in spoken language, which are known as the melodies of speech and prosody (Birsch & Carreker, 2018; Schwanenflugel et al., 2004; Veneendaal et al., 2016). This foundational skill is the platform enabling the manipulation of the segmental aspects of phonemes across the syllables, developing intonation and prosodic stress features (Birsch & Carreker, 2018; Holliman et al., 2017; Veneendaal et al., 2016). In the English language, it is common to create syllable emphasis by increasing vowel length as an intensifier, for example: "Was that a problem?" "Yes, it was a huuuuuuuge problem." Another example of suprasegmental phonology would be to call for a pet cat with a high vocal pitch, "here, kitty, kitty, kitty" (Breen, 2014).

Beginning readers often exhibit pause misplacement during oral reading. Hesitation pauses and uncoordinated breathing are common characteristics of early readers (Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2017; Benjamin & Schwanenflugel, 2010). Respiratory pauses are also frequent disruptions due to the slow reading rate of an early reader. These pauses decrease when word reading and breathing coordination become more natural as automaticity increases between 1st and 2nd grade (Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2017; Benjamin & Schwanenflugel, 2010). A fluent reader portions a text into meaningful units for comprehension (Rupley et al., 2020; Young & Bowers, 1995).

The reading pauses of a fluent reader move to natural placement at punctuation marks, demonstrating prosodic grammatical structure clues. The fluent reader will use breath pauses as a pragmatic marker with particles (e.g., such as oh, hey, well) (Bailly & Gouvernayre, 2012). These syntactic pauses phrase reading passages into smaller units to boost reading comprehension, while hesitation pauses are symptomatic of decoding problems and lack of phonological awareness (Holliman et al., 2017). Pause distribution and pause positions fluctuate as reading skills develop (Lalain et al., 2014) resulting in fluent reading reflecting adult tonality and pauses beginning to appear as early as the 4th grade (Godde et al., 2019).

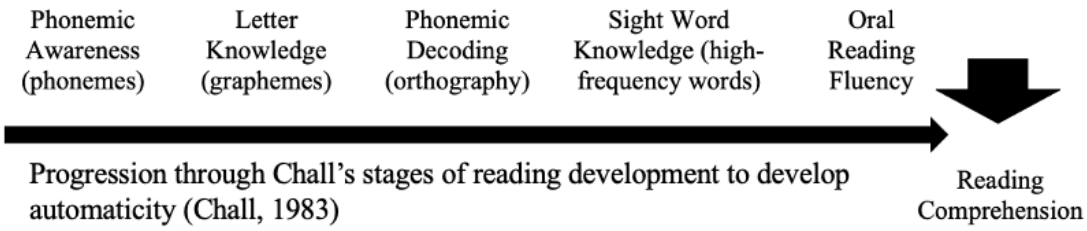
Impact of the Relationship Between Prosody and Fluency

LaBerge and Samuels proposed the automaticity theory in 1974, defining the sequential developmental processes students go through while learning to read. This reading development entails progressing through multiple brain processes, beginning with foundational phonological and phonemic awareness and letter recognition (Chall, 1983). Phonemic decoding comes next in foundational basics, followed by orthographic knowledge of phonograms (a cluster of letters), high-frequency words (sight words such as Fry's or Dolce word lists), and oral reading fluency

(decoding or application of sight word knowledge), and comprehension (Chall, 1983). The reader's proficiency over each learning process enables automaticity to be built, which frees up cognitive capacity in the brain for greater proficiency at the next developmental reading level.

Figure 5

Chall's Stages of Reading Development



Researchers trying to identify correlations between comprehension and fluency should employ more thorough fluency assessments beyond just reading rate, according to Rasinski et al. (2009). An assessment including prosody would be a more accurate measure of the student's comprehension skill because the prosodic element of fluency directly ties to comprehension. "Students must understand the meaning of the chapter in order to read with proper expression" (Rasinski et al., 2009, p. 352). If the teacher intends to increase fluency as the means to improve reading comprehension, the teaching methods must embrace a broader variety of elements beyond basic automaticity. An educational approach that inadvertently forces children to focus solely on the reading rate of fluency will not increase student comprehension skills. Fast readers may have high word errors or inaccuracies or read too quickly to understand the text, further demonstrating that fluency is the overlooked link between reading and high comprehension (Hasbrouck & Glaser, 2018; Rasinski, 2010).

Proficient reading skill development is a top priority for teachers, especially at the elementary level, since reading automaticity is a prerequisite skill for future learning. Students

may devote all their attention and focus to comprehending what they're reading when decoding is automatic. However, children's reading speed drops without automatic decoding, and they struggle to retain the message or purpose of the text. Students who comprehend text deeply while reading with vocabulary, expression, and inferencing score higher in comprehension, despite having lower oral reading and word identification scores (Berninger et al., 2006). Teaching reading skills emphasizing expressiveness during reading improves reading fluency, word reading rate, and automaticity (Holliman et al., 2017; Keskin et al., 2019; Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Paige et al., 2017). An intervention explicitly focusing on prosody resulted in student performance doubling the baseline reading rate (Martinez et al., 1998). Other research studies corroborated the gains in reading fluency when intonation and expression were the instructional focus instead of reading rate (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004; Rasinski & Stevenson, 2005; Veenendaal et al., 2014).

Impact of the Relationship Between Prosody and Comprehension

"Students with greater prosody comprehend at a higher level," according to Paige et al. (2012), "One reason for the connection between prosody and comprehension may involve working memory" (p. 61). Several studies have shown comprehension and prosody are intertwined (Hicks, 2009; Kuhn et al., 2012; Mira & Schwanenflugel, 2013; Paige et al., 2012; Penner-Wilger, 2008; Rasinski et al., 2009; Rasinski, 2010; Yildiz et al., 2009). The emphasis on prosody in classroom instruction can encourage students' consistent gains in reading comprehension and expressive oral fluency (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004).

Prosody improvement due to teaching and modeling oral reading teaching will improve students' reading comprehension by demonstrating how to make meaning through fluency (Binder et al., 2013; Erekson, 2010; Hicks, 2009; Kuhn et al., 2012; Mira & Schwanenflugel,

2013; Paige et al., 2012; Penner-Wilger, 2008; Rasinski et al., 2009; Rasinski, 2010; Ravid & Mashraki, 2007; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012; Valencia et al., 2010; Yildiz et al., 2009). Strong oral prosody improves reading comprehension, according to Kuhn et al. (2010), since proficient readers demonstrate embedded expressive prosody during oral reading, suggesting an understanding of the reading material. Students can use prosody to assist in understanding of the passage and to show when they've grasped its meaning and context. Prosody is emphasized in genres such as poetry, narrative, and dramatic literature, providing many opportunities to guide teacher's instructional choices to include prosody; nonetheless, any genre of literature emphasizing prosodic reading promotes understanding (Rasinski, 2010).

Reading is a process of making meaning and interpreting the text. Developing readers first must decode the code, understand the connections between matching phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters that represent the sounds), and expand this skill to accurately decipher words, allowing them to read with ease. Readers become fluent as they master these skills, reading with the right speed, precision, and prosody. This fluent oral reading contributes to comprehension in emerging readers, allowing them to comprehend or make sense of the text they are reading (Lerner, 2006; Reutzel & Cooter, 2012).

Disfluent readers, who lack the automaticity needed for instant word recognition, expend extra cognitive energy decoding the words they encounter while reading, according to LaBerge and Samuels (1974). Low-level decoding consumes cognitive resources that could be diverted to comprehension and interpreting the text. As a result, a low level of fluency negatively impacts comprehension in a beginning reader (Rasinski et al., 2009). To increase comprehension, students depend on prosody to improve their understanding of challenging material (Kentner & Vasishth, 2016). Students interpreting new or complex texts have been shown to have

substantially more vocalized prosodic emphasis (Benjamin & Schwanenflugel, 2010; Frazier et al., 2006; Schimmel & Ness, 2017). The reliance on natural prosodic speech patterns to interpret sentences' syntactic organization is observed when learning to read (Frazier et al., 2006). For early readers, oral reading promotes higher reading comprehension than silent reading to comprehend the text, implying that reading oral prosody serves as a bridge between comprehension and automaticity (Dickens & Meisinger, 2016; Price et al., 2015). These studies suggest that fluent readers use prosody to increase comprehension during oral reading and may over-emphasize decoding when confronted with more challenging text. Observations of highly fluent readers demonstrated that prosodic emphasis was more noticeable during the decoding of complex texts (Calet et al., 2015).

Since prosodic reading is the link to increased reading comprehension, teachers should be trained in the rubrics designed to properly assess prosody and how to disseminate that information to facilitate instruction encouraging prosodic fluency development. Students' reading prosody is additional information for teachers making instructional decisions (Hasbrouck, 2006). After proficient decoding, reading rate and accuracy is achieved, the next instructional goal should be to read with proper intonation and expression (Hasbrouck, 2006).

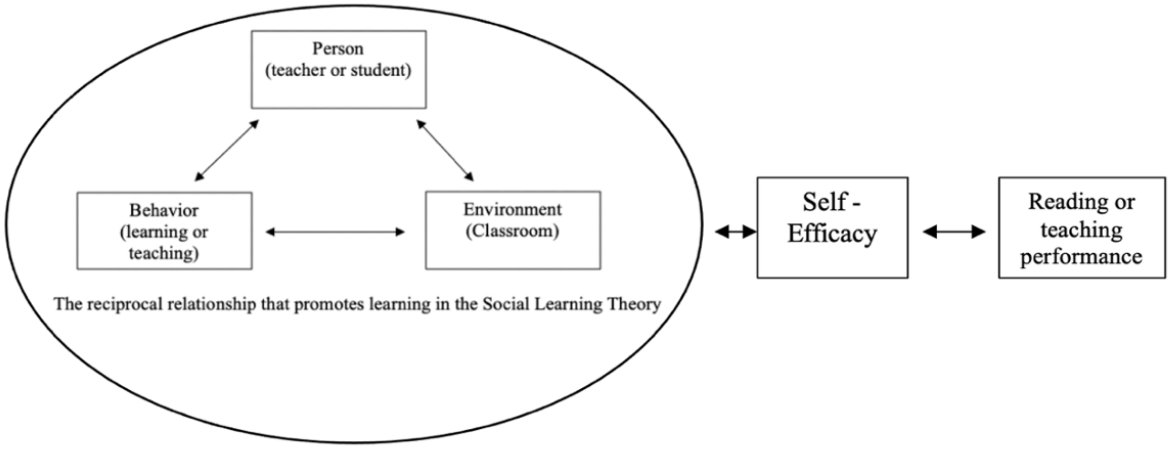
Theoretical Framework

The confidence or belief in one's ability to attain goals and finish tasks is self-efficacy (Locke & Latham, 2002). Teachers' self-efficacy in reading instruction is tied to their belief in their abilities to assist students in achieving reading proficiency (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). A teacher's self-efficacy influences their confidence in instructional and problem-solving capabilities to create positive student achievement (Bandura, 1986). Teachers must improve their understanding of the content they teach to increase their self-efficacy. When teachers lack

content knowledge for teaching a given topic, students' learning decreases, and teachers' self-efficacy decreases as a result (Schunk, 1991; Stark et al., 2016). Given today's educational standards, the self-efficacy theory allows for an investigation of how teachers' perceptions of preparedness and reading expertise affects their performance and instructional practices. Students who do not read fluently at the conclusion of third grade are currently required to be retained in sixteen states plus the District of Columbia. Competency is frequently measured by a high reading rate (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2019). Teachers report feeling negative repercussions, such as being overwhelmed, from the expectation of teaching reading programs that encourage a restricted understanding of reading fluency (Dresser, 2012; Pease-Alvarez & Samway, 2012).

Figure 6

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy



Teachers do not enter the classroom knowing everything they will need to educate all of their students; thus, it is vital to investigate the self-efficacy of early career teachers. It is suggested that self-efficacy beliefs develop in the beginning stages of a teacher's career and are difficult to change once established (Bandura, 1997). Although there is a knowledge gap about

the relationship between reading prosody knowledge and teacher self-efficacy, there is analogous research in other academic disciplines that focuses on enhancing teacher self-efficacy (Harmer, 2012; Mewborn, 2001). Bandura's self-efficacy theory incorporates individual beliefs to influence decisions, so there is a more significant likelihood of adopting new teaching strategies to encourage student success when a teacher has high self-efficacy (Shroyer et al., 2014).

Teachers who feel prepared to teach methods and content fluency instruction correlate with higher feelings of self-efficacy, yet, of 1,047 teacher prep programs reviewed in 2020, only 53% covered fluency (NCTQ, 2020). This suggests that most early-career teachers will enter the field with low self-efficacy in reading prosody. Since the level of early-career teachers' self-efficacy is a potential indicator of whether teachers remain in education (Colson et al., 2018), this lack of preparation in reading pedagogy may influence teacher longevity. University programs have responded by increasing coverage of all aspects of reading science, a trend that increased through each edition of the *Teacher Prep Review* from 2013 to 2020 (Drake & Walsh, 2020). Teachers' self-efficacy may be increased through increasing their content knowledge and offering relevant field experiences (Shillingford & Karlin, 2014).

Maloch et al. (2003) explored novice teacher self-efficacy and conducted interviews about the training received in their EPP. The results indicated that teachers who had several reading methods courses and specialized fieldwork training reported higher self-efficacy about being a teacher and their ability levels. Literature also indicated that preservice teachers who had fieldwork or who participated in a reading clinic alongside reading coursework in their EPP reported higher self-efficacy (Al Otaiba et al. 2012; Leader-Janssen & Rankin-Erickson, 2013).

Self-efficacy is significant in recognizing the necessary actions to finish the tasks needed to achieve teaching goals (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016). Teaching foundational reading

skills necessitates teachers make decisions dependent on their students' abilities and their own knowledge of reading content (Vacca et al., 2014). Teachers with more content knowledge can better adapt to students' needs, which boosts self-efficacy. A teacher's perceptions of preparedness also guide the instructional choices in the classroom. Students' achievement and motivation naturally rise when the teacher has a positive self-efficacy in their qualifications and competence (Ashton et al., 1986; Grant, 2006). The teacher's belief in their student's potential achievement is more influential on increasing teacher self-efficacy than the student's demonstrated achievement (Bandura, 1977). Teacher's building their self-efficacy is important for success, endurance in adversities, and motivation, all of which affect student success (Fry, 2009). Low feelings of self-efficacy in teaching struggling readers may cause the teacher to mistakenly believe that their students' poor reading skills reflect their teaching abilities (Allington, 2013).

If, as Bandura (1997) theorizes, self-efficacy increases through a variety of teaching experiences and positive student performance, reading instruction with a fluency focus on automaticity and speed appears to provide few opportunities for teachers to build self-efficacy in reading prosody pedagogy. When teachers implement instruction focusing on increasing fluency rate rather than exploring teaching methods emphasizing the slower oral reading characteristic of reading prosody, they are not increasing the perseverance needed to master teaching challenges. Bandura (1997) states this mindset of perseverance is a necessary element required to increase self-efficacy. As a result, teachers have limited opportunities to develop reading prosody-focused teaching strategies, which can lead to low self-efficacy and frustration and impair their instructional delivery (Wyatt, 2014).

Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs potentially influence teachers' instructional strategies they employ to engage their students (Shoulders & Krei, 2015). Teachers with high self-efficacy in their teaching abilities often display a willingness to utilize innovative practices and strategies (Shoulders & Krei, 2015). These classrooms tend to be more inquiry-based and utilize student-centered approaches, such as a flipped classroom or student-guided learning, whereas teachers with low self-efficacy use a more teacher-centered model of instruction, sometimes known as the sage on the stage (Peker & Erol, 2018). Teachers who have higher self-efficacy display more openness to change and to learn new approaches to teaching they hadn't learned in their teacher training. These teachers adapt their teaching approaches to improve student learning and raise achievement levels (Barni et al., 2019; Brozo et al., 2013; Voelkel & Christpeels, 2017; Weiβenreider et al., 2015).

Teachers practice strategies based on positive and negative experiences, affecting self-efficacy beliefs, and placing a high importance on teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (Peker & Erol, 2018). By placing the measure for proficient reading primarily on oral reading rate, it creates a correlation between increasing teacher self-efficacy to increasing student's performance as measured by the one-minute assessments (Rasinski et al., 2017; Valencia et al., 2010). Teachers of early readers must identify the complexities of reading fluency to include pairing prosody, which is a complex and challenging task, and accepting a decrease in oral reading rate. The use of self-efficacy in this model would necessitate a higher level of teacher efficacy to pursue teaching approaches that encourage reading prosody development. If a teacher isolates student proficiency as fluently reading at a high rate, then a teacher would need high self-efficacy to teach strategies promoting the development of reading prosody, ergo, producing students with lower reading rates but higher levels of comprehension. When benchmark R-CBM

examinations are assessed up to three times a year and the results are entered into the district platform, such as AIMSweb or FastBridge, this becomes more difficult for teachers. Because students are grouped by reading rate performance, these results are utilized to make instructional decisions concerning intervention placement. For example, in the spring, a first-grade student is identified by FastBridge as “some risk” if they read less than 66 words per minute on a timed reading passage, and a second-grade student is identified if they read less than 101 words per minute (Fastbridge, 2019). To participate in teaching strategies that result in possible decreased student reading rate performance but increased prosody with indications of phrasing, grammatical pauses, and intonation during oral reading, a teacher would need high self-efficacy in teaching reading prosody. This student proficiency will increase the teacher's self-efficacy when students respond well to instruction and demonstrate reading proficiency (Brozo et al., 2013). Teachers holding stronger self-efficacy views adapt the instructional strategies and sensitively adjust their teaching to student needs (Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011; Wyatt, 2014).

The National Reading Panel identified the significant positive impact of oral reading in the classroom on automaticity, expressive fluency, and comprehension for reading development across grade levels (NICHD, 2000). Despite educational leaders continuing to accept and refer to the panel findings, the report does not suggest training teachers teach the reading component skills (Reynolds et al., 2011; Shanahan, 2003). To address this concern, researchers emphasize the broad pedagogical context and reflection on instructional decisions to incorporate the panel's five critical components of reading instruction. (Gambrell et al., 2011; Madda et al., 2011; Morrow et al., 2011). Reflection on instructional choices and decisions necessitates strong

teacher self-efficacy since it requires an inner motivation to utilize new teaching techniques outside of the teacher's skill set.

Increasing awareness and teacher knowledge of successful reading instruction utilizing the five essential reading components through ongoing professional training can increase classroom instruction of phonics and phonological awareness development (Stark et al., 2016). The seminal report *Becoming a Nation of Readers: A Report of the Commission of Readin*g, a synthesis of research studies sponsored by the Commission on Reading, confirmed the correlation between teacher knowledge and the effective education students received (Anderson et al., 1988). Students with skilled reading abilities were more inclined to succeed at school (Anderson et al., 1988). According to the study, 15% of the disparity in reading achievement among children is due to teacher knowledge and performance. Teacher knowledge produced the most significant difference in student scores of all the elements studied as probable contributors to student performance. This could suggest that teacher self-efficacy will increase when teacher content knowledge increases regarding the integral role of reading prosody in improving reading comprehension and proficiency. If a teacher implements a reader's theatre or partner repeated reading routine to increase reading prosody, then discovers that these routines increased student reading proficiency in all areas, the teacher's self-efficacy may increase.

Research identifies that teacher candidates who completed coursework in a program that offered specific instruction in each critical component identified by the NRP outperformed a comparison group when assessed on literacy content and pedagogical knowledge (Clark et al., 2017). Direct instruction and field experiences exploring various reading skill pedagogy and multiple opportunities to apply this experiential knowledge with students are essential in teacher preparation (Leko et al., 2015; McLeskey & Brownell, 2015). Kavanagh and Danielson (2019)

noted that when a novice teacher read from an interactive read-aloud, when supported by a mentor teacher, both teachers actively analyzed the teaching choices made to facilitate the class discussion. This mentoring process provided opportunities for the novice teacher to reflect on the lesson and apply the teaching strategies independently later in direct instruction (Kavanagh & Danielson, 2019). Novice teachers need to integrate their instruction with specific forms of read-alouds and literacy discussions, which requires practice (Kavanagh & Danielson, 2019).

Conclusion

Reading prosody is one foundational aspect of reading skills influencing phonics, fluency, and comprehension (Kuhn et al., 2010; Paige et al., 2014; Young et al., 2019). The inclusion of reading prosody in current curricula is not optimized (Paige et al., 2012). It is common for reading instruction to address prosody as an afterthought, behind the focus of teaching decoding and automaticity, so explicitly teaching prosody raises the question of when and how to do so (Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2017; Lopes et al., 2015; Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008). The separation of teaching decoding and automaticity without prosody produces quick readers with low comprehension skills as both a listener and reader (Rasinski, 2006, 2010). Rasinski suggests that each reading component - automaticity, comprehension, decoding, and prosody - be taught fluidly to become a fluent reader.

The present study explores whether new teachers feel prepared to encourage reading prosody development. Reading without comprehension is meaningless because the point of reading is to comprehend the meaning of the words (Rasinski, 2010). When students assume that efficient reading is associated with speed reading, barking at print can quickly develop (Samuels, 2007). By altering instructional strategies to emphasize the meaning-making component of fluency – prosody – teachers can correct misconceptions about fluency, improving the

connection between reading comprehension and fluency. If teachers are uninformed of prosody's consequences in reading development due to a lack of training, student comprehension will suffer, and hyperlexia may develop. This study will also investigate the perception of prosody received in teacher training and the impact on the instructional choices made in the classroom.

Chapter III

Design and Methodology

Introduction

One purpose of this parallel explanatory mixed-methods study was to explore how in-service teachers' pedagogical decisions are influenced by their perceptions of reading prosody and fluency. The second goal was to examine the impact of teacher's perceptions of their preparation in fluency and how the preparation impacts their reading instruction. The variables under investigation include reading prosody, perceptions of prosody, feelings of preparedness in prosody, and training in prosody at their EPP. This design was selected because the qualitative data analysis on the perception of prosody in teachers' instructional decisions explained the quantitative data describing the impact of teacher's preparation received in prosody in their EPP. Using quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches created the opportunity to triangulate and enhance the data's quality by combining the strengths of both types of data (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

After a review of literature, there is substantial evidence establishing the impact of prosody on student reading development (Campbell & Hlusek, 2015; Hasbrouck & Glaser, 2018; Rasinski et al., 2020). There is a research gap on teachers' perspectives of the definition of reading prosody and how they feel equipped to teach it (Kuhn et al., 2010; Paige et al., 2012; Rasinski et al., 2020). According to literacy experts, teachers have a significant role in students' literacy development. Proficient reading is a necessary ability for academic success (Bostock & Boon, 2012; Meisinger et al., 2009; Wanzek et al., 2010). The association of fluency primarily with only reading rate in new teacher training impacts the integration of reading prosody, which will continue to be underdeveloped in students (Rasinski, 2010; Rasinski et al., 2020; Geva et al., 2017).

Chapter 3 delves deeper into the research design, procedure, and the data gathering and analysis strategy. It is essential to review the logic system that led the researcher to a specific question (Hoy & Adams, 2016) and connect it to existing empirical data on the topic (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Research Questions

1. In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?

2. In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

Research Design

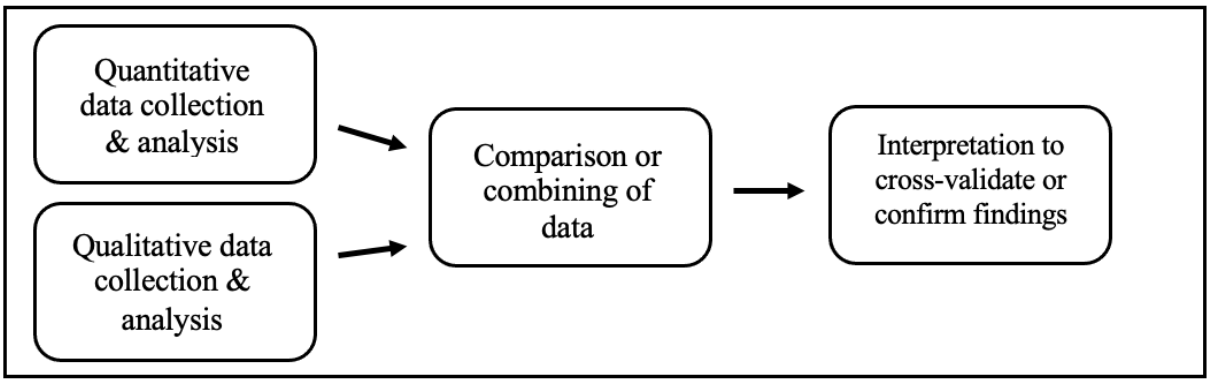
To answer various research questions, a multitude of intriguing research designs can be used (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The explanatory parallel mixed-methods research design is a two-phase research design that starts with quantitative data collection and immediately moves to qualitative data collection, culminating in a data interpretation and analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The quantitative phase was created to answer the study's research questions and followed by the second qualitative phase being created to explain the outcomes in greater depth with the utilization of open-ended questions providing more insight into the participant’s perspectives. Finally, the findings were analyzed to see how well and to what extent the qualitative results explained and enriched the quantitative findings (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

Quantitative data alone were insufficient to grasp the study's topic, so qualitative data were used to provide a more in-depth comprehension of the research problem and study's objective. The quantitative component of this study allowed the researcher to generalize preparedness in prosody, while the qualitative phase allowed participants to explain individual

replies to survey questions (Creswell, 2014). During this qualitative phase, the researcher was able to collect extra data to better explain the study topics better. Figure 7 illustrates the study's explanatory sequential design.

Figure 7

Explanatory Parallel Design



Quantitative Instrumentation

The purpose of quantitative research is to collect measurable sample data, then apply the results to a larger population to understand or predict patterns (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The researcher utilized a descriptive survey design from Section 1 of the Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey (Salinger et al., 2010). The demographic data collected from participants included gender, years working as a certified teacher, and major or emphasis in a teacher preparation program. The descriptive statistics provided analysis for means and frequency for the nominal data.

The questionnaire Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey (PTPPKS) (Salinger et al., 2010) is a standardized scaled instrument. Apart from the descriptive statistics, each question was measured by assigning numerical values 1-5 on a Likert scale (Salinger et al., 2010). This survey was previously used in several other studies and evaluated for

validity and reliability (Beachy, 2017). The instrument is designed to measure the preservice teachers' perceived knowledge and preparation within all dimensions of early reading. For this study, the questions on fluency, reading prosody, and preparedness were chosen from this validated instrument to address the research focus. The Likert scale was preferred because the scale items measure opinions and perceptions of participants on the variables under investigation and allowed for rapid data analysis (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The Likert scale enables participants to provide answers question within ranges, such as level of satisfaction, agreement, disagreement, and so on, while also providing equal intervals between responses. (Sullivan & Artino, 2013). The Likert survey was utilized to measure teachers' feelings of preparedness and perceptions of fluency whether or not their educator preparation program effectively provided instruction in reading prosody.

The Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment (PKIRA) allowed for assessing participants' specific perceptions of reading fluency, particularly prosodic reading fluency (Beachy, 2017). Once again, the questions pertaining to fluency, reading prosody, and perceptions were utilized from the survey instrument. This instrument section assigned the numerical values 1-6 on a Likert scale. The four subtests within the research instrument had different Likert categorical definitions, illustrated by Table 2.

Table 2

Likert Scales for the Survey Instruments by Subtest

Instrument							
PTPPKS Coursework & Fieldwork	Scale Answer	None 1	Little 2	Moderate 3	Considerable 4		
PTPPKS Preparedness	Scale Answer	Not at all Prepared 1	Somewhat Prepared 2	Mostly Prepared 3	Definitely Prepared 4		
PKIRA Perceptions	Scale Answer	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Somewhat Agree 4	Agree 5	Strongly Agree 6

Using Qualtrics, the researcher recreated the Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey (PTPPKS) (Salinger et al., 2010) and Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment (PKIRA) (Beachy, 2017) digitally in a web-based format. Within the instrument, there were 33 total questions: eight questions related to demographic data of each participant, 18 questions from the PTPPKS (Salinger et al., 2010) related to exposure to reading prosody, preparation in coursework, and fieldwork, and feelings of preparedness in teaching reading prosody, and six questions from the PKIRA (Beachy, 2017) related to perceptions of fluency and prosody. The survey results allowed for data interpretation from the sample to the early career teacher population, allowing for inferences regarding reading prosody perspectives, EPP program preparation, and the impact of these two variables on instructional choices made in the classroom to teach reading. Directly following the Likert scale questions in Qualtrics, six open-response questions were used to qualitatively assess participants' perceptions and understanding of reading prosody and fluency.

Table 3

Survey Items on Quantitative Instrument

Instrument	Questions
Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey	2 Questions: Yes/No 16 Questions: 5-point Likert Scale
Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessments	9 Questions: 6-point Likert Scale
Qualitative Questions	6 Open-Ended questions

Qualitative

The study's qualitative component utilized open-ended questions drawn directly from the research questions to confirm the feelings of preparedness and pedagogical choices made in the classroom by teachers. The questions were created in the "philosophical tradition of phenomenology" (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 153) to encourage the participants to articulate their perspectives motivated by the topic of prosody and instruction. This exploration of lived experiences provides a narrative structure of which a researcher can code participants' life experiences into themes. The questions were designed to be non-threatening to make participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts (Creswell & Clark, 2018).

Utilizing a qualitative descriptive design allowed the qualitative data to be used by the researcher to examine the results and highlight the similarities and differences within the resulting data. The purpose of coding is to organize things into categories that make it easier to compare items within the same category (Maxwell, 2013). Categorical codes were created through emergent coding, which involved developing the coding categories after reading the data and categories were developed on the most common themes (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Maxwell

2013). This data interpretation method provided a rich description of the teachers' perspective (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009).

The choice to utilize the qualitative descriptive design component over other options of qualitative designs, for example, ethnography, case study, or grounded theory, was twofold. First, descriptive studies can utilize quantitative data sources (e.g., descriptive statistics), qualitative data sources (e.g., open-ended questions), or both, such as this sequential explanatory mixed-method study does (Ross & Morrison, 1995). Secondly, for the novice researcher, this design often produces positive and successful results (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009). The scope of qualitative descriptive design is limited, which allows the researcher to develop a clear record of the participant's perspectives, using vocabulary that the individuals directly use (Magilvy & Thomas, 2009; Sandelowski, 2000). According to Sandelowski (2000), qualitative descriptive researchers deliver data in a greater representation than ethnographic, grounded theory, narrative, or phenomenological researchers.

Participants

This study's participants were 1st through 5th-year in-service teachers who had completed an EPP, received a degree in elementary education, and provided general elementary instruction in an elementary school. The participants held a teaching certification resulting from the identified educator preparation program and encompassed various races and ethnicities.

Consent was received by the survey participants when they clicked yes on the Qualtrics Survey (Appendix F). Before moving on, each participant clicked an informed consent (Appendix F) within the survey. The survey instrument was closed with an initial 469 participant entries. Of those, 328 participant entries were deleted from Qualtrics for partial or incomplete survey answers, and then another 40 were removed before quantitative analysis began in SPSS

because incomplete single survey questions were found by the researcher. The final number of participants for the study was 101. The participants' demographics were 99 female, one male, and one who preferred not to answer. The teaching experience of the participants was six new to profession teachers, twenty 1st year teachers, seventeen 2nd year teachers, twenty 3rd year teachers, seventeen 4th year teachers, and twenty-one 5th year teachers.

Validity and Reliability

It is the responsibility of the researcher to analyze the validity of the data and scrutinize the validity when utilizing online platforms for an anonymous survey collection. Ten reading subject experts inspected the chosen survey for content validity. They provided recommendations on clarity, relevance, or ambiguity of questions and determined the reliability of the PTPPKS and PKIRA to provide data for the research questions explored in this study. The validation process was conducted over email and was followed up with phone calls. The demographics of the subject experts were: The Reading League (2), National Dyslexia Association (2), National LETRS trainers (2), a teacher, a school administrator, a literacy trainer, and a university professor teaching within a teacher training program. The content validity index was .98.

A validation matrix was created, and the instrument was adjusted based on feedback. Instrument questions were reworded for clarity (Question 1), removed due to ambiguity (Question 8), the term "problem" was reworded to "errors," and "evaluation" was changed to "assessments" in all questions. To measure the qualitative questions' trustworthiness, the researcher utilized a team review of the questions by the expert panel to reduce ambiguity and to avoid leading, emotive, or stressful questions. This respondent validation solicited feedback

about the questions to rule out the possibility of the participants misinterpreting the meaning of the questions and identifying possible bias on behalf of the researcher (Maxwell, 2013).

A statistical test is determined reliable when the same results can be consistently repeated when used. In other words, the reliability of a given measure is related to the extent to which it is a consistent measure of a concept (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Hoy & Adams, 2016). A reliable measure has little or no random measurement error (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Hoy & Adams, 2016). To test the reliability of the adapted instrument, a pilot group of six early career teachers took the survey on Qualtrics. After completing the survey, each participant gave feedback on a Google document about the instrument and each of the questions. Table 5 is a summation of the input received from the pilot group.

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha

Scale	N	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
EPP Preparation	6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	.812
Perceptions of Preparedness	6	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	.914
Perceptions of Fluency	6	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	.716
Total Combined Scores	6	All (23)	.841

Table 5

Feedback Summation from Pilot Group of Qualitative Questions

Feedback Themes from Qualitative Questions	
Positives	Encouraging: • **“**Encouraged me to question what I know” • “What am I doing in my classroom to further the knowledge of the students concerning their reading and reading abilities. Reflecting: • “It was great to reflect on what was helpful from my college experience, and what I wish I had more of. Could have changed my focus in college as well.” • “Really evaluate my understanding of reading and how I teach reading to my students.
Confusions	• “None” • “If I was supposed to focus on my college experiences, or if I was supposed to focus on my experiences in the classroom.” • “As a new teacher, knowing what prosody is and the importance of prosody to a student’s reading ability was confusing.”
What do teachers want to know more about?	• “Better reading programs to encourage the students use of prosody so that they become lifelong readers” • **“**I didn’t like finding out my teacher preparation program didn’t prepare me to teach students to read.” • **“**How to remedy the issue of pre-service teachers being unprepared to teach reading effectively.

Quantitative

Data Collection. The instrument survey was created using items from the PTPPKS (Salinger et al., 2010) and PKIRA (Beachy, 2017). The PTPPKS is in the public domain (Salinger et al., 2010), and Dr. Beachy permitted use of the PKIRA (Beachy, 2017) (Appendix D). The instrument survey does not request any personal information that may be used to identify teachers and their responses.

Qualitative

Data Collection. The second data collection phase occurred concurrently with the quantitative collection, but the analysis occurred post-quantitative analysis. This phase employed six validated, open-ended questions located after the Likert and descriptive survey questions:

1. Based on your understanding, what is reading prosody?
2. Based on your perception, describe the importance of reading prosody?
3. Based on your understanding, what role does prosody play in reading fluency?
4. What strategies and teaching practices have you incorporated into your classroom that were NOT part of your teacher training program?
5. Following a definition of self-efficacy- How does your self-efficacy influence how you teach reading?
6. What do you feel educator preparation programs should be teaching preservice teachers about reading prosody?

Data Collection

Approval was obtained from administrators of four social media groups created for reading science education and elementary teacher support (Appendix H). The permissions and questionnaires were distributed electronically through Qualtrics Survey Software and collected

anonymously without connecting codes or identifiers. The Qualtrics link was also shared by leading reading research scholars, who are cited in the literature review on their social media platforms, and on personal blogs to increase teacher participants' depth. The survey was incentivized with an entry upon completed survey for 4 Amazon gift cards.

Analytical Methods

The researcher justified using an explanatory parallel mixed-methods design with a qualitative descriptive design. Using only one approach would have left the researcher concerns about the effects of perceptions and preparation on reading prosody unanswered without having the participant’s explanations of their viewpoints. As a result, using a mixed-methods approach made it possible to combine components from qualitative and quantitative procedures to answer the study questions, provide a more transparent and complete understanding of the results, and diversify the data (Creswell, 2014). The Phase 1 quantitative portion of the study used two Likert surveys. The Phase 2 qualitative portion used phenomenological questions to enhance the surveys' data and clarify and explain the quantitative survey data. The analysis of these two methodologies will be explained separately.

Table 6

Visual Model for Explanatory Parallel Mixed Methods Design

Explanatory Parallel Design	Procedure	Product
Phase 1: Quantitative Data Collection ⬇ Quantitative Data Processing ⬇ Quantitative Data Analysis	● Qualtrics survey (*n*= 101 teachers) ● Transfer Quantitative data to SPSS ● Linear regression analysis ● T-Test	● Likert numerical data ● Categorical data (yes/no) ● Descriptive statistics ● Independent Variable(s) o Preparedness in Prosody o Preparedness in Fluency ● Dependent Variable o Perceptions of reading prosody
Phase 2: Qualitative Data Collection ⬇ Qualitative Data Processing ⬇ Qualitative Data Analysis	● Teacher open-ended questions ● Thematic and open coding	● Text data (question answers) ● Emergent Coding ● Categorical Themes created from emergent codes
Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis	● Interpretation and explanation of the quantitative and qualitative results	● Discussion ● Implications ● Future research

Once the data were recorded, statistical analyses were performed to address each research question. This study used a mixed-methods research design for data collection and analysis strategy to enhance the data's interpretation.

Phase 1 Quantitative

Items 1 and 2 from the "Coursework" and "Fieldwork" sections of the PTPPKS, as well as items 1 through 4 from the "Feelings of Preparedness" section of the PTPPKS were used in the quantitative analysis of the data (Salinger et al., 2010). The analysis included the Likert Scale numerical ratings from items 1 through 3 from PKIRA (Beachy, 2017). Each of the 101 respondents' responses and their demographic information were entered into SPSS. Incomplete questions were classified as faulty surveys, and the data was taken out from the analysis.

Statistical tests were done on Likert survey data using the SPSS 27 tool. For the quantitative items, descriptive data and tables were used to represent the frequency and percentages of replies. Next, a linear regression was conducted on each of the instrument questions with the variables of preparedness in prosody, preparedness in fluency, and perceptions of reading prosody.

Phase 2 Qualitative

The data was analyzed for similarities and differences in item responses, coding, and categories in the qualitative process. Participants were given an infinite amount of time to complete the survey and were able to quit at any point. Emerging themes were recognized during this phase of data gathering, and new ideas and viewpoints were highlighted to be included in the previous Phase 2 analysis (Saldaña, 2016).

Emergent coding was utilized to relate data to reveal the descriptive codes, categories, and subcategories ground within participants' voices within the collected data. Descriptive coding constructed the links between data using categories (Saldaña, 2016). This coding method was chosen because its primary purpose is to form the link between subcategories and categories and then explore how they are related (Saldaña, 2016). This data triangulation provided

comprehensible and valid methodologies for analyzing the themes discovered in teachers' life experiences in preparation for reading prosody and arranged the data in meaningful ways (Saldaña, 2016).

Phase 1 quantitative data was synthesized first through regression analysis and a T-test. Next, the qualitative results were analyzed to discuss the findings, draw conclusions, and propose practical and theoretical implications. The usage of both quantitative and qualitative methods in mixed-methods studies enables an enhanced insight into the focus of the research – allowing a context that could not be achieved in an isolated approach (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Data merging occurred at the study's analysis and interpretation stage in a parallel, explanatory mixed-method design. The two data sets were kept separate until the end when they were integrated together to support a comprehensive explanation of the research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The qualitative emergent themes were inserted at the conclusion of quantitative analysis giving a richer and more in-depth comprehension of the entire research problem.

Limitations

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to explore the perceived readiness of early career teachers to incorporate instruction encouraging the development of reading prosody in their classrooms. The reader can judge the level of transferability of findings by examining the study's limitations. The results of this research may not apply to other teaching levels and/or contain the perspectives of mid to late-career teachers. This study has the following limitations:

1. The number of participants who did not complete the survey instrument.
2. The limited number of male participants.
3. The efficacy of self-reported data rests upon the participants' ability to answer the survey accurately and reliably.
4. It was assumed that the qualitative data represented honest opinions.

Chapter IV

Results

There have been many studies seeking to analyze the impact of EPP training from different perspectives; however, this study contributes to the literature by concentrating on the relationship between teachers' EPP preparation and the learned perception of fluency, to explore how teachers' training in prosody influence instructional decisions, and to discover how teachers' self-efficacy in reading fluency and prosody impact the instructional strategies chosen in the classroom. Therefore, in this chapter, the results are presented as statistical analysis of the data collected from the teachers who completed the research instruments of the Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey (Salinger et al., 2010) and Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment (Beachy, 2017) and qualitative open-ended questions developed by the researcher.

This study employed an explanatory parallel design. An explanatory parallel design analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data in a purposeful method to thoroughly answer the research questions (Creswell, 2018). The following research questions guided the data collection and statistical analysis for this study:

1. In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?
2. In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

The purpose of Chapter IV is to provide statistical results of both the quantitative and qualitative survey data for both research questions. Quantitative findings will be presented

holistically. Themes for qualitative data will explain the analysis process, moving through the first step of frequencies to the final method in determining the guiding themes.

Participants

This study's participants were 1st through 5th-year in-service teachers who had completed an EPP, received a degree in elementary education, and provided general elementary instruction in an elementary school. The participants held a teaching certification resulting from the identified educator preparation program and encompassed various races and ethnicities.

Table 7 includes the frequency and percentage results for the demographic items pertaining to self-identified gender subgroups as well as the represented years of teaching groups.

Table 7

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants

Years Teaching	-1 year		1 year		2 years		3 years		4 years		5 years	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Gender												
Female	6	5.94%	20	19.8%	17	16.83%	20	19.8%	17	16.83%	21	20.79%
Male	0		0		0		0		1	.99%	0	
Prefer Not to Answer	0		0		0		0		0		1	.99%

The demographics of the participants were 99 female, one male, and one preferred not to answer. Most participants had been teaching between one and five years (n=93) and six participants had not yet completed their first year of teaching.

Table 8 includes the frequency and percentage results for the demographic items pertaining to degree received subgroups. There was a balanced representation of both undergraduate and graduate EPP's in the participant sample.

Table 8

Education Degree Received of Participants

Degree	*N*	*%*
BA, BS, BSEd.	52	51.5%
MA, MS, MEd	41	40.6%
Post-Bacclaureate (Postbac) (5th year program, non-masters certificate)	8	7.9%

Table 9 includes the frequency and percentage results for the university EPP's attended by the participants. Grand Canyon University and Western Governor's University both had the highest of reported participants (7), followed by the University of Alaska system (6).

Table 9

Educator Preparation Programs of Participants

Educator Preparation Program	*n*	*%*
Alternative through county or district	4	3.96%
American Public University	1	.99%
American University in Cairo	1	.99%
Appalachian State University	1	.99%
Arizona State University	1	.99%
Asbury University	2	1.98%
Ashworth	1	.99%
Auburn University	2	1.98%
Augsburg University	1	.99%

Bay Path University	1	.99%
Bluffton University	1	.99%
Boston College	1	.99%
Bowie State University	1	.99%
Brandman University	1	.99%
Brigham Young University	1	.99%
Butler University	1	.99%
Capella University	1	.99%
Corban University	1	.99%
Endicott College	1	.99%
Florida State University	1	.99%
Fresno State University	1	.99%
George Fox University	1	.99%
Grand Canyon University	7	6.93%
Harvard School of Education	1	.99%
Idaho State University	3	2.97%
Indiana University Southeast	1	.99%
Idaho State University	1	.99%
Kansas State University	1	.99%
Kent State University	2	1.98%
Le Moyne College	1	.99%
Lesley University	1	.99%
Liberty University	1	.99%
Long Island University	1	.99%
Louisiana College	1	.99%
Merrimack College	1	.99%
Millersville University of Pennsylvania	1	.99%
Mills College	1	.99%
Minot State University	1	.99%
New Mexico Highlands University	1	.99%

Nipissing Universite	1	.99%
Northwest University	1	.99%
Notre Dame College of Ohio	1	.99%
Ottawa University	1	.99%
Portland State University	1	.99%
Queensland University of Technology	1	.99%
Regis University	1	.99%
Rio Salado University	1	.99%
Saint Michaels College	1	.99%
Salem State University	1	.99%
Sam Houston State University	1	.99%
Seattle City University	1	.99%
Simon Fraser University	2	1.98%
St. Petersburg College	1	.99%
Stonehill College	1	.99%
SUNY Cortland	1	.99%
University of Alaska system (UAA, SE)	6	5.94%
University of Alberta	1	.99%
University of Arkansas at Monticello	1	.99%
University of Houston	1	.99%
University of Minnesota	2	1.98%
University of Nevada, Reno	1	.99%
University of Puerto Rico	1	.99%
University of Regina	1	.99%
University of Southern California	1	.99%
University of Utah	1	.99%
University of Western Ontario	1	.99%
University of Wisconsin	2	1.98%
Western Governors University	7	6.93%
Western University Ontario	1	.99%

Wright State University	1	.99%
Washington State University	1	.99%
Western Washington University	1	.99%

Description of Research Instruments

This study utilized 16 questions from the PTPPKS concerning teachers' preparation in their EPPs in fluency, prosody, and instructional decision-making. There were two initial yes/no questions specific to EPP preparation in fluency and prosody, followed by 14 Likert-scale questions. The PTPPKS survey scale and components are grouped in themes to answer the research questions as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

The Preservice Teacher Preparation Program and Knowledge Survey Questions and Associated Groupings by Subtest

Subtest	Fluency	Prosody	Preparedness	Instructional Decisions
Coursework Items	1	4		2, 3
Fieldwork Items	1	4		2, 3
Feelings of Preparedness Items	1	3	4, 5, 6	2

The subtests of coursework and fieldwork collected data on a Likert-type scale of 1 (*None*) to 4 (*Considerable*), grouped in the format shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Likert Scale for the PTPPKS Coursework and Fieldwork Subtests

	None	Little	Moderate	Considerable
Scale Answer	1	2	3	4

The subtest of teacher preparedness collected data on a Likert-type scale of 1 (*Not at all prepared*) to 4 (*Definitely prepared*), grouped in the format shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Likert Scale for the PTPPKS Preparedness Subtest

	Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Mostly prepared	Definitely prepared
Scale Answer	1	2	3	4

This study utilized nine questions of the PKIRA concerning teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and preparedness from their EPPs in fluency, prosody, and instructional decision-making in the elements of fluency. By answering the questionnaire, teachers were asked to reflect on their own perceptions of fluency. The PKIRA questions were grouped by associations to the research questions shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment Survey Questions and Associated Groupings by Subtest

	Fluency	Prosody	Instructional Decisions
Items	1, 3, 5, 6, 8	2, 4, 9	7

The PKIRA collected data on a Likert-type scale of 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree)* to answer the research questions shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Likert Scale for the PKIRA Survey

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Scale Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6

Quantitative Data Analysis Results

The participant responses collected from the survey instrument in Qualtrics were exported to SPSS 27 to be evaluated. The teacher responses were organized to analyze responses from each participant and incomplete surveys were excluded from the descriptive statistical analysis. Preliminary frequency analyses were conducted to gain a general understanding of the data from the respondents in the study (n = 101). The following tables (15-40) show the frequency results from each question in the instrument.

Question: Please rate your knowledge of prosody and its role in reading instruction on a 1-10 scale.

Explanatory Narrative: This question focused on determining the level of reading prosody knowledge and its role in reading instruction – over half (71.3%) of respondents rated their knowledge of reading prosody between no knowledge to adequate knowledge.

Table 15

Frequencies of Knowledge of Prosody and its Role in Reading Instruction

Q. Please rate your knowledge of prosody and its role in reading instruction on a 1-10 scale				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	None to very limited	5	5
	2		7	6.9
	3	Some	20	19.8
	4		9	8.9
	5	Adequate	15	14.9
	6		16	15.8
	7	Substantial	11	10.9
	8		6	5.9
	9		5	5.0
	10	Extensive	7	6.9
Total			101	100

PTPPKS Preparation Subtest

The following two tables (Table 16 and Table 17) represent the frequencies of responses indicating if the participants EPP taught components and pedagogy of fluency in coursework and fieldwork.

Question: Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to: read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression?

Explanatory Narrative: 63.4 % of respondents indicated that their EPP coursework and fieldwork did not provide preparation in fluency and prosody.

Table 16

Frequencies of Coursework and Fieldwork Preparation in Prosody and Fluency

Q. Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to: read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	37	36.6
	No	64	63.4
Total		101	100

Question: Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to understand what they read?

Explanatory Narrative: Responses indicated that some (54.5%) EPP programs involved coursework and fieldwork training in comprehension.

Table 17

Frequencies of Coursework and Fieldwork Preparation in Comprehension

Q. Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to understand what they read?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	55	54.5
	No	46	45.5
Total		101	100

PTPPKS Coursework Subtest

The following four tables (Table 18 through Table 21) represent the frequencies of responses indicating the fluency and prosody coursework taught in the respondent's EPP program. This subtest was introduced to the respondents with the following statement to encourage respondents to reflect on their EPP coursework:

> Think about courses you took in your teacher preparation program that focused specifically on *reading and literacy*. Please rate the degree of emphasis that your program places on the strategies listed below. Keep in mind you will have the opportunity to rate the emphasis on these strategies in your Field Experiences next. Use the following scale to rate the emphasis in your coursework. (Salinger et al., 2010)

Question: Did your coursework include teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct problems as they occur?

Explanatory Narrative: Most respondents (65.4%) indicated that their EPP provided little to no coursework in fluency strategies.

Table 18

Frequencies of Coursework Instruction in Correcting Reading Errors

Q. Did your coursework include teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct problems as they occur?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	14	13.9
	Little	52	51.5
	Moderate	30	29.7
	Considerable	5	5.0
Total		101	100

Question: Did your coursework include using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?

Explanatory Narrative: Over half (86.1%) of respondents indicated that their EPP provided little to moderate coursework in fluency instruction.

Table 19

Frequencies of Coursework Instruction in Fluency Methods

Q. Did your coursework include using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	18	17.8
	Little	36	35.6
	Moderate	33	32.7
	Considerable	14	13.9
Total		101	100

Question: Did your coursework include making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?

Explanatory Narrative: The majority (88.2%) of respondents indicated that their EPP provided little to moderate coursework in instructional decisions based on evaluations.

Table 20

Frequencies of Coursework Instruction in Evaluation

Q. Did your coursework include making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	21	20.8
	Little	33	32.7
	Moderate	35	34.7
	Considerable	12	11.9
Total		101	100

Question: Did your coursework include having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?

Explanatory Narrative: Most teachers (89.1%) indicated that their EPP provided little to moderate coursework in reading prosody.

Table 21

Frequencies of Coursework Instruction in Prosody

Q. Did your coursework include having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	20	19.8
	Little	31	30.7
	Moderate	39	38.6
	Considerable	11	10.9
Total		101	100

PTPPKS Fieldwork Subtest

The following four tables (Table 22 through Table 25) represent the frequencies of responses indicating the fluency and prosody fieldwork or student teaching experience in the respondent's EPP program. This subtest was introduced to the respondents with the following statement:

> Think about the various experiences you had in elementary classrooms during your teacher training program. These experiences may be times in which you observed, did a practicum, or did your student teaching. Use the following scale to rate the emphasis in your field experiences. (Salinger et al, 2010)

Question: Did your fieldwork include teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct problems as they occur?

Explanatory Narrative: The majority (59.4%) of teachers indicated that their EPP fieldwork provided little to no experience in fluency strategies.

Table 22

Frequencies of Fieldwork Experience in Correcting Reading Errors

Q. Did your fieldwork include teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct problems as they occur?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	22	21.8
	Little	38	37.6
	Moderate	31	30.7
	Considerable	10	9.9
Total		101	100

Question: Did your fieldwork include using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?

Explanatory Narrative: Most (89.1%) teachers indicated that their EPP fieldwork provided little to moderate experience in fluency instruction methods.

Table 23

Frequencies of Fieldwork Experience in Fluency Methods

Q. Did your fieldwork include using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	15	14.9
	Little	35	34.7
	Moderate	40	39.6
	Considerable	11	10.9
Total		101	100

Question: Did your fieldwork include making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?

Explanatory Narrative: The majority (87.1%) of teachers indicated that their EPP fieldwork provided little to moderate experience in instructional decisions based on evaluations.

Table 24

Frequencies of Fieldwork Experience in Evaluation

Q. Did your fieldwork include making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	16	15.8
	Little	36	35.6
	Moderate	36	35.6
	Considerable	13	12.9
Total		101	100

Question: Did your fieldwork include having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?

Explanatory Narrative: Respondents were divided in their answers of "none" (20.8%), "little" (28.7%), and "moderate" (38.6%). This indicated an inconsistency in fieldwork experience EPPs provide for pre-service teachers to understand how to teach reading prosody.

Table 25

Frequencies of Fieldwork Experience in Prosody

Q. Did your fieldwork include having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	21	20.8
	Little	29	28.7
	Moderate	39	38.6
	Considerable	12	11.9
Total		101	100

PTPPKS Feelings of Preparedness Subtest

The following six tables (Table 26 through Table 31) represent the frequencies of participant responses in the subtest feelings of Preparedness. This subtest provides insight into the teacher's feelings of preparedness from their EPP in reading prosody and fluency teaching methods. This subtest utilized an implied "Did you feel prepared to…" on each question and 3 questions related to feeling prepared to teach specific grade level bands. This subtest was introduced with the following statement:

> New teachers enter their own classrooms for the first time feeling prepared about their abilities to teach in certain areas and less prepared in others. Use the following scale to rate your feelings of preparedness. (Salinger et al., 2010)

Question: Did you feel prepared to use a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, including direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?

Explanatory Narrative: 51.5% of respondents indicated they felt "somewhat" prepared to implement a variety of teaching methods to increase fluency in their classroom.

Table 26

Frequencies of Feelings of Preparedness in Fluency Instruction

Q. Did you feel prepared to use a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, including direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	26	25.7
	Somewhat	52	51.5
	Mostly	19	18.8
	Definitely	4	4.0
Total		101	100

Question: Did you feel prepared to make instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?

Explanatory Narrative: 77.3% of respondents felt "not at all" to "somewhat" prepared to make instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations.

Table 27

Frequencies of Feelings of Preparedness in Instructional Decisions

Q. Did you feel prepared to make instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	34	33.7
	Somewhat	44	43.6
	Mostly	19	18.8
	Definitely	4	4.0
Total		101	100

Question: Did you feel prepared to have children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?

Explanatory Narrative: Respondents indicated varying feelings of preparedness from their EPP in repeated reading strategies to increase fluency and 9.9% indicated they felt definitely prepared to teach strategies encouraging reading prosody.

Table 28

Frequencies of Feelings of Preparedness in Prosody Strategies

Q. Did you feel prepared to have children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	29	28.7
	Somewhat	34	33.7
	Mostly	28	27.7
	Definitely	10	9.9
Total		101	100

Question: How prepared do you feel to teach Kindergarteners and 1st- graders the essential skills of reading?

Explanatory Narrative: Most teachers felt unprepared to teach Kindergarten and 1st grade the foundational skills of reading, with 43.6% indicating they were not at all prepared.

Table 29

Frequencies of Feelings Prepared to Teach K/1

Q. How prepared do you feel to teach Kindergarteners and 1st- graders the essential skills of reading?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	44	43.6
	Somewhat	37	36.6
	Mostly	11	10.9
	Definitely	9	8.9
Total		101	100

Question: How prepared do you feel to teach 2nd and 3rd graders the essential skills of reading?

Explanatory Narrative: Most teachers felt unprepared to teach 2nd and 3rd grade the foundational skills of reading, with 42.6% indicating they were not at all prepared and 36.6% felt somewhat prepared.

Table 30

Frequencies of Feelings Prepared to Teach 2/3

Q. How prepared do you feel to teach 2nd and 3rd graders the essential skills of reading?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	43	42.6
	Somewhat	37	36.6
	Mostly	17	16.8
	Definitely	4	4.0
Total		101	100

Question: How prepared do you feel to teach 4th and 5th graders the essential skills of reading?

Explanatory Narrative: The majority (56.4%) of respondents felt unprepared to teach 4th and 5th grade the foundational skills of reading and 27.7% felt somewhat prepared.

Table 31

Frequencies of Feelings Prepared to Teach 4/5

Q. How prepared do you feel to teach 4th and 5th graders the essential skills of reading?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all	57	56.4
	Somewhat	38	27.7
	Mostly	13	12.9
	Definitely	3	3.0
Total		101	100

PKIRA Subtest

The following nine tables (Table 32 through Table 40) represent the frequencies of participant perceptions of the dimensions of fluency and the role of teaching reading prosody in reading foundational skills. This subtest provides insight into the teacher's instructional choices in the classroom with the goal to increase students reading fluency continuing the Likert Scale survey method, but with the participants responding to statements.

Statement: If a student can read aloud with accuracy, but does not understand what he reads, he needs to improve his vocabulary.

Explanatory Narrative: Respondents had varied perceptions of the relationship between vocabulary and fluency. This was an instructional question exploring if teachers would employ more vocabulary acquisition strategies in the classroom to increase fluency.

Table 32

Frequencies of Perceptions to Improve Vocabulary

Q1. If a student can read aloud with accuracy, but does not understand what he reads, he needs to improve his vocabulary.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	10	9.9
	2		11	10.9
	3	Neutral	20	19.8
	4		31	30.7
	5		18	17.8
	6	Strongly Agree	11	10.9
Total			101	100

Statement: If a student understands the story, but reads slowly and without prosody, the student needs fluency instruction.

Explanatory Narrative: Most (80%) respondents agreed that lack of prosodic reading necessitates an increase in fluency instruction. 20% of respondents disagreed about the relationship of prosody and fluency; their perception was that students did not need increased fluency instruction.

Table 33

Frequencies of Perceptions Fluency with Prosody

Q2. If a student understands the story, but reads slowly and without prosody, the student needs fluency instruction.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	12	11.9
	2		8	7.9
	3	Neutral	7	6.9
	4		14	13.9
	5		42	41.6
	6	Strongly Agree	18	17.8
Total			101	100

Statement: Teaching students the meaning of words through multiple exposure and repetition is part of fluency instruction.

Explanatory Narrative: The respondents varied in their responses as to their perceptions of the benefits of utilizing the repeated reading strategy in fluency instruction. This is an instructional question to provide insight into the teaching methods utilized in the classroom to increase fluency.

Table 34

Frequencies of Perceptions of Teaching Repeated Reading

Q3. Teaching students the meaning of words through multiple exposure and repetition is part of fluency instruction.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	16	15.8
	2		12	11.9
	3	Neutral	18	17.8
	4		18	17.8
	5		23	22.8
	6	Strongly Agree	14	13.9
Total			101	100

Statement: If a student reads a text aloud with accuracy and speed but is unable to answer any questions about the story, he has a comprehension deficit.

Explanatory Narrative: Over half of the respondents (54.4%) agreed that high accuracy and reading rate can influence comprehension abilities.

Table 35

Frequencies of Perceptions of Reading Rate.

Q4. If a student reads a text aloud with accuracy and speed, but is unable to answer any questions about the story, he has a comprehension deficit.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	11	10.9
	2		7	6.9
	3	Neutral	8	7.9
	4		20	19.6
	5		27	26.7
	6	Strongly Agree	28	27.7
Total			101	100

Statement: Having students repeatedly read the same text aloud will improve their fluency.

Explanatory Narrative: Many respondents (56.5%) had the perception that this instructional practice would improve fluency, with 24.8% reporting neutral perceptions of agreement. This was an instructional question aimed at providing insights into the pedagogical choices made in reading foundational skills.

Table 36

Frequencies of Perceptions of Benefits of Repeated Reading

Q5. Having students repeatedly read the same text aloud will improve their fluency				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	8	7.9
	2		11	10.9
	3	Neutral	25	24.8
	4		21	20.8
	5		24	23.8
	6	Strongly Agree	12	11.9
Total			101	100

Statement: A significant increase in oral reading miscues is usually related to decrease in comprehension.

Explanatory Narrative: Many respondents (56.5%) had the perception that this instructional practice would improve fluency, with 24.8% having neutral perceptions of agreement. This was an instructional question aimed at providing insights into the pedagogical choices made in reading foundational skills.

Table 37

Frequencies of Perceptions of Oral Miscues

Q6. A significant increase in oral reading miscues is usually related to decrease in comprehension.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	4	4.0
	2		21	20.8
	3	Neutral	20	19.8
	4		24	23.8
	5		17	16.8
	6	Strongly Agree	15	14.9
Total			101	100

Statement: Beginning readers need to encounter a new word a number of times to ensure it will become part of their sight word vocabulary.

Explanatory Narrative: Most of the respondents (66.3%) agreed with the statement that beginning readers need to encounter an unfamiliar word several times to learn it. This perception question provides insight in teacher awareness of the repetition needed to acquire new reading words through fluency.

Table 38

Frequencies of Perceptions of Learning New Words

Q7. Beginning readers need to encounter a new word a number of times to ensure it will become part of their sight word vocabulary.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	4	4.0
	2		4	4.0
	3	Neutral	13	12.9
	4		13	12.9
	5		28	27.7
	6	Strongly Agree	39	38.6
Total			101	100

Statement: For fluent reading, rapid identification of whole words is necessary.

Explanatory Narrative: Most of the respondents (78.3%) agreed with this statement and gave ratings of "4" or above. This was an instructional question aimed at providing insights into the teacher's perceptions of fluent reading and which element of fluent reading (rate, automaticity, prosody) is perceived as the highest priority.

Table 39

Frequencies of Perceptions of Rapid Reading Rate

Q8. For fluent reading, rapid identification of whole words is necessary.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	7	6.9
	2		3	3.0
	3	Neutral	12	11.9
	4		25	24.8
	5		21	20.8
	6	Strongly Agree	33	32.7
Total			101	100

Statement: Reading comprehension is related to fluent word identification.

Explanatory Narrative: Respondents were varied in their perceptions of the relationship between comprehension and word identification. A small majority of teachers felt neutral (26.7%) followed by varying degrees of agreement.

Table 40

Frequencies of Perceptions of the Relationship of Comprehension and Fluency

Q9. Reading comprehension is related to fluent word identification.				
			Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	Strongly Disagree	10	9.9
	2		5	5.0
	3	Neutral	27	26.7
	4		17	16.8
	5		22	21.8
	6	Strongly Agree	20	19.8
Total			101	100

Quantitative Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question One: In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?

The first research question explored the impact of the perception of reading fluency on the instructional choices in reading prosody made by early career teachers as learned from their EPP training. This research study defines coursework as written or practical work done by a student during an EPP and assessed for a final grade (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989). Fieldwork is defined as the internship or student teaching experiences to connect EPP course content to practical application in classroom teaching. Fieldwork is used to identify best practices in teaching and to allow opportunities for preservice teachers to observe characteristics of effective teachers.

The independent variable Prepared for Fluency/Prosody determined if the participant's

coursework and fieldwork prepared them to teach students the components of fluency – to read a text with an appropriate reading rate, high degree of correct words in a minute (accuracy), and expressive reading (prosody). This categorical variable was answered by participants with a yes or no response. The independent variable Prepared for Prosody/Comprehension determined if the participant's coursework and fieldwork prepared them to teach students the components of comprehension as related to prosody– to read a text with an appropriate level of understanding by phrasing the text and utilizing syllabic prosody. This categorical variable was answered by participants with a yes or no response.

Composite dependent variables were created by combining the indicators within each subtest of the PTPPKS and PKIRA. Each indicator within the PTPPKS subtest measured participants' preparation within their EPP in specific teaching methods encouraging the development of student reading fluency and reading prosody. Each indicator within the PKIRA subtest measured participants' perception of fluency in relation to reading prosody and pedagogical choices made in the classroom. These composite dependent variables (Coursework, Field Experience, Feeling of Preparedness, and Perception of Fluency) were used in an independent samples *t*-test to determine if there was a significance difference between the participants with a "yes" response to the independent variables of being Prepared for Fluency/Prosody and Prepared for Prosody/Comprehension and participants not prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods in their EPP program as indicated by a "no" response. A level of significance .05 was used for each statistical analysis conducted in this study. The results of each test can be seen in Table 41.

Participants scored higher in coursework when they were prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.52$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 0.65$), a statistically significant difference, *M*

= 0.78, 95% CI [0.54, 1.02], $t(99) = 6.56$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.29$. This indicates participants learnt greater variety of instructional methods and were more equipped by their coursework to teach reading routines encouraging the development of reading prosody when their EPP prepared them to teach fluency.

Participants scored higher in field experience when they were prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.63$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 0.73$), a statistically significant difference, $M = 0.70$, 95% CI [0.42, 0.98], $t(99) = 4.91$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.01$. This indicates participant's fieldwork or student teaching had a higher number of opportunities to practice reading pedagogy and teaching methods encouraging the development of reading prosody when their EPP prepared them to teach fluency.

Participants scored higher in feelings of preparedness when they were prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 0.65$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 1.68$, $SD = 0.53$), a statistically significant difference, $M = 0.82$, 95% CI [0.57, 1.06], $t(99) = 6.64$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.42$. This indicates that participants felt more prepared to make instructional decisions encouraging reading fluency and prosody, to teach a variety of reading methods, and to make instructional decisions based on student reading evaluation scores when prepared to teach fluency by their EPP than those who were not prepared to teach fluency.

Participants scored lower in their perceptions of identifying fluent reading when they were prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.72$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared to teach fluency/prosody methods ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.67$), a statistically significant difference, $M = -0.36$, 95% CI [-0.66, -0.06], $t(99) = -2.38$, $p < .02$, $d = -0.53$. This indicates that participants' perceptions defining the indicators of fluent reading as prepared by

their EPP were inaccurate or could reflect a more accurate understanding of fluency since entering the teaching field.

Participants scored higher in coursework when they were prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 0.62$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 2.09$, $SD = 0.68$), a statistically significant difference, $M = 0.57$, 95% CI [0.32, 0.81], $t(99) = 4.55$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.88$. This indicates participants learned more instructional methods and were more equipped by their coursework to teach students the components of comprehension as related to prosody when their EPP prepared them to teach comprehension.

Participants scored higher in field experience when they were prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.72$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 0.75$), a statistically significant difference, $M = 0.41$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.69], $t(99) = 2.78$, $p < .01$, $d = 0.55$. This indicates participant's fieldwork or student teaching had a higher number of opportunities to practice reading pedagogy and teaching methods encouraging the development of reading prosody through reading comprehension when their EPP prepared them to teach comprehension.

Participants scored higher in feelings of preparedness when they were prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 2.25$, $SD = 0.69$) as compared to those who did not feel prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.60$), a non-statistically significant difference, $M = 0.56$, 95% CI [0.29, 0.82], $t(99) = 4.18$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.87$. This indicates a weak relationship between the feelings of preparation to teach reading comprehension encouraging reading prosody as prepared by their EPP than those who were not prepared to teach reading comprehension.

Participants scored lower in their perceptions of fluent reading when they were prepared

in reading prosody/comprehension methods (M = 4.34, SD = 0.78) as compared to those who did not feel prepared in reading prosody/comprehension methods (M = 4.45, SD = 0.61), a non-statistically significant difference, M = -0.11, 95% CI [-0.41, 0.18], $t(99)$ = -0.76, p = .45, d = -0.16. This indicates no relationship between participant perceptions of fluent reading and preparation from their EPP in reading prosody/comprehension methods compared to those who were not prepared to teach reading prosody/comprehension methods from their EPP.

Table 41

Independent-Samples t-test for each IV and DV

Outcome	Predictor	M (SD)	*t* (df)	Cohen's *d*
Coursework	Prepared for Fluency/Prosody			
	Yes	2.88 (0.52)	6.56 (99)***	1.29
	No	2.10 (0.65)		
	Prepared for Prosody/ Comprehension			
	Yes	2.65 (0.62)	4.55 (99)***	0.86
	No	2.09 (0.68)		
Field Experience	Prepared for Fluency/Prosody			
	Yes	2.87 (0.63)	4.90 (99)***	1.01
	No	2.17 (0.73)		
	Prepared for Prosody/ Comprehension			
	Yes	2.62 (0.62)	2.78 (99)**	0.55
	No	2.21 (0.75)		
Feelings of Preparedness	Prepared for Fluency/Prosody			

	Yes	2.50 (0.65)	6.64 (99)***	0.58
	No	1.68 (0.53)		
	Prepared for Prosody/ Comprehension			
	Yes	2.25 (0.69)	4.18 (99)***	0.87
	No	1.69 (0.57)		
Perception Fluency	Prepared for Fluency/Prosody			
	Yes	4.15 (0.72)	-2.39 (99)*	0.68
	No	4.51 (0.67)		
	Prepared for Prosody/ Comprehension			
	Yes	4.34 (0.78)	-0.76 (99)	-0.16
	No	4.45 (0.61)		

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Research Question Two: In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

Research Question Two explored the impact of EPP training on teacher perceptions of reading fluency as teachers make instructional choices to increase reading foundational skills which may or may not include reading prosody. A multiple regression analysis was computed to determine what relationships exist between teachers who received EPP training in reading prosody, fluency, and comprehension (as it relates to fluency) compared to teachers who did not. Regression analysis was conducted on each dependent variable within the subtests Coursework, Field Experience, and Feelings of Preparedness between the three independent variables of Knowledge of Reading Prosody (KnowPro), Preparation in Fluency (PrepFlu), and Preparation in Comprehension (PrepCompre). The level of significance .05 was used for each statistical

analysis conducted in this study.

A multiple regression was run to predict Coursework in CorrErrors, FluencyInst, FluencyDec, and ProsodyInst from KnowPro, PrepFlu, and PrepCompre. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted CorrErrors, $F(3, 97) = 15.31$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .30$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyInst, $F(3, 97) = 18.93$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .35$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyDec, $F(3, 97) = 11.95$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .25$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted ProsodyInst, $F(3, 97) = 4.39$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .09$.

In this regression model, both coursework in fluency instruction focused on teaching elementary students to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody (PrepFlu) and comprehension strategies (PrepCompre) were identified to be statistically significant predictors of pedagogical choices of teachers for teaching students the reading comprehension skills needed to monitor their understanding of the text (CorrErrors), using a variety of teaching methods to increase each fluency component (FluencyInst), making instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations (FluencyDec), and making instructional choices in reading prosody (ProsodyInst). The independent variable Knowledge of Prosody (KnowPro) was not found to be statistically significant, suggesting this predictor had little influence on teachers' pedagogical choices in reading prosody. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 42.

Table 42

Multiple Regression Results for Coursework

Variable	*B* (*SE B*)	95% CI for *B*		β	R^2
		LL	*UL*		
CorrErrors					.32***
Constant	3.66 (0.33)	3.01	4.31		
KnowPro	0.03 (0.03)	-0.02	0.09	0.10	
PrepFlu	-0.65 (0.14)	-0.92	-0.37	-0.42***	
PrepCompre	-0.34 (0.14)	-0.62	-0.07	-0.21**	
FluencyInst					.37***
Constant	3.98 (0.39)	3.20	4.76		
KnowPro	-.07 (0.03)	0.007	0.14	0.19*	
PrepRead	-0.65 (0.17)	-0.98	-0.32	-0.34***	
PrepCompre	-0.60 (0.17)	-0.93	-0.27	-0.37***	
FluencyDec					.25***
Constant	3.81 (0.43)	2.97	4.66		
KnowPro	0.04 (0.04)	-0.03	0.11	0.11	
PrepRead	-0.92 (0.19)	-1.27	-0.56	-0.47***	
PrepCompre	-0.11 (0.19)	-0.46	0.25	-0.06	
ProsodyInst					.09***
Constant	3.47 (0.46)	2.66	4.38		
KnowPro	0.02 (0.04)	-0.06	0.09	0.04	
PrepRead	-0.58 (0.19)	-0.96	-0.19	-0.30***	
PrepCompre	-0.14 (0.19)	-0.53	0.24	-0.08	

Note. KnowPro = Knowledge of Prosody. PrepFlu = Pre-Service Preparation in Fluency. PrepCompre = Pre-Service Preparation in Comprehension. CorrErrors = Coursework in Correcting Errors While Reading. FluencyInst = Coursework in Fluency Instruction. FluencyDec = Coursework in Fluency Decision Instruction. ProsodyInst = Coursework in Prosody Instruction
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

A multiple regression was used to predict fieldwork experience in CorrErrors, FluencyInst, FluencyDec, and ProsodyInst from KnowPro, PrepFlu, and PrepCompre. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted CorrErrors, $F(3, 97) = 11.47$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .24$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyInst, $F(3, 97) = 11.36$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .24$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyDec, $F(3, 97) = 5.01$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .12$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted ProsodyInst, $F(3, 97) = 4.69$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .10$.

In this regression model, fieldwork in fluency instruction focused on teaching elementary students to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody (PrepFlu), and comprehension strategies (PrepCompre) were identified to be statistically significant predictors of pedagogical choices of teachers for teaching students the reading comprehension skills needed to monitor their understanding of the text (CorrErrors), using a variety of teaching methods to increase each fluency component (FluencyInst), making instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations (FluencyDec), and making instructional choices in reading prosody (ProsodyInst). The independent variable Knowledge of Prosody (KnowPro) was found to have a greater significant relationship in fieldwork experiences in both fluency (FluencyInst) and prosody instruction (ProsodyInst), suggesting this predictor had stronger influence on teachers' pedagogical choices in reading prosody. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 43.

Table 43

Multiple Regression Results for Fieldwork Experience

Variable	*B* (*SE B*)	95% CI for *B*		β	R^2
		LL	*UL*		
CorrErrors					.24***
Constant	3.26 (0.42)	2.43	4.09		
KnowPro	0.08 (0.03)	0.01	0.15	0.27*	
PrepFlu	-0.78 (0.18)	-1.12	-0.23	-0.41***	
PrepCompre	-0.09 (0.18)	-0.44	0.26	-0.05	
FluencyInst					.24***
Constant	3.60 (0.41)	2.78	4.42		
KnowPro	0.07 (0.03)	0.003	0.14	0.19*	
PrepRead	-0.65 (0.17)	-1.01	-0.32	-0.35***	
PrepCompre	-0.29 (0.17)	-0.63	0.06	-0.16	
FluencyDec					.12***
Constant	3.14 (0.43)	2.29	4.00		
KnowPro	0.04 (0.04)	-0.03	0.11	0.12	
PrepRead	-0.62 (0.19)	-0.98	-0.26	-0.34***	
PrepCompre	-0.08 (0.18)	-0.28	0.44	-0.05	
ProsodyInst					.10***
Constant	2.77 (0.47)	1.84	3.70		
KnowPro	0.08 (0.04)	0.004	0.16	0.21**	
PrepRead	-0.55 (0.20)	-0.94	-0.15	-0.30***	
PrepCompre	-0.08 (0.19)	-0.31	0.47	0.41	

Note. KnowPro = Knowledge of Prosody. PrepFlu = Pre-Service Preparation in Fluency. PrepCompre = Pre-Service Preparation in Comprehension. CorrErrors = Coursework in Correcting Errors While Reading. FluencyInst = Coursework in Fluency Instruction. FluencyDec = Coursework in Fluency Decision Instruction. ProsodyInst = Coursework in Prosody Instruction
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

The subtest Feelings of Preparedness results is reported in two separate tables. Table 44 provides information to answer the research question in the dependent variables FluencyMethods, FluencyInst, and ProsodyInst from the independent variables (KnowPro, PrepFlu, PrepCompre). Table 45 reports the relationships between Feelings of Preparedness by grade level bands. A multiple regression was run to predict feelings of preparedness in FluencyMethods, FluencyInst, and ProsodyInst, from KnowPro, PrepFlu, and PrepCompre. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyMethods, $F(3, 97) = 15.41$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .30$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted FluencyInst, $F(3, 97) = 11.19$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .23$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted ProsodyInst, $F(3, 97) = 6.33$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .16$.

In this regression model, preparation in fluency instruction focused on teaching elementary students to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody (PrepFlu) was identified to be statistically significant predictors of pedagogical choices of teachers for teaching fluency methods (FluencyMethods). Preparation in making instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations (FluencyInst) and instructional choices in reading prosody (ProsodyInst) were also identified to be statistically significant predictors of teacher pedagogical choices. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 44.

Table 44

Multiple Regression Results for Preparedness

Variable	*B* (*SE B*)	95% CI for *B*		B	R^2
		LL	*UL*		
FluencyMethods					.30***
Constant	3.48 (0.34)	2.80	4.14		
KnowPro	0.03 (0.03)	-0.03	0.09	0.09	
PrepFlu	-0.71 (0.14)	-0.99	-0.43	-0.44***	
PrepCompre	-0.31 (0.14)	-0.60	-0.30	-0.20*	
FluencyInst					.23***
Constant	3.59 (0.38)	2.84	4.33		
KnowPro	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.07	0.05	-0.03	
PrepFlu	-0.76 (0.16)	-1.01	-0.45	-0.44***	
PrepCompre	-0.25 (0.16)	-0.56	0.07	-0.15	
ProsodyInst					.13***
Constant	3.70 (0.47)	2.77	4.62		
KnowPro	-0.003 (0.04)	-0.08	0.08	-0.01	
PrepFlu	-0.69 (0.20)	-1.08	-0.30	-0.34***	
PrepCompre	-0.25 (0.20)	-0.64	0.14	-0.13	

Note. KnowPro = Knowledge of Prosody. PrepFlu = Pre-Service Preparation in Fluency. PrepCompre = Pre-Service Preparation in Comprehension. FluencyMethods = Teaching Methods For Fluency. FluencyInst = Making Decisions Based on Fluency Assessment. ProsodyInst = Teaching Methods For Prosody Instruction
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

A multiple regression was run to predict feelings of preparedness to teach grade band levels for K/1grades, 2/3grades, and 4/5grades from KnowPro, PrepFlu, and PrepCompre. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted K/1grades, $F(3, 97) = 12.30$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .25$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted 2/3grades,

$F(3, 97) = 11.17$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .23$. The multiple regression model statistically significantly predicted 4/5grades, $F(3, 97) = 6.90$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{Adj} = .15$.

In this regression model, preparation in fluency instruction focused on teaching elementary students to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody (PrepFlu) was identified to be statistically significant predictors of perception of preparedness of teachers for teaching grades kindergarten and 1st grade (K/1grades), 2nd and 3rd grade (2/3grades), and 4th and 5th grade (4/5grades). Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 45.

Table 45

Multiple Regression Results for Preparedness

Variable	*B* (*SE B*)	95% CI for *B*		β	R^2
		LL	*UL*		
K/1grades					.28***
Constant	3.56 (0.42)	2.72	4.40		
KnowPro	0.01 (0.03)	-0.06	0.08	0.03	
PrepFlu	-0.93 (0.18)	-1.29	-0.58	-0.48***	
PrepCompre	-0.18 (0.18)	-0.53	0.18	-0.09	
2/3grades					.26***
Constant	3.70 (0.39)	2.92	4.46		
KnowPro	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.10	0.03	-0.09	
PrepFlu	-0.76 (0.16)	-1.08	-0.43	-0.43***	
PrepCompre	-0.32 (0.16)	-0.65	0.003	-0.19	
4/5grades					.18***
Constant	2.94 (0.40)	2.16	3.72		
KnowPro	0.002 (0.03)	-0.06	0.07	0.006	
PrepFlu	-0.46 (0.17)	-0.79	-0.13	-0.27**	
PrepCompre	-0.40 (0.17)	-0.73	0.07	-0.24*	

Note. KnowPro = Knowledge of Prosody. PrepFlu = Pre-Service Preparation in Fluency. PrepCompre = Pre-Service Preparation in Comprehension. K/1grades = Preparedness To Teach Kindergarten/1st. 2/3grades = Preparedness To Teach 2nd/3rd. 4/5grades = Preparedness To Teach 4th/5th.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Qualitative Data Analysis Results: Open-Ended Questions

Respondents can express their unique perspectives in responses to open-ended questions (Berg, 1989). Immediately following completion of the survey, participants completed six qualitative questions aimed at exploring their perspectives regarding their EPP coursework and fieldwork in the elements of fluency and feelings of preparation in reading prosody. The researcher used the data from the open-ended questions to answer the research question and address the theoretical framework. The short answer questions focused on the content knowledge in fluency and reading prosody gleaned from early career teachers' experiences in their EPP and their feelings of preparedness to teach reading prosody. The open-ended questions can be seen within the survey instrument in Appendix D. Each question response was analyzed using emergent coding to reduce data into categorial codes and pattern codes (Suter, 2012). When qualitative questions are broad and explanatory, emergent coding is the preferred process to categorize data that appears (Suter, 2012). Research hypotheses are not imposed on the data; instead, the data is self-explanatory by the emergence of conceptual categories and descriptive themes (Suter, 2012).

The Coding Process

Step 1: Frequency Table

In the first-round pass of the coding process, the researcher created a frequency chart from the participant responses to the short answer questions. A frequency chart assisted in informing the researcher by listing each keyword and displaying the number of times the word

occurred in the interviews (Saldaña, 2021). After the initial step of the frequency table, the researcher organized the data from frequent words into category groupings of similar language used by the participants. The common language and meaning groupings informed the researcher of similarities in participant perspectives. Table 46 shows the frequency table and 1st round language groupings.

Table 46

Frequency Table of Qualitative Data

1st Round Language	Specifics	Frequency	Frequency %	1st Round Language	Specifics	Frequency	Frequency %
Prosody "is"	Important	32	26%	Fluency "is"	Rate	12	17%
	Voices	17	13%		Word reading	10	14%
	Helpful	12	10%		Important	8	11%
	Meaningful	12	10%		Accuracy	7	10%
	Comprehending	11	9%		Correct	2	3%
	Being	9	7%	Prosody "helps"	Comprehension	27	29%
	Creative	9	7%		Reading	23	25%
	Influencing	7	6%		Students	18	19%
	Shows	5	4%		Meaning	11	12%
	Reflection	4	3%		Skills	8	9%
	Mood	3	2%		Chunking	3	3%
	not robot voices	3	2%		Sense	3	3%
	Nuances	2	1%	Prosody	Expression	25	34%
	Fluency	2	1%		Tone	10	14%
Reading "with"	Prosody	64	41%		Inflection	9	12%
	Fluency	46	29%		Cadence	5	7%
	Understanding	20	13%		Rhythm	4	5%
	Ability	11	7%		Timing	4	5%
	Thinking	6	4%		Emphasis	4	5%
	Appropriately	4	3%	Teaching	Students	12	22%
	Accuracy	2	2%		Able	11	20%
	Fast	2	2%		Don't	11	20%
					I don't Know	9	16%
					Role	5	9%
					How	5	9%
					Frustrated	3	5%

Step 2: Identification of Reoccurring Themes

The second round of the coding process included returning to each specific word in the frequency table and analyzing the participant's statement containing the keyword. The second-round coding process consisted of categorizing words and phrases around the keywords from the

participant statements, and then identifying common recurring themes that arose from the categorized words and phrases.

A structural coding procedure was then utilized to organize the qualitative data to answer each of the research questions (Saldaña, 2021). Structural coding categorized the data to examine the "commonalities, relationships, and differences" within the groupings (Saldaña, 2021, p. 130). Codes were then assigned to the common themes. The data within the groupings were counted for occurrences and noted in the frequency table: the *n* is the number of respondents within the grouping. If the same respondent used a term multiple times within the same statement and around the same idea, it was counted as a single occurrence in the frequency table. The recurring themes in the categories and the assigned category groupings are shown in Table 47.

Table 47

Assigned Category Groupings of Qualitative Data

Groupings from Participant Statements	Frequency
Expression/tone/intonation/emphasis	65 (n=71)
Fluency of reading	51 (n=43)
Reading skills/decoding	45 (n=45)
Speed/fast/rate	44 (n=52)
Unknown/don't teach/training/choices	37 (n=38)
Meaningful/important/part/influence	32 (n=34)
Rhythm/cadence	23 (n=23)
Creative/voices	21 (n=25)
Understanding/comprehension	14 (n=16)
Phrasing	5 (n=5)
Appropriately/correctly/accurately	4 (n=4)

Step 3: Pattern Codes

The third stage of the qualitative analysis involved a thorough review and several passes through the data utilizing pattern coding. The process of pattern coding is defined as pulling the data from the first cycle coding into more meaningful units of analysis (Saldaña, 2021). Pattern coding provided the system for the researcher to collapse the codes into common patterns that systematically lead to the development of the final codes which emerged from the qualitative data. For example, the groupings of rhythm/cadence, expression/tone/intonation/emphasis, and phrasing define characteristics of reading prosody created the first code of Attributes of Prosody. Table 48 illustrates the final pattern codes developed from the qualitative questions.

Table 48

Final Codes

Final Codes Developed from Participant Perspectives of Qualitative Questions	
Code 1	Attributes of prosody
Code 2	Attributes of fluency
Code 3	Teaching choices
Code 4	Identification of fluency
Code 5	Teacher training
Code 6	Connection of reading skills
Code 7	Prosody is a helping skill
Code 8	Creative

Step 4: Development of Themes

The final step in the qualitative data analysis process was collapsing the eight emergent codes into themes. The themes represent features of the respondents' statements characterizing the perceptions or experiences that the researcher noted as relevant to the research questions. The researcher extracted quotes from the participants supporting the themes from the data. Three

main themes emerged from analyzing the participant responses in the qualitative data: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody, Teacher Perception, and Teaching Choices and Training. Table 49 illustrates the overall themes developed from the qualitative data.

Table 49

Themes Developed

Themes Developed from Participant Perspectives		Corresponding Codes
Theme 1	Evidence of fluency and prosody	Codes 1, 3, 4
Theme 2	Teacher perception	Codes 6, 7, 8
Theme 3	Teaching choices and teacher training	Codes 2, 5

Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody

The first theme, Evidence of Fluency and Prosody, emerged as respondents detailed their perception of the defining attributes of reading fluency and reading prosody. Participants familiar with reading prosody and its role in reading development used vivid descriptors to document the prosody characteristics evident in fluent reading. Respondents described reading prosody as the "Evidence of decoding ability" and the means to take a "deeper dive" within fluency.

Respondents used a copious number of adjectives (9 different descriptors) when describing the evidence they believe students should exhibit as fluent readers. One participant described the evidence of fluent reading as "rate and accuracy." In contrast, another described the evidence of fluent prosodic reading as "including tone, accentuation, and punctuation and should be considered as the third feature of fluency (besides rate and accuracy)."

The evidence of proficient reading speed also emerged as a divisive descriptor of reading with fluency and fluent prosody among participants. When describing the evidence of reading with prosody, participants described the "oral reading rhythm" and "cadence" 23 times. One

participant described the prosodic cadence as “similar to speaking,” and another described the rhythm as “natural to the ear.” One participant described prosodic reading as “reading that sounds conversational; it is not too choppy or too fast; reading is accurate and mostly without error.” However, when describing the evidence of fluent reading, participants used the terms “speed”, “fast”, and “rate” 44 times. Two participants explained that they look for their students to display “accurate, quick reading.” One respondent described the evidence of disfluency as when she has “a child cannot read with the correct timing, intonation, and phrasing” that she concludes “their fluency is off.”

Participants explained the process they use to assess reading fluency and prosody. Participants use a different indicator assessment for fluency and prosody. For example, one respondent described how they use a “CBM-R for fluency” but just “listens for expressive reading and kinda guesses if it sounds good.” One respondent described "teachers gauge prosody for assessment" for evidence of students' "comprehension." While another described prosody as reading with a "slower reading rate" but "better indicator of fluent reading than speed." Participants also noted that reading prosody was used as evidence of students' comprehension levels, stating it is "important to encourage prosody to reflect comprehension."

Participants used language describing vocal characteristics they would hear when their students read with or without prosody. The method of "reading a text in meaningful chunks with expression" and "reading with inflection and understanding rhymes" describe what evidence the teachers listen for in oral prosodic reading. The terms "expression" and "tone" were used 65 times in respondents' answers and viewed as a separate indicator of fluent reading. One participant stated that she considered "prosody as a better indicator of understanding than speed." Table 50 includes some participant perspectives of Evidence of Fluency and Prosody in their own language.

Table 50

Participant Perspectives: Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody

Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody	
Code: Attributes of Fluency	• "Reading with appropriate speed." • "Accurate quick reading." • "Usually choppy when early readers read for speed, but that's what I measure for CBM, accuracy is also important."
Code: Attributes of Prosody	• "Rhythm to reading, sound, intonation, reading with expression." • "Reading with inflection and understanding rhymes." • "Reading prosody is how reading sounds to the ear when a student is reading to you. This includes their timing, phrasing, etc." • "A combination of tone, speed, inflection in oral reading."
Code: Identification of Fluency	• "When a child cannot read with the correct timing, intonation, and phrasing, their fluence is off." • "A student might be 'fluent' meaning they can read WCPM in a range for their age, but that is separate from being able to read smoothly and have it sound like conversational speech."

Theme 2: Teacher Perception

The second theme, Teacher Perception, emerged as participants detailed their perspectives on the impact of reading prosody and how it encourages the development of other reading skills. Participants described how prosody is vital in reading comprehension skills and how they use the informative assessment data as teachers. One respondent detailed her view that "if a child does not demonstrate good reasoning prosody, it could indicate that they have issues

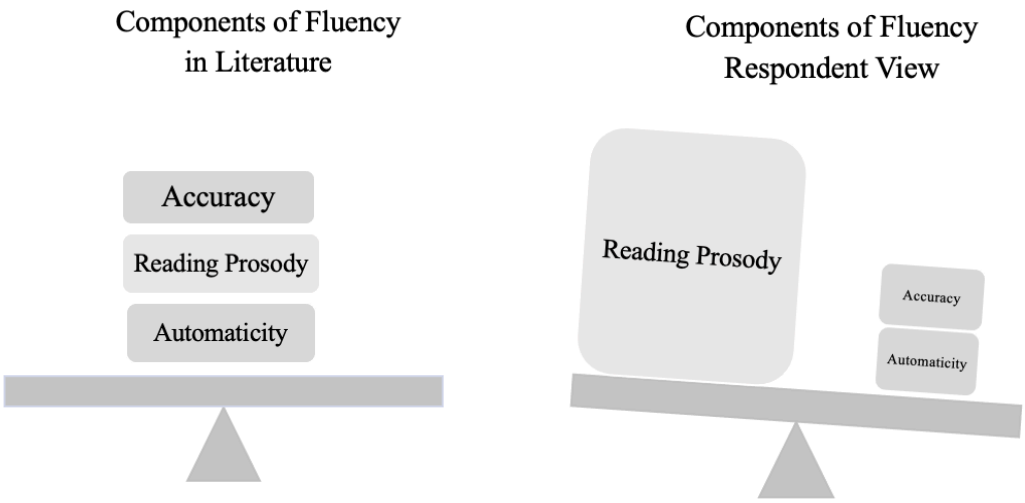
with fluency, which then could have an impact on their comprehension of what they are reading.” Similarly, participants perceived reading prosody as the connection between comprehension and fluency. One teacher described this connection as “prosody supports fluency by bringing meaning. Fluency relies on reading for meaning, not just reading fast like a robot.”

The participants detailed their perspectives of why prosodic reading is essential. Some respondents described that prosodic reading enables the student to be “reading at a deeper level,” and because “you have to be able to decode and comprehend the text to do this appropriately,” it will “impact understanding.” Another participant summed up the perspective that prosodic reading “shows strong reading skills because you have to be able to decode and comprehend the text to do this.”

Reading prosody is perceived by the participants within a hierarchy between the elements of fluency (automaticity, accuracy, prosody), placing prosody as the most critical element of fluency and last to develop. One respondent stated, "prosody determines whether or not a student has good fluency, for example, if they're reading slowly and getting stuck on words." Several participants perceived reading prosody as separate from fluency, but as an aid to comprehension; "prosody is connected to fluency because it helps students read the words accurately, but also with expression in their voice, allowing them to comprehend it better." Figure 8 illustrates the hierarchical relationship of prosody as viewed by the respondents and the true balance of the elements of fluency in research.

Figure 8

Elements of Fluency in Literature vs. Elements of Fluency Viewed by Respondents



When something exists only in the reader's mind, it is imaginary. Participants described reading prosody as the creative access point to the imaginary world during reading. Reading prosody was expressed by respondents as the ability to "create the story" and a "performance of reading." George Bernard Shaw described the Imaginary as the beginning of being creative (Shaw, 1921). The respondents viewed reading prosody as the ability to be creative with the imagination through the words of the text they were reading, which brings entertainment. The adjective "creative" relates to the imagination or describes an original idea. Participants described prosodic reading as sounding "colorful to the ear" or using "creative voices while reading." Participants described reading with prosody as "conversational" with "dialogue" and "nuances." One participant's perspective is that "prosody engages the reader in developing their comprehension because they apply different expressions and nuances to their voices as they read. I always tell my students to pretend that they are a radio play." Another teacher described the creativity of oral prosodic reading in "pauses and intonation are all an important part of making

reading interesting and making it all make sense. Without those, reading is boring and is very difficult to make sense of." Table 51 includes some participant perspectives of Teacher Perception in their language.

Table 51

Theme 2: Teacher Perception

Theme 2: Teacher Perception	
Code: Connection of Reading Skills	• "Reading with prosody conveys meaning and aids in comprehension." • "Usually choppy when early readers read for speed, but that's what I measure for CBM, accuracy is also important." • "Allows students to read not just to read but to show their understanding of comprehension in the passage." • "Prosody is one of the last steps in reading fluency. If a student can do this they have a firm grasp on the meaning and words being read." • "I see reading fluency as the bridge between decoding and reading comprehension." • "It lends itself to comprehension, students need to be able to read fluently to support their understanding of a text." • "Prosody aids in comprehension and, as such, is a part of the composite skill of reading." • "It is important, especially when students start to really dive deep into a text to pull out the author's [sic] message.' • "Prosody is important because it means the reader is not struggling to decode."

Code: Prosody is a Helping Skill	• "To be able to read aloud according to punctuation in sentence structure." • "It allows student to learn more using different reading skills." • "It is important to developing readers who understand what they are reading at a deeper level and avoid the robot reading." • "Reading with prosody is a positive trait in fluency needed for reading comprehension." • "It is a piece of fluency that is often unaddressed explicitly, but it's necessary for a reader to become proficient." • "I believe prosody is related to fluency. One can encourage the other. A child can know to read with prosody but make fluency mistakes and vice versa." • "It allows me as a teacher to gauge a student's understanding of what they are." • "It helps students assign meaning to words which boosts their comprehension/retention of information from the text." • "1-Increases comprehension, 2-increases connection from writer to reader, 3-increases reader's interaction with the text."
Code: Creative	• "Reading like an actor." "Reading with feeling, correct pauses, conveying meaning." • "Helps to create the story in their mind in an imaginary way." • "Without prosody words are just words and have no meaning or interest." • "I think it's to bring character and entertainment when reading."

Theme 3: Teaching Choices and Training

When the participants described their experiences within their EPP or feelings of preparedness, the third theme, Teaching Choices and Training, emerged from two different but similar frequency groupings. One first-round grouping consisted of EPP training, which participants defined as the experiences and preparation received within their EPP. The second grouping of teacher choices in the classroom consisted of how participants described they taught reading fluency and prosody. These two categorical groupings categories merged to form Teacher Training Code. One participant explained that EPP programs need to prepare preservice

teachers in reading prosody regarding “what it is, how it relates to fluency, and how to TEACH it.” Another detailed their perspective that “teachers need a foundation of how to get their students to reading with prosody.”

Within this theme emerged statements of frustration from participants regarding their EPP training. Some respondents reported, "I was never taught this;" "didn't learn it in my program;" and “I have had to Google this stuff; my teacher program was far from adequate.” One respondent stated, "we need a complete overhaul of teacher preservice programs. I learned nothing in mine." Another described her perspective of reading prosody: "I think it is important to teach preservice teachers that this is a skill students need to acquire and to give teachers varying strategies." One teacher suggested that EPP programs: "should make teachers realize that phonics is a good tool for new readers, but prosody and fluency cement those skills."

The EPP training teachers received impacted the instructional choices in the classroom, which emerged as the second part of the theme. Often, fluency was viewed as a high reading rate, and participants described instructional planning to increase the reading rate. One respondent described how her grade-level team determines reading proficiency: "Our team focus is to expect kids to read a text quicker, more accurate, and have some comprehension about the text.” Another stated, "I teach word repetition, which can be useful to increase fluency." Another teacher described the perspective that reading prosody "just happens; I have never focused on it (I teach 3rd)." While some participants who stated they did not have EPP training in reading prosody felt that "accuracy is most important" in reading. Several chose not to "teach this in reading" or that they "don't use it" in instructional decision-making. Table 52 includes some participant perspectives of Teaching Choices and Training in their language.

Table 52

Theme 3: Teaching Choices and Training

Theme 3: Teaching Choices and Training	
Teaching Choices	• 'I think prosody is one of the more sophisticated elements of fluency. In doing repeated readings with students, we focus on prosody after ensuring accuracy." • "I give passages so students are able to read larger chunks smoothly - easier for them to comprehend a text which can be read with fluency." • "When discussing fluency, emphasis should be placed on the fact that it isn't just reading fast, it's reading smoothly enough that the brain can focus on comprehension."
Teacher Training	• "No idea. I was not taught this in Graduate school." • "I don't have a strong understanding" • "To be honest I had to google it. This is not a term I use often." • "I know it's important but beyond reading with voices I don't know." • "Honestly never heard of it" • "I wasn't taught this" • "I don't think teachers really understand the importance of prosody. Not only does it help students read to understand, it also helps them to enjoy reading more. It is also important to note that a lack of prosody can also be helpful in recognizing other problems with reading. Students who struggle with skills like decoding will struggle with prosody. That can allow the teacher to go back to fundamental skills and make sure that the student understands phonics and decoding."

The qualitative component of this parallel mixed methods model was constructed to complement the quantitative data for both research questions of the study. To address research question one: "In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?" the data from

Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody and Theme 2: Teacher Perception were utilized. The second research question: "In what ways are elementary reading teachers' perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?" was addressed with the analysis of Theme 3: Teacher Choices and Training.

Qualitative Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question One: In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?

Perception of Fluency

Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody

EPP training influenced teachers' perception of reading fluency and the knowledge of each component within the skill. Respondents who learned in their EPP that fluency was primarily attributed to a high reading rate made pedagogical choices that included one-minute rapid reads, choral reading, and practice cold (unfamiliar) reads of reading passages to increase the reading rate. Participants without coursework or fieldwork in the EPP program often described fluent reading as correlated with a quick reading rate. One participant defined the evidence of fluency as the display of "reading with appropriate speed," and another participant had a similar definition of fluency as an "accurate, quick reading."

EPP training influenced the perspective of integrating the skill of fluency with prosody and the teacher's knowledge of each component of fluency. One respondent with EPP training described "prosody as a better indicator of understanding than speed. It seems to me to be a part of fluency." A few respondents familiar with reading prosody described the skill as a "reflection of understanding and fluency," and the "highway to reading;" these participants also had fluency coursework in their EPP program. Another participant had EPP training in fluency but desired

more, responding, "I think that I would have benefitted from a class specifically devoted to the science of reading and how to make data-driven decisions based on fluency assessments."

Respondents with EPP training in fluency also noted the importance of fluency not primarily attributing to a fast-reading rate. One described her perception, saying, "when discussing fluency, emphasis should be placed on the fact that it isn't just reading fast, it's reading smoothly enough that the brain can focus on comprehension." This view contrasted with those who did not have EPP training in fluency, which was often paired with an increased importance on a faster reading rate. One respondent described the importance of fluency being attributed to both reading rate and accuracy, noting that "word reading accuracy and reading rate helps students to not struggle."

Theme 2: Teacher Perception

Throughout the qualitative data, participants stated their perception of fluent reading is reading with "speed," "fast," and "rate." For example, one respondent stated they perceive fluent reading as "reading with appropriate speed," while another respondent described it as "accurate, quick reading." When identifying or assessing fluency, the term "speed" was used 33 times (33%) by respondents to define their perception of fluent reading, while others defined fluency as a "fast" read (2%), or with a high reading "rate" (12%). Instructional choices in the classroom noted by respondents were choral reading, round robin reading, practice reading passages, and one-minute speed drills. Several similar terms were used when respondents detailed how they assessed reading fluency in their classroom. One described the fluent reading she hears as a primary teacher assessing benchmarks: "reading is usually choppy when early readers read for speed, but that's what I measure for CBM, accuracy is also important."

According to the data, participants with EPP training in fluency had a greater perception of the impact of reading prosody development. One respondent described that she

perceived her students were reading with higher skills when reading with prosody “because you have to be able to decode and comprehend the text to do this [sic] appropriately.” Another respondent described how reading prosody impacted students’ comprehension of grammatical structure and that the students must “be able to read aloud according to punctuation in sentence structure.” Many respondents with EPP coursework in fluency (29%) described a connection between reading prosody and comprehension, with one respondent detailing it as “reading with prosody conveys meaning, feeling, and using correct pauses.”

Impact of Pedagogical Choices in Reading Prosody

Theme 1: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody

The respondents' EPP training program influenced the teaching methods they chose to utilize in their classrooms. For example, one respondent stated that they did receive "direct, systematic, and explicit, multisensory techniques" in fluency instruction in their EPP and described their pedagogical choices as including "fluency practice, teaching phonemic skills and using decodables. I model fluent reading." Another respondent with EPP training stated, "I think that prosody plays a significant role in reading fluency because fluency is one component of prosody" and that they focus on teaching "expression while reading- character voices."

The qualitative data reflected the impact of completing an EPP program without fluency training. Many respondents stated that they don't teach reading prosody (20%) or focus on fluency (16%). Some respondents indicated their reasoning was because of lack of understanding or "have no idea what it is." One respondent stated that they don't teach fluency because "I was not taught this in graduate school."

One participant, who answered that they had courses in their EPP teaching fluency strategies, identified that "a student might be 'fluent' meaning they can read WCPM in a range for their age, but that is separate from being able to read smoothly and have it sound like

conversational speech." This perception of fluency differed from respondents identifying that they did not have coursework in their EPP to teach fluency. One wrote, "it is important for a student to read fast, so I know they are not decoding." Another teacher responded, "fluency is measured by speed; prosody is not important, so I don't teach it." This data indicates that teachers who do not have training in reading fluency will not make the pedagogical decisions to teach it, impacting the development of reading prosody.

Theme 2: Teacher Perception

Participant responses also differed among pedagogical choices in reading prosody among teachers who stated they had fieldwork and coursework in reading fluency. After being prepared in the EPP program, the variation in reading prosody instruction included differentiating across reading skill levels. One respondent detailed how they think “prosody is one of the more sophisticated elements of fluency. In doing repeated readings with students, we focus on prosody after ensuring accuracy.” Another teaching strategy shared by a respondent was that “I give passages so students can read larger chunks smoothly - easier for them to comprehend a text which can be read with fluency.”

According to the data, some pedagogical choices in reading prosody described by participants when they received fluency instruction in their EPP were “using music for prosody and fluency; understanding tone and mood of the texts to inform prosody.” Other choices described by respondents included “underlining important words for children to emphasize” and “explicit teaching of vocal changes due to punctuation.” One respondent shared that they teach a “choral read, shared /partner read, and read a passage for practice AFTER I (the teacher) have read it with prosody.”

In summary, both EPP coursework and fieldwork impacted the pedagogical choices made in the classrooms by the respondents. The knowledge of what reading fluency is and the

influence the skill has on the development of reading prosody correlated with the strategies taught in the classroom. Respondents noted how they assess reading fluency and the struggle with understanding how to assess reading prosody or understanding the relationship of the skill within fluency.

Research Question Two: In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

EPP training influenced teachers' perception of preparedness to teach reading instruction in prosody and elementary reading. Those who did not receive training lacked the knowledge and instructional methods to encourage the development of reading prosody. Respondents who felt prepared by their EPP reported using reading prosody as an accurate assessment tool of reading skills, while others who lacked preparation reported not teaching the reading prosody.

Theme 3: Teacher Choices and Training.

Perceptions of Preparedness

Participants were divided in their feelings of preparedness to teach reading prosody. Over a third of respondents (36%) perceived themselves as not prepared to teach reading fluency, not currently teaching reading prosody, or not knowing how to teach reading prosody. An additional 6% of participants used “frustrated” or “frustration” to describe their preparedness. Of all the respondents (*n*=101), only 12 (12%) perceived they received enough training in fluency instruction from their EPP to teach methods encouraging the development of reading prosody effectively. The data demonstrates that the perception of lack of preparation directly impacts the pedagogical choices in elementary reading instruction.

Reading Instruction in Reading Prosody

When participants felt prepared by their EPP, reading instruction differed from those who perceived themselves as unprepared. Some respondents viewed reading prosody as a

"connection" or "gateway to reading." Prosody "makes it easier to read" by encouraging "comprehension," enabling students to understand the meaning. Participants also perceived that "fluency relies on prosody." One teacher who gave high ratings in the preparation in fluency by her EPP training used the metaphorical descriptive language of describing prosody as "the bridge between decoding and comprehension."

The preparation participants received impacted the pedagogical choices made for classroom instruction. For example, one respondent described how the EPP program prepared them to use reading prosody as an assessment tool stating, "it allows me as a teacher to gauge a student's understanding during reading." Another respondent also viewed prosody as an assessment tool for automaticity, describing that "prosody is important because it means the reader is not struggling to decode." Similarly, a respondent described their use of prosody to gauge student reading skills by stating, "prosody shows strong reading skills because you have to be able to decode and comprehend the text to do this appropriately."

Two respondents who rated their knowledge of reading prosody as low and without EPP training described classroom activities that they have used with their students. One respondent described a classroom activity of oral reading and encouraging students to imitate their intonation when repeating the sentence: “I will pause and wait for the students to fill in the blanks and read with me.” The other described the use of audio recording to allow students to hear their oral reading: “We have done some audio recordings of students reading and allowed them to play it back so that they can hear themselves.” The data from the participant responses demonstrates that EPP training impacts instructional choices in reading prosody.

Nearly a quarter of respondents (24.7%) did not make instructional decisions to include reading prosody. The data included 11 statements detailing respondents' decisions indicating they "don't" include reading prosody in their classroom instruction. An additional nine

respondents described that they did not "know how," while five other respondents wanted to know "how" to include reading prosody. The qualitative data reflected reading instruction's impact on reading prosody when participants completed an EPP program without fluency coursework or fieldwork. In summary, a lower perception of preparedness in reading prosody directly impacted instructional decisions by teachers not choosing to teach or address the skill in their classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

Qualitative Question: Self-efficacy is defined as the belief we have in our own abilities to meet challenges ahead of us and complete a task successfully. How does your self-efficacy influence how you teach reading?

The Coding Process

Step 1: Frequency Table

The researcher completed a frequency chart from the participant responses to the short answer question about self-efficacy in the first-round pass of the coding process. These words were grouped into categories based on the statements made by the participants. The initial groupings from participant perspectives of self-efficacy referred to feelings, teaching, or perception of self-efficacy's impact to the respondent. Table 53 shows the frequency table and first round language groupings.

Table 53

Self-Efficacy Frequency Table

1st Round Language	Specifics	Frequency	Frequency %	1st Round Language	Specifics	Frequency	Frequency %
Feelings	Confident	26	18%	Teaching	Students	28	30%
	Learn/Learning	23	16%		Reading	27	29%
	Feel	22	15%		Teach	16	17%
	Teaching	16	11%		readers	5	5%
	Not	13	9%		research	4	4%
	Prepared	11	7%		classes	3	3%
	Learning	11	7%		curriculum	3	3%
	Frustrated	5	3%		resources	3	3%
	Growth	4	2%		help	2	2%
	Goal	4	2%		assessment	2	2%
	Struggling	3	2%	Perceptions	Not Ready	13	25%
	Searching	2	1%		always	10	19%
	Influences	2	1%		can	9	17%
	Helping	2	1%		do	5	10%
	Challenging	2	1%		better	4	8%
	Difficult	2	1%		needs	4	8%
	Trying	2	1%		ability	4	8%
	Overwhelming	2	1%		prepared	3	6%

Step 2: Identification of Reoccurring Themes

Pattern coding during the second cycle of the coding process enabled the researcher to organize each response into meaningful units to analyze. Table 54 illustrates the final pattern codes developed from the qualitative questions.

Step 3: Pattern Codes

Table 54

Final Codes for Theoretical Framework

Code 1	Doubt
Code 2	Not Prepared
Code 3	EPP Training
Code 4	Self-Initiative
Code 5	Self-Direction
Code 6	Trust

After analyzing the participant responses, the final step in utilizing self-efficacy as a guide involved collapsing the six emergent codes into the last two themes of Mindset and Teacher as Learner. Table 55 illustrates the overall themes developed from the qualitative data.

Step 4: Final Themes from Theoretical Framework

Table 55

Final Codes for Theoretical Framework

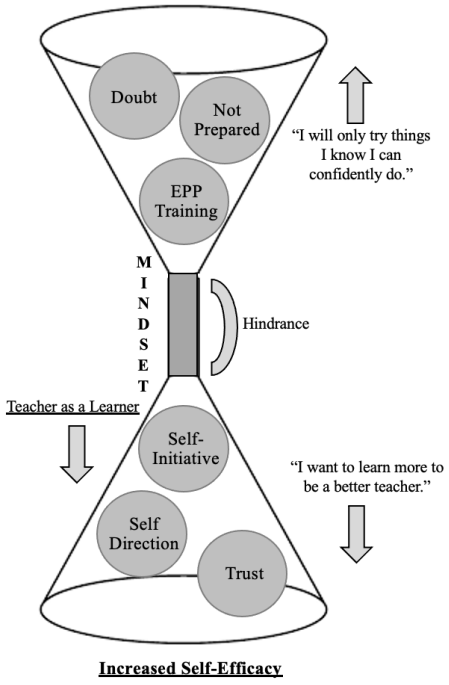
Themes Developed from Participant Perspectives		Corresponding Codes
Theme 1	Mindset	Codes 4, 5, 6
Theme 2	Teacher as Learner	Codes 1, 2, 3

The emergent codes within self-efficacy, the theoretical framework guiding this study, that stood out in the coding process are shown in Figure 9, represented by a funnel. The funnel concept illustrates stages in a process or the flow; the review of participants' responses made it clear that most participants had a similar baseline of little to no training in reading prosody and fluency from their EPP. For many respondents, the barrier of lack of EPP preparation was the hindrance at the top of the funnel, yet the codes of self-initiative and self-direction emerged.

These codes encompassed the participants' character traits, teaching habits, and tendencies, increasing their self-efficacy when they viewed themselves as learners.

Figure 9

Emergent Themes for How Self-Efficacy Influences How You Teach Reading.



The Teacher as Learner theme is the confluence between the two funnels visually representing the emerging codes from the participant responses. The upper funnel contains the emergent codes describing participants' viewpoints of their lack of training. The Mindset theme is the hindrance blocking the flow of the funnel. The lower funnel contains emergent codes from participants who pushed through the hindrance of their EPP training and pursued training independently, increasing their self-efficacy as they viewed themselves as a learner. One example of the Teacher as a Learner theme is in one respondent description in how their mindset to overcome the obstacle of lack of training in their EPP, saying "mistakes are not seen as

failures; instead, mistakes are an avenue to be used to bring new information to solve a challenge.”

Theoretical Framework Theme 1: Teacher as a Learner Theme

The processes of teaching and learning are intrinsically linked. Teachers with a learning mindset often treat mistakes and challenges as part of the learning process. Teachers have a desire to learn, and effective teachers stimulate their student's desire to learn. The theme Teacher as a Learner emanated from the participants' descriptions of their mindset, a culmination of both positive and negative views. Many participants used positive descriptors such as "hope," "growth," and "adapting" to describe their mindset as they viewed themselves as a learner. Despite a lack of EPP training, these participants viewed this hindrance as a potential for learning, increasing their self-efficacy.

The Self-Initiative code within the lower funnel is the culmination of professional development, reading, or research on teaching reading or continuing education that the respondents pursued or completed. This new learning was gained when the participants viewed their EPP preparation as lacking, pushing through a mindset of hindrance to increase their own knowledge base. One participant described this inherent need for training, saying "I know that I will face some difficult challenges and see things I've never seen before, so I will have to ask colleagues, do research, and come up with my own strategies to help those students."

Similarly, another participant described meeting challenges by "researching and taking professional development to help me teach reading," while another stated, "I continue to read, research, and learn about teaching reading to grow as a literary instructor." The training wasn't stagnated; it was various responses to the hindrance perceived by low self-efficacy in teaching reading prosody and fluency. For example, the participants viewed themselves as learners, responding to the hindrance and moving through it. One participant described the process of

"always attending classes, professional development classes, and reading articles, anything I can get my hands on to be a better teacher."

Theoretical Framework Theme 2: Mindset

In contrast, some participants reflected on the lack of EPP training in teaching fluency in a negative mindset. These participants described the hindrance as a barrier, some examples being: "I have no self-efficacy for teaching reading," "I doubt my abilities," "I was not adequately prepared," illustrating low efficacy. Frequent adjectives used by participants describing their EPP training were: "lacking" (7 occurrences), "struggled" (6 occurrences), and "nothing" (4 occurrences). One participant noted: "I have earned my MS in reading and am a licensed reading specialist. Not understanding how actually to teach reading was a horrible feeling." Another participant utilized all capital letters to emphasize their thoughts on their EPP training: "OUTSIDE and SEPARATE from my teacher preparation." Several respondents also noted low self-efficacy to teach reading after completing their EPP Training program. One stated, "I believe I can teach, but last year I did not have tools or resources and did not know how to support my struggling readers." Another respondent noted the areas lacking in her EPP; "I'm trying to fill in gaps from my educational program."

Several respondents expressed concern over their lack of training but did not describe how they see themselves as learners pursuing more knowledge to expand their pedagogy. Participant answers provided input to how they viewed their teaching abilities: "I sometimes doubt my abilities," or "I will only try things I know I can confidently do," and "I'm struggling to help my students read." These statements describe how mindset can affect the pedagogical choices made in the classroom by teachers. One participant summed up their level of self-efficacy in reading: "I have low self-efficacy to teach reading, I did not learn it proficiently in school. I struggle everyday creating my lessons."

One respondent described the method they used to move through a mindset hindrance and shift thinking into viewing themselves as a learner: "With the goal of supporting my students, I became a seeker of knowledge. Reading books, searching the internet, questioning more experienced highly regarded teachers. I still do that."

A negative mindset decreases or stagnates self-efficacy, but a positive mindset increases self-efficacy and teacher growth. In the Self-Direction code, both mindsets emerged in the examples respondents gave, such as when participants reported pursuing new learning often without support from peers or administrators. One respondent stated, "I self-directed my learning and growth," and another noted, "I am always searching for better ways to meet the needs of my students." Many respondents reported trying to fill a gap in their professional learning and utilized active verbs to describe their Self-Direction: "growth" or "growing" (12%), "looking" (12%), "learning" (9%).

A respondent noted that their self-direction came from a "drive to try new strategies and alter course when needed," while another respondent described starting with low self-efficacy, "but through practice and continued learning, I am starting to grow." One respondent noted that, "I'm of the mindset that I can change instructional as I need to meet the needs of my students. If that means going off script and having a day of unscripted lessons, so be it." Another participant described the mindset needed to grow in self-efficacy: "I feel like I don't have all the knowledge/experience/tools I need to teach all of my students well. I hope it will come with more experience." In summary, participant mindsets impacted their feelings of self-efficacy, those who sought to increase their teaching of reading knowledge increased their self-efficacy. Respondents who reported feelings of frustration and doubt, without pursing additional training, continued to report low feelings of self-efficacy. One respondent described how teacher

effectiveness was tied to student reading achievement, and low achievement impacted their self-efficacy as a teacher, mainly when they felt their EPP did not adequately prepare them.

Summary

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine the impact of teacher perceptions of fluency and the preparation received from their EPP training on pedagogical choices in reaching prosody. Chapter four presented the research questions' results from the quantitative survey instrument and the qualitative questions collected from early career teachers (n = 101). Overall, the qualitative data explored the perspectives of early career teachers related to their EPP training, knowledge of reading prosody, the importance of reading prosody, and its impact on self-efficacy.

The data analysis highlighted the following summative findings answering the research questions:

Research Question 1: In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?

The quantitative *t-test* indicated participants learned more instructional methods and were more equipped to teach reading prosody pedagogy when their EPP prepared them with coursework and field experiences. Educator perspectives of fluency correlated with their EPP training and direct experiences described by the participants. The qualitative themes confirmed an obtuse perspective of reading prosody concerning fluency from the participants. Prosody was viewed as not a part of fluency, or participants viewed it as an advanced element of fluency, above the other elements of rate and automaticity. This ambiguous perspective of fluency in the qualitative data correlates with 72% of respondents self-identifying with adequate or less knowledge of reading prosody.

Research Question 2: In what ways are elementary reading teachers' perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

A multiple regression model determined both the coursework taught and fieldwork experiences in an EPP program in fluency instruction were identified to be statistically significant predictors of pedagogical choices of teachers for choosing which teaching methods to increase student fluency, impacted the instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations, and instructional decisions in reading prosody. The frequency data correlated these findings with 63.4% of respondents indicating they did not receive fluency instruction related to reading prosody.

The feelings of preparedness subtest analysis determined that preparation in fluency was a statistically significant predictor of the elementary reading instruction choices in prosody. Within the variables of Fluency Methods, Fluency Instruction, and Prosody Instruction feelings of preparedness decreased with increased content knowledge in fluency and prosody received from their EPP training. Indicating that participants were prepared in content knowledge and reading theory but did not feel adequately prepared to readily apply the knowledge in instruction.

The qualitative data included the theme Teaching Choices and Teacher Training in which 24.7% of respondents did not make instructional decisions to include reading prosody. The instructional decisions to not include reading prosody were due to a lack of preparation in their EPP or lack of knowledge of the skill. Additionally, 6% of participants used “frustrated” or “frustration” to describe their perceptions of preparedness from their EPP.

Chapter V

Discussion

Introduction

Reading prosody builds a bridge between fluency and comprehension. Prosody facilitates the time needed to concentrate on the text's message, providing an avenue for students to phrase and understand meaning. Prospective teachers enrolled in preparation programs should be taught how to utilize explicit and implicit fluency strategies during classroom instruction. Upon completion of the educator program, graduates ought to be knowledgeable enough to incorporate various foundational reading skill strategies, why reading prosody is essential, and which fluency strategies are most effective for their students. Additionally, prospective teachers should know about current reading research of how students learn to read and move research into practice by providing effective and systematic reading instruction to address the needs of their students.

The purpose of the parallel explanatory study was to examine the impact of EPP training on teacher's pedagogical knowledge and instructional choices in fluency and prosody in the classroom. Utilizing the fluency and reading prosody questions from the PTPPKS (Salinger et al., 2010) and PKIRA (Beachy, 2017), 101 early career teachers provided input on their EPP coursework, fieldwork, and feelings of preparedness to enter the teaching field. In addition, six qualitative questions provided further insight into the research questions from the participant perspectives and allowed for triangulation of the data.

This study was guided by two research questions to determine the impact EPP training had on the perception of fluency and reading instruction in the elementary classroom:

1. In what ways does the perception of fluency as learned from teacher preparation training impact pedagogical choices in reading prosody of elementary teachers?

2. In what ways are elementary reading teacher's perceptions of preparedness influencing their elementary reading instruction in prosody?

The first step in the statistical analysis process was to create frequency tables for each of the questions. In the second step, a *t*-test was conducted with the independent variables to determine if the participant's coursework and fieldwork prepared them to teach students each component of fluency: rate, accuracy, and prosody, and the components of comprehension related to prosody. Each *t*-test determined that the participants learned a greater variety of fluency instructional methods and were more equipped by their coursework to teach reading routines encouraging the development of reading prosody when their EPP prepared them to teach fluency. A similar statistical significance emerged in the participant's feelings of preparedness. Respondents were better prepared to encourage reading fluency and prosody and to make instructional decisions based on student reading evaluation scores when prepared to teach fluency by their EPP than those who did not have fluency coursework in their EPP.

A multiple regression analysis was run to determine the relationships between teachers who received EPP training in reading prosody, fluency, and comprehension compared to teachers who did not. Results indicated that having both coursework and fieldwork in fluency instruction were statistically significant predictors of teachers' pedagogical choices for teaching students reading comprehension skills, incorporating a variety of pedagogical choices to increase each fluency component, making instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations, and instructional decisions in reading prosody. Additionally, preparation in fluency instruction focused on teaching elementary students to read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and prosody was identified to be a statistically significant predictor of perception of preparedness of teachers for teaching grades kindergarten and 1st grade, 2nd and 3rd grade, and 4th and 5th

grade. Respondents did not feel prepared to teach any of the grade level combinations but felt even less prepared to teach kindergarten and 1st grade reading skills.

The participants immediately completed six qualitative questions following the survey instrument to explore their perspectives regarding their EPP coursework and fieldwork in the elements of fluency and feelings of preparation in reading prosody. The researcher incorporated the process of structural coding to organize the qualitative data around the research questions (Saldaña, 2016). Structural coding followed the pattern coding to review the emergent codes thoroughly. Pattern coding allowed the researcher to collapse the codes into common patterns that systematically led to developing the final themes: Evidence of Fluency and Prosody, Teacher Perception, and Teaching Choices and Training.

The qualitative data provided insight into respondent's perceptions of the defining attributes of both reading fluency and reading prosody. Participants familiar with reading prosody and its role in reading development used vivid descriptors to document the prosody characteristics evident in fluent reading. Proficient reading speed also emerged as a divisive descriptor of reading with fluency and fluent prosody among participants. Most respondents viewed reading with fluency as "fast" and "quick," while the oral prosodic cadence was described as "reading that sounds conversational; it is not too choppy or too fast; reading is accurate and mostly without error." Respondents who were aware of prosodic reading described their understanding that it was a slower and more purposeful reading process. Reading with prosody was described as a better indicator of fluent reading than speed.

Nearly a quarter of respondents did not make instructional decisions to include reading prosody. The data had 11 direct statements from respondents to not include reading prosody, and nine respondents described that they did not "know how" to include the skill in instruction. The qualitative data reflected reading instruction's impact on reading prosody when participants

completed an EPP program without fluency coursework or fieldwork. In summary, a lower perception of preparedness in reading prosody directly impacted instructional decisions by teachers not choosing to teach or address the skill in their classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

Learning how to teach reading requires content knowledge and skills related to the complex processes of reading. Teachers with higher self-efficacy beliefs continue teaching instructional strategies and sensitively adjust their teaching to their student's needs. Teachers have a desire to learn, and effective teachers stimulate their student's desire to learn. The theme Teacher as a Learner emanated from the participants' descriptions of their willingness to learn and increase their self-efficacy. Many participants used positive descriptors such as "hope," "growth," and "adapting" to describe their mindset as they viewed themselves as a learner. Even with inadequate EPP training, participants desired to learn more, and they saw a potential for becoming a better teacher of reading. This mindset promoted an active learning process, not allowing the respondent to stagnate in their learning and decrease their self-efficacy. Some participants viewed their lack of EPP preparation as a barrier to their teaching, yet they did not describe an active process or problem-solving measures such as professional development or additional training to increase their teaching knowledge. These respondents also reported a low self-efficacy to teach reading fluency and prosody. These results indicate that teachers need to seek professional development to improve their teaching skills and self-efficacy.

Discussion of the Results

There are teacher misconceptions that reading fluency proficiency is achieved primarily by demonstrating a high reading rate or speed. The capacity to accurately recognize words and measure the time a student takes to read a passage has been the practice employed in schools for benchmark testing of reading fluency (Rasinski et al., 2011). The National Reading Panel (NRP)

defined the attributes of active fluent reading by detailing the grouping of words readers do in the efforts to increase their comprehension. The NRP reported that fluent readers read orally with the natural expression of voice effortlessly. While some teachers do perceive that reading speed is an accurate gauge of reading comprehension, it should not be the sole indicator of proficient reading (Grabe, 2009). The connection between inferencing, reading comprehension, and fluency is visible when prosodic reading skills are present (Dowhower, 1987; Samuels, 2012; Young & Bowers, 1995; Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Nevertheless, the element of prosody continues to be overlooked as fluency came to be defined only as a measurement of accuracy and rate by EPP and state teaching standards. This discussion will concentrate on this study's contribution to the following categories: Teacher Preparation, Perception of Fluency, and Perception of Prosody.

Teacher Preparation

Recent surveys of curricula and textbooks used in EPPs found a misalignment between the preparation of teachers to teach fluency and what is consistent with the research of the skill (Moats, 2020; NCTQ, 2020). Additionally, in the 2020 National Council on Teacher Quality investigation, only 53% of the 1,047 EPPs evaluated in 2020 trained new teachers in concepts of fluency (NCTQ, 2020). A prospective teacher enrolls in an EPP with the expectation that they will exit the program competent to teach methods to increase their student's reading proficiency. The recent data from NCTQ indicating that 53% of EPPs train teachers in fluency may not include each of the complex components of fluency defined by the NRP. Fluency is a multifaceted element of reading that requires teachers to teach and assess each of its dimensions (Rasinski, 2004). The dimensions of fluency include accuracy, prosody, and reading rate, and classroom instruction must systematically integrate each dimension (Paige et al., 2014; Rasinski, 2004). Teachers often teach fluency as a one-dimensional skill, prioritizing word reading rate to the detriment of prosody and comprehension (Kuhn et al., 2010). Teachers might not be prepared

to implement classroom routines aimed at increasing reading gains in prosodic reading and automaticity (Rasinski, 2004). Recent literature found that specific training on the intricacies of reading prosody for teachers is needed (Geva et al., 2017; Rasinski, 2010).

Reading with prosody requires word decoding accuracy, an appropriate rate of reading, and the synchronization of various subskills, including syntactic parsing, chunking of words, or scooping groups of words (Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). In this study, 71.3% of respondents rated their reading prosody knowledge between no knowledge and adequate knowledge, and 63.4% indicated that their EPP coursework and fieldwork did not provide preparation in fluency and prosody. This finding could indicate that over two-thirds of early career teachers do not know how to integrate reading prosody into instructional decisions made in their classrooms.

It is imperative that teachers effectively implement teaching strategies to increase students' word reading automaticity to encourage reading fluency development. Without substantial word reading accuracy and automatic decoding skills, students will grapple with missing skills that hinder their reading proficiency, such as comprehension, because these skills are dependent on prosody. Despite the critical impact of teaching fluency strategies, 86.1% of respondents indicated that their EPP provided little coursework in teaching fluency in their future classrooms.

Elementary teachers are responsible for ensuring students are proficient with grade-level reading skills. EPPs need to prepare teachers to incorporate reading fluency and prosody strategies into the district-adopted curriculum. The results of this study demonstrated that limited exposure to fluency strategies in their EPP program produced teachers who described their sole reliance for student fluency gains on oral reading exercises by primarily utilizing one-minute timed reading passages. This study confirms the impact of coursework and fieldwork in the EPP program. The 11.9% of respondents who completed an EPP which included fluency strategies in

the coursework embraced a range of fluency instructional choices in their classrooms, including repeated reading routines, the implementation of readers theater, and successful choral reading. This data was further confirmed by the significance of the *t*-test which indicated participants received a greater extent of instructional methods when equipped by their EPP program to teach fluency strategies. Overall, EPP training impacts the methods in which teachers will instruct their students to increase fluency. If the initial perception of fluency learned in EPPs is limited to rate or accuracy, that will influence the pedagogical choices made by teachers. The respondents who received EPP training in fluency felt more prepared in varied instructional designs.

A primary goal of reading is to comprehend the text, and prosody provides the bridge between fluency, inferencing, and comprehension (Dowhower, 1987; Samuels, 2012; Young & Bowers, 1995; Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Elementary teachers often strongly emphasize fluency instruction to increase the reading rate of their students (Meisinger et al., 2009). The limited goals of these instructional practices interfere with developing the other reading skills required for automaticity, including comprehension and prosody (Meisinger et al., 2009). This study confirms the predictive relationship between EPP preparation and the pedagogical choices in reading of early career teachers. The regression analysis showed that EPP coursework including fluency instruction that focused on teaching students each element of fluency and comprehension was identified to be a statistically significant predictor of pedagogical choices teachers would make to include these strategies in their classrooms. In summary, teachers who received training on the relationship between fluency and comprehension made pedagogical choices to engage reading prosody as a method to increase reading comprehension through the prosodic elements of phrasing, intonation, and syllabic structure. Teachers who were not prepared by their EPP training on these elements did not employ reading strategies within their classroom utilizing reading prosody.

Recent literature has examined the connection between a teacher's knowledge of reading with their instruction in the classroom for students (Robinson, 2017). When teachers enter their classrooms, they are met with the expectation that their students achieve the grade level proficiency for reading rate, even if they have received little to no training in fluency in their EPP at that grade level (Meeks et al., 2017 & Rasinski, 2006). The present study suggests that the limited scope of preservice training experiences significantly impacts the teacher's knowledge of reading and their teaching of reading practices in the classroom. State teacher licensing includes a large span of grade bands; elementary licensing is often kindergarten through 5th grade or kindergarten through 8th grade. This licensing process results in teacher job placement within grade levels for which the teacher may have never received training. The results from the regression analysis confirm teachers felt slightly more prepared to teach reading in a 4th and 5th grade classroom and the least prepared to teach reading in a kindergarten and 1st-grade classroom.

Perception of Fluency

The National Reading Panel defined the characteristics of fluent reading of proficient speed, accuracy, and proper expression (NICHD, 2000). The comprehensive definition of fluency by the NRP included explicit references to prosody: "fluency requires the rapid use of punctuation and the determination of where to place emphasis or where to pause to make" (NICHD, 2000a, p. 1). This study demonstrates the impact EPP training has on teachers' perceptions of fluent reading and choosing pedagogical methods to encourage fluency development. The results from the *t*-test determined that if the participant's coursework and fieldwork prepared them to teach students each of the components of fluency, their perceptions of fluency included prosody. Statements from these respondents also indicated that they viewed fluency as multidimensional, not just a demonstration of rapid oral reading. EPP training

influenced the perspective of interweaving fluency with prosody; one respondent described "prosody as a better indicator of understanding than speed."

Ascribing speed as the sole indicator of fluency has led to instructional and assessment practices diminishing its effectiveness as a means to build proficiency (Kuhn et al., 2012). Student reading proficiency suffers when the reading rate is the focal point because it debilitates the other reading elements required for automaticity, including comprehension and prosody (Meisinger et al., 2009). This study confirms what literature states regarding the impact speed reading has on comprehension. This study determined that teachers often correlate reading rate with fluency; for example, participants used the terms "speed," "fast," and "rate" 44 times when describing the attributes of proficient reading when not prepared by their EPP program in fluency methods. Two participants further expanded their definitions of fluency in assessment practices, and they scored their students for displays of "accurate, quick reading." Participants also described focused instructional planning and activities to increase the reading rate. The focus on a fast-reading rate is detrimental to reading comprehension; however, that is the method districts use to determine student proficiency. District benchmark assessments such as DIBELS, AIMSweb, and FastBridge do not consider prosody's contribution to reading fluency, and a fast-reading rate does not correlate with increased comprehension (Rasinski et al., 2017; Valencia et al., 2010). This rapid-read focus demonstrates a disconnect between teacher training, reading development, and district benchmarks determining that students are successful readers. Participants who did have fluency training in their EPP noted that reading prosody should be evidence of students' comprehension of the text, stating it is "important to encourage prosody to reflect comprehension." Generally speaking, teachers who were prepared by their EPP in fluency methods demonstrated understanding of the relationship between reading prosody and

comprehension. Reading prosody is a method of organizing text into groups or phrases of words that, when read together, can increase comprehension (Roll et al., 2012).

Perception of Prosody

Prosody is often assumed to be a byproduct of fluent reading (Godde et al., 2020). The literature confirms that fluent prosodic reading correlates to higher reading achievement (Holliman et al., 2017), and incorporating prosody reading instruction is necessary but is still a difficult skill to assess for proficiency (Kuhn et al., 2010; Rasinski et al., 2009; Schwanenflugel & Benjamin, 2012). EPP training influenced the perspective of teaching fluent prosodic reading and the teacher's knowledge of each fluency component. This study aligned with previous literature finding evidence that respondents with EPP training noted how to use prosody as an assessment of fluency and to use it as the indicator of fluent reading. But this study found that 71.3% of respondents rated their knowledge of reading prosody as very little to none, which impacts the pedagogical choices made in the classroom. A teacher can only teach what they know how to teach, and 86.1% of respondents completing an EPP having received little coursework in fluency instruction indicates that most new teachers enter the classroom without an understanding of reading prosody.

Respondents were aware that the EPP program they completed did not adequately prepare them to understand the impact of reading prosody. Many participants described how they were frustrated by never learning about this element and even conducted an internet search to complete the survey instrument. Most respondents felt that reading prosody was necessary; they did not have the knowledge base to determine why or how to incorporate it into their classroom teaching. One participant stated, "I think it is important to teach preservice teachers that this is a skill students need to acquire and to give teachers varying strategies."

Participants who completed an EPP program that included instruction in reading prosody correctly identified how prosodic reading encourages comprehension at a deeper level; one responded by describing how it will "impact understanding." Many respondents viewed prosody as the most critical element of fluency and last to develop. Other participants perceived reading prosody as a separate element from fluency but the avenue to comprehension. The use of intonation and stress syllables allows students to "read the words accurately, allowing them to comprehend it better." Ultimately, EPP instruction in reading prosody prepares teachers to be able to utilize a variety of fluency strategies aimed at increasing comprehension, not primarily focusing on reading rate.

Limitations of the Study

As with all research studies, the current study's design is subject to limitations. First, the survey instrument received an initial 469 respondents. Of those, 328 participant entries were deleted from Qualtrics for partial or incomplete survey answers during the data cleaning process, because if greater than 10% of values are missing the statistical analysis is likely to be biased (Bennett, 2001). Another 40 were removed before quantitative analysis began in SPSS because the researcher found incomplete single survey questions. When working with missing data, the researcher can choose to remove the data or make a reasonable guess using the imputation method for the missing data by filling in observed values multiple times in the missing values (Dong & Peng, 2013). Since the missing responses were not related to specific missing values, the researcher removed the data. Any removal of data could result in analysis with unintended bias.

Secondly, an inconsistency in the results should be noted regarding the perception of fluency. Respondents scored lower in their perception of identifying fluent reading when they completed an EPP program that included fluency and prosody methods. Participants who did not

complete an EPP with fluency and prosody methods scored higher in their perceptions of fluent reading. This finding could indicate that teachers' perceptions of fluent reading adapt or change after teaching in the field. Their perceptions of fluency as prepared by their EPP may be inaccurate or not reflect a complete understanding of fluency. Teachers who did not receive any fluency training did not have this background knowledge to compare their knowledge growth, so their baseline of EPP training is lower.

Finally, gaps in the knowledge in reading prosody and fluency of participants should be noted. Three participants expressed that they had to utilize an internet search to answer the survey questions adequately in their short answer responses. The scope of the questions in reading prosody may not fully reflect the participant's unfiltered viewpoints given an online study. The researcher assumes that the answers accurately represent the respondents' knowledge base.

Conclusions

The research literature indicates that field experiences and coursework received during EPP training substantially influences teachers' self-efficacy. This study addresses that gap in the literature by further drawing inferences between self-efficacy and purposeful instruction to develop reading prosody in the elementary classroom. The review of participants' responses made it clear that most participants had a similar baseline of little to no training in reading prosody and fluency from their EPP. Still, it was the mindset and actions of the participants that increased or decreased their self-efficacy. This learner mindset correlates with the findings of Gorski et al. (2012), who noted that teachers are progressively seeking alignment between their self-perceptions of their teaching ability and their competence to teach the subject matter. The respondents indicated an increase in confidence as their teaching of fluency and prosody became more competent. This competence increased their self-efficacy as that competence

increased student learning, aligning with the findings of Zee et al. (2016), who found that student gains were one of the few characteristics that predicted a change in teacher practice.

This study presents confirmation of the deficits in EPP training specifically for the constructs of reading fluency and prosody. The research findings determine that most early career teachers have limited fluency preparation and do not know the impact reading prosody has on comprehension and the development of proficient reading. The training received in EPP programs was found to be the significant predictor of what instructional methods teachers chose to develop student reading fluency. Respondents were transparent about their lack of knowledge on the impact of reading prosody, but they also were sincere about their desire for more learning. Additionally, preparation in fluency instruction was a significant predictor of teacher's perceptions of their own preparedness to teach. The results indicated that early career teachers entered classrooms with a perception that they were not prepared for the expectations their district would inevitably place on them for their student's fluency proficiency. The results also indicated most teachers had to seek additional training outside of what their districts provided for them to remedy the gap between their EPP training and district expectations.

Furthermore, most teachers may view fluency as the demonstration of a high reading rate and will make instructional choices encouraging faster reading, handicapping other necessary reading skills. Some respondents recognized prosody as evidence of strong fluency and enabling reading comprehension but did not have teaching strategies to encourage prosodic reading development. The results highlight early career teachers' desire for more training in teaching reading to increase their efficacy as a teacher. Respondents also did not know how to assess reading prosody or how to use the evidence of prosody in their students to make instructional choices for reading comprehension. Access to professional development is necessary for

increasing teacher and student success in reading and utilizing collaborative professional learning communities, enabling teachers to learn from each other.

Implications for Educators

Rasinski et al. (2009) give the following guidance for fluency instruction:

> Instruction aimed at improving expressive oral reading may have an even greater impact on comprehension than instruction that is aimed at improving reading rate and automatic word decoding. Instruction focused on oral interpretation of texts such as poetry, scripts, dialogues, monologues, oratory, and the like may hold considerable weight in developing students' expressive and meaning-filled interpretations of text. (p. 359)

When fluency instruction is unsuccessful in encompassing each element of fluency, instead having a focus primarily on increasing reading rate, often increases in rate does not correlate with gains in reading comprehension (Hicks, 2009). It is not uncommon practice in schools to train a student to repeatedly say "skip " for unknown words during a fluency assessment to increase their reading rate without realizing this habit's toll on comprehension. Instead, Rasinski et al. (2019) affirmed that an effective instructional choice to improve reading fluency includes encouraging a student to read a passage many times or listen to another peer fluently read until that student can read the text independently, which will increase comprehension.

The results from this study of 86% of respondents who have not received fluency training in their EPP confirmed and extended the NCTQ findings that 53% of EPPs did not include fluency instruction (NCTQ, 2020). The context of this study encourages meaningful adjustments, described in the following section, in teaching fluency in the classroom and teacher training for fluency instruction. This study informs how teachers desire increased training to improve their students' fluency proficiency and a greater knowledge base of teaching strategies in reading

prosody. Considerable implications for educators exist in adjustments in reading pedagogy for the classroom, professional development provided by school districts, and independent professional development available to teachers.

Purposeful Pedagogy in the Classroom

A shift of instructional focus from fluency to increase the reading rate to utilizing all elements of fluency to increase reading engagement and proficiency would necessitate teacher's broadening pedagogical choices. The findings of this study found that EPP programs are not providing teachers the constructs of reading prosody, how it relates to fluency and comprehension, or how to teach it in the classroom. The results indicated that teachers need a foundation for purposefully teaching their students to read with prosody, not just view it as an isolated skill to effectively weave prosody into the objectives of their instructional reading choices. EPP preparation in instructional decisions based on fluency evaluations and reading prosody instruction was also statistically significant predictors of teacher pedagogical decisions. Because of a lack of preparation in fluency pedagogy, teachers need the training to implement purposeful reading instructional strategies, including:

1. *Repeated Reading*: The results indicated that some respondents understood that reading prosody develops when a student is no longer decoding the words within a text. Reading prosody happens more efficiently when students can read the text independently or read larger amounts of text for increasing durations. Classroom instruction needs to include repeated reading of passages and books to aid in developing familiarity of the text. Repeated readings in various genres unify accuracy, rate, and prosodic reading and increase automaticity (Rasinski et al., 2009). After automaticity is achieved, students can utilize reading prosody to segment and parse the text to support comprehension. Rasinski et al. (2019) recommend repeated reading routines and readers' theater activities that

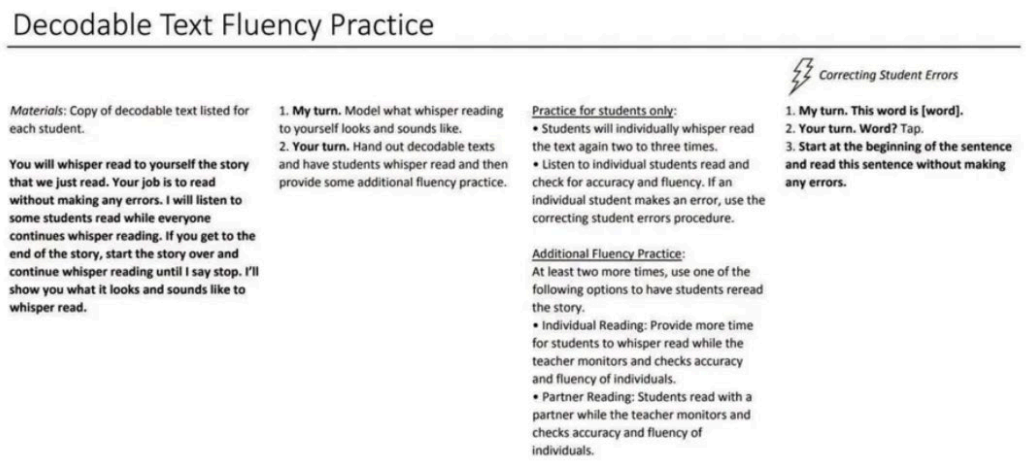
encourage students to utilize their prosodic reading skills to apply a deeper meaning to the text. This study extends Dr. Rasinski's research confirming that while some teachers have knowledge that word repetition will increase fluency, they need additional support in strategic repeated reading strategies such as dyad, choral, echo, or radio reading. Teachers will increase reading fluency through prosody instruction, implementing engaging texts and strategies for students to practice the texts repeatedly in the classroom.

2. *Read-Alouds:* The results of this study indicated that teachers did not feel prepared to teach 4th and 5th grade, implying a limited understanding of the benefit of read-alouds for the intermediate grade levels (3rd through 5th). Effective instructional choices to increase prosody include modeling fluent reading through teacher read-alouds and think-alouds. The teacher reading a picture book to the class should not be reserved only for the primary grades. A class read-aloud enables students to engage in the repeated reading strategy, by reading texts individually or with different partners of varying levels of reading proficiency (Hicks, 2009).
3. *Assessment Practices:* The results indicated that teachers did not understand how or when to use a fluency rubric to assess students reading. The need to employ diverse instructional and assessment approaches in reading fluency beyond the district-provided benchmark assessment is critical for reading comprehension. For example, during reading instruction, the teacher gives specific feedback to students and explicit reinforcement to increase fluency, allocating close attention for listening to reading pauses due to decoding unknown words. The presence of repeated vocal pausing informs the teacher that comprehension is low. The teacher would be actively encouraging the student to utilize reading prosody by using word phrasing, syllabification, and syllabic stress to increase

the understanding of the text (Hicks, 2009). The teacher can employ a fluency assessment rubric while continuing to teach systematic instruction increasing comprehension and employing various decoding strategies in their classroom.

4. *Multifaceted Approach*: Frame's (2011) study concluded that reading prosody instruction should be woven throughout all subjects and that repeated practice had the highest gains in student comprehension. Interactive stories are explicitly created to be performed and allow the student to immerse in the rhythm of the text. The results of this study indicated that some participants perceived reading prosody as the connection between comprehension and fluency. Exploring this connection enables pedagogical choices such as poetry, rhymes, or song lyrics, across subject areas, even including math or science, encouraging all components of fluency to integrate fluidly (Rasinski et al., 2009). The teacher's primary intention should be to keep these activities meaningful and an expressive oral rendition of the story, not just increase the reading rate.
5. *Decodable Texts:* The National Center on Improving Literacy (2022) advocates for instructional practices of repeated reading to improve fluency through the use of decodable texts. A routine of whisper reading allows students to receive additional fluency practice, providing opportunities to read with teacher monitoring and peer partners (NCIL, 2022). This routine, displayed in Figure 10, allows for fluency to develop with meaningful opportunities, and students can perform the reading task with a high rate of student success. The teacher engaging in consistent corrective feedback assists the student to develop reading prosody as they increase their fluent reading of the text through repeat exposure and paired with systematic phonics instruction (NCIL, 2022).

Figure 10: Word Ladder Learning Task



(NCIL, 2022) The Reading League, used with permission.

Purposeful District-Provided Professional Development

The development of purposeful pedagogy to improve student proficiency in fluency and prosody would need first to be strengthened by the teacher's knowledge and readiness to teach the skill. With the understanding that most of the teachers within the field have not received training from their EPP, districts should not assume that teachers have the preparedness to address the elements of fluency in their classrooms to achieve benchmarks scores. This deficit can be addressed by districts developing collaborative professional development that addresses the needs of teachers for further insight into the skill of fluency while simultaneously addressing the needs of students performing below proficiency. This professional development would further enhance the district's adopted reading curriculum by increasing the fluency practice and varied instruction not addressed in the curriculum. Professional development is the medium that enhances both individual teachers and district-wide systemic change (Bean & Ippolito, 2016). The following adjustments to district-provided professional development will increase student fluency proficiency:

1. *Administrator and School Leader Training*: This study indicated that educator perspectives of fluency correlated with their EPP training and fieldwork experience. It is common for teachers to move into school administration (Hancock et al., 2006), and if they have not received additional professional development, they will transfer their perspectives of fluency and how to achieve reading proficiency into their leadership role. It is critical that administrators and school leaders embrace reading best practices and research-based strategies in fluency instruction by continued professional development. Teachers implement the pedagogy, but administrators influence the decision-making processes to support the adoption of curricular resources necessary to improve the pedagogy and achieve student proficiency. School leadership professional development will also help maintain balance within a "grow your own" teacher development program implemented in a community. These programs often address teacher shortages but will perpetuate the assumption that fluent reading is fast reading because of a lack of diversity modeled in instructional methods and knowledge from school leadership for new teachers.
2. *Reading Fluency Professional Development:* The preparation and facilitation of professional development for building administration in conjunction with teachers to increase instructional choices in reading fluency and prosody will increase instructional methods used in the classrooms. The results in this study indicated an ambiguous perspective of fluency and 72% of respondents self-identifying with little knowledge of reading prosody. To increase reading best practices, including reading prosody, developing a district-wide professional development on various learning components throughout the year for both new and veteran teachers would allow the opportunity to practice new teaching skills learned. Professional development focus areas would be

reading prosody pedagogy and assessment, research-based teaching strategies to address specific fluency deficits, and cross-curricular reading strategies. An effective district provides purposeful professional development opportunities to strengthen teachers' abilities to improve the reading pedagogy they provide for their students and improve students' reading proficiency.

3. *Flexible Professional Development*: Throughout the academic year, the expansion of flexible and varied opportunities of professional development based on student fluency deficits determined by benchmark testing and individual teacher interests enhances professional practices. Based on the results of this study, 63.4% of respondents indicated they did not receive fluency instruction in their EPP related to reading prosody. Professional development is responsive to both teacher needs and student data. For example, suppose a common data trend amongst the district 1st-grade cohort is below proficiency CBM scores. In that case, district professional development could include instructional fluency strategies in repeated reading, poetry or reader's theater, or partner reading. The effectiveness of expanding the instructional repertoire can be evaluated by reading comprehension diagnostics and continued progress monitoring of fluency scores.
4. *Professional Learning Communities*: Increased time in professional learning communities (PLCs) increasing the opportunities for teachers to collaborate and share instructional practices that have benefited students in their classrooms and broaden the impact of effective fluency instruction. The outcome of this study indicates that while most teachers (63.4%) did not receive fluency training, some teachers did (36.6%) and could be utilized in strategic PLC conversations building their self-efficacy as an early career teacher. School districts must allocate time for PLCs to occur regularly so teachers can stay in continual collaborative conversations of the instructional practice colleagues are

integrating into their teaching. To meet state and district benchmarks, teachers need to incorporate all components of fluency fluidly into instruction and share teaching techniques to enhance classroom pedagogy.

5. *Professional Development on Instructional Design:* Based on the results of this study, teachers perceived their effectiveness tied to student reading achievement, and low achievement impacted their self-efficacy as a teacher, particularly when they felt their EPP did not adequately prepare them. Professional development in explicit fluency elements within reading instruction designed to increase expressive reading prosody by school districts will not only impact reading comprehension but increase teacher self-efficacy (Rasinski et al., 2009; Rasinski et al., 2019). Professional development that addresses the fluency knowledge gaps of early career teachers, particularly one which teaches the fluid relationship between accuracy, automaticity, rate, and prosody and the impact each skill has on reading comprehension, is a logical investment for a school district to provide in the efforts to increase student reading proficiency (Rasinski et al., 2019). The shift of instructional focus away from a high reading rate as the mark for fluency proficiency to prosodic oral reading would positively impact reading comprehension (Rasinski et al., 2019).

Purposeful Teacher-Directed Professional Development

The respondents in this study frequently reported that they sought professional development outside their school district to enhance their instruction. The responsibility to create targeted instruction to increase their student's fluency is recognized by every teacher; thus, teachers must be able to find relevant opportunities for professional development in which to participate. Teachers will most likely adopt instructional routines when they have opportunities for professional development that impacts their teaching philosophies and increases student

learning (Polly et al., 2017). Often, a school district cannot provide professional development due to funding. Based on the results, over a third of respondents (36%) perceived they were not prepared to teach reading fluency and didn't know which instructional methods develop reading prosody. Of all the respondents (*n*=101), only 12 (12%) perceived they received enough training in fluency instruction from their EPP to teach methods encouraging the development of reading prosody and need additional training. This deficit can be addressed at the state department of education by the creation of a professional development catalog on a range of reading topics for teachers to enhance instruction. An effective professional development catalog provided includes:

1. *Instructional Methods:* The results indicated the variety of instructional methods and reading routines to develop reading fluency participants learned in their EPP were limited. This indicates professional development topics instructing how to utilize reading prosody for instructional decision making (for example, how and when to transition from a phonetic decoding focus to phrasing of word segments) and other research-based fluency methods such as repeated reading or word ladders would increase the variety of instructional practice. The increase of instruction methods that are not primarily focused on reading quickly would decrease the teacher assumption correlating reading rate with fluent reading (Rasinski et al., 2019).
2. *Fluency Assessment:* A series of professional development classes on varied fluency assessments would encourage teachers to increase their knowledge on each element of fluency, including how to assess reading prosody. Increasing fluency knowledge would have a probable outcome of advancing those pedagogical skills, resulting in improvement of student fluency proficiency (Rasinski et al., 2019). The findings of this study indicated

that the preparation in fluency evaluations received in EPP training impacted instructional decisions made in the classroom and respondents received little preparation. The development of targeted professional learning sessions concerning the impact reading prosody has on the development of reading comprehension and using the Multidimensional Fluency Scale to guide instruction would prepare teachers to increase instructional decision-making utilizing fluency assessments.

In summary, even though respondents described feeling overwhelmed and underprepared to teach fluency, it is indisputable that they desire to participate in professional development to broaden their knowledge. Based on the responses in the survey, educators will seek additional training if they feel it applies to their instructional needs. This result aligns with research on professional development for educators. Effective professional development provides time to actively immerse in the content through modeling instruction or collaborating with peers to strategize the implementation of new learning (Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011). Those responsible for the construction and implementation of professional development will find this study demonstrates that teachers have a strong desire to enhance their instruction. They need the avenues of targeted professional learning to develop their knowledge and practices for effective reading fluency and prosody instruction.

Recommendations for Further Research

This research study provides a foundational framework for districts to understand the knowledge of fluency baseline of their teachers and administrators and where to begin the construction of effective professional development. Teachers will lack the knowledge and abilities necessary to properly teach reading prosody if there continues to be little oversight over the effectiveness of teacher preparation and professional development. An area of research to examine would be the correlation of student reading proficiency with district-developed

professional development based on teacher fluency instructional needs.

The data gleaned from this study on teacher preparedness in reading prosody and the impact on instructional fluency decisions could be expanded by researchers into a larger-scale study. The State Department of Education could include a knowledge assessment measuring educator content knowledge in each of the foundational reading components identified by the National Reading Panel in the application process for teacher licenses or renewals. The knowledge assessment would not withhold the educator license but would provide information for the state to create the identified deficit areas for professional development of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (NRP, 2000). A correlation study between teacher development and student reading scores at the state level would provide the necessary information to expand or adjust the offered professional development.

Final Thoughts

Educator preparation programs are not adequately preparing teachers to develop reading prosody or equipping them with varied fluency instructional strategies to develop proficient readers, especially students who need strategic scaffolding of reading instruction. New elementary teachers must be prepared to embark into their classrooms with more than a surface-level knowledge of the five components of reading. Educators need sufficient strategies to differentiate reading instruction to meet the varied reading abilities of the students entering their classrooms. Within the results of this study, early career teachers expressed a willingness to increase their pedagogical skills. They desire applicable professional development opportunities to learn more; this willingness may reflect the mindsets of veteran teachers. Professional development to develop teacher fluency knowledge and expand their instructional practices allows educators to utilize various instructional fluency methods, improve their understanding of fluency and prosody assessments, and use that data to drive their instruction.

Teaching is not a static profession and building a culture of support responding to the eagerness of teachers to increase their abilities in supporting the reading needs of students is advantageous. It will increase both teacher and student self-efficacy when reading proficiency increases; students will not only be more successful, but, also, early career teachers will broaden their teaching repertoire. Reading proficiency is not a lofty goal, but teachers need additional training in fluency methods to integrate prosody to fill in the learning gaps stemming from their EPPs. With continued professional development and opportunities for collaboration, teachers will become more comfortable trying new fluency instructional methods to usurp the focus of fluency being just a fast read. The art of prosody allows for the unrestricted essence of fluency to provide the gateway to reading comprehension. Increasing teacher development by encouraging instructional methods to evolve and grow continuously is a responsibility of school districts. Teachers who have increased student reading achievement will not stagnate but will continue the positive momentum of instructional growth during collaboration with colleagues by sharing new learning and reading content knowledge. Collaboration of effective reading strategies enhances reading prosody instructional practices, expands the depth of teacher learning, and increases mastery of student reading proficiency and comprehension, which is the very purpose of reading.

References

Akyol, Z., & Garrison, D. (2011), Understanding cognitive presence in an online and blended community of inquiry: Assessing outcomes and processes for deep approaches to learning. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 42*, 233-250. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8535.2009.01029.x

Al Otaiba, S., Lake, V., Greulich, L., Folsom, J., & Guidry, L. (2012). Preparing beginning reading teachers: An experimental comparison of initial early literacy field experiences. *Reading and Writing, 25*(1), 109–129.

Aldridge, J., & Fraser, B. (2016). Teachers' views of their school climate and its relationship with teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction. *Learning Environments Research, 19.* doi:10.1007/s10984-015-9198-x.

Allington, R. (2009). *What really matters in fluency: Research-based practices across the curriculum*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Allington, R. (2013). What really matters when working with struggling readers. *Reading Teacher, 66*(7), 520-530.

Álvarez-Cañizo, M., Suárez-Coalla, P., & Cuetos, F. (2015). The role of reading fluency in children's text comprehension. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *6,* 1810.

Álvarez-Cañizo, M., Suárez-Coalla, P., & Cuetos, F. (2017). Reading prosody development in Spanish children. *Reading and Writing*, *31*(1), 35–52. doi: 10.1007/s11145-017-9768-7

Anderson, R., Hiebert, E., Scott, J., Wilkinson, I., Becker, W., & Becker, W. (1988). Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading. *Education and Treatment of Children, 11*(4), 389-396.

Andren, K. (2010). *An analysis of the concurrent and predictive validity of curriculum-based measurements (CBM), the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and the New England*

Common Assessment Program (NECAP) for reading (Publication No. 3422255). Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Southern Maine. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Applegate, M., Applegate, A., & Modla, V. (2009). She's my best reader; She just can't comprehend: Studying the relationship between fluency and comprehension. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(6), 512-521. doi:1598/RT.62.6.5

Ashton, P., Webb, R., & Doda, N. (1983). A study of teacher's sense of efficacy (Final report to the National Institute of Education, Executive Summary). Gainesville, FL: University of Florida.

Axtell, C., & Parker, S. (2003). Promoting role breadth self-efficacy through involvement, work redesign and training. *Human Relations, 56*(1), 112–131. doi:10.1177/0018726703056001452

Babbie, E. (1990). Survey research methods (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Bailly, G., & Gouvernayre, C. (2012). Pauses and respiratory markers of the structure of book reading. *Annual Conference of the International Speech Communication Association, 14,* 1653-1657.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84*, 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A., (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist, 28,* 117-148.

Bandura, A. (1997*). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

Baroody, A., & Diamond, K. (2012). Links among home literacy environment, literacy interest, and emergent literacy skills in preschoolers at risk for reading difficulties. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 32*(2), 78-87. doi: 10.1177/0271121410392803

Barni, D., Danioni, F., & Benevene, P. (2019). Teachers' self-efficacy: The role of personal values and motivations for teaching. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01645.

Beachy, R. (2017). *Data literacy of reading educators: Teacher perception and knowledge of the use of reading data to influence instruction (Publication No. 10662416).* Doctoral Dissertation, Texas A&M University. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Bean, R., & Ippolito, J. (2016). *Cultivating coaching mindsets: An action guide for literacy leaders*. Learning Sciences International.

Berkeley, S., Regan, K., Dimitrov, D., Guckert, M., & Ray, S. (2016) Teachers' basic knowledge of reading instruction: Insights from a teacher preparation program. *Teacher Educators' Journal, 9*, 23-48.

Berninger, V., Abbott, R., Vermeulen, K., & Fulton, C. (2006). Paths to reading comprehension in at-risk second-grade readers. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 39(4), 334–351. doi: 10.1177/00222194060390040701

Bessemans, A., Renckens, M., Bormans, K., Nuyts, E., & Larson, K. (2019). Visual prosody supports reading aloud expressively. *Visible Language, 53*(3), 28–49.

Binder, K., Tighe, E., Jiang, Y., Kaftanski, K., Qi, C., & Ardoin, S. (2013). Reading expressively and understanding thoroughly: An examination of prosody in adults with low literacy skills. *Reading and Writing*, *26*(5), 665–680. doi: 10.1007/s11145-012-9382

Birsh, J., & Carreker, S. (2018). *Multisensory teaching of basic language skills*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Boakye, N. (2017). Efficacy of a reading intervention for first-year university students. *Per Linguam, 33*(1), 1-24. doi: 10.5785/33-1-710

Bogard, T., Sableski, M., & Arnold, J. (2017). Minding the gap: Mentor and pre-service teachers' ability perceptions of content-area literacy instruction. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 17*(4), 44-66.

Bostock, L., & Boon, H. (2012). Pre-service teachers' literacy self-efficacy and literacy competence. *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education, 22*(1), 19 37.

Boushey, G., & Behne, A. (2019). *The Cafe book: Engaging all students in daily literacy assessment and instruction*. Portsmouth, NH: Stenhouse Publishers.

Breen, M. (2014). Empirical investigation of the role of implicit prosody in sentence processing. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 8*(2), 37-50. doi:10.3389/psyg.2016.01026

Breen, M., Kaswer, L., Van Dyke, J., Krivokapić, J., & Landi, N. (2016). Imitated prosodic fluency predicts reading comprehension ability in good and poor high school readers. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01026

Breen, M., Fitzroy, A., & Oraa Ali, M. (2019). Event-related potential evidence of implicit metric structure during silent reading. *Brain Sciences, 9*(8), 192. doi:10.3390/brainsci9080192

Brindle, M., Graham, S., Harris, K., Hebert, M. (2016). Third and fourth grade teacher's classroom practices in writing: A national survey. Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 29(5), 929-954.

Brozo, W., Moorman, G., Meyer, C., & Stewart, T. (2013). Content area reading and disciplinary literacy: A case for the radical center. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 56*(5), 353–357. doi:10.1002/jaal.153

Brown, C. (2014). Language and literacy development in the early years: Foundational skills that support emergent readers. *Language and Literacy Spectrum, 24*, 35-49.

Calderhead, J. (1996) Teachers: Beliefs and knowledge. In D. C. Berliner & R. C. Calfee (Eds*.), Handbook of Educational Psychology* (pp. 709-725). New York: Macmillan Library Reference USA.

Calet, N., Gutiérrez-Palma, N., Simpson, I., González-Trujillo, M., & Defior, S. (2015). Suprasegmental phonology development and reading acquisition: A longitudinal study. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, *19*(1), 51–71. doi: 10.1080/10888438.2014.976342

Calet, N., Gutiérrez-Palma, N., & Defior, S. (2017). Effects of fluency training on reading competence in primary school children: The role of prosody. Learning and Instruction, 52, 59–68. doi: 10.1016/j.learninstruc.2017.04.006

Carlisle, J., & Berebitsky, D. (2011). Literacy coaching as a component of professional development. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 24*(7), 773–800. doi: 10.1007/s11145-009-9224-4

Chadha, N. (2009). *Applied psychometry*. SAGE.

Chall, J.S. (1983). *Stages of reading development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Chall, J. (1996). *Stages of reading development* (2nd ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Chall, J., & Jacobs, V. (2003). Classic study on poor children's fourth-grade slump. *American Educator, 27*(1). http://www.aft.org/newspubs/periodicals/ae/spring2003/hirschsbclassic.cfm

Chan, J, Wade-Woolley, L., Heggie, L. & Kirby, J. (2019). Understanding prosody and morphology in school-age children's reading. *Reading and Writing, 33*, 1295–1324. doi.org/10.1007/s11145-019-10005-4

Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006). Validity in qualitative research revisited. *Qualitative Research, 6*(3), 319–340. doi:10.1177/1468794106065006

Ciampa, K., & Gallagher, T. (2017). A comparative examination of Canadian and American pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs for literacy instruction. *Reading and Writing, 31*, 457-481.

Clark, S., Helfrich, S., & Hatch, H. (2017) Examining preservice teacher content and pedagogical content knowledge needed to teach reading in elementary school. *Journal of Research in Reading, 40*(3), 219-232. doi: 10.1111/1467-9817.12057

Clark, S. & Newberry, M. (2019). Are we building preservice teacher self-efficacy? A large-scale study examining teacher education experiences. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 47*(1), 32-47.

Cochran-Smith, M., Villegas, A., Abrams, L., Chavez-Moreno, L., Mills, T., Stern, R. (2015). Critiquing teacher preparation research: An overview of the field, part II. *Journal of Teacher Education, 66*(2), 109-121. doi:10.1177/0022487114558268

Colson, T., Sparks, K., Berridge, G., Frimming, R. & Willis, C. (2018). Pre-service teachers and self-efficacy: A study in contrast. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education, 8*(2) 66-76. doi:10.1515/dcse-2017-0016

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2007). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, CAEP. (2020). http://www.ncate.org.

Council of Chief State School Officers (Ed.). (2019). *Third grade reading laws: Implementation and impact.* http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CCSSO_CEELO_third_grade_reading.pdf

Cowie, R., Douglas-Cowie, E., & Wichmann, A. (2002). Prosodic characteristics of skilled reading: Fluency and expressiveness in 8 to 10-year-old readers. *Language and Speech*, *45*(1), 47–82. doi: 10.1177/00238309020450010301

Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson.

Creswell, J., & Clark, V. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage.

Creswell, J., & Guetterman, T. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson.

Cypert, R., & Petro, M. (2019). Prosody instruction intervention as a means to improved reading comprehension. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 33*(6), 1305-1311.

Danielson, C. (2015). *The framework for teaching: Evaluation instrument*. Hawker Brownlow Education.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Oakes, J. (2019). *Preparing teachers for deeper learning.* Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Deeney, T. (2010). One-minute fluency measures: Mixed messages in assessment and instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 63*(6), 440-450.

Deno, S. (1985). Curriculum-based measurement: The emerging alternative. *Exceptional Children*, *52*(3), 219–232. doi: 10.1177/001440298505200303

Dickens, R., & Meisinger, E. (2015). Examining the effects of skill level and reading modality on reading comprehension. *Reading Psychology*, *37*(2), 318–337. doi: 10.1080/02702711.2015.1055869

DiClemente, C., Prochaska, J., & Gibertini, M. (1985). Self-efficacy and the stages of self-change of smoking. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 9*(2), 181–200. doi:10.1007/BF01204849

Ding, C., & Liu, Y. (2014). Assessing construct of DIBELS: Measurement invariance of DIBELS subscales, from kindergarten to the first grade. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *40*, 12–17. doi: 10.1016/j.stueduc.2013.11.008

Donaldson, B. (2001). Fluency Instruction in Contemporary Core Reading Programs. All Graduate Theses and Dissertations. 1046.

Drake, G. & Walsh, K. (2020). *2020 Teacher Prep Review: Program Performance in Early Reading Instruction.* Washington, D.C.: National Council on Teacher Quality. Retrieved from: www.nctq.org/publications/2020-Teacher-Prep-Review:-Program-Performance-in-Early-Reading-Instruction.

Dresser, R. (2012). The impact of scripted instruction on teachers and students. *Issues in Teacher Education, 21*(1), 71-87.

Dowhower, S. (1987). Effects of repeated reading on second-grade transitional readers' fluency and comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly, 22*(4), 389–406. doi: 10.2307/747699

Dowhower, S. (1991). Speaking of prosody: Fluencys unattended bedfellow. *Theory Into Practice*, *30*(3), 165–175. doi: 10.1080/00405849109543497

Duke, N., Ward, A., & Pearson, P.D. (2021). The science of reading comprehension instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 74*(6), 663-672. doi: 10.1002/trtr.1993

Durrance, S. (2017). Are teachers prepared to teach reading? Research shows a gap between what we know about reading and how teachers are prepared to teach it. Southern Regional Education Board. https://www.sreb.org/are-teachers-prepared-teach-reading

Dynamic Measurement Group. (2009). Dynamic measurement group: Supporting school success one step at a time. Retrieved from http://dibels.org

Eden, G., & Moats, L. (2002). The role of neuroscience in the remediation of students with dyslexia. *Nature Neuroscience, 5(Suppl),* 1080–1084. doi:10.1038/nn946

Ehri, L. & Flugman, B. (2018). Mentoring teachers in systematic phonics instruction: effectiveness of an intensive year-long program for kindergarten through 3rd grade teachers and their students. *Reading and Writing, 31*(6). doi: 10.1007/s11145-017-9792-7

Ehri, L. (2020). The science of learning to read words: A case for systematic phonics instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 55*(1), 45-60. doi:10.1002/rrq.334

Erekson, J. (2010). Prosody and interpretation. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts, 50*(2).

Espinoza, D., Saunders, R., Kini, T., and Darling-Hammond, L. (2018). *Taking the long view: State efforts to solve teacher shortages by strengthening the profession.* Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

FastBridge Learning. (2019). *FastBridge learning: Benchmarks and norms interpretation and use guidelines (version 4).* Minneapolis, MN: Author.

Firmender, J., Reis, S., & Sweeny, S. (2013). Reading comprehension and fluency level ranges across diverse classrooms: The need for differentiated reading instruction and content. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 57*(1), 3–14. doi: 10.1177/0016986212460084

Foorman, B., Beyler, N., Borradaile, K., Coyne, M., Denton, C., Dimino, J., et al. (2016). *Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade* (NCEE No. 4008). National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance Working Paper. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED566956

Frame, J. (2011). *The effect of repeated reading with pairs of students in a large-group setting on fluency and comprehension for students at risk for reading failure.* [Doctoral Dissertation, Andrews University]. ERIC.

Frazier, L., Carlson, K., & Clifton, C. (2006). Prosodic phrasing is central to language comprehension. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 10*, 244–249. doi:10.1016/j.tics.2006.04.002

Fry, S. (2009). Characteristics and experiences that contribute to novice elementary teachers' success and efficacy. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 36*, 95-110.

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., Hosp, M. K., & Jenkins, J. R. (2009). Oral reading fluency as an indicator of reading competence: A theoretical, empirical, and historical analysis. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 5*(3), 239-256. doi:10.1207/S1532799XSSR0503_3

Gambrell, L., Malloy, J., & Mazzoni, S. (2011). Evidence-based best practices in comprehensive literacy instruction. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction.* (4th ed.) (pp. 11–36). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Gelfuso, A., Dennis, D., Parker, A. (2015) Turning teacher education upside down: Enacting the inversion of teacher preparation through the symbiotic relationship of theory and practice. *Professional Educator, 39*(2).

Gersten, R., Newman-Gonchar, R., Haymond, K., Dimino, J. (2017). *What Is the Evidence Base to Support Reading Interventions for Improving Student Outcomes in Grades 1-3?* REL 2017-271. Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED573686.

Geva, E., Galili, K., Katzir, T., & Shany, M. (2017). Learning novel words by ear or by eye? An advantage for lexical inferencing in listening versus reading narratives in fourth grade. *Reading & Writing, 30*(9), 1917–1944. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-017-9759-8

Gischlar, K., & Vesay, J. (2018) Literacy curricula and assessment: A survey of early childhood educators in two states. *Reading Improvement, 55*(3), 106-117.

Goddard, R., Hoy, W., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2000). Collective teacher efficacy: Its meaning, measure, and impact on student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 37*, 479-507.

Godde, E., Bosse, M., & Bailly, G. (2019). A review of reading prosody acquisition and development. *Reading and Writing*, *33*(2), 399–426. doi: 10.1007/s11145-019-09968-1

Good, R., & Kaminski, R.(2002). *Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills* (6th ed.). Eugene, OR: Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement.

Gorski, P., Davis, S., & Reiter, A. (2012). Self-Efficacy and multicultural teacher education in the United States: The factors that influence who feels qualified to be a multicultural teacher educator. *Multicultural Perspectives, 14*(4), 220-228.

Grant, A. (2006). An integrative goal-focused approach to executive coaching. In D. Stober & A. M. Grant (Eds.), Evidence Based Coaching Handbook (pp. 153–192). New York: Wiley.

Gray, C. (2004). Understanding cognitive development: Automaticity and the early years child. *Childcare in Practice, 10*(1), 39-47.

Greenberg, J., McKee, A., & Walsh, K. (2013). Teacher prep review: A review of the nation's teacher preparation programs - executive summary. *National Center of Teacher Quality*. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2354106

Griffith, L. & Rasinski, T. (2004). A focus on fluency: How one teacher incorporated fluency with her reading curriculum. *The Reading Teacher, 58*(2), 126-137.

Griffith, R. (2017). Preservice teachers' in-the-moment teaching decisions in reading. *Literacy, 51*(1), 3-10. doi.org/10.1111/lit.12097

Gross, J., Millet, A., Bartek, B., Bredell, K., & Winegard, B. (2013). Evidence for prosody in silent reading. *Reading Research Quarterly, 49*, 189-208. doi:10.1002/rrq.67

Gross, J., Winegard, B., & Plotkowski, A. (2018). Marking stress ExPLICitly in written English fosters rhythm in the reader's inner voice. Reading Research Quarterly, 53(3), 305–321. doi: 10.1002/rrq.198

Hapstak, J., & Tracey, D. (2007). Effects of Assisted-Repeated Reading on Students of Varying Reading Ability: A Single-Subject Experimental Research Study. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts, 47*(4).

Harmer, J. (2012). *Essential teacher knowledge*. New York, NY: Pearson Longman.

Harris, T., & Hodges, R. (Eds.). (1995). *The literacy dictionary.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Hasbrouck, J. (2006). Drop everything and read-but how? *American Educator,* Summer 2006.

Hasbrouck, J., & Tindal, G. (2006). Oral reading fluency norms: A valuable assessment tool for reading teachers. *International Reading Association*, *59*(7), 636-644. doi:10.1598/RT.59.7.3

Hicks, C. (2009). A lesson on reading fluency learned from *The Tortoise and the Hare. The Reading Teacher, 63*(4), 319-323. doi:10.1598/RT.63.4.7

Hindman, A., Morrison, F., Connor, C., & Connor, J. (2020). Bringing the science of reading to preservice elementary teachers: Tools that bridge research and practice. *Reading Research Quarterly, 55*(1), 197-206. doi:10.1002/rrq.345

Hoffman, J., Svrcek, N., Lammert, C., Daly-Lesch, A., Steinitz, E., Greeter, E., DeJulio, S. (2019). A research review of literacy tutoring and mentoring in initial teacher preparation: Toward practices that can transform teaching. *Journal of Literacy Research, 51*(2), 233–251.

Holliman, A., Gutiérrez-Palma, N., Critten, S., Wood, C., Cunnane, H., & Pillinger, C. (2017). Examining the independent contribution of prosodic sensitivity to word reading and spelling in early readers. *Reading and Writing*, *30*(3), 509–521. doi: 10.1007/s11145-016-9687-z

Honig, B., Diamond, L., & Gutlohn, L. (2018). *Teaching reading sourcebook*. Arena Press.

Hoy, W., & Adams, C. (2016). *Quantitative research in education: A primer,* (2nd edition*)*. Sage.

International Literacy Association. (2015). *Preliminary report of teacher preparation for literacy instruction* (Report No. 9413). International Literacy Association. https://www.literacyworldwide.org/docs/default-source/where-we-stand/teacher-preparation-report.pdf

January, S., Ardoin, S., Christ, T., Eckert, T., & White, M. (2016). Evaluating the interpretations and use of curriculum-based measurements in reading and word lists for universal screening in first and second grade. *School Psychology Review, 45*(3), 310-326.

Jones, A., Holtgraves, T. & Sander, J. (2019) Attitudes and knowledge of future teachers to identify struggling readers. *The Teacher Educator, 54*(1), 46-59. doi: 10.1080/08878730.2018.1490842

Jordan, N. Cuetos, F., & Suárez-Coalla, P. (2019). Prosody in the reading of children with specific language impairment. *Infancia y Aprendizaje, 42,* 87-127.

Kavanagh, S., & Danielson, K. (2019). Practicing justice, justifying practice: Towards practice teacher education. *American Educational Research Journal, 57*(1). doi:10.3102/0002831219848691

Kim, Y.-S. & Snow, C. (2021). The science of reading is incomplete without the science of teaching. *The Reading League, 2*(3), 5-8, 10-13.

Kentner, G., & Vasishth, S. (2016). Prosodic focus marking in silent reading: Effects of discourse context and rhythm. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *7*. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00319

Keskin, H., Ari, G., & Bastug, M. (2019). Role of prosodic reading in listening comprehension. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies, 7*(1), 59-65.

Khor, P., Low, H., & Lee, L. (2014) Relationship between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension among ESL students. *Online Journal of Language Studies, 14*(3), 19-32.

Kuhn, M. (2020) Whole class or small group fluency instruction: A tutorial of four effective approaches. *Education Sciences, 10*(5), 11, doi: 10.3390/educsci10050145

Kuhn, M., Ash, G., & Gregory, M. (2012). Battling on two fronts: Creating effective oral reading instruction. In T. Rasinski., C.L.Z. Blachowicz, & K. Lems (Eds.), *Fluency instruction: Research-based best practices* (2nd ed., pp. 141-155). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Kuhn, M., Schwanenflugel, P., Meisinger, E., Levy, B., & Rasinski, T. (2010). Aligning theory and assessment of reading fluency: Automaticity, prosody, and definitions of fluency. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *45*(2), 230–251. doi: 10.1598/rrq.45.2.4

Kuhn, M., & Stahl, S. (2003). Fluency: A review of developmental and remedial practices. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*, 3–22.

LaBerge, D., & Samuels, S. (1974). Toward a theory of automatic information processing in reading. *Cognitive Psychology, 6*(2), 293-323. doi:10.1016/0010- 0285(74)90015-2

Lalain, M., Espesser, R., Ghio, A., De Looze, C., Reis, C., & Mendonca-Alves, L. (2014). Prosody and reading: Temporal and melodic characteristics in the dyslexic child in reading and narration]. *Revue de Laryngologie - Otologie - Rhinologie, 135*(2), 71–82.

Leko, M., Brownell, M., Sindelar, P. & Kiely, M. (2015). Envisioning the future of special education personnel preparation in a standards-based era. *Exceptional Children, 82*, 25-43. doi:10.1177/0014402915598782.

Lerner, J. (2006). *Learning disabilities: Theories, diagnosis, and teaching strategies* (10th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Lipson, M., Chomsky-Higgins, P., & Kanfer, J. (2011). Diagnosis: The missing ingredient in RTI assessment. *The Reading Teacher, 65*(3), 204-208. doi:10.1002/TRTR.01031

Locke, E., & Latham, G. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist, 57*(9), 705–717. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.57.9.705

Lopes, J., Silva, M., Moniz, A., Spear-Swerling, L., & Zibulski, J. (2015). Prosody growth and reading comprehension: A longitudinal study from 2nd through the end of 3rd grade. *Revista De Psicodidactica / Journal of Psychodidactics*, *20*(1), 5–23. doi: 10.1387/revpsicodidact.11196

Lunenburg, F. (2011) Organisational culture-performance relationships: Views of excellence and theory z. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal, 29*, 1-10.

Madda, C., Griffo, V., Pearson, P., & Raphael, T. (2011). Balance in comprehensive literacy instruction: Evolving conceptions. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction.* (4th ed.) (pp. 37-63). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Magilvy, J., & Thomas, E. (2009). Scientific inquiry: A first qualitative project: Qualitative descriptive design for novice researchers. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing, 14*(4), 298-300.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (2016) *Designing Qualitative Research.* 6th Edition, SAGE, Thousand Oaks.

Martinez, M., Roser, N., & Strecker, S. (1998). I never thought I could be a star: A reader's theatre ticket to fluency. *The Reading Teacher*, *52*(4), 326–334.

Mather, N., Bos, C., & Babur, N. (2001). Perceptions and knowledge of preservice and inservice teachers about early literacy instruction. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*, 472-82. doi:10.1177/002221940103400508.

Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

McLeskey, J., & Brownell, M. (2015). High-leverage practices and teacher preparation in special education (Document No. PR-1). doi: 10.13140/RG.2.1.3195.2403.

Meeks, L., Stephenson, J., Kemp, C. & Madelaine, A. (2017) How well prepared are pre-service teachers to teach early reading? A systematic review of the literature. *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties, 21*(2), 69-98. doi: 10.1080/19404158.2017.1287103

Meisinger, E., Bradley, B., Schwanenflugel, P., Kuhn, M., & Morris, R. (2009). Myth and reality of the word caller: The relation between teacher nominations and prevalence among elementary school children. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *24*(3), 147–159. doi: 10.1037/a0017191

Merino, K., & Beckman, T. (2010). Using reading curriculum-based measurements as predictors for the measures of academic progress map standardized test in Nebraska. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach, 6*, 85-98.

Mewborn, D. (2001). Teachers content knowledge, teacher education, and their effects on the preparation of elementary teachers in the United States. *Mathematics Teacher Education and Development, 3*, 28-36.

Miller, J., & Schwanenflugel, P. J. (2006). Prosody of syntactically complex sentences in the oral reading of young children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 98(4), 839–853. doi: 10.1037/0022-0663.98.4.839

Miller, J., & Schwanenflugel, P. (2008). A longitudinal study of the development of reading prosody as a dimension of oral reading fluency in early elementary school children. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *43*(4), 336–354. doi: 10.1598/rrq.43.4.2

Mira, W., & Schwanenflugel, P. (2013). The impact of reading expressiveness on the listening comprehension of storybooks by prekindergarten children. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 44*, 183-194. doi:10.1044/0161

Moats, L. (2014) What teachers don't know and why they aren't learning it: Addressing the need for content and pedagogy in teacher education. *Australian Journal of Learning Difficulties, 19*(2), 75-91. doi: 10.1080/19404158.2014.941093

Moats, L. (2020). Teaching reading “is” rocket science: What expert teachers of reading should know and be able to do. *American Educator*, *44*(2), 4-9.

Moore, J., McClelland, S., Alef, E., & Vogel, E. (2016) The simplicity and complexity of reading comprehension. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 7*(6).

Morris, D., Trathen, W., Perney, J., Gill, T., Schlagal, R., Ward, D., & Frye, E. (2018). Tracking children’s print-processing skill across grades 1–3: Implications for reading assessment and instruction. *Reading Psychology, 39*(8), 820–854. https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2018.1547805

Morrow, L., Tracey, D., Del Nero, J. (2011). Best practices in early literacy: Preschool, kindergarten, and first grade. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction.* (4th ed.) (pp. 67–95). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Murray, M., Munger, K., & Clonan, S. (2012). Assessment as a strategy to increase oral reading fluency. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *47*(3), 144-151.

National Center for Teacher Quality. (2016). (rep.). *A Closer Look at Early Reading* (pp. 1–5). Washington, DC.

National Center for Teacher Quality. (2020). (rep.). *Program Performance in Early Reading Instruction* (pp. 1–20). Washington, DC.

National Literacy Trust. (2015). Teachers and Literacy: Their perceptions, understanding, confidence and awareness. Retrieved from https://literacytrust.org.uk/research/nlt_ research/6904_teachers_and_literacy_their_perceptions_understanding_confidence_and_ awareness/

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). Teaching children to read: *An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00- 4769). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Report of the national reading panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups.* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health.

National Assessment for Education Progress, NAEP. (2019). https://www.nationsreportcard.gov.

NCS Pearson, Inc. (2011). AIMSweb. Retrieved from http://www.aimsweb.com

Nichols, W., Rupley, W., & Rasinski, T. (2009). Fluency in learning to read for meaning: Going beyond repeated readings. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 48*, 1-13. doi:10.1080/19388070802161906

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 6319 (2008).

Noll, B. & Lenhart, L. (2013). Meeting first-year challenges in reading instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 67*(4), 264-268. https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1214

Noltemeyer, A., Joseph, L., Watson, M. (2014). Improving reading prosody and oral retell fluency: A comparison of three intervention approaches. *Reading Improvement, 51*(2), 221-232.

Ortlieb, E. & McDowell, F. (2016). Investigating the effects of an experimental approach to comprehension instruction within a literacy clinic. *Current Issues in Education, 19*(1).

Osborn, J. & Lehr, F. (2003*). A focus on fluency. Research-based practices in early reading series* (ED481962). ERIC. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED481962.pdf

Overstreet, T. (2014) *The effect of prosody instruction on reading fluency and comprehension among third-grade students* (Publication No. 3634058) [Doctoral Dissertation, Andrews University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

Paige, D., Rasinski, T., & Magpuri-Lavell, T. (2012). Is fluent, expressive reading important for high school readers? *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *56*(1), 67–76. doi: 10.1002/jaal.00103

Paige, D., Rasinski, T., Magpuri-Lavell, T., & Smith, G. (2014). Interpreting the relationships among prosody, automaticity, accuracy, and silent reading comprehension in secondary students. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *46*(2), 123-156. doi.org/10.1177/1086296X14535170

Paige, D., Rupley, W., Smith, G., Rasinski, T., Nichols, W., & Magpuri-Lavell, T. (2017). Is prosodic reading a strategy for comprehension? *Journal for Educational Research Online*, *9*, 245–275.

Paleologos, T. & Brabham, E. (2011). The effectiveness of DIBELS oral reading fluency for predicting reading comprehension of high- and low-income students. *Reading Psychology, 32*(1), 54-74. doi: 10.1080/02702710903341262

Pan, Y., Chou, H., Hsu, W., Li, C., & Hu, Y. (2013). Teacher self-efficacy and teaching practices in the health and physical education curriculum in Taiwan. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal, 41*, 241-250. doi:10.2224/sbp.2013.41.2.241

Pardo, L. (2004). What every teacher needs to know about comprehension. *Reading Teacher, 58*(3), 272–280.

Pease-Alvarez, L., & Samway, K. (2012). *Teachers of English learners negotiating authoritarian policies*. New York, NY: Springer Science & Business Media.

Pearson Education Inc. (2012). Assessment and information. GORT oral reading test (4th ed.). Retrieved from http://pearsonassessment.com

Peker, M., & Erol, R. (2018). Investigation of the teacher self-efficacy beliefs of math teachers. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences, 6,* 1–11. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ1192965

Penner-Wilger, M. (2008). *Building and assessing reading fluency: Academy of READING with oral reading fluency*. Autoskill International. Retrieved from: www.autoskill.com.

Petscher, Y., Cabell, S., Catts, H.., Compton, D., Foorman, B., Hart, S. A.,Wagner, R. (2020, May 10). How the Science of Reading Informs 21st Century Education. https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/yvp54

Phan, N., & Locke, T. (2015). Sources of self-efficacy of Vietnamese EFL teachers: A qualitative study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 52*, 73–82. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2015.09.006

Pittman, R., Garfield, T., & Piper, R. (2020). Increasing the literacy knowledge of teacher candidates: Why service-learning matters. *Collaborations: A Journal of Community-based Research and Practice, 3*(1), 7. doi: http://doi.org/10.33596/coll.66

Prescott-Griffin, M. & Witherell, N. (2004). *Fluency in focus: Comprehension strategies for all young readers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Price, K., Meisinger, E., Louwerse, M., & D'Mello, S. (2015). The contributions of oral and silent reading fluency to reading comprehension. *Reading Psychology*, *37*(2), 167–201. doi: 10.1080/02702711.2015.1025118

Rasinski, T. (2003). Fluency: Chasing the illusive reading goal. Presentation at the annual meeting of the Michigan Reading Association, Grand Rapids, MI.

Rasinski, T. (2004). *Assessing reading fluency*. Honolulu: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.

Rasinski, T. (2006). Reading fluency instruction: Moving beyond accuracy, automaticity, and prosody. *The Reading Teacher*, *59*(7), 704–706. doi: 10.1598/rt.59.7.10

Rasinski, T. (2010). *The fluent reader: oral & silent reading strategies for building fluency, word recognition & comprehension*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Rasinski, T., Paige, D., Rains, C., Stewart, F., Julovich, B., Prenkert, D., & Nichols, W. (2017). Effects of intensive fluency instruction on the reading proficiency of third-grade struggling readers. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *33*(6), 519–532. doi: 10.1080/10573569.2016.1250144

Rasinski, T., & Stevenson, B. (2005). The effects of fast start reading: A fluency-based home involvement reading program, on the reading achievement of beginning readers. *Reading Psychology*, *26*(2), 109–125. doi: 10.1080/02702710590930483

Rasinski, T., Chang, S., Edmondson, E, Nageldinger, J. Nigh, J., Remark, L., Kenney, K., Walsh-Moorman, E., Yildirim, K., Nichols, W., Paige, D., & Rupley, W. (2017). Reading fluency and college readiness. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 60*(4), 453-460.

Rasinski, T., Paige, D., Rains, C., Stewart, F., Julovich, B., Prenkert, D., Rupley, W., & Nichols, W. (2017). Effects of intensive fluency instruction on the reading proficiency of third-grade struggling readers. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 33*(6), 519-532.

Rasinski, T., Paige, D., Rupley, W., & Young, C.(2019). Reading fluency: From theory to proof of concept, and from science to art. Paper presented at the 69th Literacy Research Association Annual Conference, Tampa, FL, December 4, 2019.

Rasinski, T., Reutzel, D., Chard, D. & Linan-Thompson, S. (2011). Reading Fluency. *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. IV*. Philadelphia, PA: Routledge.

Rasinski, T., Rikli, A., & Johnston, S. (2009). Reading fluency: More than automaticity? More than a concern for the primary grades? *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *48*(4), 350–361. doi: 10.1080/19388070802468715

Rasinski, T., Yates, R., Foerg, K., Greene, K. Paige, D., Young, C., & Rupley, W. (2020). Impact of classroom-based fluency instruction on grade one students in an urban elementary school. *Education Sciences, 10*(227). 10.

Ravid, D., & Mashraki, Y. (2007). Prosodic reading, reading comprehension and morphological skills in Hebrew-speaking fourth graders. Journal of Research in Reading, 30(2), 140–156. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9817.2007.00340.x

Reis, S., McCoach, D., Little, C., Muller, L., & Kaniskan, R. (2011). The effects of differentiated instruction and enrichment pedagogy on reading achievement in five elementary schools. *American Educational Research Journal, 48*(2), 462–501.
doi: 10.3102/0002831210382891

Reutzel, D. & Cooter, Robert B. (2012). *Teaching Children to Read: The Teacher Makes the Difference,* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Reynolds, M., Wheldall, K., & Madelaine, A. (2011). What recent reviews tell us about the efficacy of reading interventions for struggling readers in the early years of schooling. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 58*(3), 257-286.

Robinson, S. (2017). *Teachers' perceptions of their confidence and preparation for implementing Common Core State Standards in Alabama.*

Rosenblatt, L. M. (2013). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (6th ed.) (pp. 923-956). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Ross, S. & Morrison, G. (1995). *Getting started in instructional technology research.* Washington, D.C.: Association for Educational Communications and Technology.

Rupley, W., Nichols, W., Rasinski, T., & Paige, D. (2020). Fluency: Deep roots in reading instruction. *Education Sciences, 10*(155).

Salinger, T., Mueller, L., Song, M., Jin, Y., Toplitz, C., Partridge, M., & Bickford, A. (2010). (rep.). *Study of Teacher Preparation in Early Reading Instruction* (pp. 1–140). Jessup, MD: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. SAGE.

Samuels, S. (2007). The DIBELS tests: Is speed of barking at print what we mean by reading fluency? *Reading Research Quarterly*, *42*(4), 563-566.

Samuels, S. (2012). Reading fluency: Its past, present, and future. In T. Rasinski, C. Blachowicz, & K. Lems, *Fluency instruction: Research-based best practices* (pp.3-16): Guilford.

Sanacore, J., & Palumbo, A. (2009). Understanding the fourth-grade slump: Our point of view. *The Educational Forum, 73*(1), 67–74.

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health, 23*, 334–340.

Sayeski, K., Budin, S., & Bennett, K. (2015). Promising practices in the preparation of special educators to provide reading instruction. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 51*(2), 82–89.

Scales, R., Wolsey, T., Lenski, S., Smetana, L., Yoder, K., Dobler, E., Grisham, D., & Young, J. (2018). Are we preparing or training teachers? Developing professional judgment in and beyond teacher preparation programs. *Journal of Teacher Education, 69*(1), 7–21. doi: 10.1177/0022487117702584

Scarborough, H. (1998). Early identification of children at risk for reading disabilities: Phonological awareness and some other promising predictors. In B. K. Shapiro, P. J. Accordo & A. J. Capute (Eds.), *Specific Reading Disability: A View of the Spectrum* (pp. 75-119). Timonium, MD: York Press.

Shillingford, S., & Karlin, N. (2013). Preservice teachers' self-efficacy and knowledge of emotional and behavioural disorders. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 19*(2), pp.176-194. doi:10.1080/13632752.2013.840958

Shroyer, G., Riggs, I., & Enochs, L. (2014). Measurement of science teachers' efficacy beliefs. In *The Role of Science Teachers' Beliefs in International Classrooms* (pp. 103-118). Sense Publishers. doi:10.1007/978-94-6209-557-1_7

Schrauben, J. (2010). Prosody's contribution to fluency: An examination of the theory of automatic information processing. *Reading Psychology, 31*, 82-92. doi:10.1080/02702710902753996

Schimmel, N., & Ness, M. (2017). The effects of oral and silent reading on reading comprehension. *Reading Psychology*, *38*(4), 390–416. doi: 10.1080/02702711.2016.1278416

Schrauben, J. (2010). Prosody's contribution to fluency: An examination of the theory of automatic information processing. *Reading Psychology, 31*, 82-92. doi:10.1080/02702710902753996

Schreiber, P. (1980). On the acquisition of reading fluency. *Journal of Reading Behavior, 12*(3), 177–186. doi.org/10.1080/10862968009547369

Schwanenflugel, P., & Benjamin, R. (2012). Reading expressiveness: Neglected aspect of reading fluency. In T. Rasinski, C. Blachowicz, & K. Lems (Eds.), *Fluency instruction: Research-based best practices., 2nd ed.* (pp. 35-54). Guilford Press

Schwanenflugel, P., & Benjamin, R. (2016). Lexical prosody as an aspect of oral reading fluency. *Reading and Writing*, *30*(1), 143–162. doi: 10.1007/s11145-016-966

Schwanenflugel, P., Hamilton, A., Kuhn, M., Wisenbaker, J., & Stahl, S. (2004). Becoming a fluent reader: Reading skill and prosodic features in the oral reading of young readers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *96*, 119-129.

Schwanenflugel, P., Westmoreland, M., & Benjamin, R. (2015). Reading fluency skill and the prosodic marking of linguistic focus. *Reading and Writing*, *28*(1), 9–30. doi: 10.1007/s11145-013-9456-1

Shanahan, T. (2003). Research-based reading instruction: Myths about the National Reading Panel report. *The Reading Teacher, 56*(7), 646-655.

Shoulders, T., & Krei, M. (2015). Rural high school teachers' self-efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. *American Secondary Education, 44*, 50-61.

Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schunk, D. (1991). Self-efficacy and academic motivation. *Educational Psychologist, 26*(3-4), 207-223. doi:10.1080/00461520.1991.9653133

Smith, C. (2004). Topic transitions and durational prosody in reading aloud: production and modeling. *Speech Communication, 42*, 247-270.

Son, E. & Chase, M. (2018) Books for two voices: Fluency practice with beginning readers. *The Reading Teacher, 72*(2), 233-240. doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1700

Stark, H., Snow, P., & Eadie, P. (2016) Language and reading instruction in early years' classrooms: the knowledge and self-rated ability of Australian teachers. *Annals of Dyslexia, 66*, 28–54. doi.org/10.1007/s11881-015-0112-0

Suárez-Coalla, P., Álvarez-Cañizo, M., Martínez, C., García, N., & Cuetos, F. (2016). Reading prosody in Spanish dyslexics. *Annals of Dyslexia*, *66*(3), 275–300. doi: 10.1007/s11881-016-0123-5

Sullivan, G. & Artino Jr., A. (2013). Analyzing and interpreting data from Likert-type scales. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education. 5*(4), pp. 541-542

Suter, W. N. (2012). Qualitative data, analysis, and design. In Introduction to educational research: A critical thinking approach (pp. 342-386). SAGE Publications, Inc., https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781483384443

Tompkins, G., Smith, C., Campbell, R., & Green, D. (2019). *Literacy for the 21st century: a balanced approach*. Pearson Australia.

Tschannen-Moran, M., Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 17*, 783–805.

Tschannen-Moran, & Johnson, D. (2011). Exploring literacy teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: Potential sources at play. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*, 751-761. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2010.12.005

Vacca, J., Vacca, R., Gove, M., Burkey, L., Lenhart, L., & McKeon, C. (2014). *Reading and learning to read* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Valencia, S., Smith, A., Reece, A., Li, M., Wixson, K., & Newman, H. (2010). Oral reading fluency assessment: Issues of construct, criterion, and consequential validity. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *45*(3), 270–291. doi: 10.1598/rrq.45.3.1

Vaughn, S. & Fletcher, J. (2021). Explicit instruction as the essential tool for executing the science of reading. *The Reading League Journal, 2*(2), 4-11.

Veenendaal, N. J., Groen, M. A., & Verhoeven, L. (2014). The role of speech prosody and text reading prosody in children's reading comprehension. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 84*(4), 521–536. doi:10.1111/bjep.12036

doi: 10.1080/10888438.2015.1128939

Voelkel, R., & Chrispeels, J. (2017). Understanding the link between professional learning communities and teacher collective efficacy. *School Effectiveness & School Improvement, 28*, 505–526. doi:10.1080/09243453.2017.1299015

Vogt, W. (2007). *Quantitative research methods for professionals*. Boston, MA.

Wade-Wooley, L, & Heggie, L. (2016). The contributions of prosodic and phonological awareness to reading: A review. *Linguistic Rhythm and Literacy.*

doi: 10.1075/tilar.17.01wad

Wanzek, J., Wexler, J., Vaughn, S., & Ciullo, S. (2010). Reading interventions for struggling readers in the upper elementary grades: A synthesis of 20 years of research. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 23*(8), 889–912.

Weißenrieder, J., Roesken-Winter, B., Schueler, S., Binner, E., & Blömeke, S. (2015). Scaling CPD through professional learning communities: Development of teachers' self-efficacy in relation to collaboration. *ZDM*, *47*(1), 27–38.

Wijekumar, K., Beerwinkle, A., Harris, K. (2019) Etiology of teacher knowledge and

instructional skills for literacy at the upper elementary grades. *Annals of Dyslexia,* 69, 5-20. doi.org/10.1007/s11881-018-00170-6

Wolf, M. (2008). *Proust and the squid: The story and science of the reading brain.* Cambridge: Icon Books.

Wyatt, M. (2014). Towards a re-conceptualization of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs: Tackling enduring problems with the quantitative research and moving on. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education 37*(2), 166-189.

Yildiz, M., Yildirim, K., Ates, S., & Cetinkaya, C. (2009). An evaluation of the oral reading fluency of 4th graders with respect to prosodic characteristics. *International Journal of Human Sciences, 6*(1), 353-360.

Young, A., & Bowers, P. (1995). Individual difference and text difficulty determinants of reading fluency and expressiveness. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, *60*(3), 428–454. doi: 10.1006/jecp.1995.1048

Zee, M., Koomen, H., Jellesma, F., Geerlings, J., & de Jong, P. (2016). Inter- and intra-individual differences in teachers' self-efficacy: A multilevel factor exploration. *Journal of School Psychology, 55*, 39-56.

Zeichner, K., Payne, K., & Brayko, K. (2015) Democratizing teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 66*(2), 122-135. doi:10.1177/0022487114560908

Zutell, J., & Rasinski, T. (1991). Training teachers to attend to their students' oral reading fluency. *Theory Into Practice*, *30*(3), 211–217. doi: 10.1080/00405849109543502

Appendix A

Mixed Methods Informed Consent

Northwest Nazarene University

TITLE OF STUDY: THE IMPACT OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF PROSODY IN ELEMENTARY READING INSTRUCTION: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

RESEARCHER: KRISTI GRABER
CONTACT: 907-942-0560 **EMAIL:** KGraber@NNU.edu
SUPERVISOR: DR. SERENA MORALES
CONTACT: SerenaMorales@boisestate.edu

The purpose of this study is to analyze teacher perception of readiness to teach prosody, the preparation to teach prosody received in teacher training, and the teacher perception of fluent reading.

You are being asked to participate in the study because you meet the following criteria: You are a licensed practicing teacher in your 1st through 5th year of career.

If you volunteer to participate in the study, you will be asked to do the following: Fill out an on-line questionnaire. Participants must complete all questions in the questionnaire.

This study includes only minimal risks and will take 10 to 15 minutes of your time. All information will be kept confidential and any identifying information will be withheld. Numbers will be used for both participants and universities.

By participating in this survey, you will help to contribute to the body of educational research in the area of preservice teacher development.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant **Date**

☐ Yes, I have read the above information and agree to participate in the study. I am at least 18 years of age. (By clicking here, you will be direction to the questionnaire.)

No, I do not want to participate at this time.

If you have any questions or need assistance at any point during the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Kristi Graber by email - - KGraber@NNU.edu

Appendix B

A Study of Teacher Preparation in Early Reading Instruction: Public Domain

September 2010

This report was prepared for the Institute of Education Sciences under Contract No. ED-04-CO-0062/0001. The project officer was Tracy Rimdzius in the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

IES evaluation reports present objective information on the conditions of implementation and impacts of the programs being evaluated. IES evaluation reports do not include conclusions or recommendations or views with regard to actions policymakers or practitioners should take in light of the findings in the reports.

To order copies of this report,

- Write to ED Pubs, Education Publications Center, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304.
- Call in your request toll free to 1-877-4ED-Pubs. If 877 service is not yet available in your area, call 800-872-5327 (800-USA-LEARN). Those who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a teletypewriter (TTY) should call 800-437-0833.
- Fax your request to 703-605-6794.
- Order online at www.edpubs.gov.

This report also is available on the IES website at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee.

Upon request, this report is available in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette. For more information, please contact the Department's Alternate Format Center at 202-260-9895 or 202-205-8113.

Appendix C

Permission for Use

Survey Instrument Inbox ×

Kristi Graber <kgraber@nnu.edu> Thu, Dec 3, 7:27 PM (13 hours ago)
to Rachel

Good morning Dr. Beachy,

I am a doctoral student from Northwest Nazarene University writing my dissertation. I would like your permission to use questions from the Teachers' content knowledge of reading instruction and assessment – Item Development Survey 1 and Teachers' content knowledge of reading instruction and assessment – Revised Item Development Survey 2 from your dissertation titled "Data Literacy of Reading Educators: Teacher Perception and Knowledge of the Use of Reading Data to Influence Instruction", published in 2017, in my research study.

I would like to use and print your survey under the following conditions:

- I will use the surveys only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will include the copyright statement on all copies of the instrument.
- I will send a copy of my completed research study to your attention upon completion of the study.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by replying to me through e-mail. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Kristi Graber

Rachel Beachy 8:21 AM (33 minutes ago)
to me

Absolutely, Kristi! You are welcome to use my research in any way that would help.
Take care,
RrB

COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE
DEDICATED TO CARING
POWERED BY LEARNING
PLANO ISD PROUD
PLANO ISD VISION

Rachel R. Beachy, PhD
Elementary Literacy Coordinator || Plano ISD
469-752-8042
Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be. -- Rita Pearson

From: Kristi Graber <kgraber@nnu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 10:27 PM
To: Rachel Beachy <rachel.beachy@pisd.edu>
Subject: Survey Instrument

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Appendix D

Survey Instrument

Section 1
Teacher Program Survey

Background Information (Salinger et al., 2010)	
Question 1	With which gender do you most identify with? • Female • Male • Transgender Female • Transgender Male • Gender Variant/Non-Conforming • Prefer Not to Answer
Question 2	In what semester/year did you graduate from your teacher preparation program?
Question 3	Select the degree you graduated with: • Undergraduate (BA, BS, BSEd) • Graduate (MA, MS, MEd) • Post-Bacclaureate (Postbac) (5^{th} year program, non-masters certificate)
Question 4	Which University did you graduate from your teacher preparation program?
Question 5	Select the major or concentration that is closest to your degree: • Early Childhood Education • Elementary Education • Combined Early Childhood/Elementary Education • Combined Early Childhood/Special Education • Combined Elementary/Special Education • Curriculum and Instruction • Reading Education • Multi/Interdisciplinary Studies • Other
Question 6	How many years have you been teaching as a certified teacher? • Less that 1 school year • 1year • 2 years • 3 years • 4 years • 5 years

Prosody is defined as expressive reading and the demonstration of timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that readers use to help convey aspects of meaning.

Please rate your knowledge of reading prosody and its role in reading instruction on a 1-10 scale.

1 = no to very limited knowledge; 3= some knowledge; 5= adequate knowledge; 7= substantial knowledge; 10 = extensive knowledge

Exposure to and Emphasis on Early Reading Concepts

Salinger et al, 2010

"There are many components of learning to read and a variety of strategies for teaching reading. We would like to find out what you have learned about teaching reading from your coursework and your field experiences.

First, please think about your coursework and field experiences *in general*. Then, please read the following questions and mark the most appropriate answer."

Question Item (yes/no answers)		
1. Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to: read orally with appropriate speed, accuracy, and expression?	YES	NO
2. Did your coursework and field experiences prepare you how to teach students to: understand what they read?	YES	NO

Coursework

Think about courses you took in your teacher preparation program that focused specifically on *reading and literacy*. Please rate the degree of emphasis that your program places on the strategies listed below. Keep in mind you will have the opportunity to rate the emphasis on these strategies in your Field Experiences next. Use the following scale to rate the emphasis in your coursework.

None: This was not addressed in any of my courses.
Little: This was addressed briefly in one course.
Moderate: This was addressed over several class periods in one or two of my courses
Considerable: I took a course entirely devoted to this topic.

Question (scale answer)

1. Teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct errors as they occur.
2. Using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition.
3. Making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency.
4. Having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression.

Fieldwork

Think about the various experiences you had in elementary classroom during your teacher training program. These experiences may be times in which you observed, did a practicum, or did your student teaching. Use the following scale to rate the emphasis of these strategies in you field experiences.

None: This was not addressed in any of my fieldwork.
Little: This was addressed briefly in one fieldwork experience.
Moderate: This was addressed in one or two of my fieldwork experiences.
Considerable: I had fieldwork experience entirely devoted to this topic.

Question (scale answer)

5. Teaching children to monitor how well they understand what they read and to correct errors as they occur.
6. Using a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, include direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition.
7. Making instructional decisions based on the evaluations of children's oral reading fluency.
8. Having children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression.

Feelings of Preparedness

Salinger et al, 2010

"New teachers enter their own classrooms for the first time feeling prepared about their abilities to teach in certain areas and less prepared in others. Use the following scale to rate your feelings of preparedness."

Not at all prepared: I do not know about or do not understand these activities well enough to use them with students

Somewhat Prepared: I am not completely sure how to use these activities with students in all grades and at all reading levels.

Mostly Prepared: I understand how to use these activities well with some students but still need to deepen my understanding of the activities.

Definitely Prepared: I completely understand how to use these activities with students at all grades and at all reading levels.

Question (scale answer)

9. Did you feel prepared to use a variety of methods to teach children the meaning of words, including direct and indirect (conversational) instruction, and multiple exposures and repetition?
10. Did you feel prepared to make instructional decisions based on the assessments of children's oral reading fluency?
11. Did you feel prepared to have children repeatedly read the same text aloud to improve their speed, accuracy, and expression?
12. Did you feel prepared to teach Kindergarteners and 1st graders the skills needed to develop reading proficiency?
13. Did you feel prepared to teach 2nd and 3rd graders the skills needed to develop reading proficiency?
14. Did you feel prepared to teach 4th and 5th graders the skills needed to develop reading proficiency?

Teachers' Perception Toward Early Reading

Perceptions, Knowledge, and Interpretation of Reading Assessment (Beachy, 2017)

Higher Scores mean more in agreement: Range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree)

This section explores the perceptions of teachers in reading. Please choose the answer which most accurately represents your perception or point of view.
Question (scale answer)
15. If a student can read aloud with accuracy, but does not understand what he reads, he needs to improve his vocabulary.
16. If a student understands the story, but reads slowly and without prosody, the student needs fluency instruction.
17. Teaching students the meaning of words through multiple exposure and repetition is part of fluency instruction.
18. If a student reads a text aloud with accuracy and speed; but is unable to answer any questions about the story, he has a comprehension deficit.
19. Having students repeatedly read the same text aloud will improve their fluency.
20. A significant increase in oral reading miscues is usually related to decrease in comprehension.
21. Beginning readers need to encounter a new word a number of times to ensure it will become part of their sight word vocabulary.
22. For fluent reading, rapid identification of whole words is necessary.
23. Reading comprehension is related to fluent word identification.

Qualitative:

1. Based on your understanding, what is reading prosody?
2. Based on your perception, describe the importance of reading prosody?
3. Based on your understanding, what role does prosody play in reading fluency?
4. What strategies and teaching practices have you incorporated into your classroom that were NOT part of your teacher training program?
5. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief we have in our own abilities to meet challenges ahead of us and complete a task successfully. How does your self-efficacy influence how you teach reading?
6. What do you feel teacher training programs should be teaching preservice teachers about reading prosody?

Appendix E

Permission for use of image

Kristi Graber <kgraber@nnu.edu>
to kwalsh

2:21 PM (1 hour ago)

Dear Kate Walsh,

I am a doctoral student at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, ID currently writing my dissertation on the impact of the CAEP standards on teacher readiness to teach reading prosody. I am requesting permission to cite and use the following three graphics from the "2020 Teacher Prep Review: Program Performance in Early Reading Instruction" in my study.

I would like to use and print your graphics under the following conditions:

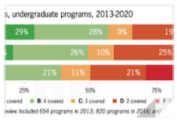
- I will use the graphics only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will include the copyright statement on all copies of the graphics.

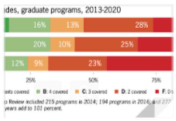
If these are acceptable to you and permission is granted, please indicate by replying to this email.

Thank you!

Kristi Graber

3 Attachments





Kate Walsh
to me

3:45 PM (19 minutes ago)

Certainly. Thanks for asking.

Kate Walsh | President

National Council on Teacher Quality
1032 15th Street NW #242, Washington, DC 20005
410-303-8311

Twitter @nctq and @nctqkate | Facebook | Blog | nctq.org

Appendix F

ACRP Completion

ACRP

FOR LEARNING FOR LISTENING FOR LIFE

Certificate of Completion

Association of Clinical Research Professionals certifies that

Kristi Graber

has successfully completed

Ethics and Human Subject Protection: A Comprehensive Introduction

Version: Jan 2020

Date of completion: Jan 18, 2020

Jim Kremidas — Executive Director

ACRP

Appendix G

Permission for use of image

Kristi Graber <kgraber@nnu.edu>
to Maria

Sat, Mar 5, 2:38 PM (2 days ago)

Happy Weekend Dr. Murray,

I'm reaching out to you because I hadn't received a response yet and I'm pushing up against the deadline of my dissertation being due. I requested permission to use an image in the newest Reading League Journal- as it is absolutely perfect for my chapter 5, implications for education section. I was wondering if you knew a different person I should reach out to for permission. I just imagine Dr. Solari is also crazy busy.

Thank you!
Kristi Graber

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kristi Graber <kgraber@nnu.edu>
Date: February 25, 2022 at 3:24:10 PM AKST
To: comments@thereadingleague.org
Subject: permission for use of graphic for dissertation

Dear Emily Solari, Ph.D.,

I am a doctoral student at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, ID and will be defending my dissertation on the impact of teacher perceptions of fluency and preparedness in reading prosody on elementary reading instruction on April 4th. I am finishing up my final chapter and the Reading League Journal showed up in my mailbox here in Alaska yesterday! The article by NCIL titled How To Build Oral Reading Fluency With Text in Your Classroom, provided some excellent insight in perfect alignment with a section I'm writing in my study for Implications for Educators. I am requesting permission to cite and use the following graphic on page 51 titled: "Word Ladder Fluency Practice" in my study.
I would like to use and cite the graphic under the following conditions:

- I will use the graphic only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will include the copyright statement on all copies of the graphic.

If these are acceptable to you and permission is granted, please indicate by replying to this email.

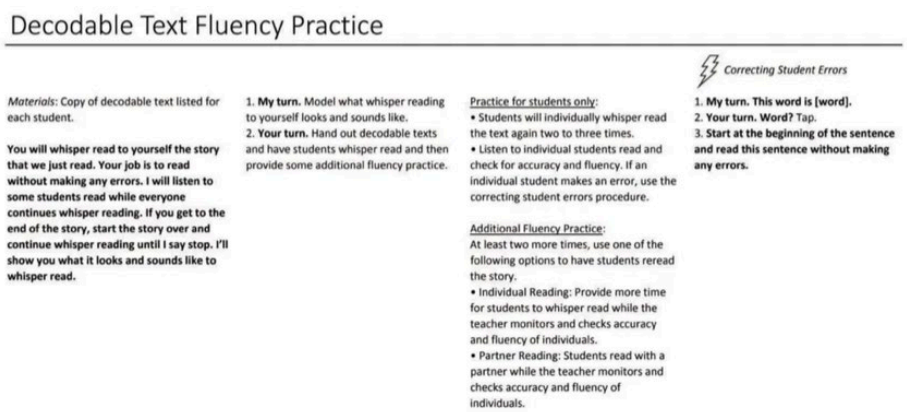
Thank you!

Kristi Graber

Maria Murray
to me

Sat, Mar 5, 3:18 PM (2 days ago)

Hi Kristi, yes you can absolutely use that image in accordance with the acknowledgements and copyright protection conditions you proposed! Good luck! 🍀



Decodable Text Fluency Practice

Materials: Copy of decodable text listed for each student.

You will whisper read to yourself the story that we just read. Your job is to read without making any errors. I will listen to some students read while everyone continues whisper reading. If you get to the end of the story, start the story over and continue whisper reading until I say stop. I'll show you what it looks and sounds like to whisper read.

1. **My turn.** Model what whisper reading to yourself looks and sounds like.
2. **Your turn.** Hand out decodable texts and have students whisper read and then provide some additional fluency practice.

Practice for students only:
• Students will individually whisper read the text again two to three times.
• Listen to individual students read and check for accuracy and fluency. If an individual student makes an error, use the correcting student errors procedure.

Additional Fluency Practice:
At least two more times, use one of the following options to have students reread the story.
• Individual Reading: Provide more time for students to whisper read while the teacher monitors and checks accuracy and fluency of individuals.
• Partner Reading: Students read with a partner while the teacher monitors and checks accuracy and fluency of individuals.

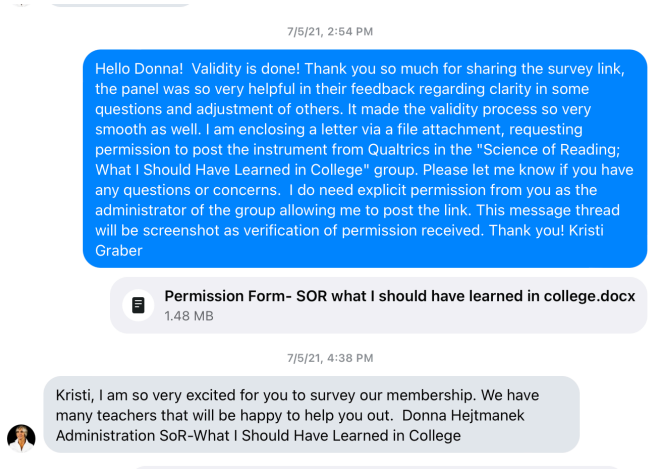
Correcting Student Errors

1. **My turn. This word is [word].**
2. **Your turn. Word?** Tap.
3. **Start at the beginning of the sentence and read this sentence without making any errors.**

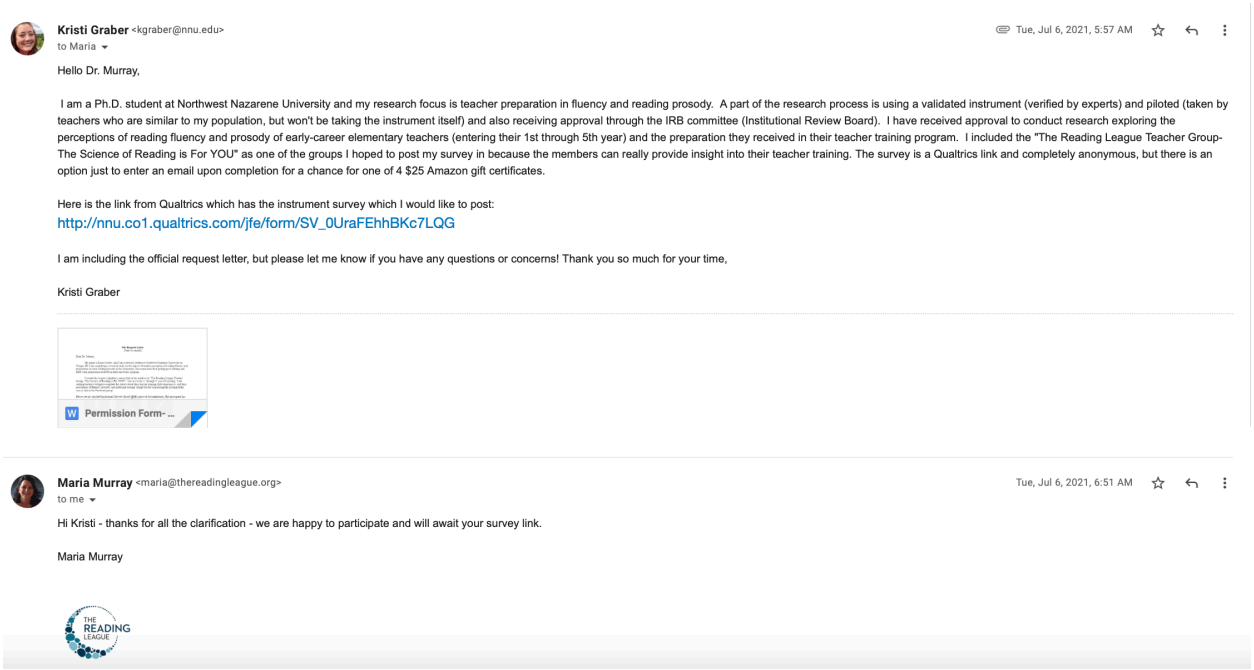
Appendix H

Permission to Post Instrument in Social Media Groups

Facebook Group: Science of Reading: What I Should Have Learned in College



Facebook Group: The Reading League Teacher Group- The Science of Reading is for You!



Facebook Group: Kinder/Firstie Curriculum with Tara West (Pre-K to 2nd)

Dear Tara,

Hi! This is Kristi, in Kodiak, Alaska. Firstly, I want to say how excited I am that you are encouraging the exploration and application of the science of reading within your curriculum and the Facebook group. That is so amazing!

Secondly, I am actually a PhD student and my research focus is teacher preparation in fluency and reading prosody. A part of the research process is using a validated instrument (verified by experts) and piloted (taken by teachers who are similar to my population, but won't be taking the instrument itself) and also receiving approval through the IRB committee (Institutional Review Board). I have received approval to conduct research exploring the perceptions of reading fluency and prosody of early-career elementary teachers (entering their 1st through 5th year) and the preparation they received in their teacher training program. I included your group "Kinder/Firstie Curriculum with Tara West (Prek-2) as one of the groups I hoped to post my survey in because the members can really provide insight into their teacher training. The survey is a Qualtrics link and completely anonymous, but there is an option just to enter an email upon completion for a chance for one of 4 $25 Amazon gift certificates.

I am including the official request letter, but please let me know if you have any questions or concerns! Thank you so much for your time,

Kristi Graber

Tara West <littlemindsatworkllc@gmail.com> Mon, Jul 5, 2021, 6:22 PM

to me

Hi there! Yes, this is perfect! You have permission to post in my Facebook group!
Thank you,
Tara West