



American
Reading Forum

Yearbook

2003

Most Recent (2002) Contenders for and Winners of Children's Book Awards in Five English Speaking Countries

Ira E. Aaron and Sylvia M. Hutchinson

This report focuses on the 2002 winners of and contenders for selected book awards from five mainly English speaking countries: Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the United States. The two presenters actually began the larger study of which this report is a part in 1986, 17 years ago; however, they initially collected winners of the past five years, from 1981-1985. In 1992, 11 years back, they expanded the study to include contenders (finalists) as well as winners. This change enlarged the annual number of books added from 11 or 12 to as many as 70+ titles. Through 2002, the total collection numbers 811 titles.

This presentation is the sixth that these researchers have presented at annual meetings of the American Reading Forum. Summaries of the previous five reports contained in annual yearbooks of ARF are the following:

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (2002). 2001 contenders/winners: Children's book awards in five English speaking countries. In W. Trathen (Ed.) *A Literacy Odyssey: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XXII, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/02_yearbook/html/01_Hutchinson_revised.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (2001). Three years (1998-2000) of children's book award winners/contenders from five English-speaking countries. In G. Moorman, & W. Trathen (Eds.) *Multiple perspectives in the millennium: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XXI, Available: http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/01_yearbook/html/06_Aaron.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1998). 1997 contenders/winners: children's book awards in five English speaking countries. In R. Telfer (Ed.) *Finding our literacy roots: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XVIII, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/98_yearbook/html/04_aaron_98.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1996). Children's book awards and 1995 shortlists from five English speaking countries. In K. Camperel, & B. Hayes (Eds.) *Literacy: The information superhighway to success: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XVI, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/96_yearbook/pdf/18_Aaron.pdf

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1991). Literacy through literature: International award winning children's books. In K. Camperel, & B. Hayes (Eds.) *Literacy: International, national, state, and local: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XI, Available:

http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/91_yearbook/pdf/06_Aaron.pdf

The 2002 collection of winners and contenders includes 73 titles. Considerable time and effort have been spent in collecting and studying the books; however, reading them has been enjoyable for the reviewers.

Information about the nature of the study will be presented, followed by a discussion of a few findings across the 73 titles. A brief review of each of the 73 titles will then be presented.

The Awards, Announcement Dates, and Sources of Books

The twelve awards from the five countries and the names of the organizations administering the awards are listed below.

Awards

- A1. AUSTRALIA: PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A2. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - EARLY CHILDHOOD (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A3. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - YOUNGER READERS (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A4. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - OLDER READERS (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- C1. CANADA: AMELIA FRANCES HOWARD-GIBBON AWARD (Canadian Library Association)
- C2. CANADA: BOOK OF THE YEAR FOR CHILDREN (Canadian Library Association)
- G1. GREAT BRITAIN: KATE GREENAWAY MEDAL (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals)
- G2. GREAT BRITAIN: CARNEGIE MEDAL (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals)
- N1. NEW ZEALAND: RUSSELL CLARK AWARD (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa)
- N2. NEW ZEALAND: ESTHER GLEN AWARD (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa)
- U1. UNITED STATES: CALDECOTT MEDAL (American Library Association)
- U2. UNITED STATES: NEWBERY MEDAL (American Library Association)

The awards selected from the four non-U.S. countries are those considered to be most similar to the Caldecott and Newbery Medals of the American Library Association. Each country has awards for both illustration and quality of literature. Australia, however, has two categories

for each (A1 and A2 - Illustration; A3 and A4 - Quality of Literature).

Library Associations in Canada and the United States administer the awards. The Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA), which includes librarians, and the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) give the awards in those two countries. Earlier this year, the Library Association - British merged with an organization of information professionals, forming the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP).

Announcement Dates

Announcement dates for shortlists and winners vary from year to year. The 2002 dates are listed below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. 2002 Announcement Dates for Shortlists and Winners.

	<u>Shortlists</u>	<u>Winners</u>
Australia	March 26	August 16
Canada	April 29	June 20
Great Britain	April 6	July 12
New Zealand	September 6	November 18
United States	----	January 21

Four countries announce shortlists weeks or months in advance of the selection of winners from those lists. Shortlists (finalists) run from four to ten titles for each award. The United States announces winners and Honor Books simultaneously each year at the winter meeting of the American Library Association.

Sources of Books

Sources of books are listed below in Figure 2. In each non-U.S. country, one book store is used. Local bookstores are utilized for U.S. books and non-U.S. books published or distributed in the United States.

Figure 2. Sources of books.

- Australia - Angus & Robertson Bookworld, Melbourne
- Canada - Mabel's Fables, Toronto
- Great Britain - Harrods, London
- New Zealand - Children's Bookshop, Auckland (Ponsonby)
- United States - Local bookstores

Availability of non-U.S. Books in the United States

Many more non-U.S. winning or contending titles are available today in the

United States than were published or distributed here a few years ago. Table I below shows that a large majority of the Canadian (85%) and of the British books (86%) are available in the United States.

Fewer of the Australian (23%) and none of the New Zealand titles are distributed or published in the United States. However, both countries have writers and illustrators who are well known in the United States; soon after publication in Australia or New Zealand, their books become available in this country. Margaret Mahy, from New Zealand, is a good example of this.

Table I. Available (Published or Distributed) in the United States

	Illustration	Qual. of Literature	Total
Australia	2 of 10 (20%)	3 of 12 (25%)	5 of 22 (23%)
Canada	10 of 10 (100%)	7 of 10 (70%)	17 of 20 (85%)
Great Britain	6 of 8 (75%)	8 of 8 (100%)	14 of 16 (86%)
New Zealand	0 of 4 —	0 of 4 —	0 of 8 —

Literary Types

As can be seen in Table IIA below, 13 of the 36 illustrated books (36%) are fantasies, followed by Realistic Fiction and Verse, each with 9, or 25%, of the 36 titles. Information from Table IIB reveals that 18 of 37 quality of literature books (49%) are Realistic Fiction and 9 of the 37 (24%) are classified as Historical Fiction. Fewer titles fall under the remaining literary types.

Table IIA. Genre (Illustration)

	Aust.	Can.	GB	NZ	US	Total
Fantasy	4	3	3	2	1	13 (36%)
Realistic Fiction	1	4	2	1	1	9 (25%)
Historical Fiction	1	0	0	0	0	1 (3%)
Verse	3	3	2	1	0	9 (25%)
Info./Biog.	<u>1</u>	0	1	0	2	<u>4 (11%)</u>
	10	10	8	4	4	36

Table IIB. Genre (Quality of Literature)

	Aust.	Can.	GB	NZ	US	Total
Fantasy	2	0	2	0	0	4 (11%)
Realistic Fiction	6	5	2	4	1	18 (49%)
Historical Fiction	2	4	2	0	1	9 (24%)
Verse	1	1	2	0	1	5 (14%)
Info./Biog.	0	0	0	0	0	0 --
Epic	<u>1</u>	0	0	0	0	<u>1 (3%)</u>

Brief Reviews of the Winning/Contending Titles

Short reviews of the 73 winning and contending titles are presented below. The winner of each award category is indicated by an asterisk (*). In parentheses following each review, the genre of the book is cited. Also in parentheses, U.S. publishers or distributors are presented. Interest levels of books in terms of grades are included when that information could be found. Main sources of this information were Books in Print and summary issues of Publishers Weekly.

Al. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Picture Book of the Year (CBCA)

*Libby Gleeson/Armin Greder (ill.) An Ordinary Day. Scholastic Australia.

Jack, on his way to school, is having a dull "ordinary day" - until his imagination takes over. Charcoal and pastel illustrations reveal the dullness of Jack's day. (Fantasy)

John Heffernan/Andrew McLean (ill.) My Dog. Margaret Hamilton Books.

This chilling story, told in text and powerful illustrations, focuses on the sad life of a small boy and his "adopted" dog, in the 1990s when "ethnic cleansing" was being imposed on certain elements of the population. McLean's expressive pictures in pencil and watercolors, with refugees' concerned and unsmiling faces, reflect the seriousness of the story. (Also finalist for CBCA's Book of the Year - Younger Readers) (Historical Fiction)

Nette Hilton/Anne Spudvilas (ill.) In My Backyard. Lothian. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

Three youngsters explore a big city, which is described in the text as the children imagine it. (Yellow taxis are dinosaurs.) Pleasant oil illustrations show the realities of the hustle and bustle of big city life. (Verse)

Leigh Hobbs. Horrible Harriet. Allen & Unwin.

Horrible Harriet, who lives in a "nest" in the attic of the school, rules the school. Her teacher with poor vision thinks she is great, but her classmates - and the two teachers she has imprisoned in the basement to do her homework - know just how horrible she is. Childlike illustrations add to the humor. (Fantasy)

Papunya School Publishing Committee. Papunya School Book of Country and History. Allen & Unwin.

This informative book "of country and history," told in text and aboriginal art, covers from 1850, when whites first moved into the Australian outback, to the present. It documents the attempt to merge five different Aborigine groups into the Papunya community, the problems of the white and Aborigine culture clashes, and the eventual development of the Papunya Scbaol, where elements of both Aborigine and white cultures were brought together in the development of the school's curriculum. (Information/History)

Shaun Tan. The Red Tree. Lothian. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

Brief text and colorful illustrations, ranging from realistic to surreal, tell of a young girl's depressing day, lightened at day's end by a bright red tree, just as she had imagined. (Fantasy)

A2. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Book of the Year: Early Childhood (CBCA)

Janeen Brian/Stephen Michael King (ill.) Where Does Thursday Go? Margaret Hamilton Books. (US: Clarion, 2002)

In simple language and fanciful illustrations steeped in blue, an animal story is told. Inquisitive Bruno, after his enjoyable birthday on Thursday, joins friend Bert on a mission to find where Thursday goes after it is over. (Fantasy)

Mike Dunbleton/Terry Denton (ill.) Passing On. Random House.

Grandma, no longer here, was a loving and supportive companion to her young grandson. He remembers and now is passing on the love and support to his little brother, in this story told in verse and exquisite pictures. (Verse)

*Bob Graham. "Let's Get a Pup!" Walker. (US: "Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate. Candlewick, 2001)

Kate, Mom, and Dad, at the dog pound, select young and lively Dave, but they are also fascinated by a friendly, very old dog. Puppy Dave cries all night in his new home. Early next morning, the family returns to the pound to find a companion for Dave (and the family). Can you guess which dog they selected? Pen and ink and watercolor pictures add comedy to the story. (Also finalist for Great Britain's 2001 Kate Greenaway Medal.) (Realistic Fiction)

Narelle Oliver. Baby Bilby, Where Do You Sleep? Lothian Books. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

In repetitive rhyme and in colored pencil illustrations, the question about where various Australian wildlife rest and sleep is answered. Small circular holes in some pages focus on the resting animals. On the final page, a key is given to the location of animals hidden in the pictures on three pages. (Verse)

A3. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders -Book of the Year: Younger Readers (CBCA)

Anna Fienberg/Kim Gamble (ill.) Joseph. Allen & Unwin. The story of Joseph from the Bible is retold in text and in oil paintings. (Epic) (US: Allen & Unwin, 2002)

Janine M. Fraser/Kim Gamble (ill.) Sarindi and the Lucky Bird. Angus & Robertson.

Sarindi's father believes strongly in luck, whereas his more practical mother knows that it takes work to accomplish goals. Gamble's black and white drawings add considerably to the story. (Fantasy)

Kerry Greenwood. A Different Sort of Read: The Diary of Charlotte McKenzie. Melbourne 1918-1919. Scholastic Australia.

Young teenage Charlotte, in diary form, relates the stressful problems faced by some World War I veterans and the horrors of the devastating and deadly influenza pandemic of 1919. Her "shell shocked" father, withdrawn and grumpy, recovers when family members become ill with influenza. Charlotte vividly describes some of the illnesses and deaths she encountered as she assisted a doctor in making house calls. (Historical Fiction)

Christine Harris. Jamil's Shadow. Penguin Books Australia.

After his parents died, Jamil spends his time in looking after his grazing cattle and tries not to become emotionally attached to anyone or anything - until a homeless dog follows him home. (Realistic Fiction)

*John Heffernan/Andrew McLean (ill.) My Dog. Margaret Hamilton Books.

This chilling story, told in text and powerful illustrations, focuses on the sad life of a small boy and his "adopted" dog, in the 1990s when "ethnic cleansing" was being imposed on certain elements of the population in Bosnia. McLean's expressive pictures in pencil and watercolors, with refugees' concerned and unsmiling faces, reflect the seriousness of the story. (Also finalist for CBCA's Picture Book of the Year) (Historical Fiction)

Odo Hirsch. Have Courage, Hazel Green! Allen & Unwin.

Hazel Green, avenger of evil, hears a tenant of her apartment building shout and threaten the hardworking gardener. She felt it her duty to make the culprit pay for his misdeed. In typical Hazel fashion, things do not go as she planned in this humorous story. (Third in series of Hazel Green books) (Realistic Fiction)

A4. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders -Book of the Year: Older Readers (CBCA)

Alyssa Brugman. Finding Grace.

Allen & Unwin. Rachel (18), after graduating from high school, cares for a brain damaged woman to earn money to help with University expenses. Like a detective, she tries to unravel the mystery of the person beyond the silence. Though humorous in spots, the humor occasionally appears to be flippant, and overdevelopment of minor points detracts from the story. (Realistic Fiction)

* Sonya Hartnett. Forest. Penguin Books Australia.

Readers travel into the cat world in this tale of a domesticated, urban cat Kian and kittens Jem and Cally, dumped by a relative of their owner into a forest. They meet and are helped by a band of feral cats as Kian tries to lead the kittens back to "his territory." They face obstacles created by nature and by man. (Fantasy)

Odo Hirsch. Yoss. Allen & Unwin.

Fourteen-year-old Yoss, living in a village hundreds of years ago, leaves the village as a rite of manhood, but instead of returning as expected in a day or two, he continues walking, until he meets a pair of robbers. Yoss gets caught up in robbery, murder, incarceration, and enslavement. Hirsch's description of Yoss will cause readers to empathize with the innocent boy. (Realistic Fiction)

Joanne Horniman. Mahalia. Allen & Unwin.

A 17-year-old father spends full time in parenting his infant daughter after the immature mother leaves them, in this story set in New South Wales, Australia. Readers may wonder why grandparents did not insist on helping the young and loving father to a greater extent, since father and child were in a near state of poverty. (Realistic Fiction)

Margaret Wild. Jinx. Allen & Unwin. (US: Walker, 2002)

This engrossing but often sad story of how Jem came to change her name to Jinx unfolds in blank verse. Readers meet Jem, her friends and family in the 190 short poems, many packed with emotion and few treating mature themes. (Verse)

Marcus Zusak. When Dogs Cry. Pan Macmillan Australia.

In this sequel to Fighting Ruben Wolfe, Cameron (Cam) narrates the continued story of the Wolfe family and how he, an introspective and shy teenager, gradually gains confidence and

wins the admiration of his mother, father, older sister Sarah, and his two older brothers (Rube and Steve). Zusak, in masterful style, makes the reader feel as if he/she is inside Cam's feelings. Reader beware! Some of growing Cam's expressed thoughts and his interchanges with brother Rube are mature! (Realistic Fiction) (US: Scholastic, 2003)

Cl. CANADA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Medal (CLA)

*Francis Wolfe. Where I Live. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001)

Sparse text, one sentence every four pages accompanied by expressive pictures, tells of a young girl's love for the place where she lives. The first letter of each two-line verse spells SEASHORE (where she lives). (Verse)

David Bouchard/Zhong-Yang Huang (ill.) Buddha in the Garden. Raincoast. (US: Raincoast, 2001) (1-up)

Inspired by a blind monk, the garden boy learns "the true nature of enlightenment" in the garden, while some monks travel great distances in search of enlightenment. Pictures in subdued colors support the story. (Fantasy)

Sharee Fitch/Janet Wilson (ill.) No Two Snowflakes. Orca. (US: Orca, 2001) (1-4)

On a snowy Christmas afternoon, a young Canadian boy writes a letter to his penpal in a far-away tropical country, in which he describes snow and the many activities children enjoy in the snow. The story, told in free verse, is accompanied by pastel illustrations. (Verse)

Sharon Jennings/Linda Hendry (ill.) Priscilla and Rosy. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001)

In this story about interpersonal relationships of rats, Priscilla learns that it's better to keep a promise to friend Rosy than to break it for something potentially more enjoyable - a boatride with Rudolph. Colorful illustrations add humor to the tale. (Fantasy)

Alison Lohans/Marilyn Mets & Peter Ledwon (ill.) Waiting for the Sun. Red Deer Press. (US: Red Deer Press, 2002) (PS-2)

Mollie, living on a farm with Mom and Dad, enjoys waiting each summer morning for the sun, and she also waits in anticipation for the arrival of a new baby brother or sister. Then Benjamin is born! Appealing pictures, often dominated by orange coloring, enhance the text. (Realistic Fiction)

Jonathan London/Paul Morin (ill.) What the Animals Were Waiting For. Scholastic. (US: Scholastic,

2002) (1-4)

Animals on an African savanna are waiting - and then the rains come, bringing action for animals, man, and nature. (Verse)

Margriet Ruurs/Andrew Kiss (ill.) When We Go Camping. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001) (All ages)

Let's go camping with a family (boy, girl, mom, dad) and enjoy the great outdoors (shown in beautiful photolike illustrations) and learn about the animals they see (in pictures and in concluding legend). (Realistic Fiction/Information),

Gail Sproule/Sheena Lott (ill.) Singing the Dark. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001) (PS-2)

A young girl and her loving mother go through their nighttime ritual of "singing the dark." Watercolor paintings show the bond between mother and daughter. (Realistic Fiction)

Annette LeBox/Harvey Chan (ill.) Wild Bog Tea. Groundwood. (US: Groundwood, 2001) (K-3)

A man remembers the trips he made as a boy with his grandfather to the bog and the animals they saw there; then he makes the trip alone since grandfather no longer can go. Dreamlike illustrations, in muted yellows and brown, set an emotional tone for the story. An Author's Note presents information about the British Columbia setting and about bogs. (Realistic Fiction/Information)

Ludmila Zeman. Sinbad in the Land of Giants. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001) (1-up)

In precise language and enchanting pictures, Zeman retells one story from The Thousand and One Nights. Sinbad the Sailor encounters a wide variety of life-threatening giants - and lives to tell about them. Each page is framed by a delicately decorated border. (Fantasy)

C2. CANADA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Book of the Year for Children (CLA)

*Jean Little. Orphan at My Door. Scholastic.

The diary of 11-year-old Victoria, living in a small Ontario town in the late 1800s, covers an eventful year (1897) in the life of her family. Two elderly, and strange, aunts come for a "short visit"; orphan Marianna (12), a Home Girl from London, comes to live with and work for the family; Marianna's brother Jasper (8), indentured to a brutal farmer nearby, escapes and has to be rescued; Victoria's mother has a difficult pregnancy. Little lightens the seriousness with well-placed humor. She also offers at the end historical information, including pictures, about the practice of indenturing British orphans to Canadian families. (Historical Fiction)

Kristin Butcher. The Gramma War. Orca. (US: Orca, 2001)

When her ill and bossy grandmother moves in with Annie's family, Annie resents her because of the many changes necessary to accommodate her. Her hate for Gramma disappears when Gramma becomes an information source for her on a project tracing the family tree. The author does an excellent job of dealing with feelings of family members, including guilt feelings. (Realistic Fiction)

Susan Currie. Basket of Beethoven. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001) (K-3)

Eleven-year-old Sam, from a poor one-parent home, swaps protection from class bullies for piano lessons from classmate Helen, a talented musician whose life seems anchored to Beethoven's music. Shy Sam and haughty Helen gradually improve their relations with each other. A two-page biography of Beethoven follows the story. (Realistic Fiction)

Sarah Ellis. A Prairie as Wide as the Sea. Scholastic.

In diary form, Ivy, from a tightknit and loving family, tells of the family's emigration from London in 1926 to rural Saskatchewan. Touches of humor are interwoven with realistic descriptions of characters and events, often depicting trials faced by citizens new to a country. A concluding Historical Note and reproductions of actual photographs of Canada in the 1920s reflect the care given by Ellis in writing this book of fiction. (Historical Fiction)

Ann Goldring. Spitfire. Raincoast. (US: Raincoast, 2002) (3-7)

Two girls, from different economic and social levels, enter the usually all-boys soapbox derby. Kathryn, whose brother is in the race, joins with April, who is derided by classmates because she lives in the poor section of town, and they give the boys stiff competition. The setting is 1943, and each chapter begins with a quote related to World War II. (Realistic Fiction)

Constance Home. The Tenth Pupil. Ronsdale. (US: Ronsdale Press, 2001) (5-up)

Living in an isolated Vancouver Island logging camp in 1934, 11-year-old Trudy learns about the harmfulness and emotional cost of racial prejudice after Japanese Canadian Shigi (the tenth pupil) enters the community's one-teacher school. Trudy becomes Shigi's friend even though classmates, reflecting community attitudes, taunt her. The story is a skillful treatment of racial prejudice and its emotional toll. (Realistic Fiction)

Polly Horvath Everything on a Waffle. Groundwood. (US: FSG, 2001) (5-up)

In a masterful interweaving of seriousness and humor, the author tells of the challenges faced by 11-year-old Primrose, the narrator, who after her parents are lost in a storm off the west coast of Canada, must adjust to a variety of "helpful" adults. The owner of a local restaurant becomes one of her best friends and supporters - which might explain why each of the 15 chapters ends with a recipe! (Also 2002 United States: Newbery Honor Book) (Realistic Fiction)

Kathy Kacer. Clara's War. Second Story. (US: Second Story Press, 2001)

In this chilling story, based solidly on fact, the horrors of life in a concentration camp for Jews, from 1943 to the end of World War II, are replayed. Terezin, a walled Czechoslovakian town, was a way station for Auschwitz and held more than 40,000 inmates at a time. Clara (13) and her family, along with all others, suffered from extreme overcrowding, limited food, oppressive guards, and no medical supplies. Highly talented inmates furnished the only bright spot by organizing instruction for children and musical entertainment for all. (Historical Fiction)

Dennis Lee/Gillian Johnson (ill.) The Cat and the Wizard. Key Porter.

In delightful rhyme and humorous pictures, Lee and Johnson tell of the friendship and activities of an unwelcomed and unhappy wizard and a black cat in "a spiffy hat." (Verse)

Connie Colker Steiner/Denis Rodier (ill.) Shoes for Amelie. Lobster Press. (US: Lobster Press, 2001) (3-5)

A young Protestant boy, living on a farm in the mountainous area of France during World War II, wonders about the mysterious guests his family shelters periodically. He gets his chance to help when a Jewish girl, Amelie, becomes a guest; he teaches her to perform farm chores and also helps his grandfather to make shoes to replace the worn ones she wore. A brief afternote furnishes historical background for the story. (Historical Fiction)

G1. GREAT BRITAIN: 2001 Winner/Contenders - Kate Greenaway Medal (CILIP)

*Richard Platt/Chris Riddell (ill.) Pirate Diary: The Journal of Jake Carpenter. Walker. (US: Candlewick, 2001)

Nine-year-old Jake Carpenter, in 1716, set sail from Charleston, SC, as a member of a ship's crew, and his adventures, including becoming a pirate, are reported in journal form. This interesting account is fictional, but much information about 18th century ships and sailing is presented in the text and in the ink and watercolor illustrations. On the last six pages, historical information on "Jake's world" and on Piracy is given. (Information/Historical Fiction)

Jez Alborough. Fix-it Duck. Picture Lions. (US: HarperCollins, 2002)

Fix-it Duck creates more problems than he solves, in this humorous story in verse and comical pictures. (Verse)

Ursula Jones/Russell Ayto (ill.) The Witch's Children. Orchard. (X-3)

On a trip to the park, the witch's children use magic to perform spells. But alas, they can't undo them. Witch Mom has to come to the rescue in this enjoyable story accompanied by lavish pictures. (Fantasy)

Caroline Binch. Silver Shoes. Dorling Kindersley.

Molly, enrolled in a dancing class, wants silver shoes just like grandmother's, but she has to make do with a pair of ordinary shoes - until her birthday arrives. Lively watercolor illustrations reveal a happy and energetic interracial family. (Realistic Fiction)

Helen Cooper. Tatty Ratty. Doubleday. (US: FSG, 2002) (PS-3)

After Molly loses her toy rabbit, she and her parents fantasize about what Tatty Ratty is doing, in this tale told in text and colorful illustrations filled with action. (Fantasy)

Vicki Churchill/Charles Fuge (ill.) Sometimes I Like to Curl Up in a Ball. Gullane. (US: Sterling, 2001)

Wombat likes to do many fun things, but most of all, he likes to "curl up in a ball" in a special place - next to his mother. Brightly colored pictures depict a lot of energy and happiness. (Verse)

Bob Graham. Let's Get a Pup! Walker. (US: "Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate. Candlewick, 2001)

Kate, Mom, and Dad, at the dog pound, select young and lively Dave, but they are fascinated also by a friendly, very old dog. Puppy Dave cries all night in his new home. Early the next morning, the family returns to the pound to find a companion for Dave (and the family). Can you guess which dog they selected? Pen and ink and watercolor illustrations add comedy to the story. (Also contender for Australia's 2002 Book of the Year: Early Childhood) (Realistic Fiction)

Gretchen Woelfle/Nicola Bayley (ill.) Katje the Windmill Cat. Walker. (US: Candlewick, 2001) (PS-up)

Katje, feeling replaced by Miller Nico's new and picky wife, moves into the windmill. Much later, the miller and his wife have a baby, and baby's mother tries to keep Katje away from the baby. Katje becomes a hero by saving the baby when its cradle is swept out into the canal after the dike breaks. The story is based on a 1421 incident that occurred in Holland. Pictures are

done in watercolor pencils. (Fantasy/Historical Fiction)

G2. GREAT BRITAIN: 2001 Winner/Contenders - Carnegie Medal (CILIP)

*Terry Pratchett. Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents. Doubleday. (US: HarperCollins, 2001)

A brilliant talking cat (Maurice), intelligent talking rats, and a dumblooking boy who plays a flute reenact the Pied Piper of Hamelin, with a few very different twists, in this humorous tale. (Fantasy)

Sharon Creech. Love That Dog. Bloomsbury. (US: HarperCollins, 2001) (3-7)

In this interesting verse novel, Jack, the narrator, under the guidance of his teacher, moves from thinking that poetry is just for girls to one who enjoys poetry and can write poems of his own. Some of the poems the teacher reads with Jack and his classmates are reproduced in the book. (Verse)

Peter Dickinson. The Ropemaker. Macmillan. (US: Delacorte, 2001)

A girl and her grandmother and a boy and his blind grandfather brave an enchanted forest to seek a mastermagician who can save their valley from evil. In this engaging fantasy, the four travelers face great challenges, most involving magic - some supportive, some destructive. (Fantasy)

Eva Ibbotson/Kevin Hawkes (ill.) Journey to the River Sea. Macmillan. (US: Dutton, 2001) (5-up)

Orphan Maia, living in London in 1910, is sent with a governess, to live in rural Brazil with the family of a distant cousin. Living with the family is unpleasant for Maia, mainly because of the jealousy of the cousin's twin daughters and their mistreatment of Maia. She becomes friends with a young part-Indian boy, becomes involved in a mystery, and explores the Amazon. (Realistic Fiction)

Elizabeth Laird. Jake's Tower. Macmillan. (US: Barron, 2002)

Jake, whose father left him the day he was born, dreams of living in a perfect tower with a perfect dad, protected from outside threats, including a physically abusive stepfather. Eventually, his imaginary tower is replaced by reality in which his longing for love and support is satisfied. The characterization of Jake is handled superbly. (Realistic Fiction)

Geraldine McCaughrean. The Kite Rider. Oxford. (US: HarperCollins, 2002) (7-up)

Living in 13th century China, 12-year-old Haoyou sees his father "sacrificed" by the ship's First Mate in testing the wind, and then Haoyou thwarts the murderer's plan to marry the widow, his mother. Haoyou becomes a daring kite rider in a traveling circus and experiences life and conflicts of Cathay (China) leading up to 1281 - and he meets the famous Mongol leader Kublai Khan. (Historical Fiction)

Geraldine McCaughrean. Stop the Train. Oxford. (US: Oxford, 2001)

Cissy and her parents, with others, are residents in a new community developed beside a railroad in Oklahoma prairie in 1893. Their survival depends upon access to the train, but the railroad owner, reacting to the people's refusal to sell him their government land claims, vows never to let the train stop in their new town. A vicious battle develops as residents vow to "stop the train." (Historical Fiction)

Virginia Euwer Wolff. True Believer. Faber. (US: Atheneum, 2001)

In 85 blank verse poems, this novel tells of 15-year-old LaVaughan's life in a sometimes dangerous innercity, her new and old friends and the strength of their relationships, and her special work in preparing for college. In an interesting manner, information about grammar and science is given in several scenes set in two college preparatory courses in which LaVaughn is enrolled. (Verse)

NI. NEW ZEALAND: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Russell Clark Award (LIANZA)

Theo Baynton. Looking for Larry. Scholastic.

In a mixture of fantasy and information about dinosaurs, Troy, a tuatara (a reptile as old as the dinosaurs and found only on islands off New Zealand's coast), travels for 145 million years looking for an uncle who wandered off. In searching for Uncle Larry, he meets all types of dinosaurs, which are shown in somewhat whimsical illustrations. Suggestions to find hidden tuatara among the dinosaurs in the illustrations give readers a change of pace. At the end, an extensive glossary and pronunciation guide, with pictures, includes 113 different types of dinosaurs. (Fantasy/Information)

Dot Meharry/Jennifer Cooper (ill.) The Pipi and the Mussels. Reed Publishing.

In the early days of Aotearoa (New Zealand), life was tranquil - and then the whales came. To escape the powerful splashing of the whales, the pipi rushed ashore and buried themselves in the sand, whereas the slower mussels attached themselves to the rocks. According to this fantasy, pipi hide in the sand and mussels latch on to rocks until this day. Illustrations add a touch of humor to the story. (Fantasy)

*Tessa Duder (ed.)/Anton Petrov (ill.) A Book of Pacific Lullabies. HarperCollins.

This collection of 26 delightful poems, supported by beautiful illustrations, contains works by 16 New Zealanders, three Australians, and one Samoan. (Verse)

Rende Hapimarika van de Weert/Anton Petrov (ill.) The Last Whale. Reed Publishing.

In a 1920s one-room school by the sea, children and their teacher are disrupted by the sound of a whale. They - like most of the small fishing settlement - rush out to watch as fishermen begin to battle the whale, which puts out to sea. Five days later, the fishermen return from sea with the now-dead whale, which was pregnant. At the story's end, young, reflective, and sad Riwia stands by the shore; two shadows - one large, one small - move out into the ocean toward the setting sun. Almost all of the characters depicted in the attractive illustrations are Maori. Several Maori words are used in the story. (Realistic Fiction with a touch of Fantasy)

N2. NEW ZEALAND: 2002 Winner/Contenders:- Esther Glen Award (LIANZA)

Fleur Beale. Ambushed. Scholastic.

Twelve-year-old Richard reluctantly leaves friends and a small community he loves when his family moves to the city. In a new setting, he becomes the victim of three bullies. With two other classmates who had been victimized by the bullies, his twin sister Kat, an assortment of schoolmates, and two grownups who had been victimized, Richard leads the charge to ambush the bullies as they attempt to "initiate" a new victim. (Realistic Fiction)

*Alison Robertson. Knocked for Six. Scholastic.

Young Tony's desire to play cricket on the school team is beset by obstacles: Dad doesn't care for cricket; Coach "Dingo" doesn't like Tony; someone steals Tony's cricket equipment; Gran's funeral is scheduled during the tournament; Cherie (a classmate and newly-crippled cricket player) tries to get Tony kicked off the team. The story revolves around cricket, and for some readers, more knowledge of cricket may be necessary for full appreciation of the story. (Realistic Fiction)

David Hill. The Sleeper Wakes. Penguin.

Residents of a small New Zealand town, located near a mountain that had erupted years earlier, refuse to consider that the mountain might erupt again. Cory and his father, a conservationist, refer to the mountain as "the sleeper." When the unexpected happens, Cory and his Dad are the first to feel the tremor. (Realistic Fiction)

Tim Tipene/Henry Campbell (ill.) Taming the Taniwha. Huia.

At school, Tama is bullied by James (called a "taniwha" - monster - by Tama's Mum). Following his grandfather's advice on how to "tame a taniwha," Tama tamed the bully with kindness. Primitive-type, colorful illustrations, with a touch of mystery, support the text. Characters, as shown in the illustrations, are Maori. (Realistic Fiction)

U1. UNITED STATES: 2002 Winner/Honor Books - Caldecott Medal (ALA)

*David Wiesner. The Three Pigs. Clarion, 2001. (K-up)

In Wiesner's version of a familiar tale, the not-so-smart wolf blows so powerfully that the three pigs, one by one, are blown almost off the pages; later, they wander through other well-known children's stories. Eye-catching watercolor illustrations, with bits of humor, carry much of the story line. (Fantasy)

Barbara Kerley/Brian Selznick (ill.) The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins. Scholastic, 2001. (1-up)

In text and detailed illustrations, the life and work of Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, an early (1800s) modeler of dinosaurs, is presented. Though his models, displayed in England and America, later were found to be inaccurate in some aspects, they can be credited with focusing attention on dinosaurs. (Biography)

Doreen Rappaport/Bryan Collier (ill.) Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King. Hyperion, 2001. (K-4)

In brief to the point text and descriptive watercolor and collage illustrations, highlights of the life (and death) of Dr. King, one of America's leading historical figures, are sketched. Most of the text is anchored to ten short quotes from Dr. King. Illustration and text together not only offer important information but also will likely have an emotional impact on young readers. (Biography)

Marc Simont. The Stray Dog. Harper, 2001. (P-3)

A family (parents and two children), out on a Saturday picnic, enjoy playing with a stray dog they name Willy; out on a picnic at the same spot the next Saturday, they see Willy being chased by a dog catcher. They immediately "adopt" Willy and take him home, where he becomes an accepted and happy member of the community. Watercolor illustrations complement the text. (Based on true story of Reiko Sassa) (Realistic Fiction)

U2. UNITED STATES: 2002 Winner/Honor Books - Newbery Medal (ALA)

*Linda Sue Park. A Single Shard. Clarion, 2001. (5-9)

Tree-ear, a 13-year-old orphan, living most of the year under a bridge with friend Crane-man, uses curiosity, determination, and courage to accomplish his dream of becoming a potter, in this award winning book set in 12th century Korea. The Korean American author, who also is a teacher of English as a Second Language, unfolds an interesting plot in picturesque language. (Historical Fiction)

Polly Horvath. Everything on a Waffle. FSG, 2001. (5-up)

In a masterful interweaving of seriousness and humor, the author tells of the challenges faced by 11-year-old Primrose, the narrator, who after her parents are lost in a storm off the west coast of Canada, must adjust to a variety of "helpful" adults. The owner of a local restaurant becomes one of her best friends and supporters - which might explain why each of the 15 chapters ends with a recipe! (Also shortlisted for 2002 Canada: Book of the Year for Children) (Realistic Fiction)

Marilyn Nelson. Carver: A Life in Poems. Front Street, 2001.

The life of George Washington Carver, a young slave who developed into a notable scientist, is reviewed in 59 poems and supporting photographs. (Verse/Biography)

Summary Comment

Winners of and contenders for prestigious children's book awards, on the whole, are among the very best books published for young readers. Those books published in English in countries other than the United States can be used in the classroom - or in the home - in the same ways as books originating in the United States. Such books can also help to enlarge pupil - and teacher - knowledge about other people, other places, and sometimes other times, as in historical fiction. Perhaps the greatest value, though, is that they lead young readers to develop an understanding that people from other places, other races, other creeds have many more similarities than differences.

Summation of Ongoing Research on Applying Distance Education in Adult Literacy Program

Eunice N. Askov

Distance education is growing rapidly as a means of delivering instruction primarily in higher education, with most institutions using the Internet ([US Department of Education, 1999](#)). Distance education offers access to students who may be fully employed during the day or who are home-bound with small children or disabilities, or otherwise unable to attend traditional classes. Can the distance education opportunities that institutions of higher education are using also be undertaken by adult literacy programs? Is distance education viable for learners who are functioning below a high school level?

The growing popularity of distance education raises the issue of what learning is. Burge ([1988](#)) asserts that most distance education courses are built on the transmission model since distance education has its origins in correspondence study. With the advent of two-way technologies, such as audio- and video-conferencing, a constructivist learning environment became possible. Internet technology now makes possible learning in a social environment since learners can be linked in a “virtual” classroom with an instructor. The World Wide Web has opened up opportunities for social learning leading to the development of higher order thinking and learning.

In the constructivist view learning is socially constructed and situated in a specific context ([Bruner, 1990](#)). Learners construct new knowledge and skills through interacting with others and the environment and reflecting upon these experiences. Learning that closely resembles the real world of the participants occurs as a social process involving others in solving real-world problems (problem-based learning).

The paper reports on a segment of a larger research project. The investigator was funded by the US Department of Education to explore applications of online distance education in adult literacy programs. She conducted extensive web searches and email correspondence primarily in the US and Australia to identify literacy programs using distance education. She also visited Australia for three months in 2001 to conduct site visits of programs that are using distance education for instruction. This article reports on the Australian part of the research. A monograph ([Askov, Johnston, Petty, & Young, 2003](#)) summarizes the entire study in the US and, by contrast, in Australia.

Methods

Data were gathered from Australian adult literacy programs that are using online instruction for distance education. The investigator used surveys, interviews, and email correspondence as well as analysis of instructional web sites in data collection. Australia, through its federal and state planning for flexible learning and targeted funding, has

strategically set out to be the international leader in this arena. Although flexible learning does not necessarily mean online delivery, use of the Internet has certainly been part of the instructional effort. Federal dollars have also been used for professional development, encouraging teachers to experiment and develop their capacity to help others with flexible learning. Although the government's evaluation efforts have focused primarily on policy strategies rather than on learner outcomes, and although many of the instructional efforts are experimental and supplemental to the traditional classroom, the descriptions of practice can provide insights for the United States about implementing online distance education. Like the United States, Australia has both federal and state efforts in adult literacy. All have taken different approaches to online distance education for adult literacy programs. We will draw some lessons learned from these case studies to inform the efforts in the United States.

Data were gathered on federal efforts as well as state initiatives in four states. The federal efforts were gleaned primarily from interviews with key informants and policy review. The four states became case studies of implementation of online distance education in adult literacy programs. Further descriptive analyses and discussion are provided elsewhere ([Askov, et al., 2003](#)). One state case study is presented after a description of the federal efforts in online distance education in adult basic education.

Results

Federal Efforts in Australia

Australia is striving to become a global leader in applying new technologies to vocational and adult education and training through the Australian Flexible Learning Framework for the National VET (Vocational Education and Training) System 2000–2004. (For more information see *Strategy 2002*: flexiblelearning.net.au.) Federally funded activities, most funded by the Australian National Training Authority, fall under each goal of the framework. To encourage independent access of services, learners are provided a national gateway to various educational and training programs on a Web site (www.edna.edu.au/index.html).

The first goal of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework calls for “creative, capable people.” The main strategy in attaining that goal is professional development. As part of this strategy, several programs have been established with federal funds: LearnScope, which supports practitioners in developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to apply new learning technologies for flexible learning and delivery; Virtual Learning Community, which encourages the continued development and integration of online learning communities across the VET sector for professional development for flexible learning; Flexible Learning Leaders, which provides professional development for the high-skill end of the flexible learning continuum of practitioners; and Flexways, which provides a Web-based resource to assist practitioners in identifying their professional development needs in learning technologies and flexible learning, developing a professional development plan, and accessing nationally developed resources.

These federal programs provide professional development not only for practitioners new to distance education, but also for experienced educators so that they can become Flexible Learning Leaders and mentors of others who are inexperienced. Teachers are urged to share what they have learned through the Virtual Learning Community program. Career development is encouraged through support for Flexways.

The federal funds are also used to encourage innovation in the LearnScope grants (learnscope.anta.gov.au) as a safe way to learn how to apply distance education to the literacy programs. LearnScope now has a strong presence throughout Australia and is enhancing the professional skills of both individual practitioners and their organizations. In 2000, 293 projects were established with more than 2,700 participants across all states/territories. In 2001, 337 projects were established with more than 3,000 participants across Australia. The authors are unaware of any similar programs for professional development at the federal or state level in the United States.

Other goals related to distance education for literacy programs concern the creation of a supportive technological infrastructure and world-class online content development and support services. Strategies include online national product development, evaluation, and further implementation, as well as access to and equity in online learning especially for targeted populations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, learners with disabilities, and learners with low literacy levels).

The development of toolboxes has also occurred with federal support. A toolbox is a collection of online training materials comprising learning activities, resources, and user guides to support delivery of competencies (including literacy) from endorsed training packages. By sponsoring the development of 41 toolboxes, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework has supported the implementation of 24 training packages and the development of 566 industry competencies. In addition, six online product projects for equity groups have been developed. More information is available at the toolbox Web site (www.flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/).

The Australian government has also funded research to increase the understanding of pedagogical, technical, and managerial aspects of flexible learning, including online learning. Use of a quality assurance framework including national protocols for nationally funded projects is supported at the federal level to develop and implement online programs. Research on distance education for literacy programs has received limited federal support in the United States. The issues of quality assurance and comparability to face-to-face programs have not been considered.

The Flexible Learning Web site (the.flexiblelearning.net.au/accessequity/content/research.asp) provides links to research concerning access to and equity of literacy services. Research papers have been developed to provide the theoretical background as well as report on a study conducted with targeted online learners. The extensive report prepared as part of Strategy 2000 suggests that online learning alone would be inappropriate for the special needs groups; these groups need human contact and support in their learning. These learners also will learn best if instruction is tailored

to their learning styles and cultures rather than “one size fits all” online instruction. Guidelines for managers and practitioners, for Web accessibility, and for course development are also provided.

Perhaps most remarkable is not the amount of federal money devoted to these efforts but the process of continually updating annual strategic plans after evaluating and revising fundable activities. Australia has been very systematic in establishing goals and strategies, revised annually, to become a world leader in flexible learning, including online learning. The deliberate federal efforts moving Australia into a position of global leadership in flexible online learning includes adult education as well as vocational education and training programs. These targeted efforts appear to be unmatched in the United States.

State Efforts in Australia

As in the United States, states in Australia have been very active in providing funding to design online instruction for literacy instruction. Although the monograph ([Askov, et al., 2003](#)) considers four different models that various Australian states have pursued, this paper focuses only on one state as an example. Most of the states use the TAFE (Technical and Further Education) institutes to develop and deliver online instruction in adult and vocational education.

The government of Western Australia (WA) established WestOne Services (www.westone.wa.gov.au) with the mission of enhancing adult and vocational education and training in this very large state. WestOne occupies a large office building in Perth with impressive television and videoconferencing studios in addition to Web authoring and printing capabilities. It also is responsible for business development, product development and distribution, and other services. The state’s fiscal resources for course development are centralized at WestOne. WestOne offers no instruction directly. All instruction is offered through the state’s TAFE institutes.

WestOne Online designs and delivers courses to the TAFE institutes throughout the state. Its centralized approach to development allows local input, as a TAFE institute can propose a course to be developed to WestOne. Often, a local college instructor develops the content in partnership with WestOne’s technical experts, and a quality assurance process follows. The course then can be used—but not modified—by any TAFE institute in the state. WestOne holds the copyright on the materials. Although WebCT is frequently used, CD-ROMs and workbooks often supplement the online components.

One course entitled “Flying through the Web” is currently available under the General Curriculum Options 3 (part of the Certificates of General Education for Adults) that roughly corresponds to mid-level literacy skills. This course was developed first as part of a series of online literacy courses orienting mid-level literacy learners to Internet use. The home page pictures an Australian barbecue; learners click on various objects at the barbecue to take them into bulletin boards, e-mail, chat, and so forth. The “guide” is a

talking parrot who provides navigational assistance. The next course, "Reading and Writing for Level 3," has been developed, as will a course in numeracy and mathematics at the same level. All are written in the WebCT learning management system.

The Western Australian experience suggests that course development occurs best in teams of practitioners and instructional designers/computer specialists. Practitioners offer the content expertise, and technology specialists have the expertise to design Web pages that are easy to read and appealing to the target audience. Selecting instruction in the use of the Web as the first course in a package makes sense to enable learners to engage in literacy content instruction.

Conclusions from the Study of Australia

Because of Australia's commitment to flexible learning that includes online learning, federal and state resources have been directed toward making the country a world leader in this arena. The purpose is to offer options to people who need additional training, thereby expanding access to services. Literacy is considered a part of a more global effort to enhance vocational education and training because literacy is recognized as a prerequisite to and part of most training programs.

Most Australian states use the WebCT learning management system for course development and delivery. Although a site license for WebCT is expensive, it offers consistency to both teachers and learners. Its communication tools (i.e., e-mail, threaded discussions on bulletin boards, chat rooms) provide opportunities for students to construct their own knowledge from the instructional materials presented on the Web and to learn by interacting with others. Additional materials, such as workbooks and CD-ROMs, can be easily integrated into the learning management system. Although the instructional portions of the courses may follow a transmission model of learning, the communication tools generally encourage teachers to follow constructivist and social learning philosophical models.

Especially interesting are WebQuests, instructional activities that teachers construct using existing Web sites. As part of the WebCT learning management system, teachers usually create WebQuests for face-to-face instruction and then may incorporate them in online courses. These WebQuests are usually based on constructivist theory and problem-based learning. Their purpose is to encourage students to use language and literacy skills to solve real-world problems. As they do not require sophisticated programming skills, WebQuests offer teachers opportunities to develop learner-centered and relevant materials for their students. A similar tool would be very useful in the United States as professional development, to encourage teachers to create and use online instructional materials. By developing and using WebQuests, teachers can become comfortable with online instruction as well as problem-based learning.

Teachers rather than literacy experts have taken the lead in developing Web-based instruction in Australia. Although most of this development supplements classroom instruction, it provides the opportunity for teachers to experiment with online instruction.

Many of these “experiments” eventually are offered to distance education students. The support for teachers has come from federal and state funding. Federally funded LearnScope projects have been a primary vehicle for supporting teacher experimentation and professional development.

This paper has tried to capture what is happening currently in Australia to guide the institutionalization of online literacy programs for distance education in the United States. State policymakers and practitioners in the United States need to think about a model, or hybrid of models, that might fit their states. Reflecting on the efforts of another country may help us think about what is happening in the United States. Development and delivery of online literacy instruction in the United States have been primarily through large multimedia products that are distributed nationally. Less emphasis has been placed on the professional development of teachers. Development in Australia, on the other hand, has been on a state-by-state basis primarily by teachers. Although this approach may lead to “reinventing the wheel,” it brings the development and delivery process closer to those who will use the online products. It also permits customization of the products to the unique needs of the state, perhaps making them more learner-centered.

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Preparing Teachers for Culture Shock: The Risky Business Of Addressing Diversity in 21st Century Classrooms

Lisa Bauer

While discussing the teacher narrative, *Educating Esme*, Cloer ([2001](#)) asked the questions, “Why is it that so many educators argue and complain that the wrong children were sent to their school? When will the clientele be accepted without question, respected, and invited to join in the progress of civilization?” The concepts of culture shock and Frierean violence directly address these questions. Often, we do not comprehend the enormity of what we’re asking teachers serving diverse students to do. At the same time, it is also true that these teachers do not comprehend how unprepared they are to implement what we’ve asked.

Current student and teacher demographics have serious implications for the quality of education offered children in US public schools. Nieto ([2002](#)) reported that the vast majority of United States (US) teacher candidates, both current and projected, are white females. These white, female teachers will enter school districts in which populations of diverse students are increasing (Berube, 2000). However, far from being prepared to serve this new demographic, these teachers will tend to be trained by “white, mostly male, fiftyish professors” with minimal experience of diverse cultures or basic understandings of inequalities ([Zeichner & Melnick, 1995](#) [in Merryfield, 2000](#)) and mentored by white, practicing teachers who received their training in the 1960s, when white, suburban schools were the norm on the US educational scene (Berube, 2000). In fact, Taylor and Sobel (2001) reported that Zeichner (1993) projected that today’s preservice teachers face a strong possibility of being placed in settings where they will serve students culturally different from themselves. Tatum ([2000](#)) as well as Seidl and Friend (2002) asserted that the process of preparing white teachers to appropriately handle their place in the power culture requires a significant amount of time and reflection before they can be effective in serving multicultural students. This dichotomy of backgrounds between teachers and students, which Nieto ([2002](#)) noted is usually either not addressed or addressed by a one-semester course in teacher education programs, results in teachers ill-prepared to address the needs they encounter in their classrooms ([Rushton, 2001](#)) and K-12 and teacher education students being inappropriately served ([Ball, 2000](#)).

Perspectives

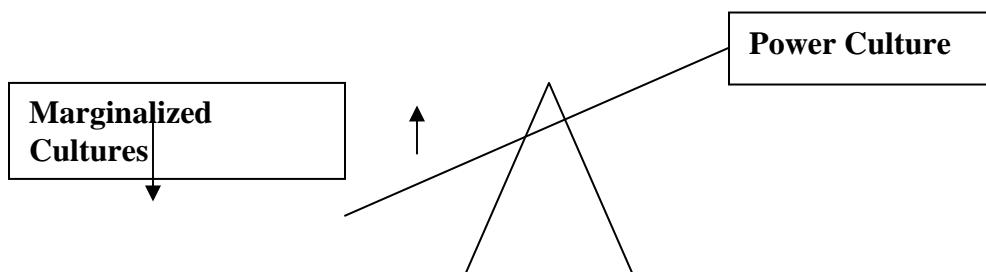
When examining the experiences of white teachers being thrust into classrooms serving students for which they are not prepared, the issue of cultural competence becomes crucial. This is particularly true in light of the fact that many white US teachers say they do not realize they are culture-bearers at all but simply see themselves as “just American” ([Ladson-Billings 1995](#); [Nieto, 2002](#)). Along with this, these teachers often are ignorant or skeptical of values carried by marginalized cultures and have a hard time even hearing input from diverse adults on how their culture’s children should be educated ([Delpit, 1996](#)). This lack of understanding often places white teachers in the position of learning to negotiate entirely new cultures with no knowledge of values, needs, and linguistic behaviors of the students they are trying to serve. This experience can be even more traumatic if the individuals in question are also first-year teachers and

developing their professional identities along with developing their identities as “the other” in a new culture ([Rushton, 2001](#)). This state of being is a perfect incubator for culture shock.

Brown (1991, p. 170), discussing second language students attempting to live in the cultures of the languages they were learning, defined culture shock as “phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis.” He cited Clarke (p., 172), who compared culture shock at its worst to schizophrenia in that “social encounters become inherently threatening, and defense mechanisms are employed to reduce the trauma.” Brown (p. 171) went on to place culture shock in the context of four developmental stages second language students experience as they learn to adapt to their new life circumstances. In Stage One, they experience a period of excitement and euphoria about their new surroundings. In Stage Two, they experience culture shock, in which life in the new culture begins to have negative impacts on their self-esteem and their sense of safety. In this stage, they begin to develop negative affects for the new culture. In Stage Three, they experience culture stress, in which some problems of adopting the new culture are solved, and others continue. In Stage Four, they experience a near or full recovery, viewing themselves as members of both their original and their adopted cultures. Brown noted that teachers could arrest the development of students at any point on the scale if they failed to nurture students through each stage, a process Brown describes as “affective inoculations.”

Of course, white teachers can successfully navigate the process of becoming bicultural, or culturally relevant, and move on to become effective teachers of diverse students ([Ladson-Billings, 1995](#)). However, even if they do develop what Ladson-Billings terms their own culturally relevant pedagogies, serving diverse populations is still a risky business. Empowering diverse students to seek justice in society can bring on consequences Friere raised in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000). Friere charged teachers of diverse students to address societal power inequities. He specified they should facilitate their students in discovering injustices perpetrated against them; require them to reflect on what they see; help them express what they learn; and encourage them to devise and implement strategies to bring about equity. These strategies, Friere stipulated, must of necessity contain elements of violence, which he defined as any action that takes away another’s humanity, because violence was used by the oppressor class to obtain power in the first place and must be used by oppressed classes to achieve societal equilibrium ([Figure 1](#)). When teachers representing the power culture accept the charge to take their students through the process of addressing injustices, Friere maintained, they must be prepared not only to accept results with which they may not be comfortable, but also to risk violence directed against them.

Figure 1. Friere’s Vision of Social Activism



Violence initiated by oppressed

Figure 1. In Friere's view, the power culture has attained its status in society through inflicting violence on others. In order to change their status, marginalized populations must initiate the application of their own violent force against their oppressors to balance the power structure. Members of the power culture who support societal equality may support efforts, but they should not initiate them.

In essence, Friere charged teachers to endanger their own positions as representatives of the power culture in the name of serving their students appropriately. It is in this backdrop of a diverse society that US K-12 teachers must negotiate ways to serve changing populations. They often begin hampered by trauma and always face the possibility of their positions as instructional leaders being toppled because to be culturally relevant, they must address issues of societal injustices in their classrooms.

In short, teacher education continues to struggle to find experiences sufficiently powerful to support students in deconstructing the messy tangle of racism, classism, poverty, sexism, and opportunity and is much less successful in helping students reconstruct maintainable positions within a commitment to social justice. ([Seidl & Friend, 2002, p. 422](#))

Methods

Data Source

The data for this study were largely autobiographical and were analyzed to draw conclusions. Data included: narratives of my own experiences as a beginning teacher, published autobiographical narratives of teachers serving marginalized populations, and autobiographical data I collected by e-mail ([see Appendix A](#)) from a teacher who experienced Frierean violence turned on her by her marginalized students. The data from the participant were collected by sending three sets of questions and asking her to respond to each before sending the next set ([see Appendix A](#)).

From Culture Shock to Culture Stress

The impetus for this study came out of my own practice. I spent my first years of teaching in the inner city after being graduated from a teacher training program in which all cultures but my own culture, the power culture, were essentially invisible. My mission as a new teacher was to teach language arts, reading and later English and journalism to students representing cultural groups with which I had had no prior experience. Armed only with the standard cannon of educational theory, methodology, psychology and one course in which I'd learned that different cultural groups spoke different dialects of English, I faced my educational charges. It wasn't nearly enough.

A collage of images still explodes into my brain as I think back on those years of teaching: undistinguishable faces of all shapes, sizes and hues; nails sticking out of ancient

blackboards that would occasionally tear my clothes; 30 books for 180 students; the mouse that danced across my room any time I showed filmstrips; the smell of old wood and mimeograph fluid; the sound of the school's one, overworked, copy machine; and intense and chronic emotions of shame and inadequacy. I couldn't understand the raw edge of anger that permeated everyone from students to staff, and I went home and literally twitched as I tried to figure out how to mold what I had to work with into the models of excellence that I had seen and espoused in my teacher training program.

The teacher I communicated with reported coming to her first classroom far better prepared than I. She was culturally competent, having had both previous professional experience in another area and volunteer experience with diverse populations. She reported she earned her teaching credentials in order to work with inner city youth.

I was good with poor people, Black people. They would talk to me, open up to me, where they wouldn't talk to most white, middle-class people...I never experienced myself as 'called' to work with middle class youth. I figured that was for other people.

In addition to her practical experience, my this teacher stated that she came to her first English/language arts classroom with knowledge of both African American literature and the implications of language diversity. Her preparation for what she would encounter serving diverse students left her far better able to articulate the marginalization she experienced as a white teacher serving diverse populations than I am even today. The list she provided me with in our email exchange resonated with my own experience, and the experiences Codell ([1999](#)), Michie ([1999](#)), and Kozol ([1990](#)) related in their teacher narratives. The teacher noted that in her experience: (a) her discipline referrals often would not be addressed, while the referrals of black teachers, and white teachers who had been at the school in question for a while, were; (b) she was expected to buy her own supplies; (c) custodians "spied" on her classrooms to make sure she taught what they thought was appropriate; (d) instructional assistants were sometimes used by African American administrators to monitor her to be sure she chose appropriate curriculum and methods; (e) colleagues assumed she was racist because she was a white liberal and wasn't shy about saying so; (f) students often stole from her and viewed their actions as stealing from "the Man;" (g) students considered it okay to verbally and physically assault her because they could get away with it; (h) African-American adults seemed to think she wouldn't have been verbally and physically assaulted if she weren't racist; and (i) she became afraid to report assaults and threats because when she did, she was considered a poor classroom manager. The teacher reported that she taught at several schools during her time as a classroom teacher of diverse students. In most of her schools, she said she was often identified as a good teacher by parents, support personnel and administrators, and her instructional leadership was supported by them when her students challenged her ability to teach them. "Administrators make an enormous difference," she noted.

Towards the middle of my second school year, I began to move out of culture shock and into culture stress. I was ready to start taking more control of my surroundings. I took an approach similar to Michie's ([1999](#)), trying to take in as much information as I could as quickly as I could. I signed up for every workshop I could find, I took graduate courses at local colleges and I began asking many questions of my more experienced colleagues. I made friends with the school

librarian and spent many planning periods and after-school hours in the school library, frantically searching out and reading titles that I thought would inspire my students. I discovered Richard Wright, Virginia Hamilton and Julius Lester in those years. The teacher noted that she too spent time with the school librarian and learned from her how to put together effective black history programs. The support I was offered allowed me to perceive I was solving problems, but I realized I had many more problems to solve before I could become a comfortable part of the school community. Going the rest of the distance seemed overwhelming and I wasn't sure I could make it.

As my early experiences became increasingly retrospective, I became increasingly angry. Teaching in the inner city is never a picnic, but I could have wasted so much less time had I received any kind of preparation for what I had experienced pedagogically. I was placed in a situation where I had almost nothing to entice my diverse students into literacy that was relevant to their lives as they experienced them. I also had diminished capacity to process information about how to function in the culture due to the stress I was experiencing. After completing my third school year, I left for more emotionally safe surroundings. It was too painful for me to fully develop a culturally relevant pedagogy.

Mutual Socialization

Once she was accepted as a good teacher, she reported that members of the school community did indeed help her to accommodate to the marginalized culture. She resisted the terminology of my question, however. She asserted that she was socialized. She also raised the question of whether members of a marginalized culture could truly be called marginalized in a community of learners where they were in the majority. The teacher also reported "doing what she was required to do" to socialize her students to the institutional expectations of public schools. Looking at her data, my own experience and the related experiences of other teachers of diverse students, I concluded that it was a process of mutual socialization. Table 1 contains examples of how members of marginalized cultures socialized white teachers to the school culture.

Table 1. Teacher Socialization by Established Members of School Culture

Type of Activity	Example
Self-selected members of marginalized groups let teacher know what is appropriate for culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lets teacher know community doesn't always appreciate "book learning."• Help teacher recruit students for activities
More seasoned white teachers share their experience and suggest ways for new teacher to cope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised teacher to have students leave bus passes as collateral for borrowed school supplies
Administrators support teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students circulated a petition about teacher declaring she was a racist. In

front of the students, African American principal put a hand on the teacher's shoulder and complimented her on teaching them about petitions. "Maybe someday you'll write a petition when it make [sic] sense to write one," he said. "You have a good English teacher."

Table 2 gives examples of how teachers socialize their diverse students to standards of the power culture.

Table 2. Student Socialization by Teachers

Type of Activity	Example
Enforced school rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Participated in getting students to line up.Wouldn't let students go to the bathroom without a hall pass
Taught Standard English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Taught and enforced rules in formal speech, writing
Promoted love of books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asked students to handle books carefullyLeft books around in hopes students would steal them. (They never did.)Created a "time machine" out of an old refrigerator
Asked students to "be kind" to each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Would not allow "capping" in class
Asked students to respect teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discouraged stealing from teacherDiscouraged throwing objects out windowsDiscouraged hitting teacher

Cultural Violence

The teacher reported that approaching her students from where they were caused them to begin to question the system.

At every Black school I taught in, the kids reached a point where they got really comfortable with me. Then, they sort of did a double take, remembered I was white, and thought I might be racist. Then, they decided that because I was white I possibly MUST be racist. Sometimes they would go around looking for evidence to prove what I was. What happened next depended on the Black adults.

The teacher pointed out that throughout most of her career, Black adults supported her with the students. She reported that parents who came to observe her classes would reprimand their children for claiming she was a poor teacher; support personnel would tell students to listen to her because she was trying to help them; and administrators trusted her to have the interests of Black kids at heart.

However, she said circumstances changed for her when she began teaching in a building with African-American administrators who perceived white teachers in a different way.

By the time I arrived, I figured things like this (students accusing white teachers of racism) happened all the time. I fully expected the support of the administration. But the administration (at this school) promoted the nascent racism of the kids...I think they have a twisted way of viewing things and I think they believed it was okay to mistreat me because I am white. And I think they were teaching the kids to do the same...Some people say minorities can't be racist because they don't have the institutionalized power. I beg to differ. At that particular school, the African Americans had plenty of power.

...I was written up and removed from my position because I supposedly was an incompetent teacher who used racial epithets against my students. No one came forward to defend me. Not the kids, who knew they were lying, not my colleagues, who knew what kind of person I am, not my union. It took a long time for the case to be settled. The resolution was a compromise. It said I am competent, but that since so many witnesses said I used racial epithets, I had. I got a reprimand in my file. It said I would be terminated if I continued using racial slurs against my students. At first, I was devastated. Only now am I angry. The anger I feel is not principally toward the kids, but towards administrators like the ones at my last school. They are fostering prejudice in the next generation.

The participant said the incident at her last school made it unsafe for her to continue teaching there. Following the reprimand, she left K-12 teaching.

When I asked her if she would ever consider teaching in another urban setting, she responded, "In a heartbeat...when you mention the possibility, something inside me quickens." She also reminded me that not every inner city school is like her last one, and that she had few problems working with professionals who were honest and "genuinely wanted kids to learn and sought a better world." She said the key was to find an urban school that supported its teachers.

Results, Conclusions, Point of View

Not preparing white teachers to serve diverse cultures can result in several possible outcomes. One outcome can be that, like me, new teachers enter a diverse school culture and

become overwhelmed with the task of becoming part of it. Because they do not understand the process to attaining culturally relevant pedagogy, they cannot see progress they may be making. Another possible outcome is that the system spits out good teachers because they threaten it, as it did with the teacher I describe in this paper and with Kozol. A third possibility is that teachers remain in the system, arrested at either the stage of culture shock or culture stress and provide angry, inappropriate instruction to children who deserve better. Kozol (1990), Codell (1999), and Michie (1999) describe several such teachers in their narratives, and I encountered them in my practice.

When discussing ways to address culture shock in second language students, Brown (1994) recommended that teachers provide students with “affective vaccinations,” in which teachers support and guide students through the stages of culture shock to “gradually emerge from those depths to a very powerful and personal form of learning.” These “affective inoculations,” so crucial to developing the ability to negotiate new cultures, are being withheld from our teachers, the very people who need to be immune from the sort of disease that is bred from oppression. Without adequate preparation and scaffolding, these teachers will not have the personal resources they need to contribute to the production of healthy members of United States society.

In an e-mail she wrote me after completing the first set of questions, the teacher made the following observation.

I think there are many people in the Black community who do not trust white teachers...I hope we can reach such people, so they will not make the mistake of trying to get rid of conscientious white teachers who are being targeted by Black kids beginning to experience their power—the sort of teacher I was once.

We need to find ways to prepare white teachers to relate to populations that have not experienced US culture in the way they have. Once they’re in the classroom, we need to develop forums for them to explore their own identity as cultural beings and to become rooted and grow in their school cultures. If we want our teachers to move beyond the stage of arguing and complaining that they have “the wrong people” in their classrooms, we will need to find ways to nurture their abilities to move beyond arguments and complaints into a place where they can actually see the issues behind the students. We will need to think about rewriting Cloer’s questions (2001) to read, “Why is it that US society argues and complains that the wrong teachers were sent to serve marginalized students? When will the teachers find acceptance, support, respect, compassion, and be given the tools they need to join in the life of the community?”

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

E-mail 1

1. How did you decide to make serving diverse populations a major theme in your teaching career?
2. What were your hopes and dreams for yourself and your students when you started teaching in the inner city?
3. How did those hopes and dreams change over the course of your career?

E-mail 2

4. What was your experience of being “the other” like when you taught in schools where members of marginalized cultures represented the majority of the students and the staff in the building?
5. How did members of the marginalized cultures you served help you to accommodate to their learning communities? How did you as a member of the power culture demand they accommodate to the institutional expectations of public schools in the United States? Please include in your discussion your view of the appropriateness of the cultural expectations on both sides.
6. How did your understanding of marginalized students and their abilities change over the course of your career?

E-mail 3

7. Describe experiences of having your marginalized students turn on you and accuse you of being racist. Please discuss your own feelings and perceptions as you processed their perceptions and accusations.
8. Would you ever be able to teach in another urban setting? Why or why not?

Literature Discussions, Participant Stance, and the Discussion Filter

Lynne A. Bercaw

Susan J. Wegmann

For many years, scholars have argued that discussions are a viable response to literature (Beach, 1993; Moffett, 1983). The reader's understanding of and connection to the literature is strengthened, informed, and challenged through one's sharing his/her perspective and one's listening to the perspectives of others (Parsons, 1990; Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Rosenblatt, 1995). This paper is a theoretical piece that explores two studies that consider the phenomenon of literature discussions amongst elementary students (Wegmann, 2001) and amongst prospective teachers (Bercaw, 2000). The intersection of these two studies reveals the support and hindrances of "genuine discussions" (Dillon, 1994) where each student voice is valued and encouraged through examining different perspectives of issues raised in the literature.

Wegmann's study (2001) investigated teacher/student discourse in the elementary classroom during language arts. The findings suggest a set of *teacher moves* that support/hinder students' voice and literary growth. Wegmann defines *Participation Stance* as the position or role in which students participate in class discussions specifically related to literature where language is used in a personally meaningful way (such as exploring a possibility or investigating a personal inquiry). Bercaw's study (2000) investigated the development of student voice in the teacher education classroom through literature discussion groups in a children's literature course. The findings of this study suggest the role of a *Discussion Filter*, which Bercaw defines as the dynamic through which prospective teachers alter what is shared publicly based on what each deems acceptable in the given social context. The intersections of the findings from these two studies offer strong implications for both the elementary classroom and the teacher education classroom. This article explores the notion of student voice through literature discussions and how teachers encourage genuine discussions through class discussions of children's literature. Three areas of intersection are highlighted: (1) students' awareness of discussion dynamics, (2) students' ability to share and hear multiple perspectives through sharing/hearing of voice, and (3) teachers' use of class discussions to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Literature Discussions and Classroom Interactions

Numerous researchers have indicated that students of all ages benefit from discussions after reading. Literature Circles (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996), Book Clubs (Raphael & McMahon, 1994), and Literature Discussion Groups (Routman, 1994) are examples of strategies within literature-based instruction that encourage students' *genuine* discussion of text. According to Dillon (1994) genuine discussion is a

particular form of group interaction where members join together in addressing a question of common concern, exchanging and examining different views to inform their answer, enhancing their knowledge or understanding, their appreciation or judgment, their decision, resolution, or action over the matter at issue. . . People do not discuss experiences whose meaning is plain to them, nor their indisputable feelings or incontestable values. When they do discuss these things, they have some question about them and they join with others to form an answer. (p. 8)

Hickman (1981) and Many and Wiseman (1992) found increases in positive student attitudes toward reading as a result of meaningful student responses to literature which included discussions. However, even though researchers have documented a positive impact due to genuine discussions, most experts agree that genuine discussions (e.g. Dillon, 1994) do not occur regularly in American classrooms. Instead, researchers have found that classroom interactions are typically teacher-oriented as well as difficult to measure.

Teaching and learning revolve around language: knowing about, using, and studying words in order to communicate and learn. Through language, classroom teachers set the tone for classroom interactions (Aulls, 1998; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000). This tone can either support or constrain students' voices (Bakhtin, 1986; Bruner, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). However, in our current age of standardized test pressure, increasing classroom sizes, and stringent accountability, how do teachers value classroom talk, which may or may not serve to teach a list of standards? How can teachers influence language in the classroom to value inquiry and critical thinking? To begin to answer these questions it is helpful to explore the voices of classroom interactions of the past.

The notion of voice in classroom interactions has evolved in meaning and understanding for several decades. In the mid 1960's, Bellack, Kliebard, Hyman, and Smith (1966) found that the most predominate type of teacher/student interaction was characterized by teachers asking factual questions, students answering questions, and teachers evaluating students' answers. A few years later, Hoetker and Ahlbrand (1969) clarified the "rules" and labeled the most common form of student/teacher interaction "recitation," or teacher-centered interaction. During recitation, students frequently answered their teachers' questions but had few other reasons or opportunities for speaking.

Flanders (1970) developed the Classroom Interaction Analysis (CIA) coding system (1970). This was one of the first instruments that targeted teacher/student interactions in classrooms. Each utterance, or group of words spoken for a particular purpose, was coded during a classroom observation to determine a particular function for speaking. At the end of a given observation period, researchers tallied the results and, using the tallies, could describe the most frequent use of language in that particular lesson. While this offered a systematic way of analyzing oral language, critics maintained that CIA coding limited possible categories of student expression, ignored both nonverbal and written communication, and often disregarded rich contextual cues (Gee, 1991; Mehan, Hertweck, Combs, & Flynn, 1982).

Following an ethnographic perspective, more contemporary scholars found similar aspects of oral classroom interactions (Cazden, 1988). Mehan (1979) characterized the Initiate, Reply, Evaluate (IRE) pattern of discourse in which teachers initiated discussions and evaluated students' answers. He found that students mostly replied to teacher-generated questions. Similarly, Nystrand (1997) characterized classrooms as places in which "the plodding transmission of information through classroom recitation" (p. 3) was of utmost importance.

Most literacy experts agree that teachers who effectively support literacy learning must provide other, more complex patterns of interaction. Based on the works of Bakhtin and Vygotsky, Nystrand (1997) suggested that oral classroom discourse should be a dialogue or

conversation, rather than a recitation. He recognized that learning is a sociocognitive event, supported by “tension, even conflict, between the conversants, between self and other, as one voice ‘refracts’ another” (p. 8). Thus, to Nystrand, supportive oral classroom discourse necessarily makes room for conversations. Eeds and Wells (1989) also suggested that literacy lessons be crafted around “grand conversations” instead of predetermined, factual questions.

Brown (1991) reported that recitation is so pervasive in schools that teachers and students think of recitation as a natural way to speak during classroom interactions. He described the frustration of teachers who tried to facilitate genuine discussions as an alternative to an IRE pattern (Mehan, 1979). Instead of enabling discussions, the teacher he studied apparently confused students who were trying to follow the rules of the school language game (Bellack, et al., 1969). In other words, the students were waiting for the teacher to ask factual questions, to which they could answer with few words, without much thought. He maintained that language in most schools describes the process of teaching something, rather than expressing or reflecting on something. In his “literacy of thoughtfulness” (p. xiii) Brown concurred with Halliday (1975) and Mehan (1979), and advocated encouraging a discourse that included uncertainty, disagreement, important questions, ambiguity, and curiosity in order to prompt students to synthesize and evaluate various texts and to give students opportunities to use a full range of functions for speaking about, and engaging with, texts.

Despite the work of experts like Nystrand, Eeds, Wells, Dewey, Bakhtin, and Vygotsky, who advocated student inquiry and open-ended discussion, the question remains, why do most classroom interactions revolve around recitation (Hoetker & Ahlbrand, 1969), while following the rules of the language game? How do some teachers manage to resist the status quo and enact classroom interactions that support multiple perspectives and genuine discussion? In part, the answers to these questions can be found by examining the *stance* of both teachers and students, and the discussion *filters* students employ during discussions about issues in the literature.

Study #1: The Participant Stance

Wegmann observed four fourth-grade teachers in two schools as they enacted literacy lessons. The corpus of data includes transcribed audio taped oral classroom discourse in the four teachers’ rooms and three interviews with each teacher and interviews with four students from each teacher’s classroom to conduct a member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In all, she analyzed 247 literacy events: those classroom interactions by two or more people that had logical beginnings and endings. Typically, these events contained multiple speakers and occurred over time, most lasting five to 25 minutes.

Building on Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory (1994) and Mehan's (1979) understanding of oral discourse patterns, Wegmann analyzed oral literature responses by focusing on stances during discussions. She found that teachers and students assumed either a Spectator Stance, in which they used language as outside observers of a text, or a Participant Stance, in which they used language as active participants and engaged more deeply with the text. While her study verified numerous other studies of the limited nature of most oral classroom discourse, it also illuminated ways to support meaningful chains of utterances (Bakhtin, 1986) within classrooms by describing effective classroom practice. Of the four

teachers Wegmann studied, one stood out from the rest. Ms. Price (pseudonym) was categorized as an “exemplary” teacher by her principal. After spending time in her room, during two school years and two complete cycles of literacy lessons, Wegmann noted valuable episodes in which both Ms. Price and her students were talking to think deeply about texts. That is, they used classroom discussions to critically examine the world. Both teacher and students assumed a *participant stance* (Britton, 1993) that encouraged various opinions to emerge and students’ voices to dominate. Ms. Price’s stance toward classroom discourse created space for students’ voices and their attempts to understand their respective worlds. What Ms. Price and her students said and did during class discussions revealed, in part, the nature of their stances. And their stances were the key to understanding why some of Ms. Price’s classroom discussions were different from traditional classrooms. Through observation and analysis of the discourse in Ms. Price’s and in other classrooms, Wegmann concluded that it is possible, and even probable that students’ voices, together with an open stance toward language can facilitate students’ learning and provide opportunities for literacy growth.

Wegmann identified two types of stances: *Participant Stance* and *Spectator Stance*. Similar to spectators in a sporting event, at times Ms. Price and her students talked *about* the text. The following excerpt illustrates a *Spectator Stance* and took place while the fourth-graders read *James and the Giant Peach* orally (numbers identify turns):

1. Ms. Price: How do you think James feels right now, as he’s looking out and thinking about the other kids? Taylor?
2. Taylor: Lonely.
3. Ms. Price: Lonely, yeah. How else? June?
4. June: Homesick.
5. Ms. Price: Very homesick, probably.

As this excerpt shows, both teacher and students are taking part in what most would call a traditional classroom “discussion,” one in which the teacher directs each interaction (turn numbers 1, 3, and 5) and students focus their answers directly on the written text (turn numbers 2 and 4). The teacher and students talked *about* texts, rather than constructed meaning *from* them. Thus, the spectator stance is characterized by: (a) teachers initiating questions that have limited numbers of responses (as in turn 1); (b) students responding only to teachers’ questions (as in turns 2 and 4); and (c) teachers evaluating students’ responses according to explicit information in the written text (as in turns 3 and 5).

Though most of the interactions in Ms. Price’s classroom were spectator in nature, Wegmann identified interactions that took place where Ms. Price and her students actively tried to understand the text, by exploring possibilities or building connections between their personal lives and the texts they studied. When Ms. Price and her students did these things with their language, Wegmann identified these interactions as “participant” stances. The Participant Stance is characterized in the following ways: (a) language is used in a personally meaningful way (such

as exploring a possibility or investigating a personal inquiry); (b) teachers and students are open to various topics for discussion (raised by a text, a peer, or a teacher); and (3) teachers and students accept multiple perspectives on topics at hand. Wegmann characterized *moves* in the discussion—what participants were doing with their language in order capture the complexity of spoken language during discussions. The moves within the Participant Stance stood out because they were vastly different from the spectator stance. These moves include:

1. Tries to wonder (common to both teachers and students)
2. Tries to connect a new topic with a personal experience (common to both teachers and students)
3. Tries to express an opinion (common to both teachers and students)
4. Teacher tries to encourage students to express an opinion (teachers only)
5. Students try to clarify own ideas (students only).

It is these moves that characterize the Participant Stance. Assuming a Participant Stance during literary discussions seemed to deepen participation and to encourage students to more fully connect with whatever text they were discussing. Ms. Price engaged her students in genuine discussions (Dillon, 1994) and grand conversations about texts (Eeds & Wells, 1989). The teacher frequently asked students to consider multiple perspectives and to share their opinions about what they read. Verified in students' interviews, Ms. Price's students seemed to enjoy the activities she planned and seemed to connect deeply with the novels they read together.

Educational Importance of the Participant Stance

Lindfors (1991) suggests that teachers may play many roles in classrooms including: provider, demonstrator, learner, observer, and responder. Teachers provide purposeful experiences in which to use language, demonstrate their own struggles with literacy, learn about concepts along with students, observe students' attempts at language growth, and respond to students' language development by supporting and encouraging them. These roles are quite different from traditional roles of teachers that can be characterized by dispensing prepackaged information and transmitting knowledge.

In the realm of classroom discourse, teachers may support or constrain students' language growth by encouraging a Participant Stance. Experts maintain that language is purposeful and can be used for various functions: (a) to aesthetically respond to a text (Rosenblatt, 1994); (b) to engage with a subject matter while reading (Routman, 1994); (c) to enrich an understanding of a complex idea (Goodman, 1986); or (d) to communicate an idea with another person (Berthoff, 1981). These functions are supported by a Participant Stance, which includes genuine class discussions (Dillon, 1994), or interactions that are characterized by student-to-student interchanges, multiple perspectives, and an attention to students' interests. In classrooms, the conversation is meaningfully sustained when teachers and students work together to create

communication events (Gallas et al., 1996), such as those found when teachers and students assume a Participant Stance.

Students who assume a Participant Stance typically make choices in determining texts or topics to read, write, or talk about, which is similar to a meaning-oriented focus found in whole language instruction (Goodman, 1986). Advocates of both integrated language arts and literature-based instruction, two approaches to teaching in which teachers may encourage and assume a Participant Stance, maintain that teachers have opportunities to create healthy learning environments (Karolides, 1997; Routman, 1994). These environments are sustained when students are given opportunities to interpret texts, ask critical questions about what they read and write, and adeptly understand language – three important results of enacting a Participant Stance and encouraging classroom teachers to set a participant tone in classroom interactions.

Study #2: The Discussion Filter

Bercaw (2000) explored prospective teachers' understanding of cultures (their own and others') through discussions of culturally relevant children's literature. This ethnographic study of a required course for prospective teachers focused on small group literature discussions. The study led to the finding of the notion of the Discussion Filter, which will be discussed at length shortly. In brief, the essence of the Discussion Filter is that one alters or filters what one shares in a given social context based on what the individual believes is acceptable in the given group norms.

This study was conducted in an undergraduate children's literature course in which emphasis was placed on discussions of culturally relevant literature (literature that represents and reflects various cultures). These discussions provided the basis for Teacher Education Students' (TESs) understanding of children, literature, and culture. Bercaw describes culture as a construct encompassing race, assumptions, biases, and privilege as well as daily habits of living. One reason this course was chosen as a research site was that a large part of the class sessions was devoted to whole-class and small-group discussions where TESs had the opportunity to engage in sharing their voices and listening to others' voices (Dillard 1997; Gollnick, 1992; Klassen-Endrizzi & Ruiz, 1995; Pinsent, 1997; Taxel, 1989).

The corpus of data includes: field notes taken during each class session, some of which were videotaped; audio-tapes of 12 small group literature discussions; paper copies of web-based literature discussion correspondence between TESs and elementary students; listserv discussions; and individual semi-structured interviews of class members (three interviews each, in the beginning, middle and end of the course). Data were analyzed through the constant comparative method where the theoretical perspective is grounded in and informed by the data (Erlandson, et al., 1993). Analysis involved the implementation of the funneling structure of inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) where the inquiry became increasingly focused on what motivated individuals toward social transformation. Patterns and themes emerged from analysis of reading, analyzing and synthesizing the various data sources (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data were coded to identify salient categories.

The concept of the Filter emerged in one of the early class discussions when Deborah (pseudonym) was conveying a story about her visit to a predominantly African-American school. As she spoke, she seemed uncomfortable with word choices such as “low socioeconomic” and “African-American.” Each time she said African-American her voice became noticeably softer. Her body language also showed some element of discomfort as she wiped her forehead and shook her head, as she appeared to search for the words to use. She even articulated how she was feeling “tense” about sharing. Although Deborah’s discomfort in sharing could be attributed to many other factors such as discomfort sharing in a large group, struggling with remembering the details of the conversation, or her general style of speaking, subsequent interviews confirmed that the hesitations and voice intonation had to do with the perceived delicate subject matter and her uncertainty about how her comments might be perceived by her classmates and the instructor.

The concept of a Discussion Filter emerged from the analysis of whole class discussions, literature discussion groups, and individual interviews. The concept was informed by two tenets of critical theory: 1) the critical examination of self and 2) the development of voice through conversation (Delpit, 1995; Freire, 1973/1990; Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Within the concept of voice development, there lies an assumption that one will share truthfully and genuinely one’s thoughts and beliefs with others. Truthful and “genuine” (Dillon, 1994) conversations, however, do not always occur, particularly when the issue is a difficult one about culture, race, race relations, and other topics related to culture. The hindrance to truthful and genuine conversations can be attributed to many causes including one’s lack of clarity on his or her position on certain issues or one’s choice to not share what one believes. Expanding on the example from Deborah, the individual may not be sure if, in a scholarly setting, she should share that she does not know if it is acceptable to say “Black” or “African-American.” She may be more accustomed to saying “Black.” However, given the academic environment, she shares what she believes to be more acceptable by the scholarly group, “African-American.”

Individual Filters

As the semester progressed, Bercaw noted where the Filter appeared. In individual interviews, she probed into what constituted each individual’s filter. TESs were asked for their insights into the idea of a filter. Many of the interviews evolved into discussions about voice and whether the TESs had the opportunity to share their voices in class discussions, literature discussions groups, and web-based discussions. Although the literature discussion groups allowed for opportunities to explore issues of cultural identity and race, race relationships and related topics, TESs agreed the discussions did not reach the depth they would have liked. The interviews further informed the developing concept of a Filter in that the reasons for filtering differed slightly for each person. While each TES acknowledged a Filter, each also stated reasons as to why each filtered what she did in the discussions. While there were differences, there were also commonalities between them: the desire to be “right” and the desire to share socially accepted ideas (e.g., politically correct ideas).

One reason that was common to all TESs was a desire to be “right” and to contribute fully articulated thoughts. In other words, class discussions were not viewed as places to *work through* one’s beliefs and assumptions, but as arenas to share established, polished thoughts. For

example, Deborah commented that she perceived others as being more knowledgeable about children's literature and stated in an interview, "I feel like I have to have something mastered before I can really discuss it...Maybe it's a lack of self-esteem, but it didn't feel like others were interested in what I had to say." Further, she felt intimidated by the "good students" in the class. Sarah gives another perspective on the importance of being right. She commented that when addressing controversial or difficult subject matters, one needs to "be careful and make sure you say things right." By "right" she means one says what one intended to say.

A second reason that was the hesitation to share beliefs they felt were not "PC" [politically correct]. Class discussions were not viewed as places to be necessarily genuine with beliefs they thought would not be accepted; discussions were perceived as arenas to share ideas that were socially acceptable. Several TESs stated in individual interviews that they filter what they share because of their respective religious faiths. They perceived that their views were not "PC." One TES acknowledged that few people shared her perspectives, but that she deemed it important to express her thoughts. Her filter was motivated by making sure her perspective was shared cautiously, especially since her views were not popular in given settings; she therefore "carefully selected" what she shared. She also admitted to guarding what she said in her classes because she feels most professors are liberal and often will dismiss her faith-informed views. Another TES shared that she hesitated to share because her ideas, informed by her Christian faith, were not "PC." She stated:

As I shared my response, I thought, 'It's not cool to be Christian.' It's not PC because of it being so narrow-minded and conservative and all these other things. So my first instinct was to not even mention that I believed the stories of the Bible that he was talking about. And then I thought, 'That's kind of crazy. Is this not who I am?' It was scary to put on the list serve because somebody could shoot me down when you leave yourself vulnerable like that. When it's something so important to you, you're leery of someone damaging it somehow or attacking you...I do feel like I had voice. But I was really listening to myself think before I'd say things in discussions.

The words with which she spoke of the consequences are powerful: shot down, vulnerable, damage, and attack. One must ask, then, what conditions allowed her to take the risks involved, and share her genuine reactions to the article, and in so doing, exposing herself to potential attack? Madeline identified two factors that influenced her decision to share: (1) she was true to the assignment of responding with one's "initial reactions," and (2) she acknowledged she needs to be true to her beliefs (not compartmentalizing school from personal life).

Educational Importance of the Discussion Filter

Initially the Filter was identified as a negative construct that hindered genuine conversations. Evidence of this negative aspect of the Filter was found in Deborah's struggle when speaking about cultural issues and Madeline's conscious decision to not filter her statements. If members of the class were sharing "acceptable" words and ideas, then the discussions would fail to reach a level where participants grappled with tough issues of culture and in doing so develop their own voice. The Filter would take whatever assumptions or questions one had and alter them to meet group expectations of what is "right." In this sense, the

Filter hinders one from bringing to the discussion ideas or questions that contradict what is socially or academically acceptable. The Filter hinders communication and grappling with issues by preventing dissenting opinions from what is deemed acceptable from being shared.

Although the Filter was initially seen as having negative implications, Bercaw began to explore its possible positive implications. Kate Lee's captured the essence of positive implications of the Filter when she stated in the final interview:

I feel like we have to listen even more carefully to what other people want to be called, to what other think is their right, because we are contributing still to the oppression of that group. I think that even my issue is how do my African-American friends feel about being called African-Americans?

This statement was profound in light of that the Filter could serve a positive role in heightening awareness of issues of race, culture, ethnicity, and power. For example, how certain groups of people are labeled might demonstrate this notion of heightened awareness. In choosing any label, one might reflect on the various implications of using a label and be sensitive to these various implications. The choice of label, however, is secondary to the heightened sensitivity to implications of the labels we use. There is power in descriptors, and each term is packed with meaning and assumptions.

This course in children's literature was designed to provide opportunities to explore culture and refine voice. Yet these opportunities generally resulted in superficial conversations. Interviews with the TESs revealed various reasons why they filtered their contributions to the discussions. When one implements discussions as part of the classroom practice, one must have a clear goal for the discussions. If, as in the children's literature course, the instructor's goal is for voice development, one must acknowledge the existence of a Filter. By explicitly stating that class discussions are a place where beliefs and assumptions are explored, the expectations would allow the TESs the freedom to delve deeply into what they believe and the implications of those beliefs upon their pedagogy. Indeed, raising consciousness about the Filter is a discussion in itself where we can note where and why we filter what we share publicly. Beyond acknowledging the existence of the Filter and making it explicit, instructors need to slow the pace of discussions to allow participants opportunity to formulate and articulate their beliefs and assumptions. Further, instructors need to emphasize in words and actions that in such discussions there are no "right answers" and all contributions will be treated with respect, including ideas that may seem in opposition to the instructor's.

The Intersection of the Participant Stance and the Discussion Filter

The exploration of literature discussions in light of both one's stance and one's filter offers insights for both teachers and students to deepening the level of genuine discussions. The authors explored the phenomenon of discussions where teachers foster and encourage students' genuine voice and diverse perspectives in response to literature. The authors contend that the discussions can only be as genuine as what the participants bring to the discussion. While Wegmann explored how teachers manage to facilitate interactions that support multiple perspectives and genuine discussions, Bercaw explored how students manage to subtly resist

genuine discussions through filtering their comments in what they perceive is correct in the given social context. In other words, while teachers may encourage genuine responses to literature, students bring to the conversations filters, which hinder genuine conversations. We therefore explore what other sociocultural norms are active in discussion and inquiry and how teachers can help students negotiate their individual filters, clarify their respective voices, and value other's perspectives.

Intersecting Themes

Upon analysis of the Wegmann and Bercaw studies, several themes emerged from their respective findings. These include: (1) Awareness—students' awareness of discussion dynamics; (2) Voice—students' ability to share genuinely and critically one's perspective and ability to hear others' perspectives; and (3) Diversity—teachers' use of class discussions in light of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Awareness. Findings from both studies have implications for teachers and teacher educators. Though the two studies were conducted in different levels of classrooms (elementary and university), implications from each can and do inform the other. A teacher's awareness of the Participant Stance is important for both classroom teachers and teacher educators. The teacher needs to make his/her students aware of what stance entails, model the different types of stances (e.g., spectator versus participant) and begin to unpack what each looks and sounds like. By making the stance explicit, teachers and students can negotiate what norms are expected in classroom discussions. For example, what looks and sounds like a spectator stance to the teacher and other students may well be a quiet, reflective *participation* by the student. A student may explain that his/her participation is more explicit in one's written work. The teacher (and other students) may then engage in discussing how more quiet, reserved students show their participating stance.

Likewise when the Filter is made explicit to students it can be negotiated. Given the positive consequences of the Filter, it is important for the teacher to highlight that certain filters are important for maintaining a safe environment, especially while rapport between all classroom participants is building. An awareness of the Filter can make students conscious of when, why and how they filter what they share. Some things may *need* to be filtered (e.g., a student recognizes that referring to a certain group by a term which one is *accustomed* to saying may be harmful because of its derogatory nature). An awareness of one's filter (when, why and how) can then lead toward one negotiating one's way around it. One might ask, "Why am I uncomfortable talking about this?" and begin to critically examine underlying beliefs and attitudes.

Certainly a student's awareness of his/her stance and how one filters his/her comments is not enough; an awareness of one's stance and filter necessitates action. When one is aware of the dynamics at work in a literature discussion, one can be more deliberate in how one participates. Awareness leads to the student's ability to *choose* how and what one contributes to the discussion.

Voice. The notion of *voice* is one that is discussed in various fields of study (e.g., critical theory, multicultural education, teacher education). Voice entails one's ability to represent one's

thoughts (beliefs, perceptions, assumptions, etc.) publicly, either in writing or dialogue. Bercaw (2000) claims that one important activity for developing voice is engagement in critical discussions and the connections made between people through these discussions. It is through connections with others of diverse cultures that individual voices are shared, heard, and refined. The greater the connections to others, the less “otherness” individuals will have (Delpit, 1995; Dillard, 1997; Gollnick, 1992; Hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995). For elementary students, voice means the ability to synthesize thoughts and share them; it also means the ability to listen to others’ voices and to begin to see things from others’ perspectives. For teacher education students, voice entails the critical examination of self (via reflection), critical examination of one’s world and larger social context, and three taking action on social injustices ascertained through one’s critical examination of self and society.

Literature discussions can provide opportunities for both elementary students and prospective teachers to critically examine their beliefs and the justices and injustices of their society (through reading and responding to literature) (Bercaw, 2000; Moller, 2002). In the earlier transcript of the Participant Stance, Wegmann demonstrated this through a class discussion of the book James and the Giant Peach the students dealt with the injustices shown to the main character James. Because students were accustomed to sharing their feelings about texts, they knew that the classroom discussion time was an appropriate platform to negotiate how they felt about James’ situation and how they could deal with situations in their own lives. Evidence of exploring voice in Bercaw’s study involves the discussion of Morning Girl, by Michael Dorris, where one student challenged how the author highlights one culture over another in the discussion of Morning Girl:

What kind of research did he [Michael Dorris] do? He’s making some assumptions about human nature and their culture that I think I would probably question...I think he assumed that while Western culture is open to criticism, this culture [the native Bahamian culture], is not open [to criticism].

In this example, Jane was sharing her belief that the author may have glorified one culture only to put down another.

The opportunities available to students in literature discussions, however, are only as good as the discussions themselves. Voice is directly affected by the Participant Stance and the Filter. Numerous researchers have verified that some discussions do not portray the characteristics of genuine classroom discussions (Cazden, 1988; Dillon, 1994; Mehan, 1979). In fact, most teachers do not encourage students to express their voice and assume a Participant Stance. Other classrooms do not encourage students to explore which filters they may possess.

Diversity. Along with teachers and students being aware of the stance they assume and the filters they possess, both studies also suggest that culturally diverse learners may deal with classroom discussions in vastly different ways. For example, a mainstream teacher who is encouraging a Participant Stance may find a non-mainstream student resisting [the urge] to join in the discussion, if the student feels that he/she should not participate in this kind of activity with an authority figure. In other words, cultural norms about teacher/student relationships might shut down an English as a Second Language student’s participation in a literature discussion.

Bercaw suggests that various Filters shape and define what participants share, based on what they perceive their group members will deem acceptable.

Along with diversity among students, Bercaw's study suggested that one benefit of literature discussions about non-mainstream cultures is for teacher education students to be exposed to cultures other than their own. In fact, the use of children's literature as a means for teacher education students to hear multiple voices is supported by various scholars including Taxel (1989), Gollnick (1992), Klassen-Endrizzi and Ruiz (1995), Dillard (1997), Pinsent (1997), and Moller (2002). There are two purposes in implementing culturally relevant children's literature. First, this type of literature provides opportunities for the readers (in this case, teacher education students) to hear other voices. Literature allows teacher education students to "vicariously experience their own culture as well as that of others" (Desai, 1997, p. 166). Second, culturally relevant literature provides an impetus for conversation about issues raised through the story (Desai, 1997; Klassen-Endrizzi & Ruiz, 1995; Pinsent, 1997). The literature is the impetus for students to see themselves and others represented in the stories.

Conclusion

Both Wegmann's and Bercaw's studies explored the nature of classroom interactions during literature discussions. By understanding different stances and by understanding how one filters what one shares, classroom teachers can better support or facilitate genuine literature discussion environments. Considering the studies together highlights the dynamics of discussions and how prospective teachers' awareness of their stance and their respective filters affect the depth of the literature discussions. Further, this piece explores methods of discourse analysis and suggests that oral classroom discourse is a complicated phenomenon, worthy of complex ways of measurement. As such, discourse analysis can more accurately portray what actually occurs in classrooms by investigating stances of participants as well as attending to discussion Filters which may influence public speech. This piece explored three areas within classroom discussions: awareness, voice, and diversity. Given that literature discussions are a viable means of responding to, connecting to and comprehending the written word, analysis of the dynamics of literature discussions is imperative to ascertain how students participate. Though this paper is a conceptual piece synthesizing two studies, future inquiry involves how the awareness and action upon the Participant Stance and the Discussion Filter affects students' connection to and comprehension of the literature.

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wwwdotphonicsdotcom

Cynthia D. Bertelsen

Susan Kauffman

Krista Howard

Lessie L. Cochran

PHONICS! This word often conjures up images of enjoyable, interactive activities or repetitive, passive worksheets. Depending on the instructors' knowledge and access to resources, one of these images will be more prevalent. According to Stahl & Stahl (1998), teachers should incorporate principles of "good phonics instruction" into their classroom by (a) developing the alphabetic principle and phonological awareness skills and (b) providing sufficient practice in reading words, since the purpose of phonics is to help children learn to recognize and read the words they encounter in print. Good phonics instruction should not teach rules, use worksheets, dominate instruction, and does not have to be boring.

One way to encourage and invite active student participation in good phonics instruction would be to incorporate technology. Since today's students are often more comfortable using computers, they might find learning more engaging by using web sites, rather than traditional paper and pencil activities. The authors sought to catalog web sites that might help teachers provide good phonics instruction.

Developing the Rubrics for Evaluating Web Sites

The authors looked at several different websites to find rubrics that could be used to evaluate web sites. Many rubrics contained similar elements, such as ease of navigation, appearance of site, number of links, and presence of phonics content. We explored the wording, the layouts and the evaluation scales. Next, we looked at the rubric designs. We highlighted items from the various rubrics; these items were then discussed and narrowed down to ten items. We made a final rubric to evaluate the different phonics web sites using these standard criteria. The newly created rubric had 10 items organized into 3 categories. The first three items related to content, content accuracy, and spelling/grammar. The second set included site layout, graphics and colors, and links. The last set consisted of four items that supplemented the web sites with additional contact information, last updates, reference to national or state standards, and extension to other environments.

We scored promising phonics web sites according to the items we created. The scoring followed a three-tier system, with three being the highest and one being the lowest. (See [Table 1](#) for a listing of the items and scoring criteria.) A score of three on each of these items would indicate a web site included: a wealth of phonic information that was *accurate* and without errors, was *attractive* and usable with many *graphics and colors*, had *three or more* additional live *links*, was *recently updated* with *contact information*, included *connections to standards*, and had *extensions to home/parents*.

After speaking with others who were teaching phonic courses, we came to the conclusion that the rubric related well to teachers needs but it did not seem to transfer in the same manner to the students. Thus we made modifications to the existing teacher rubric and developed a separate student rubric ([Table 2](#)).

Table 1: Web Site Evaluation - Teacher

Name of web site: _____ Date Visited: _____

URL: _____

Intended Audience:	Primary	Both	Intermediate
Item	3	2	1
Content	Offers a wealth of information about specific phonics skills	Offers limited information about specific phonics skills	Lacks information about specific phonics skills
Content Accuracy	All information is accurate	Some information is accurate	Site not accurate
Spelling/Grammar	No errors in spelling and grammar	1 -5error in spelling and grammar	More than 5 errors in spelling and grammar
Layout	Attractive and usable layout-easy to find information	Useable layout, but somewhat difficult to find information	Cluttered or confusing layout, unable to locate information
Links	Three or more additional, working links included	1-2 additional, working links included	Additional links included, with at least one working
Contact Information	Contact person or information included	Contact person included but lacks information	No contact person or information included
Graphics and Color	Very interesting, does not distract reader	Somewhat interesting, does not distract reader	Not interesting or available, distracts reader
Last Updated	1 day to 6 months since last update	7 months to 1 year since last update	Over a year since last update or no date on site
Standards	Standards posted on site	Standards linked to site	Standards not available
Extension to Other Environments	Many activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school	Few activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school	No activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school

Total Column Points: _____

Total Points _____ /30

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Table 2: Web Site Evaluation - Students

Name of web site: _____ Date Visited: _____

URL: _____

Intended Audience:	Primary	Both	Intermediate
	Item	3	2
Content	Has more than 3 phonics activities	Has 2 or 3 phonics activities	Has 1 or 0 phonics activities
Content Accuracy	All information is accurate	Has 1 inaccurate piece of information	Has 2 or more inaccurate pieces of information
Spelling/Grammar	There are no errors in spelling and grammar	There is 1 error in spelling or grammar	There are 2 or more errors in spelling or grammar
Graphics and Color	Interesting, adds to site content	Interesting but does not add to content and is not distracting	Uninteresting, none are on the site, or they are distracting
Layout	Easy to find desired phonics game or activity	Somewhat difficult to find desired phonics game or activity	Difficult to find desired phonics game or activity
Directions	Directions are clear and easy to follow	Directions are somewhat confusing but can be figured out easily once game begins	Directions are confusing and difficult to figure out even after game has begun
Speed of Presentation	Speed of presentation controlled by user's input	Speed of presentation a little too fast or too slow	Speed of presentation is much too fast or too slow
Feedback	Errors are treated neutrally & consequences do not reinforce incorrect responses	Errors are not treated in a negative manner	Errors are treated in a negative manner or are reinforced
Activity Completion	End of activity is apparent or can escape easily	End of activity is apparent but cannot escape easily	End of activity is not apparent and cannot escape easily
Parent or Teacher Information	Goals of activities are listed and there are 3 or more extension activities suggested	Purpose of activity is listed and there are 1 or 2 extension activities suggested	No goals or purposes are stated and there are no extension activities

Total Column Points: _____

Total Points _____ /30

[Back](#)

When creating the student rubric, we kept the same three-tiered ranking system, but made modifications to five of the ten items. The five unchanged items included *content*, *content accuracy*, *spelling/grammar*, *layout*, and *graphics/colors*. The other five items were modified to represent areas directly related to student learning. We wanted to find out whether or not the *directions* were clear and easy to follow. We looked at *speed of presentation* especially since children with special needs may have shorter attention spans. We also wanted to find out if the program gave *feedback* to the students for correct/incorrect responses. Another consideration was *activity completion* (i.e., something clearly saying that this activity was over). If students had gone through the activity a couple of times and wanted to quit, could they simply stop, or go on to some other links? Our final category was the presence of *parent or teacher links* to further student activities.

Using the Rubrics

We paired up to locate and evaluate the web sites. Each pair searched for sites via the Internet (various search engines as well as colleagues' recommendations). We used key words such as phonics, language arts, phonemic awareness, early reading, and early childhood special education to search for sites. The pairs independently evaluated the list of sites and determined their top ten. Then we came together to discuss our rankings. Each of us examined the sites from our own perspective—one coming from the general education perspective, a second from the special education perspective, a third from the primary (1-3) grades perspective, and a final from the middle (4-6) grades perspective. During this shared meeting, the two public school teachers focused on sites that their students enjoyed interacting with and/or that they could use to supplement the K-6 curriculum, whereas, the teacher educators focused on sites with accurate content, clear connections to standards, and links of theory to practice. The teacher educators eliminated sites with a large percentage of ads and retained sites with suggested lesson plans.

Interestingly, we found that pairs had identified at least five of the same web sites (starred in list) and ranked them within the combined list of twenty sites. Each of the twenty sites was re-evaluated to determine the top ten. These ten are listed alphabetically in [Table 3](#), without regard to rankings.

Using Websites for Instructional Purposes

One use for web sites is to help teachers better meet their curriculum and standards. Teachers have an opportunity to modify information on the web site to match their individual curricular needs. For example, one author changed the words in a game on the website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonic>) so that the words she selected matched the word wall words she introduced that week. The words were also used as a review for last week's words. Students also could use this approach, independently, at computer and ABC centers. Some sites were directly linked to state standards (<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities>) while other sites referenced grade-level standards (http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html).

Another use is to assist teachers as they address early reading development. All grade levels need to emphasize reading, but the lower grades should focus on early reading foundations such as alphabet recognition, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and word recognition

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonics>). Some states have placed a greater emphasis on incorporating phonics into their reading programs. Teachers are expected to identify students who are having trouble with basic reading skills. If they are not identified as young children, the likelihood of developing difficulties increases as the children mature. Preschool and

Table 3: List of Web Sites for Good Phonics Instruction**Websites for Phonics: Children**

1. Between the Lions: Get Wild About Reading developed by the Public Broadcasting System (2002) * <http://pbskids.org/lions/>
2. Chateau Meddybemps/Fun and Games created in 1995 by Jerry Jindrich (2003) <http://www.meddybemps.com/letterary/index.html>
3. Game Goo: Learning that Sticks created by Cognitive Concepts, Inc. (2001) <http://www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/gooeyhome.html>
<http://www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/gooey.html>
4. Words and Pictures developed by British Broadcasting Company (2000) * <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonics>

Websites for Phonics: Teachers

5. A-Z Teachers Stuff Network created by a classroom teacher (1997; 2002) * <http://atozteacherstuff.com/themes/alphabet.shtml>
6. Can Teach developed by Iram Khan and James Horner (nd) <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/beginning.html>
7. Phonics Link created by the California Department of Education (2002) * http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html
8. READ*WRITE*NOW Activities for Reading and Writing Fun was a Joint Project of the United States Department of Education, the American Library Association, Pizza Hut, Inc., Scholastic, Inc., Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (1996) <http://www.ed.gov/Family/RWN/Activ97/begin.html>
9. Scholastic developed by Scholastic Book Club (2003) * <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities>

10. Wisconsin Literacy Education and Reading Network Source <http://www.wilearns.com/apps/>

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middle-grade teachers are held accountable for teaching early reading skills, which left unaddressed, could lead to deficiencies in the older children.

Web sites can be used as resources for parents. Teachers encourage parents to get involved in the schools. Through newsletters, parents are informed about web sites that are applicable to reading strategies generally and phonic skills in specifically. Parents and children can make use of specific sites identified in the newsletter, such as games they might play together. This opportunity enables children to play on the web without interruption and interact with their parents at the same time (<http://pbskids.org/lions/>). Some students we have worked with have reported that they enjoyed this option because they had more time to play at home than at school. Older students and their parents might use the web sites to support school instruction (<http://www.meddybemps.com/letterary/index.html>). This is a good way to review material without completing worksheets. The parents of children, who have problems with a particular sound, can log on and get ideas to further the home/school connection. If there was a particular sound the class is working on in spelling, this too can be placed in the newsletter so parents could encourage their children at home.

Web sites might be used to gather assessment information on students. Teachers could use phonics web sites for two different forms of assessment. First, websites can be used for informal assessment purposes. For example, teachers can format many activities found on each site to assess students' knowledge of phonics. Second, websites may contain copies of formal assessments available for teacher use. For example, the University of Oregon developed the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Assessment for K-3 teachers. "This assessment instrument is a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills" (<http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>). Both assessment options can be used to help identify students who are having trouble with these basic skills. According to one of the authors, who used the DIBELS assessment in her class, this assessment tool helped her identify the specific phonic skills needed by her students.

Web sites provide valuable resources for teachers. Several of the web sites include copies of lesson plans (i.e., <http://atozteacherstuff.com/themes/alphabet.shtml>, http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html) for teachers, and some also allow teachers to submit ideas of their own. Teachers can informally share web sites through grade level or team meetings and regular teacher meetings. The curriculum directors or principals for a more formal presentation can also provide lists of web sites.

Recently, technology has enhanced educational opportunities for teachers, parents and students. The Internet has enabled teachers and parents to work collaboratively in providing extensions to academic learning. Web sites should be colorful, engaging and interactive to

sustain student attention and interest. While doing so, the web sites can also be informative, educational, and beneficial for all stakeholders: teachers, parents, and children. For teachers, web sites can assist in planning and teaching while helping to organize and deliver instruction to individuals and small groups of children. For parents, web sites can increase communication between home and school by assisting the parent with homework and informing them about curricular developments. Finally, the children can use websites to supplement their classroom instruction providing multi-modality learning.

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Finding Contact Zones in English Language Arts: Reaction to the Call to Forum

“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys”

Tom Cloer

It seems those fellow prisoners of Chicano poet Jimmy Santiago Bacca, featured in Bill Moyers’ Language of Life ([1995](#)) PBS series, were wrong. They told Bacca that “Books are stupid. Sissies read books. You couldn’t do nothing with a book. You couldn’t fix a 57 Chevy with a book.” Thus we have the title of Smith and Wilhelm’s ([2002](#)) wonderful work, “*Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*.

We know, however, that about the only things in literacy activities that boys tend to do better than girls are information retrieval and work-related literacy tasks ([Smith and Wilhelm, 2002](#)). So, in fact, one could indeed use, and most probably would need a book to subsequently repair a 57 Chevy. Furthermore, a boy would most likely read such a book better than other texts. So why the title?

Themes of Bacca’s story permeate every nook and cranny of Smith and Wilhelm’s book. Bacca was in jail at seventeen and couldn’t read. He was, as they say in our literacy business, “at risk.” Neither he nor his friends could see any immediate practical results that literacy could provide. However, the real clincher is that Bacca’s life offers us a picture of the potential power of literacy and literature to change lives, as seen in his beautiful poetry. Bacca became interested after having stolen an anthology of the Romantic poets from a female jail clerk, a college girl. Bacca helps us to fight stereotypes. He reminds us of the reality of how untapped potential in boys is the norm of many schools in America, rather than the exception.

I also have encountered the same problem in reporting my research on gender differences that Smith and Wilhelm address so eloquently. They declare that their work “Is not a critique of the impact of feminism. Neither is it an argument that girls are receiving too much attention at the expense of boys” (p. xvii).

I have a feminist daughter whom I have incessantly encouraged, nurtured, and reinforced. My daughter’s world has improved somewhat in her life space. For that, I am ecstatic! It is nonsense, however, to suggest that we male literacy researchers of gender differences are afraid that men are losing the advantage in this society. Smith and Wilhelm ([2002](#)) do a thorough job summarizing why we better be concerned about boys.

While statistics differ somewhat, available databases suggest that boys are four to six times more likely to commit suicide than girls; more than twice as likely to get into fights; three times more likely to be suspended from school; four times as likely to be diagnosed as emotionally disturbed,

depressed, emotionally isolated, or suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder; up to fifteen times more likely to be perpetrators of violent crime (pp. 7-8).

Method: Separating Flow From Blow

I liked the way Smith and Wilhelm gave the transcripts of the students that allow the reader to scrutinize the data firsthand. These researchers, I thought, did a very fine job separating the meaningful talk from the boys' blow.

Smith and Wilhelm worked with 49 males from four different types of middle and high schools. They worked with an urban high school, a diverse comprehensive, regional suburban high school, a rural middle and high school, and a private, all male middle and high school. The achievement levels represented were high achievers, average achievers, and low achievers. There were African Americans, European Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans in their group.

They collected four different kinds of data from these kids. First, they ranked activities from most enjoyed to least enjoyed. These included: listening to music, playing sports, working on a hobby, hanging out with friends, surfing the net, reading a good book, learning something new about a topic of interest, etc. Secondly, they read vignettes or profiles of other males embracing or resisting various kinds of literate activities. The boys in the study read and stated how they were alike or unlike the profiled males in the vignettes, and what they admired and did not admire about them. Thirdly, they were asked to keep track of everything they listened to, watched, read, and wrote in school and at home for a duration of three months. Lastly, they responded to four stories using think-alouds of thinking, feeling, and doing with two action-oriented stories and two reflective stories. In the action-oriented stories, one had a female and the other had a male protagonist/narrator. The same was true with the reflective stories.

Going With the Flow

What mattered with these boys? Flow. Say what? Smith and Wilhelm define flow as losing one's self and becoming so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. For flow to happen, there must be a sense of some control and at least a little competence, a challenge, clear goals and feedback, and a focus on the immediate experience. Boys spending hours, days, and weeks trying to accomplish moves with a skateboard is an example of flow. The boys in this important study did not encounter flow in the literacy activities of school.

I sang "Hal le loo yer" when I encountered Smith and Wilhelm's suggestion after seeing clearly that these boys muddled through school with no sense of control, competence, goals, feedback, or immediacy in the school tasks. The authors stated unapologetically that "Teachers need to provide students with a repertoire of expert strategies for approaching and completing particular tasks" (p. 37). The researchers are putting themselves at risk by saying "Teaching then, should precede development,

leading the learner into uncharted and challenging waters that can be navigated with assistance” (p. 40). Hal le loo yer! Smith and Wilhelm have bought the farm. They will meet with resistance from this brave stand. The boys in this important study did not report receiving any such help.

The boys studied read in an efferent manner ([Rosenblatt, 1978](#)). This is reading for information. An example is Appalachian youngsters reading to find out about the habits of wild turkey because the season would soon open. Aesthetic reading is much more difficult for boys. It is, ironically, the type of reading we teachers relish because of the sheer pleasure we have with reading. Smith and Wilhelm never allude to process versus product, but it is clear that efferent reading puts product first. The process of reading is only important as to how it relates to the product, the information. For example, in Appalachia the product would be the needed information about deer hunting, deer habits, types of hunting allowed, seasons, etc.

One of the most baffling findings was how much importance these males placed on reading. However, school and its reading were to be helpful far off in the future. The authors felt this ensures procrastination, and it allows teachers to avoid a focus on students. We don't have to know the interests and attitudes of students if we are not going to value their interests, use their interests, and make those interests useful. I remember showing a teacher at an inservice session on literacy how to use multiple-response slates and retrieve cognitive and affective feedback data from the children as we taught. The teacher asked, “Why would I need such information? It would not change anything I do.” I sadly replied, “You are correct. Under those constraints, you really don't need the feedback.”

This study's reverberating finding was that boys must see genuine purpose in what they do. After 39 years in the literacy business, I see this as the sine qua non. This leads us directly to the Buddha. It is not as simple, furthermore, as saying that students' interests must be used. One can use the students' interests, and still strike out if the student does not see purpose in the task. The authors said it well, “Purposefulness seemed to be a part of competence” (p. 104).

The authors really stepped up when they said that teaching must change in fundamental ways if we are ever going to seriously deal with a gargantuan problem. (Here it is again!) Do we teach English/Language Arts, or do we teach students? I think these fellows got it right. We must do both. But the students must seek answers to genuine questions that they would actually ask. The ideas and questions must matter to the boys. They must solve real problems and answer real questions. Reading the canon can sometimes involve a form of meaningful inquiry; it ‘ain’t’ always easy. Inquiry is the best way to get flow.

When the Appalachian boys in one of our studies ([Cloer & McMahan, 1994](#)) read to find out what gauge shotgun to use for turkeys, what size shot to chamber, what type of turkey caller works best for beginners, what type of shotgun to use (semi-automatic, pump, over-and-under, single barrel, double barrel, etc.), and students were given the best

periodicals, books, and multimedia resources to answer such questions, it was amazing to see. But, every time a mountaintop experience encourages, gives me a sense of optimism, and causes celebration, someone jolts me back to reality. One unnamed individual made the following statement that best epitomizes the ancient dilemma about students' interests and what we must cover in the curriculum: "Dr. Cloer, I know that adolescent boys would be genuinely interested in reading about —say—bestiality. But I, for one, would stand as firmly against it as I do about hunting." After I gingerly explained about southern community values, and how deeply embedded these traditions were, I pointed out the importance of being able to recognize when we're completely out of the contact zone.

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Gender and Grade Differences in Self-Perceptions as Writers

Thomas Cloer, Jr.
Mary V. Ellithorp

The IRA/NCTE Joint Task Force on Assessment ([1994](#)) did not know that instruments were in the pipeline, as they developed their standards, that might just be able to measure whether or not students showed adverse effects of other types of assessment. In 1994, the task force boldly declared “Regardless of the source or motivation for any particular assessment, states, school districts, schools and teachers must demonstrate how these assessment practices benefit and do not harm individual students”(p.14). This task force declared that the consequences of assessment must be foremost in the mind of literacy educators at all levels. “The consequences of an assessment procedure are the first, and most important consideration in establishing the validity of the assessment”(p.25). The task force started a new era in assessment whereby cognitive gains, the high-stakes testing by states notwithstanding, would not be the only criteria scrutinized. What about the emotional correlates of the schooling? It is obvious by now that we can get children to achieve about anything we literacy educators want them to achieve, as has been demonstrated time and again by data-collecting evangelists with a certain rigid program for lock-step reading ([Allington, 2001](#)). But, there is another question to be asked. Do students savor the flavor of the content and the process after the methodology has brought higher test scores? Do they become lifelong readers and writers? Do they perceive themselves as readers and writers? How do males and females differ on these emotional dimensions?

This study will attempt to address some of these issues by measuring children’s self perceptions as writers at varying grade levels, and analyze gender and grade differences to see if perceptions become more positive or more negative as children advance through the grades.

Review of Literature

There have been several important developments since the Joint Task Force on Assessment presented standards relating to the consequences of assessment. In 1995, The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) was published to measure children’s self-perceptions about their achievement in reading ([Henk & Melnick, 1995](#)). The test measured children’s perceptions about the feedback they were receiving, the progress they felt they were making, how their reading compared with others in their perceptions, and how they perceived themselves as feeling in the act of reading.

In 1996, the Motivation to Read Profile ([Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996](#)) presented both a reading Self-Concept Scale and Value Scale. These scales sought students’ perceived competence in reading and information about the value students placed on different reading activities.

The RSPS and the Motivation to Read Profile both measured self-esteem as a reader and did so with firm research foundations. Literacy educators then had two more excellent affective instruments to use if they wanted to simultaneously measure cognitive and affective effects of a certain literacy project. Two more reading instruments were now available to measure whether or not cognitive training had positive or negative effects on students' emotions. Until the development of these two scales, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (1990) had been the only norm-based affective instrument for elementary and middle grades. It was well researched and had a sound empirical base, but, like the RSPS and the Motivation to Read Profile, did nothing in relation to writing.

The Writer Self-Perception Scale (WSPS) alleviated that problem by systematically measuring how students perceive their performance, both in relation to the task and in relation to peers ([Bottomley, Henk, & Melnick, 1997/1998](#)). The WSPS also measures how children are perceiving the Social Feedback they are receiving from teachers, classmates, and family members. The Physiological States scale measures the child's perception of the internal feelings that are experienced during the act of writing.

Cloer and Pearman ([1993](#)) analyzed gender differences and found that middle-grade girls' attitudes toward recreational reading did not differ significantly from primary girls. Such was not true for boys. Boys' attitudes toward recreational and academic reading deteriorated significantly by the fourth grade. Girls saw academic reading and recreational reading differently in the fourth grade by viewing academic reading negatively. They saw recreational reading as a different and positive endeavor. Fourth grade boys were negative about each.

Cloer and Ross ([1996](#)) demonstrated a high correlation between students' standardized reading test scores and six different measures of students' self-perceptions as measured by Henk and Melnick's (1995) Reader Self-Perception Scale. They raised the question of why a primary child's standardized reading score, from a task that does not resemble an authentic literary endeavor predicts self-esteem as a reader in the fourth grade. Standardized reading tests do not have colorful, predictive, language from exciting, funny, and interesting characters appearing in fanciful and beautiful illustrations that assist with the reading of the engaging literature.

Cloer and Dalton ([2001](#)) showed that six grade boys and girls differed significantly in their self-perceptions as readers on the RSPS when their standardized test scores were not significantly different. They showed also that a group of girls with significantly low standardized reading achievement scores had higher self-esteem as readers than boys who had significantly high standardized reading achievement on the same test. Therefore, for even those in or outside of literacy education who believe significantly poor readers should have lower self-esteem as readers and vice versa, Cloer and Dalton's study causes cognitive dissonance. These subjects' self-esteem as readers in no way coincided with reality as measured by standardized reading tests.

Cloer and Dalton (1999) showed that gender differences appeared as early as second grade on all three scales of the Motivation to Read Profile. They also found that fourth grade girls placed significantly higher value on reading than fourth grade boys, and that fourth graders were significantly lower on all these scales than the second graders in their study.

The specific question that our current study addresses is whether gender and grade differences are evident in students' self-perceptions as writers. Do the students in higher grades score lower as in the studies reviewed? Do boys always score lower than girls? Are there any exceptions on any of the scales? Are males genetically inferior to females in terms of language arts achievement? Are there any data points that would lend hope to males in this regard?

Method

The current study attempted to determine if there were significant gender and grade differences in self-perceptions as writers, as measured by the Writer Self-Perception Scale, for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. The means of boys versus girls on all five scales and a pupil total or composite score were analyzed using t-tests for independent means. The five scales were General Progress (GENPROG), Specific Progress (SPECPROG), Observational Comparison (OBSCOMP), Social Feedback (SOCFEED), Physiological States (PHYSSTA), and the composite or pupil total (PUPLTOT) score. There were also comparisons made for all fourth graders (boys and girls) versus all fifth graders, and fourth graders versus sixth graders. Finally, the mean scale scores and composite score for all boys in the study were compared to all scores of the girls.

Subjects

The current study included 703 students and 27 teachers from 31 different classrooms in 12 different schools. The schools included urban, suburban, and rural elementary settings. There were 292 fourth graders from 8 different schools, 14 different classrooms, and 13 different teachers. There were 331 fifth graders from seven different schools, 14 different classrooms, and 13 different teachers. There were 80 sixth graders from two different schools, five different classrooms, and two different teachers. One sixth grade teacher also doubled as a fifth grade teacher.

Procedure

The teachers included in the study administered the Writer Self-Perception Scale to the 703 students in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Each of the 38 items is followed by five possible responses from Strongly Agree (5 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point). Children were instructed to read each item and to rate how much they agree or disagree with the statement. The scores on the scales could range from 6 to 45 points. The total score or pupil total could range from 38 to 190 points.

The teachers and students in the study were guaranteed anonymity by selecting a number that only they knew and by submitting student data with the correct corresponding number. Teachers were given written instructions to identify the gender of each child in the study by writing “B” (boy) or “G” (girl) on each WSPS. Teachers were told that the investigators would compute all the data. The teachers were instructed in writing to bind all students’ WSPS scales together and to make sure that the same number appeared on every child’s WSPS.

Results

Table 1 gives the means, standard deviations, and number of cases for all the scales and total pupil scores for fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Note the decrease in means as students advance in grade level. Further analyses will determine if these means are significantly different.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations on WSPS for Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades

Variable	Mean Fourth Grade (N=392)	S.D.	Mean Fifth Grade (N=410)	S.D.	Mean Sixth Grade (N=80)	S.D.
GENPROG	34.61	4.597	33.65	5.195	32.630	6.001
SPECPROG	29.09	4.559	28.76	5.030	27.090	6.271
OBSCOMP	28.24	6.753	28.65	6.871	26.24	6.310
SOCFEED	26.52	5.164	25.98	5.280	24.410	5.780
PHYSSTA	22.38	5.759	21.78	5.609	19.550	6.800
PUPLTOT	140.89	20.105	138.82	22.439	130.040	26.800

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Table 2 gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for the fourth grade. There was one significant difference on the Physiological States scale favoring the girls. The girls perceived themselves as having more positive internal feelings during writing than boys. The good news is that this sample of male and female fourth graders from 14 different classrooms in varied school settings did not show significant differences that have shown up much earlier in another study in motivation to read, self-concept as a reader, and value placed on the act of reading (Cloer and Dalton, 1999).

Table 2

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Four

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	34.625	34.714	-0.167	289
SPECPROG	29.342	29.100	0.471	287
OBSCOMP	28.539	28.100	0.559	290
SOCFEED	27.210	26.550	1.144	280
PHYSSTA	23.132	21.500	2.395*	283
PUPLTOT	142.980	139.964	1.295	288

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N = 152 girls, 140 boys

*p = .017

[Table 3](#) gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for fifth graders. Five of the six variables yielded significant differences in the means for males versus females. In all instances, mean differences favored the girls.

Table 3

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Five

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	33.919	32.772	1.939*	326
SPECPROG	29.344	28.082	2.268**	326
OBSCOMP	29.113	27.854	1.639	329
SOCFEED	26.863	24.807	3.524***	328
PHYSSTA	23.356	20.836	4.267***	320

PUPLTOT	142.594	134.351	3.300***	325
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N = 160 girls, 171 boys

* p = .05

** p = .02

*** p < .001

Table 4 gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for sixth graders. Five of the six variables involving the WSPS yielded significant differences in the means for the males versus the females. In all instances, mean differences favored the girls.

Table 4

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Six

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	34.174	30.529	2.526*	43
SPECPROG	29.196	24.235	3.441**	45
OBSCOMP	27.283	24.235	1.659	56
SOCFEED	25.804	22.529	2.463*	56
PHYSSTA	21.870	16.412	3.790***	67
PUPLTOT	138.326	118.529	3.214****	48

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N = 46 girls, 34 boys

* p = .015

**p = .001

***p < .001

****p = .002

When the investigators analyzed the mean differences between all fourth graders (N=392) and all fifth graders (N=410), the means for the General Progress Scale was the

only significant difference ($t=2.79$, 795 df, $p=.005$). However, when mean differences between all the fifth graders and all the sixth graders were analyzed, a very different result was obtained.

[Table 5](#) gives t-test results for differences between the means for all the scores on the WSPS of all fifth graders versus all sixth graders. Five of the six variables yielded significant differences in the means for fifth graders versus sixth graders. In all instances, mean differences favored the younger fifth graders.

Table 5

t-Test Results Between All Fifth and Sixth Graders

Variable	Mean Fifth Grade	Mean Sixth Grade	t	Df
GENPROG	33.649	32.625	1.423	103
SPECPROG	28.763	27.088	2.252*	100
OBSCOMP	28.651	26.238	3.084**	119
SOCFEED	25.983	24.413	2.254*	106
PHYSSTA	21.778	19.550	2.753**	101
PUPLTOT	138.824	129.913	2.788**	102

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N = 410 fifth graders, 80 sixth graders

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

[Table 6](#) gives t-test results for differences in all fourth graders versus all sixth graders. All six variables yielded significant differences in the means for fourth graders versus sixth graders. In all instances, mean differences favored the younger fourth graders over the sixth graders.

Table 6

t-Test Results Between All Fourth and Sixth Graders

Variable	Mean Fourth Grade	Mean Sixth Grade	t	Df
GENPROG	34.615	32.625	2.798*	99
SPECPROG	29.087	27.088	2.708*	97
OBSCOMP	28.291	26.238	2.621*	119
SOCFEED	26.518	24.413	3.021*	106
PHYSSTA	22.378	19.550	3.472**	103
PUPLTOT	140.888	129.913	3.467**	98

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N = 392 Fourth Graders, 80 Sixth Graders

* p < .01

** p < .001

When the investigators analyzed the differences in means for all boys in the study (N=358) versus all girls in the study (N=345), the analysis again yielded significant differences on all six variables in the study. In each instance, mean differences significantly favored the girls.

Discussion

These results agree with the findings obtained from four other studies involving affective measurements of boys' and girls' attitudes and self-perceptions relating to literacy (Cloer & Pearman, 1993; Cloer & Ross, 1996; Cloer & Dalton, 1999, 2001). In each of these studies involving all affective instruments published in the nineties, gender differences occurred before middle school, and in all instances these gender differences favored girls. In each of these studies involving the affective instruments published in the nineties, the higher the grade level, the more likely the score would be lower. This occurred by the end of the primary grades in two of the studies (Cloer & Pearman, 1993; Cloer & Dalton, 1999).

Some might argue that these data tinkering with the affective dimension are simply reflecting what is going on in the cognitive dimension. Girls are superior to boys in literacy endeavors, and boys will "just have to get over it" and blunder forward with their ineptitude. Furthermore, the longer one stays in school, the smarter and more insightful one becomes. It is a clear logical extension that children begin to see

themselves as the wimps they are in literacy, and they just need to get over it already. God help us! Has it come to this?

Many of us in literacy education take exactly the opposite view. First, girls may not be genetically superior to boys, and the differences seen in literacy development may be cultural differences. Furthermore, children are not predestined to be wimps in relation to literacy. Many of us believe, like Purkey and Novack ([1996](#)), that potential is always there, just under the surface, waiting to be invited forth by a caring and competent teacher. Cloer and Pearman ([1993](#)) also found in their study that the amount of time teachers spent reading weekly for their own pleasure predicted children's attitudes in their classes. Those findings from the Cloer and Pearman study suggest that if a child's teacher had a genuine love for reading real literature for real reasons, that teacher was more apt to develop such an attitude in children.

These differences that show girls superior to boys do beg the question "Are there things we can do to change?" The writers believe there are things we can do. Henk and Melnick ([1995](#)), Bottomley, Henk, and Melnick ([1997/1998](#)), and McKenna and Kear ([1990](#)) would have us first measuring and dealing with assessment data that mattered. After using their instruments, these researchers would have us modify classroom practices, revise grouping techniques, and assign reading and writing activities that are enjoyable. They would have us as literary educators use the data from the instruments to monitor individuals throughout the year and from year to year. By doing so, we could help children whose motivation, attitudes, and self-perceptions were below the norm.

Teachers might, if they use these instruments cited, model how to give more frequent and concrete illustrations of progress. They might model how to give opportunities to write in situations that are nonthreatening such as: transformations of songs, poems, chants, etc.; they might model how to use children's literature for writing. Surely we all in the literary business should model the enjoyment, appreciation, relaxation, and gratification that can be gained from writing. Things can change! We remain in the business because of our incurable romanticism, eternal optimism, and our vision of greatness that we have for every child. Come and help.

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Finding Contact Zones in English Language Arts: Reaction to the Call to Forum

“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys”

Tom Cloer

It seems those fellow prisoners of Chicano poet Jimmy Santiago Bacca, featured in Bill Moyers’ Language of Life ([1995](#)) PBS series, were wrong. They told Bacca that “Books are stupid. Sissies read books. You couldn’t do nothing with a book. You couldn’t fix a 57 Chevy with a book.” Thus we have the title of Smith and Wilhelm’s ([2002](#)) wonderful work, *“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys:” Literacy in the Lives of Young Men.*

We know, however, that about the only things in literacy activities that boys tend to do better than girls are information retrieval and work-related literacy tasks (Smith and Wilhelm, 2002). So, in fact, one could indeed use, and most probably would need a book to subsequently repair a 57 Chevy. Furthermore, a boy would most likely read such a book better than other texts. So why the title?

Themes of Bacca’s story permeate every nook and cranny of Smith and Wilhelm’s book. Bacca was in jail at seventeen and couldn’t read. He was, as they say in our literacy business, “at risk.” Neither he nor his friends could see any immediate practical results that literacy could provide. However, the real clincher is that Bacca’s life offers us a picture of the potential power of literacy and literature to change lives, as seen in his beautiful poetry. Bacca became interested after having stolen an anthology of the Romantic poets from a female jail clerk, a college girl. Bacca helps us to fight stereotypes. He reminds us of the reality of how untapped potential in boys is the norm of many schools in America, rather than the exception.

I also have encountered the same problem in reporting my research on gender differences that Smith and Wilhelm address so eloquently. They declare that their work “Is not a critique of the impact of feminism. Neither is it an argument that girls are receiving too much attention at the expense of boys” (p. xvii).

I have a feminist daughter whom I have incessantly encouraged, nurtured, and reinforced. My daughter’s world has improved somewhat in her life space. For that, I am ecstatic! It is nonsense, however, to suggest that we male literacy researchers of gender differences are afraid that men are losing the advantage in this society. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) do a thorough job summarizing why we better be concerned about boys.

While statistics differ somewhat, available databases suggest that boys are four to six times more likely to commit suicide than girls; more than twice as likely to get into fights; three times more likely to be suspended from school; four times as likely to be diagnosed as emotionally disturbed,

depressed, emotionally isolated, or suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder; up to fifteen times more likely to be perpetrators of violent crime (pp. 7-8).

Method: Separating Flow From Blow

I liked the way Smith and Wilhelm gave the transcripts of the students that allow the reader to scrutinize the data firsthand. These researchers, I thought, did a very fine job separating the meaningful talk from the boys' blow.

Smith and Wilhelm worked with 49 males from four different types of middle and high schools. They worked with an urban high school, a diverse comprehensive, regional suburban high school, a rural middle and high school, and a private, all male middle and high school. The achievement levels represented were high achievers, average achievers, and low achievers. There were African Americans, European Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans in their group.

They collected four different kinds of data from these kids. First, they ranked activities from most enjoyed to least enjoyed. These included: listening to music, playing sports, working on a hobby, hanging out with friends, surfing the net, reading a good book, learning something new about a topic of interest, etc. Secondly, they read vignettes or profiles of other males embracing or resisting various kinds of literate activities. The boys in the study read and stated how they were alike or unlike the profiled males in the vignettes, and what they admired and did not admire about them. Thirdly, they were asked to keep track of everything they listened to, watched, read, and wrote in school and at home for a duration of three months. Lastly, they responded to four stories using think-alouds of thinking, feeling, and doing with two action-oriented stories and two reflective stories. In the action-oriented stories, one had a female and the other had a male protagonist/narrator. The same was true with the reflective stories.

Going With the Flow

What mattered with these boys? Flow. Say what? Smith and Wilhelm define flow as losing one's self and becoming so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. For flow to happen, there must be a sense of some control and at least a little competence, a challenge, clear goals and feedback, and a focus on the immediate experience. Boys spending hours, days, and weeks trying to accomplish moves with a skateboard is an example of flow. The boys in this important study did not encounter flow in the literacy activities of school.

I sang "Hal le loo yer" when I encountered Smith and Wilhelm's suggestion after seeing clearly that these boys muddled through school with no sense of control, competence, goals, feedback, or immediacy in the school tasks. The authors stated unapologetically that "Teachers need to provide students with a repertoire of expert strategies for approaching and completing particular tasks" (p. 37). The researchers are putting themselves at risk by saying "Teaching then, should precede development,

leading the learner into uncharted and challenging waters that can be navigated with assistance” (p. 40). Hal le loo yer! Smith and Wilhelm have bought the farm. They will meet with resistance from this brave stand. The boys in this important study did not report receiving any such help.

The boys studied read in an efferent manner ([Rosenblatt, 1978](#)). This is reading for information. An example is Appalachian youngsters reading to find out about the habits of wild turkey because the season would soon open. Aesthetic reading is much more difficult for boys. It is, ironically, the type of reading we teachers relish because of the sheer pleasure we have with reading. Smith and Wilhelm never allude to process versus product, but it is clear that efferent reading puts product first. The process of reading is only important as to how it relates to the product, the information. For example, in Appalachia the product would be the needed information about deer hunting, deer habits, types of hunting allowed, seasons, etc.

One of the most baffling findings was how much importance these males placed on reading. However, school and its reading were to be helpful far off in the future. The authors felt this ensures procrastination, and it allows teachers to avoid a focus on students. We don't have to know the interests and attitudes of students if we are not going to value their interests, use their interests, and make those interests useful. I remember showing a teacher at an inservice session on literacy how to use multiple-response slates and retrieve cognitive and affective feedback data from the children as we taught. The teacher asked, “Why would I need such information? It would not change anything I do.” I sadly replied, “You are correct. Under those constraints, you really don't need the feedback.”

This study's reverberating finding was that boys must see genuine purpose in what they do. After 39 years in the literacy business, I see this as the sine qua non. This leads us directly to the Buddha. It is not as simple, furthermore, as saying that students' interests must be used. One can use the students' interests, and still strike out if the student does not see purpose in the task. The authors said it well, “Purposefulness seemed to be a part of competence” (p. 104).

The authors really stepped up when they said that teaching must change in fundamental ways if we are ever going to seriously deal with a gargantuan problem. (Here it is again!) Do we teach English/Language Arts, or do we teach students? I think these fellows got it right. We must do both. But the students must seek answers to genuine questions that they would actually ask. The ideas and questions must matter to the boys. They must solve real problems and answer real questions. Reading the canon can sometimes involve a form of meaningful inquiry; it ‘ain’t’ always easy. Inquiry is the best way to get flow.

When the Appalachian boys in one of our studies ([Cloer & McMahan, 1994](#)) read to find out what gauge shotgun to use for turkeys, what size shot to chamber, what type of turkey caller works best for beginners, what type of shotgun to use (semi-automatic, pump, over-and-under, single barrel, double barrel, etc.), and students were given the best

periodicals, books, and multimedia resources to answer such questions, it was amazing to see. But, every time a mountaintop experience encourages, gives me a sense of optimism, and causes celebration, someone jolts me back to reality. One unnamed individual made the following statement that best epitomizes the ancient dilemma about students' interests and what we must cover in the curriculum: "Dr. Cloer, I know that adolescent boys would be genuinely interested in reading about —say—bestiality. But I, for one, would stand as firmly against it as I do about hunting." After I gingerly explained about southern community values, and how deeply embedded these traditions were, I pointed out the importance of being able to recognize when we're completely out of the contact zone.

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Listening, Speaking, and Writing in a Content Area

Carol Crumbaugh
Pam Schram

"When you write out the [math] problems, you're figuring out how to do it and realizing how the problem works and why it does." (Thomas)

"Writing sentences [about mathematics] is just wasting your lead." (Taylor)

"It doesn't take long to like tell people what you're trying to talk about." (Haley)

What causes children to have such different perspectives about how talking and writing can be helpful to learning mathematics? In this Problems Court paper we explore the question, what can be learned about ways to help children successfully participate in the literacy processes of listening speaking, and writing? Specifically, our aim is to launch an inquiry about what is required from students to successfully participate in listening, speaking, and writing¹ in a content area. We use analysis and excerpts from interviews with 15 third graders to bring students' voices and perceptions about the role of listening, speaking, and writing in their learning of mathematics.

Review of Literature

From various perspectives we know that listening, speaking, and writing are important facets of subject area learning. For example, the sociocultural learning theory of Vygotsky (1978) provides a framework for this Problems Court paper on listening, speaking, and writing. There are at least two ways in which sociocultural learning theory informs the ideas presented here. First, one's use of language to negotiate meaning is central. For Vygotsky, language was the most important psychological tool or sign. As a sign, language mediates learning. Second, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of language on human thought. In his view, meaning originates between individuals. "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level: first *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*)" (p. 57). That is, through speech in the social or external domain, the child transforms and internalizes what is learned. What the child knew previously is internally reconstructed. If so, it seems that talking—and its companion, listening—are strategic to learning.

¹ We acknowledge the importance of reading in a content area. However, in this paper,

we focus on the literacy processes of listening, speaking, and writing.

In addition, the studies by Douglas Barnes and Courtney Cazden (among others) support the primacy of classroom talk in learning. For example, Barnes (1992) described the ways in which children use exploratory talk to tentatively work at “rearranging their thoughts during improvised talk” (p. 108). To Barnes, children used exploratory talk on the way to final draft language, “which amounts to a formal completed presentation for a teacher’s approval” (p. 108). Cazden (1986) stated that spoken language “is the medium by which much teaching takes place and in which students demonstrate to teachers much of what they know” (p. 432). Considered in this way, classroom discourse merits thoughtful consideration when exploring student learning in content areas.

Burbules (1993) expanded the role of talk, or speaking, to that of something more dynamic. Burbules used the term “dialogical relation” to describe a relation between people in the context of discussion, a relation “to ‘carry away’ its participants, to ‘catch them up’ in an interaction that takes on a force and direction of its own, often leading them beyond any intended goal to new and unexpected insights” (p. 20). In this view, talk appears to be suspended from traditional classroom conversations; conversations are dependent on participants and their interaction.

To summarize, language may be seen to support learning by the way in which it is used to negotiate meaning, to explore thought, to teach and to learn, and to enter into a dialogical relation with another. When consideration of literacy development is extended, it is logical that teachers of all content areas would appreciate the language demands of their particular fields. And what of listening, speaking, and writing in mathematics?

The ideas above, regarding the roles of talk and language in learning, can be applied to a content area such as mathematics. Clearly, the leading organization in mathematics education, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), places value in mathematical discourse, viewing discourse as “ways of representing, thinking, talking, and agreeing and disagreeing” (NCTM, 1991, p.20). In subject area learning, as students become literate, they learn to communicate their understandings. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2000) assert the following regarding communication:

Communication is an essential part of mathematics and mathematics education. It is a way of sharing ideas and clarifying understanding. Through communication, ideas become objects of reflection, refinement, discussion, and amendment. The communication process also helps build meaning and permanence for ideas and makes them public. When students are challenged to think and reason about mathematics and to communicate the results of their thinking to others orally or in writing, they learn to be clear and convincing. Listening to others’ explanations gives students opportunities to develop their own understandings. (p. 60)

Implied but not specified in these dynamics are norms of participation in teaching and learning that differ from traditional mathematics teaching. Also implied but not specified is the idea that teachers and students are able to navigate mathematical discourse through the use of listening and speaking. However, little guidance is given teachers (and students) regarding the new roles and responsibilities that participation in such discourse carries. In addition, NCTM

advocates that mathematics teaching and learning include such dynamic processes as reasoning and problem solving, again without specific assistance to teachers as to how they might go about choreographing these processes.

Others (e.g., NCTM, 1991, 2000; [Countryman, 1992](#)) advocate that writing in mathematics classes can help students make sense of mathematics by, clarifying their thinking, constructing arguments, posing questions, reflecting about their work, and developing new approaches for solving problems. Burns ([1995](#)) stated, “Writing encourages students to examine their ideas and reflect on what they have learned” (p. 13). Underscoring Barnes’s ([1992](#)) notion of exploratory talk, one could deduce the value through writing of students’ increasing ability to clarify understandings. In addition, there is a uniquely reflective component to writing. McCallum and Whitlow ([1994](#)) argue that understanding patterns in mathematics shares many commonalities to the way in which children come to understand the patterns in language use.

To summarize, when applied to the content area of mathematics, the literacy process of listening, speaking, and writing are vital to the growth of students’ mathematical thinking. The nation’s leading professional organization in mathematics education purported benefits to students engaged in these literacy processes when they wrote, “Students who have opportunities, encouragement, and support for speaking, writing, reading, and listening in mathematics classes reap dual benefits: they communicate to learn mathematics, and they learn to communicate mathematically” (NCTM, 2000, p. 60). The key is to provide students with the opportunities to engage in such literacy processes.

Setting

To provide context for our discussion in this Problems Court, we describe a specific third grade classroom and our experiences in this class during mathematics instruction. The setting is a third grade classroom in an elementary school in northwestern North Carolina. One of the authors co-teaches mathematics in this classroom. In this third grade classroom, students sat at desks clustered in groups of four and five. In these clusters, students regularly worked in pairs or small groups to discuss and work on tasks. The teachers fostered norms of participation where students were provided with rich, hands-on tasks and expected to communicate their emerging mathematical ideas while listening to one another. The teachers planned for discussion and disagreement, listening carefully to student responses in order for mathematical thinking to build through discourse. Teacher questions were open-ended, with follow-up questions that probed students’ reasoning (Tell us more about... What do others think? Do you agree/disagree?). Student responses typically included “I think....because....” statements. They regularly recorded numerical sentences (where applicable) and drawings to explain their thinking or how they arrived at a solution. Frequently, students were asked to write sentences with words to explain solution strategies.

During the interviews students described their math class as follows: "It's an adventure." "Kind of hard, kind of easy." "Challenging." "Frustrating." "Interesting, fun." "It's an adventure." "Lots of ideas to talk about."

Student Interviews

Many of the questions that the authors asked the third graders were related to their perceptions of speaking, listening, and writing to learn math. Below we summarize their responses and provide some excerpts to illustrate their voices. As you read, consider the many complex issues raised by the students about using speaking, listening, and writing to learn mathematics.

Speaking

Speaking was the preferred mode for most of the students when asked how they could best demonstrate their understanding about mathematics. For most children talking is natural and learned early in life but they still have to think about how and when to use talking to help them think about learning math. Some examples of how they thought about speaking in their math class were to give answers, to give opinions, to prove answers, to debate, to tell Dr. Crumbaugh what they had been doing while she was gone. Additional examples included to share things out loud, to explain problems (so that students at their table can correct you if you're wrong), to figure out problems, to give a different idea, to help everyone, and to help them.

When asked if she liked to explain her ideas during math, one student responded: "I try to but sometimes I explain things that like sometimes I can't explain what I'm thinking, you know when that happens? Sometimes I have something that is the answer to the question and I can't explain it with words, I can only explain it in my mind and on paper." Another student was asked, "Why do you talk [during mathematics discussions]?" The child responded, "When it's interesting, ideas build onto stuff, new stuff. It helps everyone, give you an idea or a different idea."

Listening

Most students preferred listening as the way they learned math best. They talked about using listening to know what to do, to hear others' opinions, to help them understand, to hear others' ideas, to help them "catch on," to learn how to do stuff, to get to know the problem better, to help you figure out the question, and to give them a different idea.

A student who preferred listening as the way he learns best during math explained: "We listen to the teachers and we listen to the other children's ideas and we learn what they know from what we hear and when you're talking, you can't really learn anything from that and when you're writing, you're writing what you already know."

Writing

Children talked about writing for different purposes including writing math problems, writing sentences to explain their thinking, drawing pictures, and writing problems on the board. For most children, writing presented more of a challenge. It was the least favorite form of communication when learning math. From their perspective writing was hard, their hands got tired, it was hard to explain in writing, writing was too much work. Children also responded by

saying if you did something wrong you have to write all over again, sentences take too long, and writing is just "wasting your lead."

Discussion

To initiate discussion during our Problems Court session, we posed the following questions:

- What is required for students to successfully participate in small and whole group discussions in content areas?
- In what ways can teachers help students learn the skills required to successfully participate in small and whole group discussions in content areas?
- What do teachers need to know to support students' successful participation in discussions and writing in content area classes?
- In what ways are issues of successful participation in the literacy processes of listening, speaking, and writing the same and different for various content areas in elementary classes?
- How can teachers help students learn to communicate their ideas n writing about content area topics?
- What is the role of teacher educators?

A lively discussion ensued with the primary focus on writing. Participants talked about the complexity of writing and the many challenges to supporting children in their writing and seeing writing as a tool for learning. They also discussed the importance of audience when writing and perhaps children did not like to write because they felt that they were communicating with an expert, the teacher, who already knew what they were trying to write about. Another suggested that we call it something besides "writing". Questions were also posed about how the writing was evaluated and the messages students received about the value of writing during math class. The discussion concluded in agreement that more interactions were needed between the field of reading and language arts and mathematics to help teachers and students learn more about how to successfully use speaking, listening, and writing to learn mathematics.

In this setting where the teachers planned for the third graders to communicate their mathematical ideas, listening, speaking, and writing were commonplace. And from the students' perspectives, these literacy processes appeared to be influential as they learned third grade mathematics. The authors were intrigued by students' perceptions of the role of listening and speaking in their learning, noting they were preferred by the children. In addition, the fact that writing presented more of a challenge was expected, as writing is more complex than listening or speaking. Somewhere between talking and writing sentences in this third grade mathematics class was picture drawing to communicate understanding. Might picture drawing in third grade mathematics reveal emergent mathematical understandings, perhaps parallel to emergent readers who draw pictures to tell stories? Rather than provide children with content comprehension strategies, the teachers operated on the assumption that language use would foster mathematical understanding. That is, to successfully communicate mathematical ideas, children needed opportunities to communicate their ideas, to listen, talk, and write during mathematics.

As discussed earlier, language use plays a strategic role in learning, and communication is prioritized by the national organization for mathematics educators. However, because these literacy processes are not typical in mathematics classrooms, students' perceptions inform further investigation. There is much to be learned about these new roles and responsibilities for teachers and for students, and the authors intend for the ideas presented in this Problems Court paper to prompt further discussion.

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Who Owns Literacy: Shalom Chaverem or Katie Bar the Door?

**Richard Culatta, Appalachian State University
Jill Lewis, New Jersey City University**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the implications of professions outside of Reading and Language Arts assuming responsibility for the provision of services to children and adolescents with literacy problems. Specifically, the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association is now emphasizing literacy assessment and intervention as an integral part of the scope of practice for Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs). This paper will discuss and react to this scope of practice statement and present illustrative examples of ongoing interactions between service providing professionals not usually considered traditional reading educators. The New Jersey Literacy Initiative Mission Statement (2002) will be highlighted as a result of cooperative efforts bridging multiple specialties. The first section of this paper will focus on presenting a clear understanding of the intervention practices and institutional goals that a field outside of Reading and Language Arts is sanctioning for its members. The final section of the paper will describe how New Jersey is approaching the challenge of monitoring two professions interest in reading disabilities.

The title of this paper (Who owns literacy?: Shalom Chaverem or Katie Bar the Door) implies that professionals who consider Literacy, in all forms, their domain may have new partners like it or not. The bottom line is that there are laws in practically every state that make it illegal to practice Speech-Language Pathology without the proper credentials but none that the authors are aware of that monitor the practice of Reading Instruction. The authors are suggesting that the provision of quality literacy intervention services to children and adults should be a concern of traditional Reading Professionals.

ASHA and Literacy

The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) is the professional association for approximately 112,000 Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs). It is a relatively aggressive, proactive, Association that speaks for SLPs on all aspects of professional life. Illustrations of its influence include that ASHA has: (a) successfully sponsored minimal entry into the field of Speech-Language Pathology at the masters level; (b) initiated and monitored a universally accepted (and often required) national level certification at the completion of a mandated post-masters clinical fellowship year and achievement of passing scores on a standardized test for employment; and (c) sponsored licensure laws that require, in most states, professionals providing speech-language pathology services to be licensed or face criminal code penalties for practicing without a license. An ASHA Ethical Practices Board establishes codes for ethical conduct within the profession and has the power, with cause, to suspend and or revoke the national level of certification, the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC), a decision that parallels disbarment in the legal profession.

It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association that SLPs play a critical and direct role in the development of literacy for children and adolescents with communication disorders. The Association also unequivocally states that: SLPs can make a contribution to the literacy efforts of a school district or community on behalf of other children and adolescents. ([ASHA 2001b](#)) The roles and responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists are clearly defined by the ASHA Scope of Practice in Speech Language Pathology Guidelines ([ASHA 2001 a](#)). Within the Scope of Practice document it is clearly stated that along with many other roles, appropriate roles and responsibilities for Speech Language Pathologists include but are not limited to: (a) preventing written language problems by fostering language acquisition and emergent literacy;(b) identifying children at risk for reading and writing problems;(c) assessing reading and writing; (d) providing intervention and documenting outcomes for reading and writing; (e) assuming other roles such as providing assistance to general education teachers, parents, and students; advocating for effective literacy practices; and advancing the knowledge base (ASHA 2001b). Four official documents of ASHA: A Position Statement with an executive summary (ASHA 2001b), Guidelines ([ASHA 2001c](#)), a Technical Report ([ASHA 2001d](#)) and a listing of the knowledge and skills needed with respect to reading and writing ([ASHA, 2002](#)) specifically describe the Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists With Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents. As is typical with ASHA, the global statements about assuming responsibility for providing service to those with literacy disabilities are backed up by specific delineations of suggested practices. For example: Strategies for supporting emergent literacy and preventing literacy problems include practices such as (a) joint book reading, (b) environmental print awareness, (c) conventions and concepts of print, (d) phonology and phonological processing, (e) alphabetic/letter knowledge, (f) sense of story, (g) adult modeling of literacy experiences, and (h) experiences with writing materials. The specific implementation strategies for each of these practices are detailed in the Guidelines (ASHA 2001 c). Please refer to the documents listed in your bibliography to get a greater sense of the detailed involvement being advocated.

It is not the intention of ASHA to limit literacy intervention to only those with communication disorders. ASHA's position and guidelines are designed to support the notion that SLPs can collaborate with school administrators, teachers, parents, and other professionals to develop programs for promoting emergent literacy and literacy skills among general education students as well as those with identified spoken language and literacy problems (ASHA 2001b pg21) However, the ASHA Guideline (ASHA 2001c pg22) document does distinguish between the therapeutic roles that are felt to be the responsibility of the SLP and the instructional roles that are the responsibilities of the general education teacher. For example, according to the Guidelines, SLPs might provide direct instruction to individual students who need explicit and intensive instruction in phonological awareness or alphabetic principles. However, it is not recommended that SLPs routinely conduct "phonological awareness training" in all kindergarten classrooms.

Now that we have shared a brief description of the scope of recommended involvement it might be appropriate to ask why ASHA feels that it is appropriate to provide these services.

ASHA, on behalf of its membership, believes that SLP's knowledge of normal and disordered language acquisition, and their clinical experience in developing individualized programs for children prepares them to assume a variety of roles related to the development of reading and writing. The unique knowledge that SLPs bring to the process is their ability to assess the subsystems of language as they relate to spoken and written language. SLPs can contribute information about the degree to which a student has basic knowledge at the level of sounds, words, sentences and discourse. They can answer questions about whether students are using basic language knowledge and metalinguistic and metacognitive skills for reading processes involved in decoding, comprehending, and paraphrasing what they read and for writing processes involved in spelling words, organizing discourse texts, formulating and punctuating sentences and revising, editing and presenting their work. (ASHA 2001 b pg 20)

In addition, the Association has published a document that summarizes knowledge and skills needed by SLPs who work with reading and writing in children and adolescents (ASHA, 2002). It is based on the assumption that no one discipline "owns" either the knowledge or skills needed to meet the literacy learning needs of infants, toddlers, children and adolescents with and without disabilities. ASHA outlines 5 five separate areas of knowledge and skills divided into 79 specific sub-areas. These areas and sub-areas and the documents that delineate them can be studied on the web sites listed in references provided with this paper.

Implementation of Interest

Speech-Language Pathologists are implementing their interest in literacy in areas other than direct service provision. U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretaries, Dr. Susan Neuman of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and Dr. Russ Whitehurst of the Office of Educational Research Institute (OERI) were keynote speakers at the November 2002 ASHA Convention in Atlanta. Their special sessions were entitled "Federal Reading Initiatives: Potential Roles for SLPs" and "The Federal Reading Initiative: What is Our Role in Reading Anyhow?" The notice for the presentations alerted ASHA members that Speech-Language Pathologists can play a number of key roles in the research and development of early literacy programs. ASHA members were encouraged to learn more about these programs and take advantage of the potential grant and professional opportunities. The bi-monthly ASHA Leader newsletter (which goes to all 112,000 SLPs) of March 19, 20002 reports that these government agencies believe strongly that SLPs play an important role in language development in reading and literacy. Specifically, ASHA members were invited to collaborate with the federal agencies on the Early Reading First initiative, a \$ 75 million dollar per year competitive grant initiative designed to enhance reading readiness for preschool children in high poverty areas and where there are high numbers of students who are not reading at grade level . They were also invited be a part of the Reading First Program which will be funded at \$900 million. Both programs are administered under the No Child Left Behind Act. SLPs will function as critical members of the team that implements the grant funded aspect of these programs.

In May 28 2002 , the ASHA Leader newsletter reported that OESE, the agency administering the Early Reading First program contacted ASHA for preschool reading/literacy

programs to serve as models for Early Reading First and other programs at the state or local levels. ASHA's Literacy Research Coordinating Committee selected six programs as potential model programs and forwarded their names to OESE. The authors feel it may be of interest to traditional reading specialists to see the following list of programs and affiliations of the recommended programs. The programs selected were: (a) Language-Learning Early Advantage Program (LEAP) which is housed at the University of Maryland's Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. LEAP is directed by Fromma Roth; (b) Language Acquisition Preschool (LAP) program directed by Betty Bunce under the auspices of the Department of Speech-Language-Hearing and Schiefelbusch Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at the University of Kansas; (c) Emerging Language and Literacy (ELL) program staffed at the Children's Therapeutic Learning Center in Kansas City , MO; (d) Cabrini-Green Preschool Language and Pre-Literacy Curriculum a cooperative program with Head Start Teachers in consultation with Ruth Watkins of the University of Illinois; (e) Early Childhood Speech and Language Programs that are programs at the Miller Speech and Hearing Clinic at Texas Christian University; (f) Animated Literacy which is a reading and language program published by J. Stone Creations. It would not seem unrealistic to guess that these programs, strongly affiliated with the field of Speech-Language Pathology, might have an inside track at potential funding of the Early Reading First initiative.

Interests also extend into the areas of clinical research and training. For example basic research articles such as "Designing and Implementing an Early Literacy Screening Protocol: Suggestions for the Speech-Language Pathologists" was the featured article in the April 2002 issue of *Language Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools* a major ASHA Journal. This particular article provides a rationale for incorporating early literacy screening into speech-language pathology service delivery. It also makes recommendations for determining which children and what areas of literacy should be targeted in screening activities. The authors (Justice, Invernizzi and Meier) assert that SLPs must use a protocol for identifying those children who should be targeted by advanced preparation and intervention efforts in order to prevent literacy problems and ensure children's timely achievement of key literacy skills . They argue that using an early literacy screening protocol holds promise as a proactive means for enhancing literacy related service delivery activities.

Articles such as : *New or Expanded Literacy Roles for Speech-language Pathologists: Making It happen in the Schools* ([Ehren & Ehren, 2001](#)), *The ABCs of spelling: Development, assessment and intervention* ([Butler, Apel, & Masterson, 2000](#)), and *Written language disabilities and educational strategies* ([Butler, & Graham, 2000](#)) are appearing more frequently in the Speech-Language Pathology literature. Anecdotal first person accounts are now routinely featured in the ASHA LEADER with titles such as: "Serving Students with Spoken and Written Language Challenges: It's in the Cards" ([Apel, 2002](#)); "Getting Into the Adolescent Literacy Game" ([Ehren, 2002](#)) and " Literacy in the Public Schools: One SLP's Personal Odyssey and Ongoing Adventure" ([Yess, 2002](#)).

Training initiatives are exemplified by recent training grant received by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro titled: Language Literacy Impairment and Juvenile Delinquency.

The stated goal of the program is to prepare Master's level speech-language pathologists to be specialists in reading and written language disorders. ([Cimorelli, 2003](#))

This section of the paper has described how a field outside of traditional Reading and Language Arts might co-opt some roles usually delineated to Reading and Language Arts. It has also presented the rational and some examples of professional functioning within the area. The next section of the paper will discuss how Reading professionals in New Jersey have responded to the ASHA position and how they have worked to develop a positive relationship with Speech-Language Pathologists that encourages providing quality services to those requiring them without changing the widely understood roles of two groups of professionals.

The New Jersey Experience

Position papers do not become significant unless they result in a course of action and advocacy for the views they express. Such is the case with the ASHA position paper, as experienced by the professional literacy community in New Jersey.

Starting the Conversation

It has been rare for New Jersey Reading Specialists and SLPs to communicate with each other on professional matters, primarily due to lack of contact with each other. In most New Jersey public schools, Reading Specialists are not part of the Intervention and Referral Services Team. Thus, I (Lewis) found it somewhat surprising when a representative from NJ's ASHA community asked that I meet with him. The request was made through a member of the Advisory Board to the Legislation/ Professional Standards Committee of our state reading association (NJRA). This Board member is a school psychologist, and she viewed this request for a meeting as presenting great possibility for collaboration.

Although, I have chaired the state reading association's Legislation/Professional Standards Committee which reviews literacy issues, writes position papers, and develops advocacy strategies for high quality literacy programs and literacy teachers. It was not until the December 2001 American Reading Forum (ARF) meeting during a discussion with ARF members Rich Culatta and Stan Goldberg that I became aware of the ASHA Position Statement and its implications for reading professionals. Now I understood the SLP's interest in meeting with me. Certainly the anticipated meeting required that I do some careful planning.

As part of my preparation, I reviewed requirements for SLP licensure in New Jersey and found that not a single course is required in reading theory or best reading practices. Investigation into requirements in other states yielded similar results, as did conversations with colleagues across the nation. I also reviewed the ASHA position statement and, to be certain that my own reaction was not untoward, I discussed the Statement with other reading professionals. Their responses were similar to mine. They were alarmed by ASHA's statement and questioned how individuals with no training in teaching reading could declare themselves qualified to assume this role. In New Jersey, Reading Specialists go through a rigorous Master's Level

program. Additionally, they are required, to have two years of classroom teaching experience prior to receiving the reading specialist certification. ASHA's statement seemed brazen, at best.

Identifying Core Beliefs

Meeting day with the New Jersey SLP arrived in early December 2001. The school psychologist also attended. During our initial discussion, I asked the SLP about ASHA's Statement and sought his opinion regarding what his professional association had deemed its members could do. His response was surprising. He said he was unaware that the statement claimed these things. He then indicated he did not know how to do many of the things listed and that, clearly, they fell within the purview of the Reading Specialist. For the next two hours we discussed respective roles, what contributions each profession made to children's development and concerns we had about Special Education programs in New Jersey. We agreed on many points, including the need for each school to have a Reading Specialist and for reading specialists to be included on the Intervention and Referral Services Team. The school psychologist agreed on every point and added additional ones. The result was our decision to collaborate on writing a mission statement that would address our concerns and make recommendations for action. Our audience would be policymakers, and we would seek support from professional associations.

Developing An Evidence-Based Mission Statement & Obtaining Endorsements

Over the course of the next two months we refined our document, Mission Statement ([Appendix I](#)) and found evidence to support each point made. NJRA's Legislation/Professional Standards Committee participated in developing the statement which was then reviewed by our Executive Board and adopted by our Board of Directors. The SLP and school psychologist worked with and obtained endorsements from their respective organizations. Then we sought endorsements from other groups.

The statement calls for 13 initiatives, each of which we believe will contribute significantly toward the goal of literacy for all children in our state ([Appendix I](#)). There is an emphasis on promoting high quality teacher preparation and professional development. We call for effective reading programs and assessments that address needs of individual students. We also ask for employment of Reading Specialists and SLPs in every school building, and clearly delineate the role of each. Other initiatives include increased access to technology and appropriate physical space for reading instruction, as well as the inclusion of special needs students in this initiative.

We were fortunate that some of what we asked for is now part of the No Child Left Behind regulations and requirements for New Jersey's Reading First grant awards. This alignment made it somewhat easier to obtain endorsements since some of the issues were, therefore, already familiar to members of professional education associations.

Most organizations that were approached readily agreed to the content of our Mission Statement. I met with the Chair of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association's Education Committee who quickly endorsed the Statement and, in fact, invited me to serve on her committee. The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the teachers' union in New Jersey, has a long adoption process, however. It involves presenting requests such as ours to affected committees and for those committees to then decide the course of action it would take; we have to date been invited to meet with only one of these committees. However at an NJEA Delegate's Assembly two years earlier, some of our points in the Mission Statement had already been endorsed and this is indicated on the Statement (Appendix I).

Identifying Advocacy Outcomes

The Statement, with logos of endorsing organizations, was then sent to the New Jersey Governor's office, state legislators, and members of the State Board of Education. Meetings have been held with several legislators to discuss particular aspects of the Statement. One was most interested in Special Education and wanted to know what model programs other states could offer and what preparation resource room teachers had for teaching literacy. To find out I conducted a national survey and have shared the findings with this legislator. While this might not lead to specific legislation supporting our Mission Statement, it has forged a new relationship and I believe NJRA will be called upon should any literacy legislation cross this Assemblyman's desk.

While we cannot claim a direct outcome, a few months after our Mission Statement was sent to the Governor, he held an Education Summit. "Better Teaching" was the first goal the Governor identified and he suggested a way to achieve this goal was to "strengthen state requirements to ensure that all elementary school teachers know how to teach reading." New Jersey's Teacher Licensure and Certification Code, nearly 20 years old, is currently being revised.

Continuing The Conversation

The New Jersey SLP with whom I worked provided a workshop at NJRAs Literacy Institute entitled, "The Speech-Language Specialist's Role on the School Literacy Team." A short time later, he suggested that the leadership of NJRA and the two NJ speech associations meet to discuss other possibilities for collaboration. Here is where the reading professionals may bar the door. There is understandable reluctance to become 'paired' with the speech associations. In the past, NJRA has coordinated conferences with other associations and partnered on publishing position papers. However, in every instance our professional roles were clear and were not threatened. Linking ourselves any more closely with the speech pathology associations might give the appearance of legitimatizing SLPs as reading professionals or implying that we agree with ASHAs statement of the roles and responsibilities of its members. We could, in a sense, be causing our own demise.

Final Thoughts

It is valuable for professional organizations to collaborate on initiatives of mutual interest. Frequently, the result is increased talent and perspectives that make the outcome richer and also more appealing to a wider audience. This was certainly the case in developing the NJLIMS Statement and in working with the speech pathology associations and others to develop the statement and garner endorsements. But how far should such joint efforts go?

If funding for literacy programs continues to increase, providing more opportunity for professional development providers, it will be important for Reading Specialists to monitor our own professional entry points. We must be careful not to weaken our professional standards in an effort to seem “collegial”. We must understand that our expertise, knowing how to help children with complex reading difficulties and knowing how to help teachers provide the most effective literacy instruction, is not synonymous with knowing how to help children with complex speech needs, no matter what ASHA’s leadership or its members think. We each must recognize our respective areas of proficiency and use them, collaboratively, to bring about the best results for children and schools. To ignore our differences and to treat each other as though we were equally qualified to do whatever our leadership says we are qualified to do, would lead us down a directionless, albeit primrose, path to confusion. And in the end, the achievements of our children and our schools would be compromised.

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Appendix I

NEW JERSEY'S LITERACY INITIATIVE MISSION STATEMENT

Endorsed by:

New Jersey Association of School Psychologists
New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association
New Jersey Association of Learning Consultants
New Jersey Association of Speech-Language Specialists
New Jersey Reading Association
New Jersey Business & Industry Association

Supported by:

New Jersey Educational Association
(NJEA supports the general concept of the NJLIMS while the appropriate committees continue to review the specifics for endorsement.)

In order to achieve the goal of literacy for all New Jersey's school children, we believe there must be the following initiatives:

1. Development of language arts literacy benchmarks for all grades from pre-K through 12, with particular attention to kindergarten through grade three.
2. A requirement of coursework in teaching of language arts literacy skills for all teacher certifications, including alternate route, in the state Administrative Code. These should include the NJEA Delegate Assembly's (November 1998) recommendation that there be required 12 credits in this core area for elementary certifications; 6 credits for secondary certification. Twelve credits should also be required for early childhood certifications. Further, it is the view of the undersigned that 6 credits in language arts literacy should be required for all other certifications, including special education. Alternate route teachers should have the equivalent in instructional time in learning how to teach language arts literacy.
3. Professional development training that is ongoing, sequential, comprehensive, coordinated, and required as inservice for all teachers and that is directed toward developing students' language arts literacy skills. It should include but not be limited to: reading curriculum, language development as it relates to literacy, informal classroom assessment, teaching diverse

learners, research based reading practices, critical thinking and comprehension across disciplines.

4. Use of multiple, varied, comprehensive, research based reading programs and assessments, tailored to meet the individual needs of students, including meaningful use of students' first language skills. *
5. Employment of a full-time reading specialist on the staff in each school building who will provide intensive direct services to students and consultation with teachers and school staff. *
6. Use of speech-language specialists in each school building to foster oral language development and language acquisition skills, and to identify students at risk for reading and/or writing problems due to speech/language disabilities.
7. Programs for parents and other caregivers to build awareness and skills so they can participate in the early literacy development of their children.
8. An Intervention and Referral Services system in each school building (NJAC Chapter 16, 6A:16-7.1-7.3) that includes the parent, classroom teacher, reading specialist, speech language specialist, school psychologist, learning consultant, and other educational support staff to develop reading intervention plans for students.
9. Access to technology used for the improvement of reading instruction and a Library Media Center in each school staffed by a certified education media specialist. *
10. Use of classroom assistants to supplement, not replace, certified teachers for reading instruction. *
11. Implementation of a process for identifying children with potential reading difficulties; such identification should take place in pre-K and be part of continuous K-12 evaluation. *
12. Creation of appropriate physical space in each school to focus on individual or small group reading instruction based on developmental needs of at risk children. *
13. Inclusion of students who are eligible for special education and related services in this literacy initiative.

*Supported by NJEA Delegate Assembly's November 1998 recommendation.

For further information and/or Evidence Supporting the NJLIMS, contact:

Jill Lewis (NJRA), jlewisprof1@yahoo.com

Les Aungst (NJSWA & NJASLS), Laungst@aol.com
Avivah Dahbany (NJASP), Adahbany@aol.com

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Literacy Instruction and Governance Differences at State-Designated High and Low Performing Schools

Deborah L. Earley and Jane Brady Matanzo
Florida Atlantic University

The contemporary accountability trend can be marked by the release of an influential report on the negative state of American schools, “A Nation At Risk” ([Atkinson, 2002](#)). The report, conducted by the National Commission of Excellence in Education (1983), initiated two waves of policy. The first policy initiative raised academic standards and the second focused on expanding assessments and school restructuring efforts ([Valencia & Wixson, 2000](#)). Legislatively, throughout the 1980s, federal involvement in K – 12 public education was decentralized through block grants to the states ([McGill-Franzen, 2000](#)). Decentralization led to state policies for standards and accountability for schools to meet these standards.

State-led education reform gained momentum during the 1990s. Standards for state performance in education were defined in the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994. This legislation mandated that all states and districts receiving Title I funds must issue annual school, district, and state report cards. By 2001, all 50 states had some form of reporting system in place. Forty of the 50 states were preparing formal school report cards, which included student performance on state assessments ([Goertz, Duffy, & LeFloch, 2001](#)). Thus, states are aligning accountability programs with the objectives set forth in the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994.

Goertz et al. (2001) performed a 50-state survey of state assessment and accountability systems in place during the 1999-2000 school year. They found that, overall, 48 states used a state assessment as the main indicator of school performance. Some states collected additional measures of non-cognitive performance such as attendance and drop-out rates. Two states, Iowa and Nebraska, required the local districts to test students with an assessment of the districts’ choice. These 48 states test reading as part of the state assessment, with eighth grade as the most popular grade level assessed. By 2008, 28 states will require high school students to pass a state assessment for graduation.

By the beginning of 2001, the U.S. Department of Education had approved the performance standards established in 28 states. While preparing annual report cards for schools, low performing schools are identified by state accountability systems. Most states provide support for low-performing schools in the form of corrective action planning, financial assistance, expert assistance, or professional development (Goertz et al., 2001).

State accountability systems can be categorized into three types: public reporting, locally-defined accountability, and state-defined accountability. The public reporting system, used by 13

states in 2001, requires districts to report the results of the statewide assessment. With this system, schools are not ranked or rated. The locally-defined system emphasizes local standards and planning, utilizing school improvement plans as a vehicle for documenting accountability. The state-defined system sets the performance goals for schools. The state provides rewards for meeting or exceeding the state goals or sanctions for not meeting the goals. The performance goals vary; and, the states measure school progress by either setting an absolute target, measuring schools' relative growth based on past performance, or measuring the achievement gap. Thirty-three states used a state-defined system of accountability by the 1999-2000 school year. All 33 states identified low-performing schools (Goertz et al., 2001).

Often, state accountability programs focus on student performance on a standardized assessment. The International Reading Association ([2002](#)) defines high-stakes assessment as using one test to make important decisions about students, teachers, and schools. Policy decisions are based on test performance, creating an atmosphere for high-stakes assessment.

A high-stakes assessment program also can impact literacy instructional practices. Most of these assessment programs focus on reading and, therefore, have an effect on literacy instruction. Three studies describe the effects of high-stakes assessments on literacy instruction. First, Guthrie, Schafer, & Von Secker ([2000](#)) found that reading programs with a high impact on standardized assessments used an abundance of books and resources and placed little emphasis on basal reading programs. Intermediate level teachers placed more emphasis on integration, books and resources, collaboration, and writing. Second, Jones, Jones, & Hardin ([1999](#)) found that in North Carolina, teachers spent a majority of the day teaching reading, writing, and math. Eighty percent of the teachers claimed that students spent at least a fifth of total instructional time practicing for the end-of-grade test. Two-thirds of the teachers reported that they changed their teaching practices since the inception of the state policy, with 76% reporting to feel more stress. A third study by Almasi, Afflerback, Guthrie, & Schafer ([1995](#)) focused on Maryland schools with at-risk populations that were initiating instructional changes. The researchers found that overall the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program "did have a direct influence on the types of instructional changes taking place in all five [participating] schools" (p. 12). These changes included more opportunities for students to write and more choices in reading and writing.

Standards and high-stakes assessment are factors in Florida's state accountability system. The Florida State Legislature enacted the Bush/Brogan A+ Plan for Education (A+ Plan) in 1999. The new legislation provided an increase in funding and accountability for K-12 public schools in Florida ([MyFlorida.com, 2002](#)). The A+ Plan consists of three main parts: 1) addressing accountability and improving student learning; 2) raising standards and improving training for educators; and 3) improving school safety and reducing truancy (Florida Department of Education, 2001a).

Regarding accountability and student learning, the law requires that students in grades 3 through 10 take the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) for Reading and Math. FCAT Writing is administered in grades 4, 8, and 10. The content of the assessments are based on Florida state academic standards, the Sunshine State Standards. The results of student

performance on the FCAT are shared with parents through written reports (Florida Department of Education, 2001c).

School grades based primarily on student achievement data from FCAT scores are assigned by the Florida Department of Education ([Florida Department of Education, 2001b](#)). Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, a point system was implemented, with schools earning “one point for each percentage of students who score high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains” ([Grading Florida Public Schools 2001-2002, 2002](#)). The student sample from which school grades were based consisted of general education, speech impaired, and gifted students who were enrolled in the same school in October and February of the current school year. Students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) with more than two years in an English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) program also were considered in the school grade. Once the points were tallied for each school, a formula was applied to determine the school grade. The formula required adding the points earned in the six areas, three of which involved reading scores, and determining the percentage of eligible students tested. School grades range from A (highest) to F (lowest) ([Grading Florida Public Schools 2001-2002, 2002](#)).

Statement of the Problem and its Significance

The Florida Department of Education grades public school performance based primarily on student achievement, as measured by FCAT scores. If a school is graded F for two years in a four-year period, the parents may opt for an Opportunity Scholarship, or voucher, to attend a private school or choose another public school graded a C or better. In the first year of implementation, 1999-2000, two schools in Florida had students eligible for Opportunity Scholarships. Seventy-eight parents removed their children from these schools, with 58 choosing private schools. Since the grading system began, several other schools were graded F for only one year, thus escaping the eligibility status for Opportunity Scholarships. Across Florida in 1999, 76 schools were graded F. In 2000, four schools were graded F, and no schools were graded F in 2001. In 2002, the number of F schools increased to 68, 10 of these having students eligible for Opportunity Scholarships ([Florida Office of School Improvement, 2002](#)).

The volatile fluctuation of the number of F schools between 1999 and 2002 poses two possibilities. One possibility is that the schools improved student performance on FCAT, thus improving the school grade. In this case, what literacy instructional practices were being implemented and did they differ from A schools? Another possibility is that the Florida Department of Education school grading policy changed, thus affecting the school grades. The problem presented is to investigate variables related to these two possibilities.

Schools graded F submitted reports to the Florida Department of Education outlining intervention strategies to improve student achievement. These strategies focus on a variety of general areas, including instructional practices, curriculum, school safety, district interventions, and community involvement ([Florida Office of School Improvement, 2002](#)). However, many of these reports did not provide details of teaching behaviors, personnel, or governance procedures employed by these schools. Additionally, current published research does not focus on literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance at these Florida schools. This study provides information concerning literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance procedures at

Florida schools graded F as well as those graded A, and it determines if there is any difference in these variables between the two samples.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the school grading policy of the Florida A+ Plan for Education on literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance procedures in Florida public schools. The research questions of this study were:

1. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on literacy instructional practices and materials in Florida Public Schools?
2. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on personnel in Florida Public Schools?
3. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on governance procedures in Florida Public Schools?
4. What, if any, changes have occurred in the Florida Department of Education public school grading policy since its inception in 1999?

The following null hypotheses were tested:

Null Hypothesis One: There is no difference in literacy instruction and materials at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no difference in personnel at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Three: There is no difference in governance procedures at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Four: There has been no change in the Florida Department of Education public school grading policy since its inception in 1999.

Methods

Random sampling was used to select Florida public schools graded A and F in 2002. Possible participants for the study were determined after the schools were randomly selected. The three participant groups were associated with either an A or F school: 1) grade 3-10 teachers who taught reading, writing, and/or language arts during the 2001-02 school year ($n = 107$); 2) principals ($n = 17$); and 3) District Directors of Curriculum or equivalent positions for the district in which the randomly selected school was located ($n = 12$).

Three surveys were used to collect data ([Appendices A-C](#)). The researcher originally designed all three surveys for this study. The contents for each were based on published research and established best practices for literacy instruction and school governance. Additionally, all three surveys were piloted using Cronbach Alpha reliability analyses before distribution to the study sample. Teacher participants completed the Literacy Instructional Practices Survey. Principal participants completed the School Governance Survey. District participants completed the District Governance Survey. In order to provide participant anonymity and track a response rate, a school contact distributed the surveys to eligible participants. Follow-up phone calls and

mailings were used in an attempt to increase participant response rates and decrease non-response bias.

Results

Descriptive analyses of frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency were conducted on data from all three surveys. An independent t-test was conducted on composite mean scores from the Literacy Instructional Practices Survey. A document analysis was conducted to determine if any changes had occurred to the school grading policy since 1999.

The Literacy Instructional Practices Survey collected data from classroom teachers (35% response rate). The six composite scores tested were: Instructional Groupings, Materials, Classroom Activities, Decoding Teaching Practices, Comprehension Teaching Practices, and Writing Teaching Practices. Six independent t-tests ($\alpha = .05$) were conducted to test a null hypothesis. In each case, the null was unable to be rejected (95% confidence interval). Thus, inferential analyses found no significant difference between the types and frequency of literacy teaching practices at A and F schools.

The School Governance and District Governance Surveys collected data concerning personnel (65% response rate for principals and 75% response rate for district participants). Due to a small sample size, only descriptive analyses were conducted on personnel data. All principal participants and 97% of district-level participants reported the use of full-time classroom teachers for literacy instruction. In addition, 50% of F schools employed Title I teachers separate from the classroom compared to 8% of A schools. One hundred percent of principal participants, at both A and F schools, reported using informal classroom observation and student achievement on the FCAT as methods to evaluate literacy personnel performance.

The School Governance and District Governance Surveys also collected data regarding school governance procedures. Fifty-nine percent of all principal participants reported weekly visitations to literacy classrooms. Ninety-five percent also reported collaboration among district staff, principals, and teachers concerning the management of individual school budgets. In general, participant responses indicated collaboration between district and school staffs regarding governance decisions for literacy curriculum and instruction. Only 16% of principal participants indicated complete autonomy over personnel decisions while 40% of district-level participants reported complete principal autonomy for personnel decisions.

The document analysis revealed changes by the Florida Department of Education to the school grading policy since its inception in 1999. Modifications from 1999 to 2000 included the deletion of subgroup minimum performance criteria for A and B schools. Maintaining or improving FCAT Reading scores of the lowest 25% of students was added to the criteria for A and B schools. Another addition for schools graded A, B, C, and D was criteria for meeting “other school data” such as absenteeism and high school drop out rates. School grades from 1999-2001 were based on meeting performance criteria defined as percentages of students achieving Level 2 or higher on FCAT Reading, Writing, and Math.

In subsequent years, other changes to the school grading policy occurred. In 2001, most of the school grading criteria remained unchanged. Only “other school data” was deleted from the school grading criteria for all grades. In 2002, the method for determining the school’s grade changed from a straight percentage of students performing at targeted performance levels to a formula that also accounted for individual student learning gains from one school year to the next.

The score ranges for FCAT Reading Achievement Levels remained unchanged from 1999-2002. This means that the minimum and higher performance criteria, which are the foundation for determining school grades, remained the same. These Achievement Levels, ranging from 1 (*lowest*) to 5 (*highest*), were the only constant component of the school grading policy from 1999-2002.

Conclusions

There was no significant difference in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices regarding instructional groupings, materials, classroom activities, decoding instruction, comprehension instruction, or writing instruction between schools graded A and schools graded F. Hence, regardless of the state-designated school grade of A or F, teachers were implementing the same literacy instructional practices at similar frequency rates. This conclusion was drawn after conducting an independent t-test on each of these six composite scores.

Measures were taken to increase the power of this study, especially in regards to making any generalizations from the independent t-tests. First, an independent t-test is the most efficient statistical method to test for differences between two group means. Second, using research-based content for the surveys and piloting the surveys addressed content validity. Instrumentation reliability was addressed through a pilot study and the application of Cronbach Alpha Reliability tests. All three basic assumptions for a t-test were met in this study (Glass & Hopkins, 1996); thereby, power was increased to make generalizations when the nulls were unable to be rejected within a 95% confidence interval. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that there were no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools.

A second conclusion drawn is that A schools and F schools use similar literacy instructional personnel and methods to evaluate their performance. Full-time classroom teachers were the most commonly employed literacy instructional personnel at A and F schools. All principals used informal classroom observation and student achievement on the FCAT to evaluate literacy instructional personnel.

Due to a small sample size ($n < 30$), conclusions for this research question are based solely on descriptive analyses. Chi-square analyses were planned for responses on survey items regarding personnel but were not conducted because the A school sample size was 13 and the F school sample was 4. As a result, no conclusions were drawn regarding significant differences between A and F school personnel.

A third conclusion is that both A and F school governance practices can be characterized as collaborative between the district and school levels. Overwhelmingly, participants reported that principals and teachers were involved in governance practices regarding the school vision and mission statements, management of the school's individual budget, and decisions concerning personnel. Chi-square analyses on survey items regarding governance practices and a t-test for the Decision-Making Composite were not conducted due to small sample size ($n < 30$). Thus, no conclusions were drawn regarding significant differences between A and F school governance.

The fourth conclusion drawn is that the school grading policy has been changed by the Florida Department of Education since its inception in 1999. Document analysis revealed changes to criteria for all school grades (A – F) from 1999-2002. While peripheries to the grading criteria were changed, the minimum and higher performing criteria for the school grades remained unchanged.

The number of F schools declined from 76 in 1999 to 4 in 2000 and the criteria for the F grade was changed from 1999 to 2000. In 1999, FCAT data for reading, writing, and math had to be at or above the minimum criteria. In 2000, the criteria were based on FCAT data for reading, writing, and math at or above the minimum criteria *for students enrolled in both the October and February FTE at the same school*. As mentioned previously, the minimum criteria did not change during this time period. This modification of the F grade criteria may have contributed to the decline in the number of F schools from 76 in 1999 to 4 in 2000. It was not until the school grading criteria changed in 2002 that the number of F schools increased.

Implications

Findings from this study present implications for practices and research. One implication is that factors other than the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices are affecting a school's grade. This researcher found that teachers at A and F schools are using the same literacy instructional practices on a similar frequency range. Two-thirds of the school grade is determined by student performance on FCAT Reading and Writing. Student performance on FCAT Reading and Writing is influenced by literacy instructional practices. Thus, the question remains, "Why are these schools earning different designations or grades by the state?" It appears that factors other than the types and frequency of instruction implemented must be affecting outcome differences in terms of the state grading criteria.

Second, findings from this study highlight the impact of high-stakes assessment on curriculum and instruction. All of the A and F school principal participants relied on student achievement on FCAT as a method to evaluate teacher performance. Such a practice is sure to impact curriculum and instruction because a teacher will adjust teaching practices if he or she is being evaluated by student performance on a high-stakes assessment. Results from this study imply that the curriculum is narrowing focus solely on reading, writing, and math and FCAT preparation is stressed.

A third implication of this study is that school grades should be viewed in concert with not only the criteria of the grading policy, but also the range of raw scores for the FCAT Achievement Levels (1-5). School grades are based on this FCAT Achievement Level student

performance data. It is important to keep these FCAT Achievement Levels in mind when considering an individual school's grade over a period of years because the score range for each Achievement Level could change. A question to consider is whether the school grade changed because of an increase or decrease in student performance on FCAT or because of a change to the FCAT Achievement Level score ranges.

Limitations

A limitation to this study was the low response rate (27%) from teachers at F schools. Sample selection bias errors were addressed in the formation of the research design by randomly drawing a 9% sample of all schools graded A and F in 2002. However, not all districts and schools in the sample agreed to participate in the study. Of the 27 districts randomly selected, five denied the researcher access to their schools. Four of these districts cited the protection of the principals and teachers at the schools graded F as these principals and teachers had been through much scrutiny by the Florida State Department of Education and school community. Media attention on these schools also heightened the situation. Even in districts where permission was granted to access schools, 14 principals at schools graded F declined to participate in the study due to various reasons, including an overwhelming amount of state-required paperwork and time restraints due to professional development for new reading curricula. Whatever the reasons, sampling bias error is a possible limitation to this study because those participants who did agree to complete the surveys could be typically different from those participants who refused (Alreck & Settle, 1985).

A second possible limitation to this study is the sample size. The sample of teachers was large enough ($n = 107$) to conduct inferential analyses to test the null hypotheses. But the study could have been even stronger if the teacher participant sample was large enough to analyze literacy instructional similarities and differences among A and F elementary school teachers and A and F secondary school teachers. It is possible that a significant difference in the frequency of literacy instructional practices would emerge if the participants were not analyzed as a whole group.

A third limitation stems from the use of surveys. The researcher assumed that participants responded honestly and accurately to survey items. Also, some eligible participants chose not to participate, creating non-response bias. Follow-up mailings were implemented to limit the effects of non-response bias and increase the response rate. Another step taken to address limitations was piloting the original surveys to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study investigated literacy instruction, personnel, and governance differences at A and F schools in Florida. The findings for frequency of literacy instructional practices were significant. Findings also were reported concerning types of personnel and school governance practices implemented at these schools. The findings and implications of this study lead to possibilities for other studies. Recommendations for future research are as follows:

- A replication study with a larger sample size should be conducted in order to verify the results of this study.
- Future research should investigate any similarities and differences in the quality of instruction occurring between A and F schools. This study analyzed the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices, not the quality of instruction. The quantitative data from such a study should be combined with classroom observations to moderate the bias of self-reporting.
- Future research should investigate the relationship between school and/or student demographic variables and the school grade. If there are no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools, then what variables are affecting the schools' grades? For example, is the socioeconomic status of the student population associated with the school grade? Does the degree of parental involvement differ between A and F schools? Since this study concluded that there was no significant difference in the frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools, other possible variables affecting school grades should be investigated.

Though the findings concerning literacy instruction were significant, this study presents an insight for research possibilities. Findings established that there were no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instruction between A and F schools. Yet, the schools were still designated by the state as two extremes of school performance by a grading policy that primarily focused on student achievement based on reading and writing high-stakes assessments. Certainly, these findings must be verified through replication studies. Furthermore, other variables affecting student achievement at A and F schools must be investigated.

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Appendix A

Literacy Instructional Practices Survey

©

Deborah L. Earley, 2002

This survey is intended for grade three through ten teachers who are responsible for reading or writing instruction. Please answer each item by choosing the response that best reflects your practices in the classroom over the **last school year (2001-02)**.

INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPINGS: Items #1-5 are designed to measure the frequency of instructional groupings utilized when teaching reading and writing in your classroom. Select the response that most closely describes frequencies during the last school year.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
1. Used whole group instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Teacher-led small group instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. One-to-One instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Cooperative Groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Peer tutoring.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MATERIALS: Items #6-16 are designed to measure how often you used the following materials when teaching reading and writing in your classroom. Responses should reflect frequencies during the last school year.

	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
6. Computers to deliver instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Children's or adolescents' literature.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Poetry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Creative dramatics.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Newspapers and/or magazines.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Basal readers and/or texts.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MATERIALS CONTINUED

	CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW			
	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
12. Expository (non-fiction) books.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Graphic organizers.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Workbooks and/or skill sheets.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. State FCAT prep materials.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Teacher-made tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TEACHING PRACTICES: Items #17-25 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction for the following decoding skills. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
17. High-frequency words.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Word attack skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Phonics as a separate subject.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Phonics in the context of reading or writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Root words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Prefixes/suffixes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Practicing words out of context (ex: flashcards).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Practicing words in context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Systematic instruction in vocabulary development, including word meanings.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comprehension Instruction: Items #26-36 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction for the following comprehension skills. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
26. Prediction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Inferencing.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Summarizing.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Main idea.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Details.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Solving problem-situations creatively.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Sequence of events.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Drawing conclusions.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Structure of different genres of text.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Text-to-text and/or text-to-self connections.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Story elements (<i>i.e.</i> character, setting, problems, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Writing Instruction: Items #37-46 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction in **writing**. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
37. Taught spelling from lists of words.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Taught grammar or word structures separately.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Provided writing assignments as an isolated exercise.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Required students to spend time with sustained writing (ex: journals).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Modeled the writing process (plan, draft, revise, etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Taught prewriting strategies (<i>i.e.</i> outlining, webbing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WRITING CONTINUED

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
43. Provided timed writing performance assessments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Taught writing mechanics (ex: punctuation, capitalization).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Provided writing assignments in response to class readings or discussions.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Used the 6-point FCAT Writing scoring rubric on student writing assignments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: Items #47-71 are designed to measure how often the following **reading and writing activities** occurred in your classroom. Responses should reflect frequencies during the last school year.

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
47. Student discussions about texts they have read.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. Independent reading time.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. Literature study.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. Question-generating by students.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. Teacher demonstration of reading strategies.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. Reading in the content areas.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. Author's Chair.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. Partner or Buddy reading.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. One-on-one teacher-student conferences.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. Reading aloud by students.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. Choral reading.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. Reading of student-selected text.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. Authentic purposes for reading and writing activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTIVITIES CONTINUES

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
60. Opportunities to write original material.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61. Note-taking.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
62. Graffiti Boards.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63. Peer writing conferences.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64. Grammar tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65. Writer's notebook.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66. Spelling tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
67. Opportunities to write personal responses to literature.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68. Essay tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
69. Students wrote to a narrative prompt (FCAT practice)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70. Students wrote to a persuasive prompt (FCAT practice).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
71. Students wrote to an expository prompt (FCAT practice).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: Please respond openly to Items #72-78. The survey is anonymous and all answers will be kept confidential. In addition, answers from all participants in the study will be analyzed for patterns, statistically tabulated, and summarized.

72. If you have taught at least five years in Florida, has your curriculum changed since the inception of FCAT? If yes, how has it changed?

73. Personally, what was the MOST helpful professional development training?

74. Personally, what was the LEAST helpful professional development training?

75. How often did you attend professional training for literacy instruction last year?

76. What percentage of instructional time per week did you spend in one-to-one instruction?

77. What did your principal expect you to do to prepare for FCAT Reading?

78. What did your principal expect you to do to prepare for FCAT Writing?

DEMOGRAPHICS: CIRCLE OR WRITE the response that best reflects your situation during the 2001-02 school year.

79. Gender: male female

80. Years teaching experience: _____

81. Highest degree held: bachelors masters specialist doctorate post-doctorate

82. Teaching responsibility: Grade level(s) taught: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(83) Subject area(s): reading writing language arts

84. Total number of students to whom I taught reading: _____

85. Total number of students to whom I taught writing: _____

86. School in which you taught: rural suburban urban

Appendix B

School Governance Survey

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This survey is intended for principals of elementary and secondary schools in Florida. Please answer each item by choosing the response which best reflects your experiences over the **last school year (2001-02)**.

PERSONNEL: Items #1-2 are designed to gather information regarding personnel responsible for teaching reading and writing at your school. Responses should reflect personnel employed during the last school year.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

1) Select methods you employed to evaluate the performance of teachers of reading and writing.

- Informal classroom observation
- Evaluation by students
- Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS)
- Parent surveys
- Student achievement on FCAT
- Peer review
- Examine teachers' lesson plans or other instructional materials
- Teacher portfolio of Educator Accomplished Practices (EAP)

2) Select the types of teachers who taught reading and writing at your school.

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

GOVERNANCE: Items #3-13 are designed to gather information regarding governance procedures at your school. Responses should reflect procedures during the last school year.

- 3) Select the one response that best describes the people who developed the school vision and mission statements.
 - School-based staff
 - Principal and staff
 - Principal
 - District-level staff

- 4) Select the one response that best describes how often professional development training for reading and writing instruction was offered during the last school year.
 - Never
 - Weekly
 - Bi-weekly
 - Monthly
 - Once a semester
 - Once a year

- 5) Select the one response that best describes how often you visited classrooms during reading or writing activities during the last school year.
 - Never
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Yearly

- 6) For planning teams, teachers were grouped by: (select the one response that best reflects groupings for last school year)
 - Grade level
 - Vertical families (*i.e.* grades K-5, or 6-8, or 9-12)
 - Content area

For Items #7-13, **check all** responses that apply. Responses should reflect the last school year (2001-02).

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

7) Individual school budgets were managed by

- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and teachers in collaboration

8) Purchasing decisions about reading curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

9) Purchasing decisions about writing curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

10) Decisions about school personnel were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal collaborated
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and Staff collaborated

11) Decisions regarding reading curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

12) Decisions regarding writing curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

13) Professional development training for literacy instruction was selected by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: Please respond openly to Items #14-17. The survey is anonymous and all answers will be kept confidential. In addition, answers from all participants in the study will be analyzed for patterns and then summarized.

14) How did you encourage communication and reflective dialogue regarding literacy instruction amongst the staff?

15) How did you offer formal recognition to successful teachers of reading and writing?

- 16) Was merit pay provided for Grade 3-10 teachers based on FCAT scores?
- 17) How often did the School Accountability Committee meet? Please describe its major involvement with budget, curriculum and instruction, and personnel.

DEMOGRAPHICS: For Items #18-25, **CIRCLE OR WRITE** the response that best reflects your situation during the 2001-02 school year.

- 18) Gender: male female
- 19) Years experience as a principal: _____
- 20) Highest degree held: bachelors masters specialist doctorate post-doctorate
- 21) School can be categorized as: rural suburban urban
- 22) School-level: elementary (K-5) middle (6-8) high (9-12)
- 23) Days in the required school year for teachers, including planning and professional development: _____
- 24) Hours in the school day for teachers (to the nearest half hour): _____
- 25) The majority of full-time reading or writing teachers were: in-field out-of-field

Appendix C

School Governance Survey

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This survey is intended for Associate Superintendent of Curriculum, Director of Curriculum, or the district representative for curriculum in Florida public school districts. Please answer each item by choosing the response which **best** reflects your district's policies over **the last school year (2001-02)**. Please reflect policies for traditional K-12 public schools only (exclude charter schools, private schools, and home schoolers).

PERSONNEL: Items #1-4 are designed to gather information regarding personnel responsible for teaching reading and writing in your district. Responses should reflect personnel employed during the **last school year**.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

1) Select methods employed in your district to evaluate the performance of teachers of reading and writing.

- Informal classroom observation
- Evaluation by students
- Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS)
- Parent surveys
- Student achievement on FCAT
- Peer review
- Examine teachers' lesson plans or other instructional materials
- Teacher portfolio of Educator Accomplished Practices (EAP)

Select the types of teachers who teach reading and writing in your district at the: (check **all that apply**)

2) elementary level

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

PERSONNEL CONTINUED

3) middle school level:

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

4) high school level:

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

GOVERNANCE: Items #5-13 are designed to gather information regarding governance procedures in your district. Responses should reflect procedures during the last school year.

5) Select the one response that best describes the people who developed school vision and mission statements.

- School-based staff
- Principal and staff
- Principal
- District-level staff

GOVERNANCE CONTINUED

- 6) Select the **one** response that best describes how often your district provided professional development training for reading and writing instruction during the **last school year**.

- Never
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Once a semester
- Once a year

For Items #7-13, **check all** responses that apply. Responses should reflect the **last school year (2001-02)**.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 7) Individual school budgets were managed by

- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and teachers in collaboration

- 8) Purchasing decisions about reading curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

9) Purchasing decisions about writing curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

10) Decisions about school personnel were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal collaborated
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and Staff collaborated

11) Decisions regarding reading curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

12) Decisions regarding writing curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

13) Professional development training for literacy instruction was selected by

- District staff only
 - District staff and Principal in collaboration
 - Principal only
 - Principal and teachers in collaboration
 - Teachers only

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: Please respond openly to Items #14-16. All answers for this survey will be kept confidential. In addition, answers from all participants in the study will be analyzed for patterns, statistically tabulated, and summarized.

14) How did you encourage communication and reflective dialogue regarding literacy instruction amongst school administrators?

15) How did your district offer formal recognition to successful teachers of reading and writing?

16) Was merit pay provided for Grade 3-10 teachers based on FCAT scores?

DEMOGRAPHICS: For Items #17-20, CIRCLE OR WRITE the response that best reflects your situation during the 2001-02 school year.

17) Gender: male female

18) School district size: small mid-size large
(1-25 total schools) (26-100 total schools) (more than 100 total schools)

19) Days in the required school year for teachers, including planning and professional development: _____

20) The majority of full-time reading or writing teachers were: in-field out-of-field

Networking and Negotiating for Adolescent Literacy

Joyce C. Fine

Cathy Toll ([2002](#)) in her chapter “Can Teachers and Policy Makers Learn to Talk to One Another?” explains why policy makers appear to want to change schools in ways that are incongruent with the views of educators. She claims that the discourses ([Gee, 1996](#)) of the two communities are so different that they are not able to communicate clearly and effectively. She suggests that teachers make decisions based on engagement with students, concern for children’s affect, and control of teacher decision making. Policy makers, on the other hand, see teachers as passive and unwilling to change. Policy makers insist on acquiring objective data that will guide reform, which usually has little to do with children and a lot to do with curriculum standards. The conflicting discourses, she suggests, reflect different perspectives and represent differences in power status.

Meanwhile, children’s needs are often forsaken while these two camps are competing for control. These discourse communities need to listen to one another. The dialog must help the two sides understand each other’s perspectives rather than perpetuate differences. How can this be done? It can be started by talking and working with the many layers of public, private, and governmental agencies in our communities. It involves a flexibility to share goals and talk, networking and negotiating along the way. One project that is an example of this type of networking and negotiation is described below.

In 2000 the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) in Miami received a grant for \$3 million dollars as part of a National Demonstration Project, Cops 2000, from the U.S. Department of Justice. The goal was to reduce the rate of recidivism through a post-arrest diversion (PAD) program. Many researchers from the field of social science were called in to participate. The grant was to create a model in which social services were offered to prevent large numbers of first time offenders (FTOs) from becoming repeat offenders. These services included family and career counseling, employment, financial assistance and other social services as needed.

The Assistant Director of the JAC, who became the grant director, was aware of the need to support adolescents academically, as well as with other social services. He contacted a reading professor for assistance. Was she interested in trying to establish some tutoring for this population? Would she set up an appointment between her Dean and the Juvenile Assessment Center’s Commander to discuss the possibility of doing this? Even though tutoring was not a part of the original grant proposal, they realized the importance of getting the students back on track in school. So began the networking and negotiating process that set the tenor of the next few years of this project. It has become an example of the type of socio-cultural negotiation that is required when large community systems begin to work together as well as with marginalized adolescents. This type of discourse across systems and societal levels is what is unique about this project.

The Model: CIPP

The best way of describing what took place under this grant is to use the CIPP model created by Daniel Stufflebeam ([1966, 2000](#)) which developed over the years. It is the framework

for guiding evaluation that is aimed at effecting long-term, sustainable improvements. It provides a means for the assessment and continuous improvement of programs, institutions, and systems. The CIPP Model includes knowing the Context, getting Input, beginning a Process, and producing a Product in a repeated cycle. As the context changes, continuously changing the input and adjusting the process makes the product or outcome evolve. It is a constant, ongoing interplay of people and situations that influence the outcomes of the project.

Context

The context of the program is Miami-Dade County, a large, diverse city. The Miami-Dade County Public School System is the fourth largest in the nation where almost 60 percent of the student population is on free and reduced lunch. Growing numbers of adolescents have been arrested, many from immigrant populations. There are over a 100 different languages spoken by students in the Miami schools. The Police Department, under the Department of Juvenile Justice, had set up the JAC so that any minors who had been arrested anywhere in the county would be treated uniformly, following guidelines for the protection of youth.

Input

Since the JAC had to continue its role in processing all arrested juveniles, it had to first establish separate groups or agencies for handling the research and the financial aspects of the grant. These subcontractors had to be approved by a vote of the Miami City Council. Once this was done, the newly hired representatives had to approve the plans for the tutoring project, redirecting some funds from the budget, which had been approved at the federal level.

On the university side, the grant had to be approved by the newly established Urban Center for Education and Innovation. While the newly hired director of research from another university wanted to make a private, contractual agreement with the professor, the professor wanted to provide tutoring under the mission of the Urban Center and as part of a practicum in reading. She knew that most of the teachers in the K-12 Literacy Masters in Reading Program were elementary teachers who needed to gain experience working with marginalized adolescent learners if they were ever going to be willing to teach them. If they never worked with marginalized adolescents in their training to become reading specialists, they might never want to work with this population. They needed to talk to the students and see them as individuals in order to understand their needs, issues, and situations.

Product

The goal of Project LIFT: Literacy Intervention for Teens was established to provide this experience and to work with the JAC as a part of the PAD program. The Urban Center gave a \$5,000 seed grant to work out the arrangements and get started.

The negotiation with the research team entailed the professor designing a program and presenting it to the team of researchers and grant directors. The grant personnel suggested that the professor “dream up what she wanted to do.” In consultation with others who had run programs for marginalized youth, the plan was submitted. It was originally for 12-14 year olds

and included snacks and incentives for completing the tutoring. The professor felt the teachers would have the greatest opportunity to help students who were at these ages. The snacks were to help if students came to tutoring hungry and to give them an incentive and a “good taste” for literacy.

The original proposal was modified considerably with such changes as expanding to include any age juvenile who had been arrested and not having any food or incentives for those coming to the JAC for tutoring. The JAC representatives felt that the opportunity to have the FTO’s criminal record expunged was incentive enough to get them to participate in the tutoring. They wanted to support the adolescents without glorifying their situation. Understanding the officials’ perspectives led to a compromise.

The PAD program gave just under \$30,000 for purchasing materials and books and to establish a tutoring project in which ninety FTO’s would be assessed and receive instruction in literacy. Consideration was given to the fact that the adolescents previously had made the decision to break the law. The JAC officers limited the number of students who would be allowed to participate at any given time to fifteen. The tutoring would take place on the second floor of the JAC center, over the processing and holding areas for the offenders. If there were any breakouts of fighting or any other problems, the police officers would be just below and would be able to intervene.

Product

With these details in place, the professor began recruiting graduate students for the fall 2001 term. To participate, graduate teachers would read articles on adolescent literacy and prepare an action research project from their experience. Twenty-four teachers attended the first session, were given a tour of the facilities and were told basic safety precautions that would be needed for working in that environment. They were prepared to participate by offering tutoring on multiple evenings and on Saturdays each week. The teachers came and waited, but the students did not appear.

Finally, the students began to come on Saturdays. They have continued to come each term, but only on Saturdays and only small numbers of those who qualified for the service. The teachers who were able to tutor these students overcame their initial fears of working with these kinds of students. They were no longer put off by the appearance or gestures that showed resistance in the beginning. Each term, by the end of the first session, the students had new attitudes about why they were coming and about literacy in general. There were never any difficulties that erupted, but, we were not reaching enough students.

Context

Where were the large numbers of academically low-performing students? They were supposed to be recommended for tutoring after the social workers interviewed them with their parents. The social workers were supposed to be screening the FTO’s, determining if the FTO’s had been arrested for a misdemeanor, and evaluating them as psychologically safe enough to be released. If needy in the area of academics, based on a snapshot report from the school system,

the social workers were to recommend them for tutoring. Yet, the students were not coming for tutoring. Although some had begun to come on Saturdays, none came on the weekdays after school hours.

This meant that the graduate teachers who were supposed to be working with marginalized youth on the weekdays had to tutor another student situation. Through negotiation with the school system, they were able to tutor in an alternative school that was in session until 6:00 pm. This school had FTO's as well as other students with major adjustment problems. The professor made these arrangements and attended those sessions, also.

Input

The question of why the FTO's were not attending was still unanswered. The arrangement with the JAC was that the tutoring was part of the sanctions. This was a situation that had to be investigated. Several reasons were considered: it could be the location of the program or it could be that communication about tutoring as a sanction for completing the PAD program was a problem. The JAC then informed the professor that they had to seek the approval of the state's attorney for tutoring to be officially added to the sanctions. This led to more negotiation. After one state's attorney quit, tutoring as a sanction was finally arranged with the new state's attorney.

Process

The program was able to continue, but the numbers of FTO's who participated were still low. The professor was told that the Miami Teen Court was interested in sending students to the tutoring. The Miami Teen Court, which operates under the auspices of the Metro-Miami Action Corps, has FTO's and other students, as well, participate in mock court proceedings. The FTO's who go to trial, must follow through with their peers' sanctions in order to have their criminal records expunged.

Product

The Teen Court began to send student's families to Project LIFT. These students were already participating in the programs that had been stipulated for them in order to have their criminal records expunged. They complied to achieve their goal. Perhaps these student's families were more supportive. The Teen Court students were able to make good progress with the tutoring. These students were more motivated to change. Although they had been performing poorly in school, they were functioning at less severely low literacy levels. With the mentor-tutor, they completed the tutoring sanctions. These higher functioning students were the most successful in making gains.

Context

The COPS grant ended. The tutoring continued through the last month of funding. Recently the Teen Court organization has indicated that it wants to continue funding the program but wants to move it to their building, which is closer to where many FTO's have been arrested.

The building also is shared by an alternative education school for middle school students. This organization believes it will always have plenty of students who will participate.

Input and Process

The JAC is waiting until they get more funding to be able to continue tutoring. However, in the meantime, they have been recognized for the model they created. The JAC has been instituted as a separate arm of the Metro government, not part of the Police Department any longer. They will be able to continue their total-child support approach. They have offered their facilities for tutoring to continue and also are willing to send students to the Teen Court building if that turns out to be a better location to draw students.

Product

The teachers have all benefited from the experience and have made wonderful comments such as the following:

The information I have gathered and been exposed to by reading about adolescent literacy has given me the opportunity to compare that many of the strategies that are used at the elementary level can be used to assist marginalized struggling adolescent readers.
HB

When you can reach one of these children who has ‘gone astray’ and helped guide them back into regular productive society that is something that touches your heart and doesn’t easily go away...it gave me the desire to work with children who may not be where they need to be educationally or socially. JR

I have made a difference in the life of one student. And it feels exhilarating! Even if I have to do it one student at a time, I will achieve. JG

The FTOs involved made varying degrees of progress depending on the number of times they came and the degree to which they connected with the teachers. Some found the mentoring aspect very meaningful. One parent commented to the Teen Court that since her son participated in the program he has improved two grade levels. This comment suggests that the students need to be followed in a longitudinal study to measure the impact. Both the JAC and the Teen Court are supportive of this type of study.

Conclusion

This article documented how the negotiations involved in Project Lift: Literacy Intervention for Teens required the commitment and understanding of those involved to achieve the intended goal of supporting marginalized adolescents. There were many meetings in which the perspectives of the different governmental agencies, educators, and students were shared. Patience, persistence, and openness to honestly present what was needed, yet allow for the other’s discourse needs to be met, contributed to the success of this project and hold promise for further dialogue for literacy instruction, particularly in the area of adolescent literacy. Perhaps, this model of exchange could lead educators to more successful networking and negotiations with other government agencies. From this experience, it seems important to begin on a local

level to dialogue with governmental agencies if we hope to help more youth. Perhaps, getting policy makers and educators to talk on this level will build the trust and discourses of understanding needed for exchanges at the state and national levels.

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On the Nature of the Interactive Reading: A Culinary Metaphor

Michael P. French

Interactive reading has been described by Lipson and Wixson ([1997](#)) as a view that entails a variety of factors in which attributes of the reader, the text, and context intersect. Reader factors include general prior knowledge, knowledge of the reading process, and for reading. Texts factors include the discourse to be constructed whether narrative, informative, or poetic. Context factors include the how and where reading takes place—the purpose for reading, the author stance of the text, and the physical space in which the actual act of reading takes place.

In teaching the interactive view of reading to students in various university classes at Bowling Green State University (Fundamentals of Reading, Phonics, Content Reading) I have used an analogy such as driving a car to illustrate the interactive nature of personal knowledge (one's ability to drive), the text (the vehicle being driven), and the context (how and where the vehicle is driven). Students come to see how the process (in this case driving) can be impacted by elements of experience (Who has driven in Boston?), expertise (Who can drive a manual transmission), and attitude (Who has experienced road rage?). Reading works the same way.

I have been attending the ARF conference since 1999. In reflecting on these several trips to Florida, I have come to realize that cooking shrimp can also stand as an apt metaphor for reading. Cooking requires knowledge of ingredients and tools as well as procedural knowledge of planning the various types of food (shrimp, chicken, rice). Cooking requires knowing differences and similarities between recipes, e.g., knowing what base to use for what sauce. It also requires knowing how to adapt to different stoves, different pans, and different sizes of shrimp.

Cooking shrimp, like reading, requires successful prior experiences: Prior experiences in which others of significance have communicated satisfaction and respect, as well as constructive criticism, back to the chef. Each successful prior experience leads to new understandings and constructive risk-taking (such as don't undercook the shrimp). Commenting on this point Murnen ([2002, personal communication](#)) adds that there is a social construction of knowledge—"We know we have done something correctly within a particular social context because we receive validation from that discourse community of mentors and peers." For example, the second year I helped in the kitchen I rolled shrimp in Old Bay spice to create a different variety of shrimp. It seemed that people liked it. This allowed me to take a risk and try to present the shrimp in new ways—as in the third year when I presented a New Orleans Bar-B-Q dish. ([Appendix A](#)). I received lots of positive comments about this style of shrimp—to the point that in the fourth year, I brought my own oversized frying pan to be able to prepare more shrimp more efficiently. I also tried another style – Garlic/Butter/Chardonnay Shrimp ([Appendix B](#)).

Again, many complements were received. These positive acclamations make one want to cook again to relive the positive feelings, to take calculated risks, while staying grounded in the basics (bring the water to a boil—add shrimp—set the time for 12 minutes, drain and serve over ice.)

How often do we praise readers like we praise cooks? And, when do we pay the ultimate compliment and call the cook a chef? When does a learner become a reader or a writer an author? Reading requires constructive problem solving, as does cooking. This last year was the first time I have ever cooked on a solid-top range. I wasn't sure how to work the electronic oven, and the microwave was a devil to program; Books can be like that too. But I had help. Tim set the clock, and thanks to Marty, the over-boils got cleaned up quickly. As teachers, we sometimes need to help readers get started when the clock needs setting, and we need to clean up the mess when the words boil over the top of the page.

Cooking for sixty people is a rush. But I must share, in the last few years, I have prepared for the ARF shrimp extravaganza by practicing – I help out at Church dinners and functions. I have learned a great deal from the dedicated women who serve funeral lunches. I also practice recipes before I try them out on “real people.” The two chicken dishes this year were the result of trial and error at cooking wings. (The garlic chicken recipe ([Appendix C](#)) came from Lori Williams, one of the BGSU grad students, and the other Cajun style in [Appendix D](#) was my own.) We need different recipes because some will like shrimp while others will prefer chicken. As with cooking, we have to understand that not all readers have the same tastes. Both recipes (texts) will nourish the body and soul—and provide for a memorable feast.

As teachers we too need to help our young and old students become comfortable “performing” for groups. Whether reading aloud in a fifth grade classroom, or giving one’s first national presentation, we need to prepare our young readers for these large group experiences. And we need to help readers use what others know and to adapt it. This point, based on Bakhtin’s notion of dialogic semantics, was emphasized in Murnen’s presentation (2002). Growth and learning occurs, in part, only when another’s words (or in this case, recipe) becomes one’s own—for the learner to use to explore new understandings of the old concept by the application and construction of new semantic understandings. As teachers of reading, we can assess this growth only in metacognitive dialogue with the reader (or the chef) asking, “What did you intend for this to be?” And the response of the learner (or the cook) will help to define the personal representation or translinguistic meaning of reader or chef. Bahktin further reflects on this translinguistic quality by stating that the word interacts with the metalinguistic environment both as utterance and variable in dialogue, leading to the total accumulation of meaning—the heteroglossia ([2000/1981](#)).

Thus, for me to use and to own the word, I must come to think of myself, and I have, as ARF’s executive chef. At least, in my own mind, I see myself as very able to fulfill this role to the organization, to fulfill a service to those who value the fellowship of the feast, and to accept and take responsibility for the entertainment and nourishment of

others. As teachers, when we help readers to become poets, published authors, dramatists, singers, or even new teachers of reading, we help them to assume these same roles in identities they will define for themselves. Murnen adds, “children stake out identities—or I would say they experience ideological becoming...that is, they stake out some kind of personal intellectual space from which they can lay claim to authorship, readership, “chefship” etc.” (personal communication). Therefore, a child becomes a reader when he or she says, “I am a reader.” When a child proclaims this to the world, we must accept it and celebrate in the accomplishment with the child.

Teachers create lessons like I plan new dishes. They search the libraries and book clubs for new titles that will entertain and nourish the minds of their students. I have become a food channel addict; I seek out new recipes, and already I have begun to think of what the menu in 2003 will include.

Finally, without positive attitudes, our students will not become readers. As cited in Lipson and Wixson (p. 45), Adelman and Taylor ([1977](#)) assert that whether children perform or learn in a particular situation depends on whether they can do what needs to be done and whether they choose to do it. This makes a lot of sense to me now. Going to Florida next year will mean meeting new friends again, learning and discussing new concepts, and reacting to new ideas. It will also mean cooking shrimp for more than sixty of my closest friends and making the choice to do it to the best of my ability, just like reading.

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Note: The personal conversations with Tim Murnen came from his interlinear notes on the draft of this paper.

Appendix A: Shrimp BBQ – New Orleans Style (as prepared at ARF)
(Insert name)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
½ cup Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce (I have found the higher the quality the sauce, the better the taste and thickness of the sauce.)
Merlot wine (use any brand—not too inexpensive or the sauce will have a bitter aftertaste)
Cajon spices (any brand will do)
River Road Barbequed Shrimp Seasoning (purchased at the French Market in New Orleans)
Shrimp (1 to 1.5 #)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add Worcestershire sauce and slowly blend
3. If the sauce gets too thick, add a little wine but not too much
4. Before adding the shrimp, add spices to make a small mound in the middle of the pan (I don't measure, but there should be enough spice as to keep the sauce away.) The more Cajun you use, the hotter the sauce will be.
5. Slowly swirl the pan until the mound separates and is blended. DO NOT STIR THE SPICES ROUGHLY.
6. Add the shrimp and bring to medium heat. Turn shrimp a few times until all the skins are pink. At ARF, this took about 20 minutes.
7. Remove from heat and place shrimp in a deep bowl or dish.
8. Serve with the sauce. (Sauce can be used as gravy for rice, or it can be used with French bread.)

We made two servings this year.

For my family, I use one stick of butter, about ¼ cup of Lea and Perrins, and a bit of wine, and a whole lot more Cajun spice; that is, I like it hot!

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Appendix B: Garlic-Butter Shrimp in Chardonnay (Insert name)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
Olive oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ jar of minced garlic
Chardonnay wine (use any brand—not too inexpensive or the sauce will have a bitter aftertaste)
Two whole lemons
Shrimp (3/4 to 1# shrimp)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan that has a cover. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add minced garlic and slowly stir to blend. Do not let butter burn. If it starts to get brown, thin with a little bit of olive oil.
3. Add about a glass-full of wine. Cover for about a minute and let the garlic permeate the sauce.
4. Add the shrimp and cover.
5. Let the shrimp steam in the butter/wine mixture until all the skins are pink. At ARF, this took about 15 minutes.
6. Remove from heat and place shrimp in a deep bowl or dish. Squeeze juice of lemon over the bowl and drizzle a little sauce. (Or serve over ice—at ARF we did both.)

We made two servings this year, but smaller than the BBQ style.

(As of this writing, I have only made this recipe at ARF.)

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Appendix C: Garlic-Butter Chicken in Chardonnay (Insert name – from Lori Williams)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
Olive oil
1 jar of minced garlic
Chardonnay wine (just a splash for taste)
Italian bread crumbs
Chicken wings (3-4 packages)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add minced garlic and slowly stir to blend. Do not let butter burn. If it starts to get brown, thin with a little bit of olive oil or wine.
3. Add about a splash of wine.
4. Add the chicken and slowly stir fry until all the chicken begins to brown. Add more wine if the sauce gets too dry.
6. After the chicken is lightly browned, place in a cooking dish and place in preheated oven at 350 degrees. Turn chicken as it bakes. Remove in about 30 minutes to drain off fat. Continue to bake until meat begins to pull from the bone. At ARF this took another 20 minutes.
7. Turn up the oven to about 450-475 and place chicken back in oven to crisp the skin.
8. With about three-five minutes left, sprinkle with bread crumbs.
9. Serve hot (or cover for later service as we did at ARF)

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Appendix D: Cajun chicken marinade (Insert name)

Ingredients

Marinade:

One jar sauce of choice: At ARF, I used Ragin Cajun Fixin's "All Meat Marinade" (see www.purecajun.com/marinade.htm).

About two cups of Merlot wine

Extra Cajun spice as desired

Olive oil

Chicken wings (3-4 packages)

Merlot wine (as needed)

Hot sauce (if you dare)

More Cajun spice (

Directions

1. About five hours before you will cook the chicken, mix up all the marinade ingredients and cover over chicken. Keep about a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of Ragin Cajun for later.
2. Seal in dish with cover or zip-lock bag and place in fridge. Turn every hour or so (this is why I missed Monday's sessions...)
2. When ready to cook, place in fry pan with a bit of olive oil. You won't need much since the chicken will be coated with marinade.
3. Add more hot sauce and spice if you want (I do when I make this for me!)
4. Add the chicken and slowly stir fry until all the chicken begins to brown. Add a little wine if the sauce starts to burn.
6. After the chicken is lightly browned, place in a cooking dish and place in preheated oven at 350 degrees. Turn chicken as it bakes. Remove in about 30 minutes to drain off fat. Continue to bake until meat begins to pull from the bone. At ARF this took another 20 minutes.
7. Turn up the oven to about 450-475 and place chicken back in oven to crisp the skin.
8. Drizzle some Ragin Cajun over the chicken so it won't get too dry.
9. Serve hot (or cover for later service as we did at ARF)

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Let's All Read in Muggle County: Learning to Write Educational Grants Through a Class Simulation

Michael P. French, Bowling Green State University

Nicole Petersen, Bowling Green State University

Lori Williams, Bowling Green State University

Since 1999, the OhioReads ([n.d.](#)) program has existed in the state of Ohio to provide monies to schools for the advancement of literacy initiatives in the primary grades. OhioReads is Governor Bob Taft's major education initiative and is part of the Ohio Literacy Initiative of the Ohio Department of Education; it exists as a partnership of schools, community organizations, businesses, libraries, parents, and students. The OhioReads initiative is consistent with the list of strategies states have used to improve student reading given by the Education Commission of the States ([2004](#)): (a) providing grants for or requiring districts to provide intervention and remedial services, especially to at-risk students; (b) requiring intensive reading instruction and interventions for students who do not meet reading standards, including summer school, extended-day or tutoring programs; (c) requiring or encouraging districts to place a greater emphasis on improving reading skills for K-3 students; (d) requiring districts and schools to develop individual reading plans for students who fail to meet grade-level standards; (e) creating grant programs for districts (some target low-income districts) to improve reading performance through intensive reading instruction, reading academies or other related initiatives such as extended-day programs, small-group reading instruction, teacher professional development or hiring reading specialists; (f) providing grants that use volunteers to improve student reading; (g) establishing reading centers at universities to assist districts in identifying, assessing and providing instructional intervention programs to students with reading difficulties; (h) increasing parental involvement and providing better information to improve their child's reading skills (including the importance of early brain development); and (i) requiring education and human service agencies to develop plans for early education services to ensure that all children will read by the end of 3rd grade.

Teacher Education

How does this relate to teacher education in general and to the preparation of reading specialists in specific? First, newly graduated teachers need to know that these programs exist. Second, graduating teachers (especially reading specialists) need to have the technical skills to participate in these programs—especially as grant writers. Finally, avenues to deliver this technical information need to be developed by teacher educators. Accordingly, this paper presents a review of a grant writing simulation included in a graduate level content reading course at a mid-western university.

Purposes of the Simulation

The first purpose was to introduce the complexities of grant writing to students who had little previous experience in this type of writing. The second purpose was to provide opportunities for students to participate in writing teams. Finally, through their participation, students would learn the technical aspects of grant proposal writing (especially the development of the grant budget).

Simulation Components

The simulation included seven core elements, which are summarized below:

1. Creation of a fictional county “Muggle County” ([See Figure 1](#)). In order to provide a common understanding of demographics and planning, a fictional county was created. Loosely based on the northwest part of Ohio, the county consisted of both urban and rural districts, wealthy and poor districts, and those growing, as well those in decline. The name was taken from the popular Harry Potter series.
2. Creation of DOE “Report Cards” ([See Figure 2](#)). The state of Ohio posts district report cards on the Internet. These report cards include information regarding district demographics and student achievement. A set of report cards was created to enable participants to review the “state-provided” information. For example, the report card contained information on what percent of teachers have advanced degrees, what percent of students have passed state tests and what the daily attendance rates were.
3. Creation of district demographics and salary schedules ([See Figure 3](#)). In addition to the state report cards, a booklet of district demographics and salary schedules was developed. The district demographic booklet provided information regarding individual school districts that might help frame a proposal as well as tables of values (salaries, benefit rates, substitute teacher pay, tuition rates, etc.). The information in this booklet was used in the development of budgets and project rationales.
4. Creation of the RFP (Request for Proposals) based on the OhioReads RFP, in which content literacy and staff development components were included. With the permission of the state department of education, the actual online RFP was adapted for this exercise. By using the actual state RFP, we were able to ensure that students would be exposed to actual technical vocabulary. Further, the state RFP requires the use of mentors in providing one-on-one instruction. This practice is not necessarily related to content literacy practices. Therefore, in place of the section on mentoring, staff development was added. In this way, students were required to consider the steps necessary to implement their proposed programs. (Selected pages from the RFP are shown in [Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#).)
5. Direct instruction in grant writing techniques ([See Figure 6](#)). Specific instruction was provided to illustrate the process of writing a grant from a stated proposal. Attention was especially given to the development of the grant budget.

6. Evaluation by multiple blind readings. To mirror actual practice, the simulation included an evaluation process in which the class would read each other's grants. This provided an opportunity for the students to appreciate the efforts of others.

7. Creation of a set of rewards for teams and individuals. To provide concrete motivation for the exercise, a set of awards was created. In this way, students felt the excitement of writing for a reward.

Relating the RFP to the Curriculum of the Class

As specified in the rules of the simulation, the projects created had to be based on content literacy foundations. The relationship of grant RFP content to the course curriculum is illustrated in the [Table 1](#). During the simulation, the first hour of class time was given to grant writing instruction, group meetings, and consultation with the professor. The second part of the class (approximately 90 minutes) was spent on content reading topics and activities.

Table 1

Relating the Grant RFP to the Course Text

Selected section of Grant RFP	Related sections from McKenna & Robinson
Defining needs and trends	Ch 1: Implications of content literacy
Model to be adapted	Ch 2: Literacy processes Ch 14: Teaching for diversity
Research basis	Continuous throughout the text
Strategies to be implemented	Section 3: Strategies for guided reading Section 4: Postreading strategies Section 5: More ways to facilitate learning through text
Staff development	Ch 1: Teacher resistance to content literacy
Assessment of students & predictors of improvement	Ch 3: Getting to know your students, materials and teaching Ch 4: Global lesson planning Ch 5: Prior knowledge

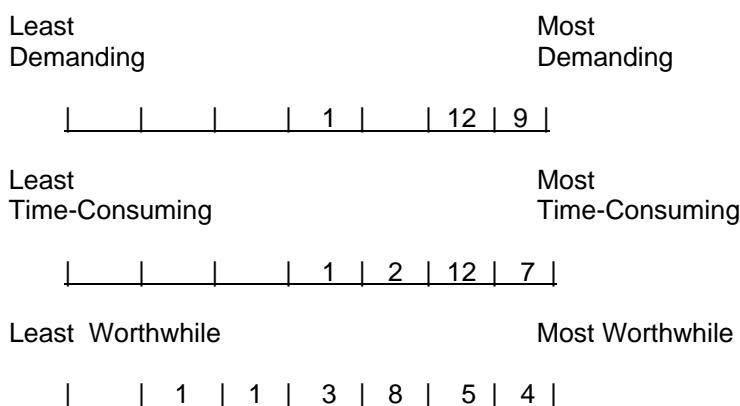
Results of the Simulation

In all 23 students participated in the simulation and 22 completed grant proposals. Of these, only three students had previously participated in any grant writing activities. Selected project titles are shown in [Figure 7](#). As illustrated, many of the projects did have a content literacy emphasis in the title. Some, however, clearly did not. This proved to be one of the limitations of the project for some students. They were not able to see how topics such as “reading styles” could be related to content reading development. Still, at the end of the exercise the grants were evaluated and prizes were awarded. In order to assess students’ perceptions of the exercise as a whole, a simple questionnaire was completed at the end of the simulation. The first set of questions dealt with issues of demands, time, and worthiness. For these items a seven-point semantic differential was used. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Semantic Differential Results (n=22)

Compared to other class assignments in your program, the grant exercise was:



Note: $n = 22$

As illustrated in Table 2, most of the students ($n = 21$) clearly believed the simulation was demanding. This was reflected further in their feelings that the simulation was time-consuming. Still, at least 17 individuals indicated the exercise was worthwhile.

The second set of questions dealt with Bowling Green State University’s core values. These core values were used as a rationale for the exercise in the beginning of the simulation. The core values include the following: (a) creative imagining; (b) spiritual and intellectual growth; (c) cooperation; (d) respect for one another; and (e) pride in a job well done. The questionnaire required the students to respond to the extent the core values were addressed and met in the simulation. The results of this assessment are illustrated in Figure 8:

From left to right:

- C: Creative Imagining
- S: Spiritual and Intellectual Growth
- C: Cooperation
- R: Respect for One Another
- P: Pride in a Job Well Done

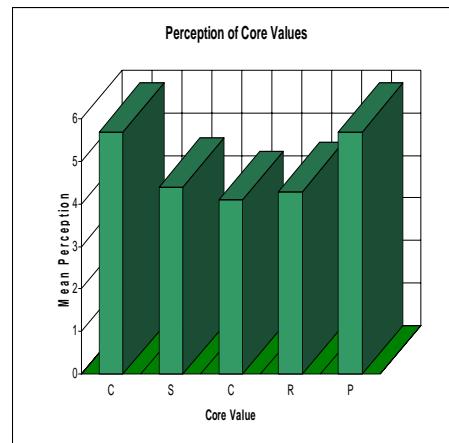


Figure 8. Perception of the core values for the 22 students who completed the simulation.

As seen in the figure, the students clearly believed the simulation enhanced their understanding of creative imagining and pride in a job well done. These sentiments were seen in comments students made on their evaluations:

Even though I lacked the creativity to actually write a grant, I truly enjoyed and have learned from this experience and will in the future try the grant writing process to help my teaching in the classroom. Thank you for this experience.
(Student 6)

This should be its own class. (Student 12 and Student 6)

Spend more time on content reading. (Student 3 and Student 11)

Provide direct instruction – especially on the budget. (Student 20)

A valuable experience. (Student 1, Student 7, Student 13, Student 18)

Great project. (Student 4)

Further evaluations were elicited from two participants (Author #2 and Author #3). They provided the following analyses of the pros and cons of the project. Author #3, indicated she loved the experience and will use it in the future. She has included the experience on her resume. She noted she preferred to work individually but appreciated the reward system. She noted that reading other's work was beneficial.

On the negative side, she disliked the requirement to work in groups and would like to see a separate grant writing class. She felt the project was very overwhelming at first and that more structure might have been provided.

Author #2 indicated that her group provided good support and won the competition. She appreciated learning the whole process of grant writing. She too liked the peer evaluation and the significance of the experience. As did her fellow student, Author #2 felt the process was difficult to understand in some parts. She attributed this to not knowing what was needed in the proposal. She agreed the simulation could have been a class of its own.

Discussion

The purpose of the simulation was to provide an opportunity for graduate students to learn the rudiments of grant writing. The simulation includes many elements of actual grant writing. These included needs assessment, development of project ideas, working in writing teams, development of budgets, and participation in peer review. In many respects, the project was successful in meeting the objectives of the simulation.

The project might have been enhanced in several respects. First, the structure of the project may have been confusing to some. In the future, if this simulation were repeated in a content reading class, it may be beneficial to complete the project over a shorter period of time (two to three weeks) rather than spread over ten or more weeks. Second, more attention would be given to the overlap of the grant project and content literacy foundations. In this way, there might be a clearer understanding of how the grant writing enhances content literacy development. Third, a more careful evaluation of group-roles would be undertaken. In this way, some of the confusion relative to how the groups functioned might be limited. Finally, it was the case that the course evaluations were lower than when the instructor taught the class without the simulation. We speculate that although students generally appreciated learning about grant writing, they did not appreciate learning the process at the expense of the overall content reading course. We also recommend that inclusion of experimental projects such as that reported in this paper may be better provided by professors with tenure who can afford the variation in course evaluation.

Still, despite these concerns and issues, the simulation was successful in providing a foundation for these students. These sentiments are summarized by Author #2 and Author #3:

The grant-writing process overall was an excellent experience. It was difficult and confusing at times, but my group worked well together. We were able to bounce ideas off each other and proofread each other's grants to check for all the information needed and other little mistakes. I know this experience will be beneficial for my future teaching positions. Hopefully I will be able to help others learn with the experience I have and with what I have learned. (Author #2)

I believe this was exceptional to have had this experience before getting out into the field. It is my hope to continue to write grants

when I arrive in my first classroom– for my class, for the school, and for the entire district. Having had this opportunity I am much more willing and ready to write OhioReads and other grants in the future. (Author #3)

Author #1 offers this final comment:

Although we can debate the fairness of state DOE-sponsored grant programs, it would appear these programs have become a reality of schools. Therefore, whether included in core reading courses or provided in individual, unique experiences, the writing of basic grants is and will be a requisite skill for all reading specialists in the future. (Author #1)

References

Education Commission of the States. (2004). Retrieved April 1, 2004 from <http://www.ecs.org/Back>

OhioReads. (n.d.). Retrieved April 1, 2004 from <http://www.ohioreads.org/Back>

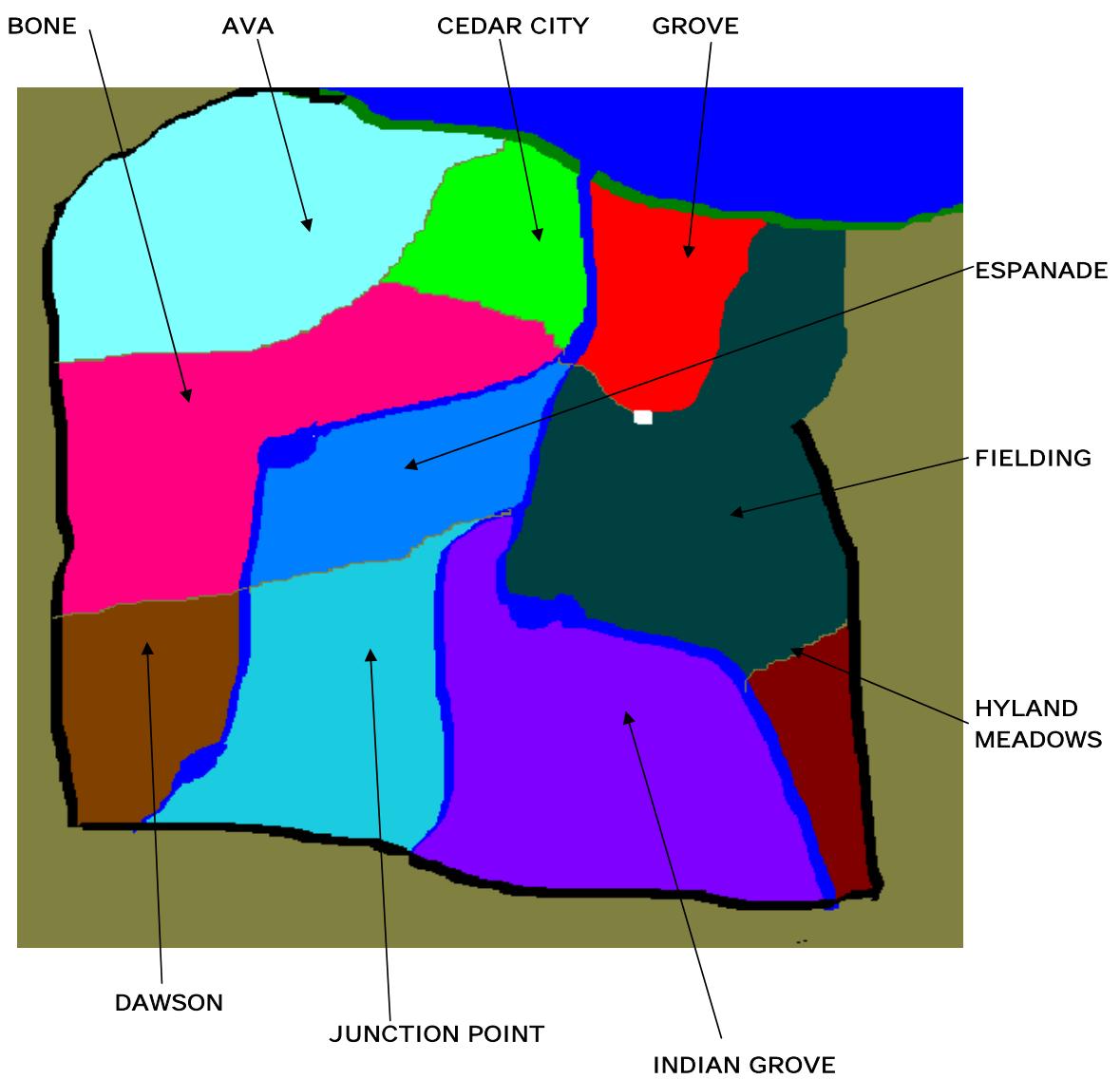


Figure. Muggle County

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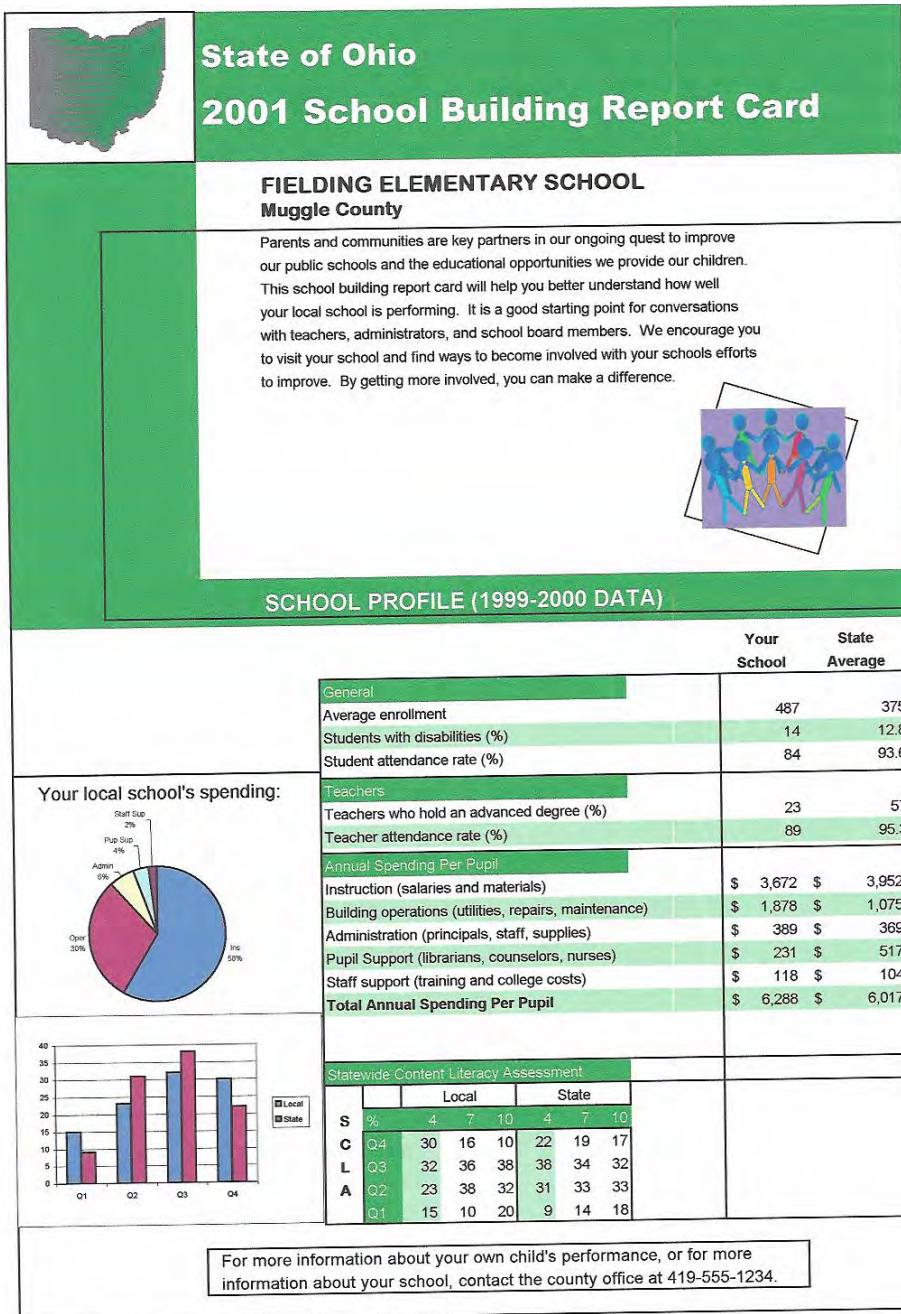


Figure 2. Sample report card provided in demographics package

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Fielding City Schools



Fielding is the largest city in the county and the Fielding City Schools serve two-thirds of the city area. (The Grove district includes the northern part of the city and the lakeside suburb of Grove.) Older buildings and antiquated technology is the norm. Recent concern has grown over principal retirements. Many children have split and blended parents. In spite of it all, a relatively young faculty has implemented many new ideas including Arts Unlimited, dance artists in residence, and PDS programs with BGSU and Findlay. There is interest in 4 Blocks and other aspects of reading

but administration has decided that monies need to be spent on core texts. Most faculty are below the BA 20 level and many talented teachers have left citing the lack of educational opportunity as the key reason for leaving.

Enrollment

Grade	Enrollment	Grade	Enrollment	Grade	Enrollment
K	84	5	84	9	87
1	83	6	85	10	84
2	86	7	89	11	81
3	79	8	76	12	72
4	76				

Fielding Salary Schedule

Years	BS/BA	10	20	MA/MEd	10	20	30
0	\$27,750	\$28,750	\$30,250	\$32,250	\$35,250	\$39,250	\$44,250
1	\$28,583	\$29,583	\$32,583	\$34,583	\$37,583	\$41,583	\$46,583
2	\$29,440	\$30,440	\$33,440	\$35,440	\$38,440	\$42,440	\$47,440
3	\$30,323	\$31,323	\$34,323	\$36,323	\$39,323	\$43,323	\$48,323
4	\$31,233	\$32,233	\$35,233	\$37,233	\$40,233	\$44,233	\$49,233
5	\$32,170	\$33,170	\$36,170	\$38,170	\$41,170	\$45,170	\$50,170
6	\$33,135	\$34,135	\$37,135	\$39,135	\$42,135	\$46,135	\$51,135
7	na	\$35,159	\$38,159	\$40,159	\$43,159	\$47,159	\$52,159
8	na	\$36,214	\$39,214	\$41,214	\$44,214	\$48,214	\$53,214
9	na	na	\$40,390	\$42,390	\$45,390	\$49,390	\$54,390
10	na	na	\$41,602	\$43,602	\$46,602	\$50,602	\$55,602
11	na	na	na	\$44,910	\$47,910	\$51,910	\$56,910
12	na	na	na	\$46,257	\$49,257	\$53,257	\$58,257
13	na	na	na	\$47,645	\$50,645	\$54,645	\$59,645
14	na	na	na	\$49,074	\$52,074	\$56,074	\$61,074

Figure 3. Sample demographic pages

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**Let's All Read
Graduate Reading Program
Spring 2002
Content Reading Grant Writing Competition**

All pages of the **narrative** should be numbered consecutively, starting with Section 1.1 as page 1.

Each application should be stapled together in the upper left corner. Do not bind or put in notebooks.

Your application should be submitted consisting of:

- ✓ One (1) original copy in print and on disk.
- ✓ A reference list of all materials consulted in preparing the application. This will include books, journals, web resources, curriculum guides, test manuals, etc.
- ✓ A list of individuals with whom you consulted in developing your proposal.
- ✓ Each application must be typed - **It is due as specified in the syllabus of EDCI 520.**
- ✓ Address questions about the application to your instructor.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Let's All Read Content Reading Grant exercise was established to introduce graduate students to the technical process of developing a literacy grant. It is based on the 2001 Ohio Reads Classroom Grant Application.

Your Let's All Read Content Reading Grant will be written based on your simulated affiliation with a Muggle County School District. The overall purpose of the grant is to support teachers in implementing reliable, replicable, research-based strategies in reading in content subjects to address the diverse needs of students as identified in the various descriptions. Your Grant funds may supplement, but not supplant existing state funded programs and services that would normally be provided to a school.

The strategies or models identified by the applicant for implementation must:

- Have a strong theoretical basis as previously learned in EDTL 621 and other courses.
- Be based on reliable, replicable research;
- Include a balance of instructional strategies that support the attainment of reading or writing skills in content areas;
- Include strategies, experiences, and skills that lead to success in reading and/or writing; and
- Include strategies for the staff development of existing teachers with whom the grant will be written.

In addition, the grant may include the development of positions, or hiring of personnel. A table of values (salaries, benefits, and other costs) will be provided. Other costs should be based on existing price lists as located in catalogs or on web sites.

FUNDING AVAILABLE AND AWARD AMOUNTS

A total of more than \$17.4 million in simulated funds is available for the Content Reading Grants over the two-year funding period. Up to 47% of the total available funds (approximately \$8.2 million) will be targeted for grants to school buildings in urban and rural type districts. The remaining 53% of the total available funds (approximately \$9.2 million) will be targeted for grants to school buildings in suburban type districts. These percentages roughly correspond to the number of all students failing the 4th grade content literacy test (within eligible buildings) and their corresponding percentages within the urban/rural and suburban subcategories.

State grant funds are limited to costs directly involved in implementing models and strategies that support the elements of the eight-point framework for a comprehensive literacy program and to support volunteer tutoring programs in reading.

The number of students to be served in relation to the amount of funds requested, and the justification for the project based on students' needs, will be used for determining the amount of each grant award. Therefore, the number of awards and award sizes will depend on the applications selected. However, the maximum award per school building over the two-year period will not exceed \$100,000.

SCORING OF THE APPLICATION

Each application will be scored on **the quality of application** criteria (100 points)

1. **The quality of application score** will be determined by the points awarded via both Peer Review and Faculty Review. A total of 100 points are available and a copy of the Rating Criteria to be used by the peer reviewers is attached. The review criteria and point values are provided in each section to assist the applicant in writing a successful narrative. (The sections total 90 points. 10 points will be awarded for overall impression.) A percentile score will be determined for each proposal. The final rank score will be calculated using the formula $\{(2 \times RS) + Percentile\}$.
2. **The writer of the highest grant (or ties) will receive the class award.**
3. **Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams as well.**

GRANT PROCESS

1. Your instructor must receive one (1) original, and four (4) copies of each proposal prior to the application deadline.
2. If all application requirements are not met, the application may lose points during the scoring process, or it may be returned without consideration.
3. Each completed application will be reviewed and scored by at least three peer reviewers from the class.
4. Each proposal's score will be analyzed to eliminate reader bias.
5. Scores from the quality of application criteria will be used to produce a ranking of the applications from highest to lowest within these categories.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS

During the week of April 7th, we will convene the 2002 Content Reading Grant Peer Review. At the peer review, students will be trained and grouped in teams of three to perform the application content review using the rating criteria provided. In addition, peer reviewers will be encouraged to record comments that will serve as feedback to the applicants.

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

The Let's All Read Content Reading Grant application primarily consists of a series of grant narratives, which describe the project objectives and methods of attainment. In addition, the budget narrative and budget grid should detail proposed expenditures of each fiscal year. The review criteria and point values are provided in each section to assist the applicant in writing a successful narrative.

You must follow the outline and numbering format that follows for each part. The narrative should not exceed 20 pages, text must be double-spaced (tables and charts may be single-spaced). Page size must be 8 ½" by 11", and 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Graphs and charts may be used, but must fit within the page limitations. Failure to follow these rules may disqualify the grant.

Peer Reviewers will be instructed to stop reading at the end of the 20th page of narrative. There is no limit to the number of pages allowed for letters of commitment or addendum; however, peer reviewers will have approximately thirty minutes to review each proposal, therefore concise narratives and addendum are encouraged.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Aspects of the grant process will be taught in class. For questions regarding any part of the application, including the project narrative, budget and fiscal guidelines, eligibility requirements, or any other general technical assistance, please contact Dr. French.

All technical assistance provided by the OhioReads office is considered general information and is not a guarantee of funding. Also, visit the OhioReads web site at www.ohioreads.org to review frequently asked questions related to the grants and application process. This information may help you in your writing process.

GRANT TIMELINE

The grant period for these funds will begin in July 1, 2002 and end on June 30, 2004.

QUESTIONS

Address questions about the application to Dr. French at 372-READ.

Figure 4. Project introduction from request for proposals

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Project Narrative

Follow the outline and numbering format that follows for each part. The narrative should not exceed 20 pages, double-spaced, tables may be single spaced, 8 ½" by 11", and 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

Part 1. METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING STUDENTS TO BE SERVED (24 points)

Content Outline:

- 1.1 Describe current method that the school uses for identification of reading problems (current grade level reading assessment).**
- 1.2 Describe the current needs and trends of students in the school related to content reading and literacy.**
Tip: Include analysis of instructional needs of students who read at low levels using state and local data and important demographics.
- 1.3 Describe the method that the school will use to identify students to be served by the grant.**
Tip: Include the process, evaluation tools and priorities for selecting participants.
- 1.4 Identify the approximate number of students to benefit in one school year (including any summer and before or after school programming).**
Tip: The number to participate may be either the same as the number of students reading at or below grade level, or it may be smaller (a targeted group of low readers). Be sure to clearly indicate if the target is a specific age/grade level in primary or all primary ages.

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Effectiveness of the process for identifying and assessing needs of students.
- Extent and level of need.
- Effectiveness of the process for identification of reading difficulties.

Reminder: Application must address services to students.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Cite sources of data and information on the reading skills of students in the primary program as well as the school's results on the content literacy tests.
- ✓ Demonstrate a thorough analysis of the reading needs of students at the school, particularly students reading at low levels, including an analysis of groups often found to be reading at low levels (e.g., from low income families, with limited English proficiency, with diverse learning styles, with little or no intervention experiences, other).
- ✓ Identify students for project inclusion based on multiple assessment components including but not limited to:
 - Teacher input (from observations, anecdotal records, reflection, student work, and parental input);
 - Valid, reliable norm-referenced or criterion-referenced instruments that measure emergent literacy or overall reading abilities; and
 - Informal diagnostic measures.
- ✓ Show that the building has a clear focus on the needs of students, specifically those reading at low levels.
- ✓ Demonstrate a strong, identified need for the grant.
- ✓ Demonstrate that a substantial number of students out of the total number of students assessed in need will be served by this project.

Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH-BASED MODEL TO BE IMPLEMENTED (12 POINTS)

Your grant must be based on published content literacy research. If you include a research-based, packaged program in your proposal, you should provide a strong rationale as to why this is warranted.

The following format should be used for citations. Each study cited should be numbered with the number following the authors' names.

For example:

According to Rowe and Hendricks (1), family relationships can be studied in the illustrations of picture books.

Then, the citation should be noted on the reference list. You are allowed no more than two pages of references (not counted in the 20 page total). The references may be single-spaced, but must be 12 point in size. The list should be presented in the order of presentation in the narrative in this format:

- (1) Rowe, Erin & Hendricks, Cindy Gillespie (2002). An Analysis of Family Relationships in Caldecott Award-Winning Books. Yearbook of the American Reading Forum.

Content Outline:

- 2.1 Describe your model to be implemented, how it came to be created or adapted (if applicable), how it will be carried out in the identified school, and a summary of the research that supports it.**
- 2.2 Describe why and how the model selected will improve student content literacy performance for the students targeted in Part 1. Include appropriate cites that demonstrate the generalizability of your model.**

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Effectiveness of the model in meeting the identified needs.
Reminder: Application must implement a model that is based on reliable, replicable research. The model identified by the applicant may include one or more specific research-based approaches that, in combination, provide the balance of instructional strategies or enhances instructional strategies.
- Effectiveness of the model in providing intervention for problem learners.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Reference different authors, researchers and perspectives regarding the proposed model.
- ✓ Cite respected peer-reviewed publications (not marketing research or testimonials).
- ✓ Avoid overuse of web-based citations.
- ✓ Focus on coherent, theoretically driven reading strategies, rather than a collection of unrelated approaches.
- ✓ Demonstrate a strong fit between the proposed model and the identified need, with research used to document this linkage.

Part 3. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND TIMELINE (18 POINTS)

Content Outline:

- 3.1 Describe the instructional strategies that will be implemented and by whom (role of reading specialist, role of principals, reading coordinators etc).**
- 3.2 Describe the involvement from the school and community (teachers, administrators, businesses, volunteer organizations, parents, others) in planning the project and in the commitment to and capacity of the school community to implement the project.**

3.3 Describe the program timetable, including activities/milestones to be undertaken by the project. Be sure to list the action steps that will be used to attain successful program results. (This can be shown easily in a table form.)

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Level of commitment.
- Capacity to implement the model.

Reminder: The application must address students and may include professional development or volunteer training.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Demonstrate a thorough, well-designed plan for implementing the model, with necessary professional development and materials.
- ✓ Demonstrate quality of both staffing and training.
- ✓ Offer a realistic and sequential schedule of activities over the duration of the grant.
- ✓ Demonstrate strong involvement of school and community in planning and carrying out the project.

Figure 5. Selected pages from the request for proposals

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Planning a budget

- 1) Your budget items need to relate to grant activities.
- 2) Use dollar amounts only.
- 3) The budget should be layed out in a logical progression.
- 4) Provide calculations as appropriate.
- 5) Show details of supplies -- including shipping.
You may use the state of Ohio function/object format to summarize your budget.
- 6)

Functions are major categories of expenditure.

Objects are details within the category.

Ohio Functions include:

Instruction	Includes cost of teaching, tutoring, etc.
Support Services	Includes cost of aides, curriculum coordination, inservice (by school staff)
Administrative Services	Includes cost of administrators and supervision
Fiscal Business	Includes treasurer and bookkeeping (not allowed in current grant)
Transportation	Includes busses, vans, mileage, etc.
Other Services	Any other monies, including consultants and those outside the employ of the school.

Within each function, the following objects may be applied:

Salaries	Wages for service according to contract. (Must have fringes.)
Retirement and fringe	The negotiated rate applied to salaries.
Purchased services	Monies paid to those outside the employ of the school. May or may not have fringes.
Supplies	Those items needed to provide the grant activities, from A to Z. Items that become part of the structure, e.g.,computers, desks, shelves, etc.
Capital Outlay Capital Outlay *replacement*	Replacement of items in Cap Outlay above.
Other	Any other monies not detailed above.

The relationship between functions and objects is best shown within a matrix:

	Instruction	Support Services	Administrative Services	Fiscal Business	Transportation	Other Services	TOTAL
Salaries							
Retirement and fringe							
Purchased services							
Supplies							
Capital Outlay Capital Outlay *replacement*							
Other							
TOTALS							

Figure 6. Budget planning worksheet

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SMILE (*Science Manipulatives Inspire Learning Experiences*)

Content Area Four Blocks

Project ELMS (*Explorations in Literacy, Math, and Science*)

CIRCUIT (*Content Improvement in Reading Classrooms Using the Integration of Technology*)

Content Literacy and AmericaReads

Reading Styles Technology Intervention

Blocking in strength to plant seeds to the future

STARS (*Soaring Towards Achieving Reading Success*)

SMARTKIDS

LAUGH (*Literacy and Arts United for Growth and Happiness*) (Won award)

Arts Plus

Figure 7. Sample grant titles

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Lore in the LAB: Linguistic Accommodation between AAVE and WAVE Youngsters in an Urban Middle School

Rosalind Raymond Gann

In the urban Midwestern school district where I taught for eleven years, one persistent piece of teacher lore ([North, 1987](#)) was the belief that Urban Appalachian students adopted the speech characteristics of the African American majority. Some English teachers regarded this observation as obvious and hardly worth mentioning. Others decried this “intrusion of Black English” into classroom discourse feeling it inhibited acquisition of “correct” English by all students. Still others saw it as an interesting and perhaps inevitable consequence of ethnically diverse schools and neighborhoods. A few questioned whether the phenomenon existed at all and viewed the aspects they noticed as part of pandemic “bad grammar.” Yet others view the suggestion that there actually is a characteristic African Americans language as a sign of bigotry. Diverse ideologies, hailed by their proponents as revealed truth, are common to teacher lore and would be entirely expected in debates about language. Think back to the Ebonics controversy ([Smitherman, 2000](#)).

The phenomenon of one linguistic variety absorbing traits from another, termed *linguistic accommodation* by sociolinguistists ([Hudson 1996](#)) had never been documented with reference to these two particular dialects. If via contemporary linguistic research techniques, the Urban Appalachian students at our school could be shown to have acquired speech characteristics from African American classmates, our investigation would not only widen sociolinguistic literature, but it would show that so-called teacher “lore” was a serious and fertile source of research hypotheses. The contemporary sociolinguistic notion that people alter style, register, and variety of speech depending on situation and interlocutor, is founded on the premise that we render ourselves more attractive to others by reducing the differences between our styles of communication ([Giles & Powesland, 1975](#)). One may “accommodate” by changing or “code-switching” to the home language of a bilingual interlocutor, by copying a conversation partner’s non-verbal gestures, or by altering speech variety to resemble the sounds, syntax and lexical choices of an interlocutor.

Review of Literature

When they first appeared in the 1970’s, accommodation studies were restricted to investigations of alterations in interlocutor speech (Speech Accommodation Theory or SAT). Today, the field has expanded to encompass non-verbal communication as well ([C.A. Shepard et al., 2001](#)) and draws on diverse disciplines, primarily social psychology, communication and sociolinguistics (Communication Accommodation Theory or CAT). Coupland, & Jaworski, ([1997](#)) and Bilous and Krauss ([1988](#)) investigated how men and women at Columbia University converged or diverged from the speech of an opposite sex interlocutor with whom they completed a problem solving activity. Gallois and Callan’s quantitative study of variety preference among Australian speakers ([1988](#)) indicated that

people preferred those who communicated in ways resembling their own and suggested that one motive for altering speech styles was making friends. Genessee and Bourhis, (1988), in their succinct studies of evaluative reactions to language choice and the role of sociocultural factors examined reactions to Francophone and Anglophone usage in Quebec and elsewhere in Montreal. Usually, though by no means always, linguistic accommodation is studied quantitatively. Ahl-Khatib (1995), using data from a Jordanian radio call-in program, showed that accommodation can be limited by cultural factors such as gender. Using discourse analysis, Coupland and Jaworski (1997) showed that Welsh / English doctors, patients, and speech interpreters in a clinic for the hearing-impaired accommodated each other's speech to maximize mutual understanding. Ten years earlier, using similar discourse-analytic techniques, Aronsson (1987) had investigated speech accommodation between petty criminals and court personnel in Sweden. Prince (1988) attempted to study accent change using vocal recordings over the course of an artist's career, but this work was unconvincing. Similarly unconvincing was the work of Scotton (1988) where evidence of accommodation was taken from TV programs. Jones et. Al. (1999) developed an interesting, but awkward and complex, coding system for analyzing various types of communicative variables which, they hoped, would become standard in accommodation studies.

Genesee and Bourhis, (1988), demonstrated how code switching—changing from one language or dialect to another-- is multiply determined and influenced by community norms. They examined differential reactions to language choice by Anglophones and Francophones in Montreal and Quebec City. Believing that the validity of accommodation studies is often limited by the use of simulated contexts, Willemyns et el. (1997), designed a study where accent accommodation could be studied in a job interview at their university. But in reviewing the literature on accommodation studies, I found no studies dealing with accommodation between or Appalachian English, sometimes known Southern Mountain Dialect, and African American Vernacular English.

Methodology

In the Fall of 2000, there were approximately 450 students attending New Vista Middle School, a specialized middle school for students who had previously failed one or more grades. New Vista was located in a large city, outside the Appalachian Mountains, but close to them—often termed a “Port of Entry city” where new arrivals from Appalachia first settled when they left that region. The New Vista program was experimental, highly disciplined and required a great deal of academic work from students unused and disinclined to perform it. Twenty-two of these students were Euro-Americans and the remainder African American. Thus, approximately 5 % of the population was Euro-American when I undertook to do the study. But, by January 2001, when I received clearance to proceed, the census of Euro-Americans had fallen to eight Euro-American students, or 2%. By the end of the school year, an additional three Euro-American students had dropped out, and one had transferred in. The census of Euro-American students at the end of the school year was now only six, or 1%.

The extremely high dropout rate among Urban Appalachians had been well documented ([Southern Regional Council, Working Paper 8, 2000](#)). Along with the rest of the staff at the New Vista Middle School, I had presumed that all of our Euro-American (i.e., white) students were of Appalachian origin. As I proceeded with the research, I now learned this was incorrect. In the sample of five Euro-American students I eventually put together, three were Appalachian, two were not. I use the designation WAVE-speaker (White American Varieties of English) to describe the Euro-American speakers in the remainder of this report ([Mufwene,1996](#)).

Purpose of the study

This study aimed to determine whether WAVE-speaking students at New Vista School ever showed *linguistic markers* or distinguishing characteristics of African American Vernacular English in their relaxed speech with each other, and whether there was a difference in the presence and/or number of these markers when WAVE-speakers conversed with African Americans than when they spoke with each other.

The research questions were these:

1. Would one find linguistic markers of AAVE (African American Vernacular English) speech in the relaxed conversation of WAVE (White American Varieties of English) speakers at New Vista Middle School?
2. Would the speech production of WAVE-speaking students at New Vista show greater incidence of AAVE markers when they were conversing with AAVE speakers?

Subjects

To run a study utilizing chi-square, it was preferable for at least five New Vista WAVE speakers to take part. Issues of gender balance made it desirable that at least six WAVE subjects be included-- three males and three females.

However, it was not possible to persuade three WAVE-speaking males to participate. The experimental group consisted of five WAVE-speaking subjects. The study sample was a sample of convenience formed by discussing the project with the eight WAVE speakers still in attendance at New Vista Middle School in January of 2001. Six AAVE-speaking participants served to create a multi-lingual condition for the WAVE speakers. These were drawn on a volunteer basis from my own language arts classes. Because it was important to know if study participants had ties to Appalachia, a questionnaire was administered asking for participants' and parents' birthplace and parents' occupation. Field notes were also kept by the researcher.

Conduct of Interviews

In the interviews, I made every effort to create an atmosphere where participants would speak freely about what mattered to them, in what William Labov ([1972](#)) calls a

relaxed style of speech. Participants were informed this was a study of teenage speech, and that some boys, some girls, some Blacks, and some whites had been selected so there would be representation from major groups within the school. It was emphasized that though we were in the school building, we were engaged in research having nothing to do with school. Students were permitted to call me by my first name, which they could not normally do. Profanity during the ordinary flow of conversation was permitted. This astounded participants. I explained that because most teenagers “cussed,” it was impossible to study their speech unless they were free to use profanity.

Interviews were recorded on a Morantz cassette recorder on DR-II 90 high bias tape. To the recorder was attached a single microphone and the apparatus was set in the middle of our circular interview table. Passing the microphone to the person speaking was considered, but wanting no interference with the flow of conversation, it was decided not to. Undoubtedly, some clarity was sacrificed by making this choice.

Interviews were begun by the students asking students to identify themselves on tape and by asking a single question about school— e.g., “What do you like about this place? What don’t you like?” Sometimes, students talked for a full hour without my doing anything else, and the interviewer’s major activity was insuring that everyone spoke. A list of questions was ready, but these were only used when participants were not talking, or if they had gone off on an unproductive tangent.

Managing Data

The tapes were transcribed using a word processor coupled with a Panasonic Variable Speech Control machine. Transcripts were typed play script style with participant names listed in the left margin. Speech frames were numbered for reference. Care was taken to assure that critical sounds—such as the ‘s’ marker-- were transcribed accurately. This necessitated listening to particular sections of tape repeatedly. Once tapes were transcribed, there were still many gaps, because of inaudible and unintelligible sections. Every section of the tapes was reviewed again and many gaps were filled in, especially those sections involving critical sounds. A revised transcript—about 180 pages in all-- was produced, and this became the reference documents for the rest of the study. Using the word processor’s cut and paste function, a one-subject transcript was prepared for each study participant. These were examined for *linguistic markers*. A linguistic marker is a speech characteristic present in one linguistic variety but not in the one to which it is being compared. The transcript of each AAVE participant was scored for each of seven speech linguistic markers under consideration in the study: s-marker deletion, copula deletion, plural deletion, possessive deletion, multiple negation, invariant be, compleative done, remote time been, and future predictive ‘Ima.’ Employing discourse analysis, instances were designated where given markers could have occurred but did not. Actual and possible occurrences of the linguistic markers were then tabulated; tables were constructed, and ratios were calculated.

[Table 1](#), for example shows how Jeremiah, an AAVE-speaking teenager, deletes the ‘s’ in such sentences as ‘He study hard.’

Table 1
Jeremiah: s-marker deletion

Actual	Other poss.	Total poss.	Ratio
7	6	13	0.5385

Chart lists actual number of deletions, other possible occurrences, total possible frames, and their ratio.

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Data was charted and tabulated in this fashion for every AAVE speaker until there were figures on every linguistic marker under study for each AAVE speaker. In the case of WAVE speakers, there were two sets of data to compare—the incidence of linguistic markers in the mono-ethnic and in the multi-ethnic condition. The procedure for acquiring this data was identical to that used for the AAVE speakers' ratio of actual to possible linguistic marker use. For each condition, occurrences of linguistics markers were counted, using discourse analysis to obtain figures for possible use. A ratio was then calculated [Table 2](#), for example, compares Craig's use of 'invariant be' in the two conditions. 'Invariant be' is a salient AAVE marker. A nonconjugated form of 'to be' it is used in combination with the present participle, to express habitual action: "Students be studying for finals."

Table 2
Craig's Incidence of AAVE marker usage under two conditions.

Mono Eth			
Actual	Alt Form	Possible	Ratio
1	151	152	0.0066
Multi Eth			
Actual	Alt Form	Possible	
13	99	112	0.1161

Table shows the difference between a WAVE speaker's AAVE marker usage under two conditions.

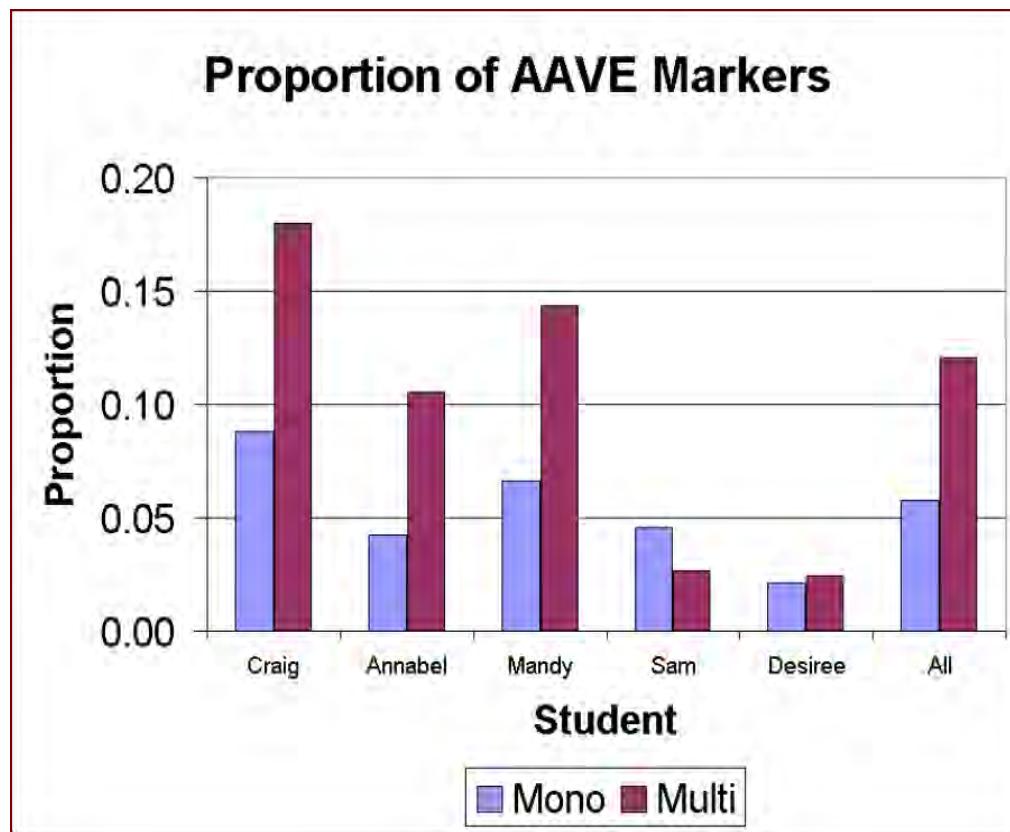
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[Table 3](#) summarizes the proportions of AAVE marker usage by WAVE subjects in the monoethnic in comparison with the multiethnic conditions. These are displayed in the accompanying graph. The chi square statistic was used to test the significance of differences between the multi-ethnic condition and the mono-ethnic condition. The difference between the AAVE speakers and their WAVE counterparts was also compared in this way. When the results for a male subject who had been used as a "gender place

holder” in interview were equivocal, the supplementary data thus acquired were used to provide additional information.

Table 3
Proportion of AAVE Marker Use: Mono- and Multi- Ethnic Conditions

Subject	Mono	Multi
Craig	0.0883	0.1797
Annabel	0.0422	0.1056
Mandy	0.0662	0.1433
Sam	0.0458	0.0268
Desiree	0.0211	0.0244



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Qualitative Data

The greatest part of this study was quantitative. However, observations were made and notes taken to supplement, contextualize and situate the accommodation data. English was the only language spoken at New Vista Middle School; however, the presence of several English varieties made it a multi-lingual learning community. The researcher noted there were three English varieties in use at New Vista Middle School during the study. Firstly, African American Vernacular English, the dominant linguistic variety, was spoken by all students to some extent. I had the impression that many non-African American teachers accommodated to AAVE and used it occasionally in instruction. A second variety, Midwest Standard, the prestige variety, was used over the P.A. System, in some instruction, in bureaucratic correspondence and in high-stakes testing. Teachers' attempts to make students speak Midwest Standard met with little success. A third variety, Southern Mountain English, or Appalachian English, was highly stigmatized. Spoken in an attenuated form by the Urban Appalachian students, it was sometimes designated 'Hillbilly Talk.'

Both AAVE and WAVE speakers disapproved of two language varieties—a hyper-correct style of English they associated with student teachers from a nearby university, and a stigmatized variety they connected with older Urban Appalachians. The former, they called "talking fake," which they associated it with people who could not be trusted. The latter—"Hillbilly Talk"—was thought to signal an absence of "street smarts" and *savior faire* necessary to negotiating urban culture. Students were generally intolerant of linguistic variation. When I asked participants if the student teachers might be talking as they did because they had grew up speaking this way, they vigorously denied the possibility. Similarly, two of the subjects, both WAVE-speakers, denied that one could "be smart" and "talk like a Hillbilly."

The AAVE speakers were proud of their linguistic variety, which they believed to be action-based and oriented toward practical solutions. They considered Black people "good at survival," and thought their language helped them endure. In discussing *The Titanic* disaster, their knowledge of which was based on a recent movie, an AAVE participant said, "The white people just sat there and let the boat sink." An African-American interlocutor agreed, saying Black people would have found a way to escape from the sinking ship. AAVE subjects seemed aware that white people tend to "pick up," i.e., accommodate to, Black speech. They believed white people did not use obscenity as forthrightly and effectively as Blacks, and said white people sounded funny when they attempted to "cuss." They considered "Black English" and "slang" to be synonymous.

Results

The results showed that AAVE markers occurred in the speech of every WAVE subject, even in the monoethnic condition where no AAVE speakers were present. Three of the five WAVE speakers showed a significant increase in AAVE marker usage in the presence of AAVE-speaking interlocutors. Hypothesis # 1 predicted one would find many AAVE linguistic markers in the verbal production of WAVE speakers at New Vista Middle School. The results supported this. Hypothesis #2 posited WAVE-speaking students would show greater use of AAVE markers when in company of African

Americans. This was also supported by the results. Thus New Vista teacher lore was completely on target about the linguistic patterns at the New Vista Middle School.

Discussion

To understand why WAVE speakers accommodated to AAVE, it is useful to consider three theoretical perspectives: Solidarity Theory, theories connecting language and culture, and Language and Power Theory, one important form of which is anti-language theory. Solidarity theory states that people often alter their linguistic variety to converge with an interlocutor's in order to be liked and accepted ([Hudson](#)). Languages, according to this perspective, foster particular ways of seeing the world, and implicitly invite others to share their world view Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, ([1985](#)). Language and Power theories relate linguistic choice to world view, ideology ([Fairclough,1989](#)) or what Halliday ([1978](#)) calls "reality bearing." A specific type of Language and Power theory is Anti-language theory. It is used to explain how special populations—prisoners for example—enact their resistance to those in power by creating anti-codes which" exclude those not in the anti-group and articulate an alternate view of the world. ([Halliday](#)). Theories that link language to culture and identity focus on the way individuals utilize linguistic variety to mark membership in an ethnic group. It seems likely that both the AAVE and WAVE youngsters in this study preferred using AAVE to Standard Midwestern English because the latter code was connected in their minds with styles of instruction that did not allow them to "be themselves." For both groups, AAVE functioned as an *anti-language*, a language of resistance.

There were only a handful of WAVE speakers at New Vista—nine at the time the study began, seven when it ended. There were never more than two WAVE speakers in any one class. In order to become part of the New Vista student community, it was necessary for WAVE speakers to form friendships with native speakers of AAVE. One possible explanation of their linguistic accommodation would be WAVE speakers' desire for acceptance and friendship in an environment that was linguistically foreign. According to Solidarity Theory, it would be natural for an outnumbered minority speech group to shift to the language of their interlocutors. Solidarity theory provides one plausible explanation of the study's results.

The accommodation seen in this study may also have been conducted to what Halliday has termed *anti-language*. An *anti-language* is an argot spoken by a subjugated population such as a group of prisoners used to articulate and enact a counter-reality as an act of resistance. At the New Vista School, where at-risk students were generally unhappy with a fast-paced academic program, both Black and White students utilized a form of African American English liberally laced with ghetto slang to articulate their distaste for the rigors of the school, which was set up to help them, but which they disliked.

Another possible reason for WAVE speakers' accommodation to AAVE may have been the weakening of ties to their home culture. While school personnel referred to all white students as "Appalachian," only three of the five WAVE subjects were

actually of Appalachian background, and two were *Urban Appalachians*, people two generations removed from life outside the city. They shunned Appalachian English which they called “Hillbilly Talk,” and considered old-fashioned at best. They connected this variety with ignorance, and lack of knowledge relevant to urban life. On the other hand, they viewed AAVE as practical, trendy, and powerful. They may have viewed African American students and their parents as more capable of negotiating with New Vista’s administration. Their wish to be users of the student “power code” affords another possible explanation of the WAVE speakers’ linguistic accommodation.

There may also be a connection between linguistic accommodation among the WAVE speakers at New Vista and the power structure of the school. AAVE, while not a prestige code in the world beyond school, was a power code within it. It bespoke the power of the Black community, in contradistinction to the bureaucratic jargon of the central office. It represented and enacted the power of the numerically larger and in one sense, more powerful student body, as opposed to the influence of staff. So, it is possible that WAVE speakers found it empowering to speak what was, in one frame of reference, the power code of the school.

Which Possibility is Correct?

From the study data alone, one cannot tell which of these theoretical explanations provides the best explanation of the linguistic accommodation that was noted-- Solidarity Theory, Language and Culture Theory, or Language and Power Theory (Anti-Language Theory). But when one recalls that during the 2000-2001 school year the census of WAVE speakers at the New Vista school plummeted from 22 to students to 5, it seems probable that WAVE students were uncomfortable at the school. Berlowitz and Durand ([2000](#)) cite a “pushout” phenomenon where Urban Appalachian youth feel so unwelcome in school that they leave. Linguistic accommodation may have been a byproduct of a situation where especially Appalachian WAVE speakers were stigmatized for speaking their home English variety and felt otherwise unwelcome at New Vista. Appropriation of the school’s linguistic power code appears to have been a strategy for coping with a situation where there was linguistic and cultural bias against those students who remained.

Conclusion

Members of a community need not speak mutually intelligible languages for a multilingual situation to exist. The New Vista School with its combination of Standard Midwestern English, African American English and attenuated Southern Mountain English was a multi-lingual learning community. Language is closely related to identity. It is also related to literacy and its acquisition. If students’ home variety of English is stigmatized within a school, this is a barrier to the acquisition of literacy.

When teachers notice that linguistic accommodation is occurring between ethnic minorities in a school, it is important to be certain it is really happening. Techniques such as those used in this study are useful. Beyond that, it is important to ascertain why it

is occurring. While linguistic accommodation occurs normally as part of the process of linguistic change ([Labov, 1972](#)) it is not always a benign phenomenon. Linguistic accommodation as it was manifest at New Vista may have been influenced by a the simple wish of the Euro-Americans to be liked, but it may also have been by inter-group tensions in the school and the community beyond. It is possible that linguistic accommodation to AAVE occurred at the New Vista School because WAVE-speaking students felt a need to need to join the school's culture of power. The Urban Appalachian students in the study had the added issue of speaking a stigmatized linguistic variety. If as educators we believe every student in a public school deserves respect, this should be troubling. Classrooms are properly places where students learn to control prestige varieties of language ([Delphit,1995](#)); however, everyone's home discourse should be welcome.

As teachers of literacy, we must go beyond making observations and disseminating them as lore. We must test them in the *lab* of formal research to make sure they are accurate. The observation tested in this study was highly accurately. But not only must such incites be scientifically tested, the issues to which they point should be explored and acted upon. This study raised the issue of linguistic equity in schools and the language classroom. It touched on concomitant issues of access and power in education. Do students from minority dialect communities feel welcome in our schools and classrooms? Do we even know?

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Five Trends in Literacy and Technology from Submissions from *Reading Online*

Dana L. Grisham, San Diego State University

Bridget Dalton, CAST

Editors, *Reading Online*

www.readingonline.org

As we write this, our term as journal editors of the International Reading Association's professional electronic journal, *Reading Online*, is coming to an end. June 2003 will see the final issue of the journal under our editorship, and we approach the end of our work with mixed feelings. On one hand, editing the journal has been a labor of love. We have had the privilege of working with our amazing department editors ([click to view slide](#)) and with authors who have brought us intellectual excitement and professional growth. We have worked closely with the outstanding professionals at IRA headquarters who assist with so many aspects of the journal. And we have come to be close colleagues and personal friends with each other over the almost four years of our association. On the other hand, as we disclose our final responsibilities, we do so with sadness, knowing that the journal we edited is changing in ways that we cannot yet envision. IRA's new plans for electronic services will see the establishment of a new portal called Reading Online, and the peer-reviewed content will remain. The rest of the journal will evolve as IRA places most of its electronic services onto the portal. We are privileged to be a part of the Electronic Services Committee charged with transforming the site. At this time, however, Reading Online as we know it, will cease to exist.

The electronic journal is the only one of the publications of IRA that has no paper existence. Its establishment in 1997 was the culmination of an extraordinary vision and the combined efforts of an incredibly visionary and talented team. For the first three years, ROL existed primarily as a publication website, under the editorship of Martha Dillner and her team. As we took on the editorship in June 2000, our charge was to expand on the very promising start made by the Dillner editorial team and cultivate the journal by increasing submissions, increasing the readership, adhering to a regular production schedule, and building the reputation of *Reading Online*. In collaboration with our editorial team, we were able to accomplish these goals. Of course, there are areas where we would have liked to realize greater progress, such as publishing more examples of innovative hypermedia composition. We are optimistic that will take place in future online publications.

Reading Online has a mission statement that has formed the foundation of our editorship:

Reading Online is a journal of classroom practice and research for K-12 educators. It is intended to help readers become more attuned to using technology effectively for classroom instruction, and to understanding new literacies and the

impact of these on teaching practice and student learning. The journal is designed to foster the exchange of ideas and the development of networks among readers and authors through discussion in the electronic environment. Peer-reviewed articles published in *Reading Online* will focus on a broad range of topics in literacy education, but should have practical applications and demonstrate sound pedagogical principles.

As of October 2002, we reported that

- 16% of all article-length content published since May 1997 is peer reviewed
- Under the current editors, 17% of content has been peer reviewed (10% in 2000-01, and 23% in 2001-02)
- 66% of all content published since May 1997 and 70% of peer-reviewed articles focus on K-12 instruction; the remaining content focuses outside the journal's mission on teacher education (with little or highly limited relevance to K-12 educators) or preschool
- 63% of content and 56% of peer-reviewed articles focus on technology and new literacies
- Under the current editors, 71% of all content and 62% of peer-reviewed articles focus on K-12 instruction
- Under the current editors, 65% of all content and 54% of peer-reviewed articles focus on technology and new literacies

With regard to an increase in readership, this has been one of the highlights of our editorship. Site traffic is strong and has increased significantly during the current editorial term. The large majority of site visitors come from the United States. Readership has increased dramatically. The most popular sections of the site in its current configuration are (in this order) Articles, Electronic Classroom, New Literacies, International Perspectives and From the Editors, From Years Past (archival material including discontinued Research, Critical Issues, and Reviews sections from the Dillner editorship), and Online Communities.

Because all content published on the Reading Online site remains available to the reader in archives (and is always free of charge), many past publications remain popular. However, each month, the most popular individual articles or features are consistently those from the current issue. These appear on the contents listing of the home page, as well on the individual listings of each section. As we track the readership we see page views that increase. For example, it is not uncommon for articles to have thousands of page views. See the following table (October 2002) for a breakdown of articles and features that have been viewed more than 1500 times in any single month.

Figure 1

Articles and Features Viewed More Than 1500 Times in Any Single Month, February 2001 to May 2002

1. Coles, G., "Literacy, Emotions, and the Brain" (posted in 1999 under the Dillner editorship in the now-discontinued Critical Issues section) (5820 views)
2. Wilkinson, L., & Silliman, E., "Classroom Language and Literacy Learning" (invited article in the series of chapter summaries from the *Handbook of Reading Research*) (3392)
3. Ash, G.E., "Teaching Readers Who Struggle: A Pragmatic Middle School Framework" (peer-reviewed article) (2897)
4. Gambrell, L.B., Morrow, L.M., & Pennington, C., "Early Childhood and Elementary Literature-Based Instruction" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2880 views)
5. Cammack, D., "Two Sites for Struggling or Reluctant Readers" (Electronic Classroom, invited Web Watch) (2698)
6. Burgess, S., "Shared Reading Correlates of Early Reading Skills" (peer-reviewed article) (2535)
7. Pressley, M., "Comprehension Instruction" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2516)
8. Guthrie, J., "Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2475)
9. Curtis, M., & Longo, A.M., "Teaching Vocabulary to Adolescents to Improve Comprehension" (invited article for themed issue on struggling readers) (2091)
10. Johnson, D., "Internet Resources to Assist Teachers Working with Struggling Readers" (Electronic Classroom, invited Web Watch) (2064 views)
11. Dalton, B., & Grisham, D.L., "Introduction to a Themed Issue on Struggling Readers" (From the Editors feature) (2031)
12. Dalton, B., "Twenty Online Resources on Reading with Comprehension and Engagement" (From the Editors feature) (1940 views)
13. Balajthy, E., Reuber, K., & Robinson, C., "Teachers' Use of Technology in a Reading Clinic" (peer-reviewed article) (1939)
14. Witherell, N., "Book Review: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*" (invited review of Allington book posted in Articles section) (1865)
15. Turbill, J., "The Language Used to Teach Literacy: An Activity for Teachers" (International Perspectives department feature) (1670)
16. Casey, J., "Technology Empowers Reading and Writing of Young Children" (invited short feature, Electronic Classroom) (1665)
17. Galda, L., Ash, G.E., & Cullinan, B.E., "Research on Children's Literature" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (1658)
18. Commeyras, M., "The Improvisational in Teaching Reading" (peer-reviewed article) (1650 views)
19. Tancock, Susan M., "Reading, Writing, and Technology: A Healthy Mix in the Social Studies Curriculum" (peer-reviewed article) (1584 views)
20. Johnson, D., "Picture Book Read-Alouds" (Electronic Classroom web watch) (1558)

21. Pisha, B., & Coyne, P., "Jumping off the Page: Content Area Curriculum for the Internet Age" (peer-reviewed article for themed issue on struggling readers) (1502)
-

In other words, the sheer volume of readership of the journal tends to assure the author that his or her work *will* be read by many people and that we, as editors, can provide specific figures. This is important since often RTP depends upon the impact of one's publications. Our records reflect that in June 2000, when our first issue went "live" ROL had 134,868 page views, with 36,999 sessions at 6.27 minutes each. By May 2002, that had increased to 278,236 page views, with 51,431 sessions at 7.12 minutes each. In a recent issue we topped 400,000 page views and the sessions and session times continue to increase. "Views" represents the number of pages accessed, including any graphics, etc., that might appear on those pages. "Sessions" refers to the number of distinct visits to the site.

Trends We Have Seen

As we began to look back over our time as editors we noted several trends in the submissions to the journal that we note below. These encouraging trends reassure us that what we are doing is important work and we offer these to you as evidence that the outlet for work embracing the intersection of literacy and technology is necessary and that the need should continue to increase over the next few years. As technology evolves, we see the role of a journal such as Reading Online increasing in value, both for contributors and for readers.

Increasing Sophistication in Submissions for Peer Review

In looking over the journal content for the past two and a half years, the first trend we have noted is an increasing sophistication in the submissions for peer-review. First, the form of the content has evolved technologically. Since July 2002, only three articles have been published that could have been published in print form only without the need for technology available in Reading Online. Two aspects distinguish the articles we have published

Technology in service of traditional literacies. Articles that make the point that technology can be used to teach traditional literacies include those where the author substitutes software for reading, writing, or presentation task. Some important examples include:

Denise Johnson's webwatches that provide online sources for teachers (poetry, struggling readers, literature, etc.) A particularly interesting excerpt is on poetry ([Johnson, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Martha Dillner's peer-reviewed article on using technology flexibly in composing ([Dillner, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Karen Bromley's "Vocabulary Learning Online" ([Bromley, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Another good example is Susan Tancock's article on using technology in the social studies ([Tancock, 2002, Online Document](#))

Technology in service of new literacies. Articles in this category use technology in ways that extend the definitions of literacy. An example of this is Susan Deysher's webwatches in the new 21st Century Literacies ([Deysher, 2003, Webpage](#)), and the publication of many articles in the new literacies department. For example, we like Maya Eagleton's roadmap of electronic literacy ([Eagleton, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Also check out Kevin Leander and Lois Duncan's piece on "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Literacy, Consumerism, and Paradoxes of Position on gURL.com" ([Duncan & Leander, 2000, Online Document](#)).

Expanding Definitions of Literacy

Expanding definitions of literacy are apparent throughout the journal, but especially in our New Literacy department. Examples include John McEaneaney's hypertext article "Ink to Link: A Hypertext History in 36 Nodes" ([McEaneaney, 2000, Online Document](#)). In this piece, you will learn the difference between hypertext and linear composition and reading! We also refer you Choi and Ho's, "Exploring New Literacies in Online Peer-Learning Environments" ([Choi & Ho, 2002, Online Document](#)). Ann Watts Pailletot's many contributions cannot be overstated on this topic ([Hammer & Kellner, 2001, Online Document](#)). Editor Dana Grisham's editorial on the need for teachers' increased attention to media literacy is also pertinent ([Grisham, 2001, Online Document](#)) as is Kahryn Au's "Culturally Responsive Instruction as a Dimension of New Literacies" ([Au, 2001, Online Document](#)). We also refer you to Jamie Myers and Rick Beach's piece on critical literacy ([Myers & Beach, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Teachers' Increasing Interest and Competence in Technology

Readership statistics bear out classroom teachers' increasing interest and competence in technology. What is going on in teachers' classrooms is far more sophisticated as evidenced by our Teachers' Voices feature in the articles section. Here is a short list of the wonderful diversity of topics covered in this section:

- Literacy, the American Revolution, and the Three R's of Our Fight for Freedom: An Interview with Judy McAllister and Erica Lussos
- An Interview with Roxie Ahlbrecht About Writing, Technology, and the "Apple Bytes" Project

- Collaborative Internet Projects: An Interview with Susan Silverman About Her Passion and Hobby
- An Interview with Mark Ahlness and Jean Carmody About the Earth Day Groceries Project
- An Interview with Cathy Fowler About Sharing a Love of Reading Through Book Raps
- Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad: Bringing a Second-Grade Social Studies Curriculum Online
- Using Technology to Help Adolescents Excel
- Education With Heart: An Interview With Teacher Carol Wilson

Technology as a Vehicle for Teacher Education

Technology as a vehicle for teacher education has appeared over and over again in the journal. Teacher educators are doing more with online resources. We suggest that if you have second language learners you might refer to Jill Kerper Mora's website ([Mora, 2000, Online Document](#)).

However, most of the articles on teacher education concern two strands:

Technology that connect preservice teachers with kids/teachers. Jerry Maring's three articles use technology for communications and learning between preservice teachers and students in K-12 schools. Check out his second article for cybermentoring techniques ([Maring, Levy, & Schmid, 2002, Online Document](#)). Some of the Teacher's Voices series are of great assistance to other teachers and teacher educators in providing exemplars of what teachers, acting for the most part on their own initiative can do to connect literacy and technology in their classrooms. We particularly like Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad: Bringing Social Studies to Life ([Strangman, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Simulated problem-solving experiences. A good example of this is Michael Kibby's work on the reading clinic with simulations for teachers who wish to become reading specialists ([Kibby & Scott, 2002, Online Document](#)) Several authors also explore the utility of online courses. Kara Tabor and Jane Slater Meyers, provide a new look at web-driven coursework in "RISE: The Online Professional Development Choice for Secondary Teachers" ([Tabor & Meyers, 2002, Online Document](#)).

A Continuing Interest in Struggling Readers

As editors, we surveyed our readers about their interests. The widespread interest and frustration with teaching struggling readers topped the list for the survey and led to a themed issue on the topic. In addition to the themed issue, we have published a number of articles and webwatches on this topic, including Editor Bridget Dalton's extremely popular "20 Websites for Struggling Readers" ([Dalton, 2001, Online Document](#)).

An Interest in Intermediate and Middle Level Education

Our readers are interested in intermediate and middle level education, especially functional/content area instruction, and we have published substantial content in this area. Maya Eagleton's work on e'zeens ([Eagleton, 2002, Online Document](#)), Spires and Cuper's "Literacy Junction: Cultivating Adolescents' Engagement in Literature Through Web Options," ([Spires & Cuper, 2002, Online Document](#)) and Gwynne Ellen Ashe's "Teaching Readers Who Struggle: A Pragmatic Middle School Framework," ([Ashe, 2002, Online Document](#)) are just a few of the selections. More recently, David O'Brien's work with adolescent learners highlights that young adolescents who may be disengaged from regular texts may remain engaged in digital and multimedia texts and makes an argument for using the new literacies ([O'Brien, 2003, Online Document](#)).

New Players!

Technology is bringing new players to the game, and they are making contributions that we can only begin to appreciate at the moment. Many important innovations are happening outside of the traditional literacy community of teachers and researchers. For three important examples, see "Multimedia Pedagogy and Multicultural Education for the New Millennium" by Rhonda Hammer and Douglas Kellner ([Hammer & Kellner, 2001, Online Document](#)) and Ron Silverblatt's "Media Literacy in an Interactive Age" ([Silverblatt, 2000, Online Document](#)) and "Visual Education" by Paul Messaris ([Messaris, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Final Thoughts

Reinking and colleagues characterized the current epoch in literacy as a "post-typographic" world, the implications of which we have yet to understand and appreciate. As we document the trends of a journal that we believe has been on the cutting edge of the intersection between literacy and technology, we are pleased to have been a part of it and we look forward to the next chapters of the story.

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Expanding Pre-service Teachers' Notions of Literacy and Diversity

Julie Horton
Linda Pacifici

In this paper, two teacher education researchers describe their inquiry to understand pre-service teachers' conceptions of difference related to student learning. The specific research question is: how do pre-service teachers respond to difference in students? According to the deficit model in education, student failure in school is attributed to explanations that include genetics, physiological, or cultural/racial reasons ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#); [Wiener & Cromer, 1967](#)). Additionally, teachers adhere to the deficit model by assuming that children from certain backgrounds are incompetent because they do not do well in school. Too often, the deficit model is the norm with many teachers as they interact with students from cultural groups different from their own. These teachers tend to equate cultural differences as "deficits or disadvantages" ([Bennett, 1986](#); [2003](#)), and they ignore the effects of social class, race, gender and culture ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#)).

An inclusive approach for learning is often used to counter the deficit model in education ([Pearl, 1997](#)). However, when asked about creating inclusive environments for learning many pre-service teachers will respond with "I'm colorblind" or "I will treat all kids the same in my classroom" ([Bennett, 2003](#); [Nieto, 2000](#)). By regarding students as all equal in the classroom, a teacher ignores the differences inherent in each person and instead expects each student to respond to instruction in the same way. When a student fails, teachers usually do not look at their own practices but blame the student ([Gomez, 1994](#); [Ryan, 1976](#)). Gay ([1993](#)) states that, "many teachers do not have frames of reference and points of view similar to their ethnically and culturally different students because they live in different existential worlds" (p. 288). This perspective prevails when teachers fail to challenge their own perceptions, attitudes and assumptions, accepting them as inevitable, justifying inequity ([King, 1991](#); [Ladson-Billings, 1994](#)).

It is a fact that the number of culturally diverse students continues to increase in American schools yet the number of white teachers remains the same, at around eighty percent, who are unfamiliar with the backgrounds of their students ([Irvine 2001](#)). Multicultural education for pre-service teachers has been identified as one way of increasing teachers' understanding of culturally diverse students. Multicultural education aims for teachers to understand the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds. Bennett writes that the "major goal of multicultural education is to change the total education environment so that it will develop competencies in multiple cultures and provide members of all cultural groups with equal education opportunity"([1986, pp. 52-53](#)).

In multicultural education literature a continuum exists on approaches towards implementing a multicultural curriculum in schools. These approaches span a conservative to more liberal and democratic approach. Additionally, not only does a continuum exist but varying interpretations among theorists create a multiplicity of frameworks for one to consider. [See Banks (1994) for his four phases; Sleeter & Grant, (1999) for their five approaches; and Baptiste and Archer (1994) for their three levels.] Some teachers view their role in the classroom as one of integrating students into the existing mainstream society while others promote learning about the existing cultures of students in the classroom in order to build equity and respect for everyone ([Sleeter & Grant, 1999](#)). These two approaches illustrate the contrasts in multicultural education pedagogy: one perspective places emphasis on making the student fit into an existing society while the other promotes a society accepting of all. When teachers ignore a student's background and expect them to "fit in" to their own personal belief system they are in fact illustrating deficit thinking.

One of the underlying beliefs of deficit thinking is that the student is unsatisfactory and must be brought up to teachers' or schools' standards. Because of conflicting internal and external messages pre-service teachers may have internalized, Gonzales argues that teacher educators should encourage pre-service teachers to ask these questions of themselves to ensure curriculum integration and move away from this deficit model:

1. Does my course assist students with knowing the multicultural context of this society?
2. Does this course assist students with knowing major perspective views and frames of reference contributed by diverse social groups to cultural thought and practice?
3. After taking my course will students know of the contributions by women, people of color and other groups to the institutional life of this nation?
4. After my course will students know more about the major controversies and issues shaping the experiences of ethnic groups? ([Gonzales, 1994, p. 13](#))

These questions can serve teacher education programs by assisting them to discover what practices are appropriate, uniting goals with reality. In doing so, educators are beginning to question themselves and their course requirements in order to find out if the needs of their students are being met. Therefore, teachers are taking responsibility for their influence in the educational system.

In this inquiry, the researchers discovered what teacher education practices were appropriate, uniting goals with reality. In doing so, these educators are beginning to question themselves and their course requirements in order to find out if the needs of their students are being met.

Methods

The researchers co-taught an undergraduate education course entitled *Literacy, Technology and Instruction* to pre-service teachers enrolled in K-12 teacher education programs across the university. This course was taught at a university located in the Appalachian mountain area. It would be fair to say that there was a lack of racial diversity among the students as the pre-service teachers in both classes self-classified themselves as White. The majority of the pre-service teachers were traditional in age, coming straight out of high school into residential university programs, and from a middle to upper class background. None of these pre-service teachers, at the point of entering this course, had participated in a course devoted entirely to diversity.

The goals of the course were to expand pre-service teachers' notions of literacy, media literacy, technology, and to relate these concepts to issues in education. To expand students' notions of literacy, the instructors incorporated the concepts of deficit thinking and literacy into course topics. For two semesters, Fall, 2001 and Fall, 2002, a pre-instruction survey was conducted with pre-service teachers in order to document perceptions and attitudes before class instruction. This survey was conducted to gain information about students' ideas surrounding "good" teachers and students, two concepts that can reveal levels of multicultural understandings. Students were also asked in the survey to relate diversity to teaching and learning. The open-ended questions on the survey were:

1. What does it mean to be a good teacher? Please describe.
2. What pictures do you have in your mind of a "good" student?" Please describe.
3. Are you familiar with the concept of deficit thinking? If so, what does that mean to you?
4. In our own words, define or explain the concept "diversity."
5. How does diversity relate to teaching and learning?

Following this survey, students were introduced to the concept of deficit thinking through an article ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#)), a PowerPoint presentation and full class discussion linking back to Purcell Gates' *Other People's Words*. This five-week unit of instruction culminated in the students' writing a reflection paper relating deficit thinking to the Purcell Gates book. Comparisons between survey responses and reflective papers were conducted for final evidence of change in students' points of view. The researchers met regularly to discuss and analyze the data. Salient points were selected and coded to develop emergent themes and issues for further discussion ([Glasser & Strauss, 1967](#)).

Analysis

Analysis was conducted on the surveys and unit reflections, and comparisons between the two were made to examine evidence of change. The researchers examined the surveys and unit reflections separately. Responses were catalogued and examined for emerging themes. The researchers compared analysis of the same data and resolved differences in conference. Major themes in surveys and reflections are reported as well as comparisons between semesters and between surveys and unit reflections.

Results

Surveys

The first question on the survey asked students what it meant to be a good teacher. The 37 pre-service teachers in Fall 2001 semester tended to name characteristics such as “caring” people or a person that “included all students regardless of their culture backgrounds.” Only three pre-service teachers named content knowledge as important in terms of being a good teacher. So the most consistent response to this question is that teachers should care about students and reach out to them and support them in learning. One pre-service teacher from the Fall, 2001 semester indicated some sense of accountability resting on the teacher when she wrote on her survey: “... a good lesson is only as strong as the instructor and even a ‘good’ student can identify a poor lesson and easily lose interest. A good lesson can capture a ‘bad student.’”

Pre-service teachers from the Fall 2002 semester expressed more varied views of being a good teacher. While the majority of the pre-service teachers (31 out of 45) did describe a good teacher as possessing affective qualities such as: respecting students, being a friend to students, exhibiting passion and care, being a role model, enjoying teaching and students; 14 pre-service teachers wrote responses indicating other perspectives. Of these 14 responses, seven pre-service teachers indicated that good teachers possess knowledge and skill in their content as well as affective qualities. Responses include, “knowable about material, kind, considerate.” Another pre-service teacher wrote, “To be a good teacher is being able to ‘teach’ your content and follow the state’s competencies, however, at the same time your students should walk away with an understanding of your content.” These pre-service teachers appear to take responsibility for students’ learning as well as their content domain. Another seven pre-service teachers wrote responses that indicate a primary focus on content knowledge, but support this focus with teaching effectiveness. These responses include: “A good teacher is equipped with the knowledge and skill to teach at the level of his/her chosen profession. [Furthermore] A good teacher is made when he/she contains a compassion/love of herself, her career, and her students.” “A good teacher shares the knowledge he or she has with their students and gives them a framework for the process of learning.” And finally, “Being able to teach the subject that you assigned. Having the students understand and learn the subject matter. Being caring and warm to the students. Being understanding and willing to help the students in any way.”

So, while there were varied responses to the survey prompt, the responses support the conclusions made from the earlier semester: being able to reach out and support student learning is the most important aspect of teaching or just as important as being able to know one’s teaching content area.

The next survey question asked what picture do you have of a “good student?” Typical responses from the Fall 2001 semester included: “Attentive, Listens, Respectful.” However, if we look at how one pictures a good student, most respondents place the responsibility for “being good” on the students. Also, pre-service teachers saw

“goodness” in the traditional sense of the word. A “good” student was defined as one who “tries to understand,” “attention,” “effort,” “eager/excited,” “on time,” and “behaves well.”

The pre-service teachers responding to the survey question from the Fall 2002 semester presented a variety of views. Traditional, behavioral traits were identified by 29 of the 45 students. These traits include: disciplined, attentive, asks questions, non-disruptive, shows up, does best work, and asks questions. Two pre-service teachers indicated that the teacher has a role in a student being “good,” for example: “There are no bad students. There are just some who are easy for the teacher to reach and those who are more challenging to reach.”

While none of the pre-service teachers from either semester were familiar with the concept of deficit thinking from the outset of the study (survey question #3), many from the Fall 2001 semester reflected the concepts of “Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different” in their diversity responses (question #4). For example “diversity is the presence of different backgrounds...being different” ([see Table I](#)). One student went even further writing, “diversity is encompassing differences-it’s accepting who/what we are at face value and learning from it. It’s overall an attitude about accepting and collaborating.” This pre-service teacher understood the value of meeting individual students’ needs.

As the researchers read through the Fall 2001 surveys, pre-service teachers’ concepts or explanations of diversity illustrated that they have some idea of what diversity is but have absolutely no concept of how it relates to them as teachers (question #5). The majority of the pre-service teachers saw diversity as being different or having other cultures in the classrooms. One pre-service teacher saw diversity as a political tactic, six pre-service teachers related diversity as simply being open-minded towards difference. While several pre-service teachers named open-mindedness, when it came to what that meant this also was limited to learning styles, add-on methods or ability. When asked to define or explain the concept of diversity, the majority of students said it was “bringing in another culture.”

Table I
Pre-service Teachers' Ideas of Multicultural Education

Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different	Human Relations	Multicultural Education
“Diversity should be exposed to children sometime in their education in order to prepare them for them future.”	“There are many different backgrounds and upbringings of students that you are going to have to teach. You have to know these differences and be able to relate to them.”	“I want to not only teach diversity, I want my students to breathe and desire knowledge for information and concepts far beyond their experience-this is the best way to learn.”

Note: Taken from Sleeter & Grant, 1999.

[BACK](#)

Pre-service teachers responding during the Fall, 2002 semester had either no concept of deficit thinking (survey question #3) or attributed it to some sort of individual self-perception based on the lack of cognitive skills. However, three pre-service teachers did write that deficit thinking is (a) “thinking someone is less because of who they are or where they come from;” (b) “thinking poorly of others because of their class, gender, etc.;” and (c) “preconceived notion of how certain people will behave.” (The pre-service teacher writing the third response above additionally wrote that deficit thinking is “a politically correct term directed at disadvantaged socio-economic groups. Ignores individual strength and determination.”)

The pre-service teachers (Fall, 2002) writing in response to their understanding of diversity (survey question # 4) were clear that this refers to differences in individual students' race, ethnicity, religion, home cultures and even learning style. As in the Fall, 2001 survey responses, their writing for survey question #5, connecting diversity and teaching, reflected Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level in Sleeter & Grant's model ([Table I](#)). Their responses ranged from believing that simple “exposure” to difference cultures was a good thing in itself, to going beyond exposure to having students and the teacher knowing “where people are coming from” in order to avoid favoritism and to promote acceptance and tolerance. Additionally, these pre-service teachers responded that diversity relates to classroom teaching and learning since teachers need to have an understanding of each student in order to understand classroom interactions, and that teachers can nurture diversity and use it as a learning tool.

Survey Results Conclusion

As described earlier, there is a continuum for understanding and integrating multicultural education in the classroom. After reading through the responses to these

initial surveys that ask pre-service teachers to relate diversity to teaching and learning, the researchers discovered three levels of understanding that directly relate back to the Sleeter & Grant framework (1999). While pre-service teachers held traditional beliefs for the role of the teacher and the student, they did believe that they had a responsibility to expose their students to a variety of other cultures. In the Sleeter & Grant model these beliefs correspond to the Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level (Table I). At this level teachers work to adapt their instruction to the individual learner's needs reflecting the underlying belief that the curriculum and schooling process was good and beneficial for all—that the students will fit into the existing system. Additionally, the researchers saw pre-service teachers sporadically responding at one of the two other levels: the Humans Relations category which leads to acceptance, tolerance, and empathy, and the Multicultural Education category which incorporates diversity into teaching strategies and uses it as a learning tool.

Unit Reflections

The final assignment of the first unit on literacy was the Unit I Reflection. In this assignment, pre-service teachers were to write: (a) on their learning of literacy, (including readings from Gee (1989), Purcell-Gates (1995), and Hirsch (1988)); and (b) insights they gained from the Purcell-Gates book. Additionally, the pre-service teachers wrote about literacy, teaching and learning, diversity, and deficit thinking. Through examination of these artifacts, the researchers were able to obtain a tangible glimpse into attitudes, perceptions and understandings of concepts related to difference and learning. Three major themes emerged from the Fall 2001 semester: (a) the connection between diversity and teaching; (b) genetics, and (c) internalized deficit thinking. Comparison of Fall 2001 and Fall 2002 data indicates that these themes are consistent across both semesters.

Connecting diversity and teaching.

It appears that pre-service teachers in the first semester class were beginning to name acts of deficit thinking in Other People's Words. Utilizing the words of the pre-service teachers, teachers must not "blame the victim." In the case of the Purcell-Gates' book, one student wrote, "[The] teachers did not look at individual students difficulties, but viewed them as part of the collective disabilities urban Appalachians are stereotyped to possess" (Student 18). This student was able to see the negative impact of a label. Another pre-service teacher in Fall 2001 class was able to put this into the context of her own classroom:

As a teacher I must constantly be aware of literacy and diversity in my classroom...the least noticeable group, maybe even a group of people solely in the school that I teach, might be the most important ones for me to recognize and abolish stereotypes about. (Student 10)

Throughout this unit, pre-service teachers recognized that difference does not mean deficient and that they will be responsible for setting an accepting environment in

their future classrooms. "As a perspective teacher I am seeing more that you have to get to know your students [but] by putting a certain label [on a student] you are truly putting the child at a disadvantage" (Student 5). These pre-service teachers began to realize that:

there [are] going to be kids like Donny everywhere. They may not fit his description but they certainly [may] have his same problems. So we must all understand that these children are out there and they need our help. They cannot just be pushed to the side and forgotten. (Student 9A)

Another wrote:

...teachers have to teach to the diversity, not simply to ignore that it exists. This means that we must encourage differences and celebrate our diversity, as well as, foster an environment where they are able to learn regardless of their cultural backgrounds. These students deserve the same knowledge and opportunities, but perhaps not the same treatment of how they obtain that knowledge. (Student 2)

In the Fall, 2002 class, the pre-service teachers made connections between expanded notions of literacy, diversity/deficit thinking, and teaching. For example, one pre-service teacher wrote:

I realized through reading this book that stereotypes pervade and plague our culture, and people are easily convinced that their way of life is ideal. I will never forget Donny's teacher claiming Jenny's ignorance, but undoubtedly being unable to fix her car or remember a grocery list. Jenny and Donny were non-literate because they were unable to read, but they were also completely unaware of the significance of print in our society. But, they also had no reason to be able to read. They didn't use it in their every day life, until Donny began going to school. As Purcell-Gates states, "one learns a discourse by being enculturated into its social practices through scaffolding and social interaction with people who have already mastered the discourse" (p. 182). Donny had no reason to write on how to build a kite, because he could just as easily show the process, as he always had. People assume that diversity constitutes a person of a different race or religion, but Donny provided much more diversity in his classroom than an African-American face or a Jewish boy. He provided the school system with a boundary that it is not structured to deal with accepting different discourses within the classroom. Jenny and Donny are not language deficit because they are able to communicate with each other for all of their purposes outside Donny's schoolwork. People assume that people who are unable to express themselves with extensive vocabularies are perhaps mentally or verbally deficient with language, but the discourse and the particular language to that discourse is not being considered (Student 22).

Another pre-service teacher wrote that:

The first session has opened my eyes about many things. First it opened my mind to the fact that I truly did not know the meaning of literacy. I was forced to see

with my own eyes by looking, researching, listening, and discover all of the extra factors that play into someone being literate. During this I realized how many teachers do not play the role of a teacher and do not help their students learn. Students are stereotyped by their diversities. Then the teacher will decide if he or she is willing to take the extra time needed to help the students. (Student 9)

From these examples, the researchers found that in fact many pre-service teachers were establishing connections between diversity and teaching. First they were able to identify acts of deficit thinking and this led them to attribute negative outcomes to stereotyping and negative perceptions. When pre-service teachers learn about the negative impact of labeling and jumping to conclusions about students based on their own personal bias they negate the individual. It seems that these pre-service teachers are seeing the importance of recognizing diversity among their students, using diversity as a strength in the classroom as well as a learning tool. Yet, in terms of the Sleeter and Grant model (1999), the students did not question the institution of schooling in the broader societal sense and believed that the established curriculum was valid and useful for all students. While the majority of the students reflected the Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level in the model, and a number then reflected the Human Relations level, only two or three from both semesters indicated through their responses an understanding and a desire to incorporate the multicultural education level in their teaching.

Deficit thinking and genetics.

According to Valencia (1997), deficit thinking has become a justified approach in education due to the differences in genetics between the races. In this manner of thought, different races have different genetic composition, which are thought to be deficient. This has been generalized further to also include accents or dialects that further mark negative attitudes. This has also been linked with poor socioeconomic status, another theme from *Other Peoples Words*. Pre-service teachers in the Fall 2001 class began to understand this type of deficit thinking. For example, as one pre-service teacher wrote:

Social class differences have predicted literacy skill achievement. Social status has predicted how one will be educated. If one is born into a family that is not middle class and educated they have a lower chance of achieving a good literacy level. Jenny and Donny were seen as poor whites-part of a minority class. They were foreigners and outsiders to the world of literacy. (Student 3)

Pre-service teachers in the Fall, 2002 class articulated understandings of the genetics argument and deficit thinking through their understanding of Donny and Jenny in the Purcell-Gates book as members of the “invisible minority” (Purcell-Gates). For example, one pre-service teacher wrote:

More troubling in Jenny and Donny’s case (main characters in the Purcell-Gates book), was the fact that they physically looked like everyone around them. Their key difference is background and culture. People in their community saw them,

not so much as being different, but as being helplessly ignorant. Purcell-Gates offers help because she realizes the futility of “deficit-ridden views”. While she may agree that Jenny and Donny are significantly different than others in the community; she is not willing to write them off as helpless. (Student 11)

Some pre-service teachers in the Fall 2002 semester were not able to see their own versions of the genetics and deficit thinking point and maintained a narrow view of difference by continuing to use the term illiterate in the final reflection. This usage implies the genetic disposition of certain groups of people. Another pre-service teacher stated that Jenny and Donny suffered from acute learning disabilities. This student states that the:

...alleged links between literacy and diversity are overstated in the extreme, being a politically correct society we attach identifying nametags to certain groups of people. These communal nametags are used to provide people with a reason for not being successful. The concept completely ignores the strength and determination of individual human beings. (Student 6)

While one does not deny the strength and determination of individuals, the main goals of the researchers’ unit on literacy and deficit thinking seem to be lost with this particular person.

This version of deficit thinking, as merely a variation in genetics, seemed to be the most accessible for the majority of the pre-service teachers. They were able to articulate its meaning and at the same time, students were extremely vocal in their outrage at the treatment by the educational community who were in this mindset. During class discussions pre-service teachers would ask, “what is the point of education if you already think someone is going to fail?” What an excellent question to pose for any educator who is already determining a child’s future based on the way they look or the way they talk.

Internalized deficit thinking.

Pre-service teachers in both classes were able to understand the concept of deficit thinking when groups of people or individuals attribute it to themselves and act on these beliefs. As a pre-service teacher from the Fall 2001 class wrote: “Sadly, many who are labeled as being deficient in thought, end up believing in the stereotypes themselves” (Student 6). Another pre-service teacher responded:

After being told time and time again that Urban Appalachian culture was the factor that restrained Donny and her from reading and writing, Jenny seemed to have engaged in deficit thinking herself...Jenny illustrated deficit thinking herself because she believed her hillbilly or countrified language hindered her from becoming a successful reader, while she felt Donny’s inability to learn to read and write was due to his laziness. (Student 1)

Some pre-service teachers wrote contradictory statements about difference, deficit thinking and teaching perhaps illustrating their confusion. One example is from a person who wrote:

She [Purcell-Gates] does, however, offer valuable insight through her experiences with Jenny and Donny into many factors that influence a student's ability to succeed at reading and writing. There is a great connection between a student's success in school and their background. Race and financial status are huge factors in predicting the success of a student. For Donny his race did not make him difference, but his whole background did. The diversity within a classroom should be a positive thing rather than a negative thing. A child of any background can be taught to read and write within their realm of understanding. A teacher such as Donny's really has a problem with deficit thinking because she could not relay information to Donny in a way that made it relevant to him, therefore his success at literacy was greatly hindered. (Student 3)

This student does understand and can write an example of internalized deficit thinking, believes that diversity in the classroom can be a positive feature and that a child of any background can be taught. Yet she also refers to the connection between one's racial and socioeconomic status and success in schooling and that students who come from "less desirable backgrounds" can only be taught "with limitations."

Conclusions

The two classes began at introductory levels of understanding multicultural education as illustrated in the Sleeter & Grant model of Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different. Students in the classes understood the value of exposing their students to diversity and of teaching to individual students' needs. Yet this could be a superficial level as exemplified perhaps in only studying Black Americans during Black History month. The Unit I Reflections written at the end of the five weeks indicate that the pre-service teachers understood and could apply bits and pieces of concepts that underlie multicultural education: connecting diversity with teaching; deficit thinking and genetics; and internalized deficit thinking. The researchers felt that while most pre-service teachers were well-intentioned, many still seemed to feel that students in public school will have different learning abilities due to their different backgrounds. One student wrote:

...not everyone can read and write and that by examining a persons background and the social class that they come from that has something to do with their capabilities in learning. (Student 5)

This pre-service teacher was not able to see the larger picture and was still blaming the student for not being able to learn (according to the teacher's standards). The pre-service teachers couldn't articulate how expanded notions of literacy and their own projection of deficit thinking would enter into the picture.

The researchers concluded from working with the data that pre-service teachers need a carefully constructed sequence of readings that introduce concepts aligning with and supporting notions of literacy and deficit thinking. These concepts would include among others: stereotyping, prejudice, dialect, devaluation of education, and human capital. During this one five week unit of instruction, the students read the material outside of class, and participated in multiple small group interactive activities to discuss, articulate and argue with these notions. The concepts are complex and require one to move away from their personal ideologies or beliefs. Recognizing how deficit thinking and narrow views of literacy influence our understandings of our students is a long process not completed in a five-week unit. Just as the most integrated level of Multicultural Education in the Sleeter & Grant model (1999) states that students will seek knowledge and experiences that contributes to deeper and deeper understandings of diversity, so too do the course instructors need to create and plan activities that will move the students beyond the first level of multicultural education into the more complex areas. Perhaps the underlying assumptions about societal and schooling goals should be learned as well as a comparison of the curriculum, and instructional practices implicit in each level (Sleeter & Grant, 1999).

While the teacher population is increasingly comprised of white female teachers with limited experience with minorities, the student population is becoming more and more diverse ([Colville-Hall, MacDonald & Smolen, 1995](#); [Fuller, 1994](#); [Tran, Young & Di Lella, 1994](#)). It is vital that all teachers are able to teach to all kinds of diverse populations because it is becoming apparent that most will be doing just that. Utilizing this aspect of deficit thinking contributes to expanded notions of literacy. This process continues to challenge pre-service teachers' expectations of children that will continue when they are in their own classroom.

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In Five Thousand Years of Teaching Reading, What Have We Learned?

Bob W. Jerrolds

In keeping with this year's theme; "Looking Forward, Looking Backward: Reading at the Crossroads," I'm looking backward. As you may have heard it said before, historians are the only people in the world who get paid for looking backward. Unfortunately, for this presentation, I'm not getting paid. I'm getting older now, so I am looking more backward. In fact, I can't believe how backward I look! I have been retired for six years. A couple of you are old enough to have talked with me about retiring, and I have given the same advice that was given to me. If you are in education, you will know when the time comes to retire. A former member of the Georgia State Department of Education said that an educator ought to retire when he sees the same innovation coming around for the third time. To look backward we need a good rear-view mirror, and we need to remember that objects coming up behind us may be larger than they appear.

I suppose that as we get older there is a greater tendency to look back. Aunt Ludie said - now you remember my Aunt Ludie - You knew full well when you invited me to make a presentation that you were going to hear about my Aunt Ludie! I remember Aunt Ludie saying she was so old that she could remember when people wore hats and told the truth. Hat or no hat, I'm going to tell you the truth. The truth is some of the ideas we have about the teaching of reading and some of the techniques we use are older than Adam's house cat, and that is not necessarily bad. I do, however, think that it is reprehensible that some of our colleagues have built their entire professorships on the process of putting old wine in new bottles.

I commend our program planners (Bob Schlagal and Woodrow Trathen) for providing for a look backward. It is a whole lot easier to get where you are going if you know where you have been. I also commend this organization for having as one of its reasons for existence, "To ensure that in the field of reading no idea is too bold or new to be given a hearing, and none too old to be given reconsideration." That is really quite well-stated, which is, of course, why I wrote it.

What was the purpose for the invention of writing in the first place? The purpose was to record what we had learned so that we and succeeding generations would not have to learn it by experience all over again. Would it not be supremely ironic if, of all groups, reading people did not know their own history? There is some evidence that such might be the case. If we did know the history of our own field, would we constantly be throwing out ideas and practices only to come back to them again and again under new names? Anticipating how the research for this paper would turn out, I considered entitling this paper, "Been there; done that; bought the t-shirt." What I did not anticipate is that my title would be in error because we have been teaching reading for more than 5,000 years.

Just how old is reading and writing anyway? For more than 100,000 years humans have been making marks on various surfaces, and archeologists are continuing to find more all the time. Some of these marks are lines, some dots, some are hatch marks, etc. Although some may have been random, and some were apparently just decorative, most clearly did convey meanings. Most of those that conveyed meaning represented some kind of counting. Ancients also drew pictures and made various geometric designs that also represented counting.

In Alberto Manguel's interesting book, *A History of Reading*, he writes,

In 1984, two small clay tablets of vaguely rectangular shape were found in Tell Brak, Syria, dating from the fourth millennium BC. I saw them, the year before the Gulf War, in a unostentatious display case in the Archeological Museum of Baghdad. . . . All our history begins with these two modest tablets. They are—if the war spared them—among the oldest examples of writing we know. ([Manguel, 1996](#))

History is usually defined as the *written* record of human kind. If history began with those two little tablets in Baghdad, let us hope that the days immediately ahead in Baghdad do not begin the closing of some giant, cosmic circle.

Of all the mnemonic marking that peoples used preceding real writing, knot records were the most common in early developing cultures around the world and were used to convey elaborate means of counting.

The Inca of ancient Peru used mnemonics almost exclusively to achieve what writing achieved in the same or similar contexts in other societies. The Inca had several different types of knots to record their empire's daily and long-term mercantile transactions and payment of tribute. Each knot held a specific decimal value (no knot in a certain place meant "zero"). For example, one overhand knot above two overhand knots above a group of seven knots recorded the number "127". Thus, there were specific cord places for the concepts "hundreds", "tens" and "ones". Bunches of strings of knots could be tied off with summation cords. ([Fischer, 2001](#)).

Less convenient than knots, other materials such as stone carvings, pictographs, notched sticks and bones, colored pebbles, etc. have been used to make records of whatever early cultures valued highly whether genealogy, lists of kings, possessions, captives taken in battle, seasonal cycles, or whatever. These were precursors of real writing, but they did not take on the subtleties of transcriptions of human speech. Instead they were only mnemonic devices, although they were frequently elaborate and complex. The earliest of these meaningful markings almost always involved counting of some kind.

Before we can talk about when reading and writing began we have to define real,

or complete, writing. Even though I don't approve of split infinitives, for purposes of this discussion let us accept Fischer's definition. "One might accept that it is indeed the sequencing of standardized symbols (characters, signs or sign components) in order to graphically reproduce human speech, thought and other things in part or whole" (Fischer, 2001).

From the time that writing began many, if not most, cultures have so valued it and been awed by it, especially those who could not read, that they have attributed its invention to a god or goddess, or to a human who, for the achievement, was transformed into demi-god or hero status. Further, throughout most of history reading and writing have been controlled by the priestly classes. The very earliest writings almost always appear to be tallies of the possessions of some king or other high-ranking individual. Thus it would appear that writing was not invented by Thoth, Apollo and his Muses, or some demi-god. It was invented by some long-dead certified public accountant.

A mounting body of evidence indicates that, contrary to what we previously believed, reading and writing did not evolve independently in such varied places as Babylonia, Egypt, China, and India. There are even some reputable scholars who contend that it did not evolve independently in Mesoamerica. I find this assertion a little incredulous, but some scholars claim that writing in Mesoamerica had too much in common with Chinese writing to be coincidence. Although pottery fragments have been found in China with markings on them that date to about 4,000 B. C., there is no consensus that these represent real writing or even pre-writing. Clearly the writing of Japanese, Korean, and other eastern languages evolved from the Chinese, but whence came Chinese?

Having been practiced in Mesopotamia and points east for some two thousand years, the idea of complete writing apparently diffused from there to north-central China, where, due to the demands of the Chinese language, writing went on to assume its unique East Asian cast. (Fischer, 2001)

If history is the written record of the experiences of humankind, then it appears that Samuel Noah Kramer ([1959](#)) was justified in entitling his book, *History Begins at Sumer*. Fischer states:

Though there are other possible interpretations, the cumulative weight of evidence urges the consideration that the idea of complete writing may have emerged only once in humankind's history. Drawing from a standardized repertoire of pictograms and symbols - the distillation of a long development from notches to tablets - the Sumerians of Mesopotamia elaborated what has since become humankind's most versatile tool. All other writing systems and scripts are, then perhaps derivatives of this one original idea - systemic phoneticism - that emerged between 6,000 and 5,700 years ago in Mesopotamia. (Fischer, 2001)

What an epiphany for one person and what a boon for humankind the moment that our ancient Sumerian CPA realized that if he elaborated his counting marks he could

make them represent speech sounds and if he could represent sounds he could make his marks record anything that he or anyone else could say! We can only imagine how dazzled he must have been by that insight. The subtle move from complex mnemonic marks to phonetic representation represents the first real or complete writing.

Although we have real writing that far back in Sumer, to date we do not have examples of the work of school children that far back. However, in Sumer a goodly number of tablets have been found dating from about 2,500 B.C. that are obviously the work of schoolboys learning to be scribes. We can tell that it is because on individual clay tablets or pottery shards we have the same word, sentence, list or passage written over and over again in the same hand. We also have passages written by long ago Sumerians in which they describe their activities. Kramer found one man's essay in which he describes a day at school when he was a lad. Like some of us when we tell children about our school days, I expect that he embroiders his experiences a bit. Kramer states of this essay:

In school the monitor in charge said to me, "Why are you late?" Afraid and with pounding heart, I entered before my teacher and made a respectful curtsy.

But curtsy or not, it seems to have been a bad day for this pupil. He had to take canings from the various members of the school staff for such indiscretions as talking, standing up, and walking out of the gate. Worst of all, the teacher said to him, "Your hand (copy) is not satisfactory," and caned him. This seems to have been too much for the lad, and he suggests to his father that it might be a good idea to invite the teacher home and mollify him with some presents - by all odds the first recorded case of "apple-polishing" in the history of man. The composition continues: "To that which the schoolboy said his father gave heed. The teacher was brought from school, and after entering the house he was seated in the seat of honor. The schoolboy attended and served him, and whatever he had learned of the art of table-writing he unfolded to his father."

The father then wined and dined the teacher, "dressed him in a new garment, gave him a gift, put a ring on his hand." Warmed by this generosity, the teacher reassures the aspiring scribe in poetic words, which read in part: "Young man, because you did not neglect my word, did not forsake it, may you reach the pinnacle of the scribal art, may you achieve it completely. . . Of your brothers may you be their leader, of your friends may you be their chief, may you rank the highest of the schoolboys. . . You have carried out well the school's activities, you have become a man of learning." (Kramer, 1959)

It would appear that a little bribery would go a long way in those days. However, this and other Sumerian schoolboys had their work cut out for them.

Thus the neophyte began his studies with quite elementary syllabic exercises such as tu-ta-ti, nu-na-ni, bu-ba-bi, zu-za-zi, etc. This was followed by the study and practice of a sign list of some nine hundred entries which gave single signs along with their pronunciation. Then came lists containing hundreds of words that had come to be written, for one reason or another, not by one sign but by a group of

two or more signs. These were followed by collections containing literally thousands of words and phrases arranged according to meaning. . . . A collection of most common expressions used in administrative and legal documents was also included as well as a list of some eight hundred words denoting professions, kinship relations, deformities of the human body, etc.

It was only when the student had become well acquainted with the writing of the complex Sumerian vocabulary that he began to copy and memorize short sentences, proverbs, and fables, and also collections of “model” contracts, this last being essential for the redaction of legal documents, which played a large role in the economic life of Sumer. ([Kramer, 1963](#))

Does all this have a familiar ring? To me it sounds like letter learning, word families, sight words, word lists, common phrases, and learning from a model.

Ancient Egyptians called writing. . . “god’s words” - because they believed it to be the gift of Thoth, the ibis-headed scribe of the gods, healer, lord of all wisdom and patron of scholars. . . . Few writing systems in the world have been as beautiful or captivating. None has had such far-reaching effects on humankind. (Fischer, 2001)

Archeological evidence indicates that contact with Sumer, directly or indirectly, is what gave writing to Egypt, not Thoth.

Egypt had borrowed from Sumer not simply the ‘idea of writing’, but logography, phonography and linearity with sequencing. The Egyptian sign inventory was codified very early on, with set phonetic values and sign usages. Then, recognizing specific requirements of the Egyptian language, scribes innovated new writing tools. (Fischer 2001)

Thus the Ancient Egyptians did what the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and others did; they adopted an alphabet and adapted it to the needs of their language. The only major group not clever enough to adapt the alphabet they adopted were the people who spoke English, but more of that later.

The Egyptian hieroglyphs were representations of sounds. They were not, as we might assume from looking at them, ideographs. By the way they are hieroglyphs, not hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphic is the adjectival form of the word. We would not want members of the American Reading Forum calling them hieroglyphics. Ancient Egyptian students were taught to read primarily by spelling the word and by sounding out the syllables. You think we don’t still use something as primitive as the spelling method? In response to the question, “What is this word?” how many times have you heard teachers or parents say “Spell it.” Obviously 5,000 years later we are still trying to teach children with this ancient method.

Of course, the Egyptians rather than the Greeks or Phoenicians were apparently the first to represent single consonants with only one sign corresponding to each

consonantal phoneme in their language . . . This brilliant way of writing . . . Spread to Sinai and Canaan and revolutionized writing in terms of flexibility and economy. One no longer needed to learn hundreds of signs; usually, fewer than 30 . . . (Fischer, 2001)

Speaking of consonants, the Egyptians and many other early writing cultures used only consonants in their texts. They did not use vowels. Can you imagine trying to teach our youngsters to read English using no vowels? It can be done, by the way: nglsh cn b rd wtht vwls, bt nt wtht cnsnnts; Ei a e ea iou oe, u o iou ooa.

'The Phoenicians who came with Kadmos,' wrote Herodotus in the fifth century BC of the legendary Phoenician prince of Tyre . . . Introduced into Greece, after their settlement in the country, a number of accomplishments, of which the most important was writing, an art which, I believe, had been unknown to the Greeks until then.' While the Greeks received consonantal alphabetic writing from the Phoenicians, syllabic writing had been known to them long before this . . . Since Kadmos had lived, as Herodotus also alleged, approximately 1,650 years earlier—that is, when the syllabic writing of the Phoenicians' ancestors had arrived in Hellas—perhaps the historian was recalling a legend relating to the Greeks' first borrowing of writing rather than the second. (Fischer, 2001)

The Ancient Greek student did not have an easy time learning to read. His texts had no spaces or other markers to indicate where words start and stop. They also had no markers such as upper case letters or periods to separate sentences. Some of you may remember that at the first meeting of this association Hecker, Jerrolds, and Benton ([1981](#)) presented a paper in which they proposed a new type of informal reading placement test, one in which the student was faced with the same problems as his counterpart in Ancient Greece. By the way a recent review of the literature revealed that the new informal reading placement test of Hecker, Jerrolds, and Benton has not been heard of since.

It took the Greeks until about 400 years B. C. before they figured out that they could draw horizontal lines in the text to separate words. While they were at it, they decided they could indicate new sentences by enlarging the first letter and/or indenting.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus tells us how they learned to read.

We first learn the names of the letters, then their forms and length, then syllables and their usual variations. Then we begin to read and write, but syllable by syllable and slowly until we have acquired some facility, then connectedly. . . . ([Lampert, 1935](#))

That sounds suspiciously like synthetic phonics to me.

Because it was Greek to them, these ancients had to be resourceful in their teaching techniques. Lampert cites Athenaeus:

Kallias of Athens . . . composed the so-called Alphabet-Revue on the following plan. Its prologue is composed of the letters of the alphabet, and it is to be read in such a manner as to divide the letters according to the punctuation and bring the conclusion in the manner of a tragic denouement back to the letter alpha, thus: Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, The chorus of women is composed by him with the collocation of letters in pairs, set to meter and accompanied by tunes
 (Lamport, 1935)

This sounds like the alphabet song to me and dramatization of reading material. And here we are in 2002 still using choral reading as a part of our repertoire.

Another novel approach was used by a wealthy Greek named Atticus. His less than bright child could not seem to learn his alphabet, so the father bought 24 slaves, gave each the name of one of the Greek letters, and gave them to his child as playmates. And some of you thought that Reading Recovery was expensive! We have no record of the effectiveness of the treatment. I do not advocate the Atticus Method. I feel that it is excessive.

Have you noticed that no matter how impressive a new development might be there is always someone who thinks that it will be the ruination of the next generation. Bright as he was Plato was extremely suspicious of books.

The art of writing was to be sure in Plato's time nothing new; but the Greek book . . . was scarcely yet a century old. Something of its newness is reflected in the delightful version of the story of the invention of books and letters, attributed to Theuth (Thoth) of the Egyptians, 'This,' said Theuth, 'will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; for this is the cure of forgetfulness and folly.' To him replied Thamus, King of the Egyptians: 'O most ingenious Theuth, he who has the gift of inventions not always the best judge of the utility of his own inventions to the users of them. This invention of yours will create forgetfulness in learners' souls because they will not use their memories.'
(Hendrickson, 1929)

Plato was not the alone in his grave misgivings about books. He and others felt that they had indeed already brought about forgetfulness. In ancient Greece that loutish and lazy younger generation was not bothering to remember that which could easily be looked up again in a book. It occurs to me that we are now hearing the same complaint leveled against computers, which will be worse because computers can look it up for you. And, by the way, the younger generation is still loutish, lazy, and going to hell in a handbasket. But speaking of Plato, he presents Socrates as saying, "I know what I do not know." (Buchanan, 1948) Now, if that is not metacognition, I don't know what is!

Although I have not found the source, I have read that the Ancient Hebrews with a taste for learning used a board much like the hornbook that we meet later in reading

education. To reward academic achievement the teacher would drizzle honey in the shape of a letter. When the scholar had mastered the identification of the letter he was allowed to lick the honeyed letter from the board. Quintus Horatius Flaccus whom we know as Horace was a Roman of the first century. Horace also recognized the importance of rewarding children with food even though he wrote satires on the culinary arts (Marshall, 1911). “He commended the innovation of awarding children toothsome dainties molded in the form of letters when they had mastered the alphabet and thus as it were made them swallow it” (Lamport, 1935).

Although this method had several names through the ages, in honor of Aunt Ludie I call it the Biscuit Method. I remember Aunt Ludie saying, “Why, some of them people in’ around criticizin’ teachers couldn’t teach a yard dog to eat a biscuit.” In England it became known as the Gingerbread Method and it was widely recommended in Europe as late as the 18th century. Huey ([1909](#)), Smith ([2002](#)), Lamport (1935), and all the rest of us love Matthew Prior’s poem:

To Master John the English Maid
 A Horn Book gives of Ginger-bread:
 And that the Child may learn the better,
 As he can name, he eats the Letter;
 Proceeding thus with Vast Delight,
 He spells, and gnaws from Left to Right.

Speaking of Nila Banton Smith, I chose this topic because I had made the first moves toward writing a history of reading instruction. In the process I learned about Lamport’s 1935 dissertation in which he had already done most of what I thought I might do. Toward the end of my preparation for this presentation I found that Nila’s excellent book was coming out in a special edition with an updating chapter by P. David Pearson. So now I don’t have to write a history of the teaching of reading. By the way, the special edition of the Nila’s book has an excellent epilogue in which Norm Stahl helps younger readers understand the importance of the book and the context in which it was written.

By the time the German, Basedow, wrote his *Neuen werkzeug zum lesenlehren* in 1787 the Biscuit Method had been fully developed. I mention this book because I had to demonstrate a reading knowledge of German while in the doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin; and, after all these years, I wanted to make some use of the experience. Basedow was teutonically specific on the Biscuit Method stating, “No child needs to eat the letters for longer than four weeks” (Lamport, 1935).

In case you think that the Biscuit Method died out in the 1700’s consider today’s alphabet soup and alphabet cereal. Think also on the number of parents who bribe and reward their children with food for doing their homework or getting good grades. I can remember the 1960’s when we as teachers rotted all those teeth with M&Ms because the psychologists were telling us to reinforce learning with our conditioning techniques.

The Roman alphabet was their adaptation of the Greek alphabet. We do not know

when they first learned to use the Greek alphabet, but it was long before their conquest of Greece. Apparently they had picked it up from the Greek colonies in southern Italy or those on the islands off the southern coast.

Much of what we know of Ancient Rome's educational theory and practice we owe to the writing of the Spanish-Roman, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, generally known to us as Quintilian. In A.D. 68 Quintilian was granted a professorship, marking the first instance in which the government assumed any responsibility for public education.

The basis of education in Quintilian's time was *mos maiorum*, the way of our fathers. In other words, boys and girls were to be educated by observing and imitating their elders. From its earliest days of power Rome was a society based on warfare and slavery. With the coming of the emperors Roman society became a quagmire of corruption, intrigue, and violence. In this setting Quintilian and many other thinkers developed an almost pathetic faith in education as the remedy for society's ills ([Smail, 1938](#)). This is a phenomenon that we have with us today.

We might have expected a man of Quintilian's intellect and apparent goodwill to have had more to say than he does about the nature of the injustices, corruption, and violence in the world under the rule of Vespasian and Titus and especially under Domitian. Perhaps, as is sometimes the case today Quintilian did not always take the high road because he found himself much obliged by his professorship.

Quintilian begins by affirming the supreme importance of elementary education, the foundation upon which the whole superstructure must rest (Smail, 1938). Some of you in this room are still trying to make the same point 1934 years later. Why? Because, despite all the lip-service given to the concept, in practice we are still not placing the emphasis on elementary education.

And what kind of teacher would Quintilian have in an elementary school? The following quotation gives us some idea:

Would Philip King of Macedon have chosen that the first rudiments of letters should be imparted to his son Alexander by Aristotle the greatest philosopher of the day, or would the latter have undertaken the task, save in the belief that the first elements in our studies are best handled by the best teachers and that these elements have an important bearing on the final result? (Smail, 1938)

Although others at the time held that instruction should not begin until age seven, Quintilian said it could be started earlier if it had elements of play and if the teacher were not too exacting in his demands. Quintilian warned against too much rigor with young children lest the teacher cause the children to hate learning. He stated, "For just as narrow-necked jars spill a flood of liquid poured over them, whereas they fill up when it flows in gradually or even drop by drop, so we must observe carefully the capacity of youthful minds" (Smail, 1938). Now, see, right here the man is talking about immersion whether the whole language people know it or not. I have always maintained that in

immersion some will swim and some will drown. Being a renegade Methodist, I have never been sold on immersion anyway. I know one thing for sure; when I taught in public schools I had my share of narrow-necked jars.

Quintilian had some very specific suggestions for the teaching of reading, one of which was called tracing.

When the child begins to trace the outlines of the letters it will be useful to have them cut out on a board . . . so that his pen may be guided along them as if in furrows. Thus he will not go wrong as in writing on waxen tablets (for he will be confined within the edges on either side and will therefore be unable to deviate from his model), and by tracing definite outlines with great speed and frequency he will develop the proper muscles and will not require the helping hand of a teacher placed upon his own. (Smail, 1938)

Now, some of you can call it the Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile Method of you want to, but you are still using that same old technique. And in severe cases, I think you are well-advised to do so.

Quintilian also suggested giving the child blocks to play with that had the letters carved or painted on them. The blocks could be thrown like dice, and the child was to identify the letter that came up. He could also set up the blocks in rows to spell words. Sounds to me a little like ABC blocks and some of the reading games we use today.

Quintilian and his contemporaries were sold on syllables. He said, “There is no short cut to the learning of syllables. They must all be learnt by heart; nor, as is frequently the case, should the more difficult be postponed till they are dealt with in writing words” (Smail, 1938). That ought to make even you Rudolph Fleschites in the audience happy. However, I would hasten to point out these were Romans, using the Roman’s language, Latin, and the Roman alphabet. They were not trying to read English which uses the Roman alphabet which is 20 letters short of the number needed to pronounce English. I am a great believer in phonics, but I am not a phonics fanatic. You will remember that Santayana said, “Fanaticism consists of redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim.” Our phonics fanatics of today would take us back to the way Dionysius of Halicarnassus was taught to read in 60 B.C. Phonics works well for those languages that use alphabets that were designed for or adapted to the language. However, English speakers did not significantly adapt the Roman alphabet. Hence, in those programs that over-rely on phonics the English-speaking child tries to spit, cough, grunt, and groan his way to literacy.

Quintilian also wrote, “The skilled teacher, when a pupil is entrusted to his care, will first of all seek to discover his ability and natural disposition” (Smail, 1938). Here is a man talking about diagnosis and individual differences nearly 2,000 years ago, and we are having teachers today using whole language as an excuse for having all the children doing the same thing at the same time. In another sense of the word Quintilian was out of step with his time, and to a lesser extent with ours.

As for corporal punishment, though it is a recognized practice and though Chrysippus does not object to it, I am altogether opposed to it, first because it is disgusting. . . In the next place, because a pupil whose mind so ill befits a free man's son as not to be corrected by reproof, will remain obdurate even in face of blows. . . and finally because such chastisement will be quite unnecessary if there is some one ever present to supervise the boy's studies with diligence. (Smail, 1938)

Quintilian said that in teaching reading one principle was fundamental, "There is, therefore, only one general principle which I would lay down here to enable my pupil to do all these things correctly, viz. let him *understand* what he is reading" (Smail, 1938).

In a day and age when home schooling was the rule among Romans, Quintilian did not support the practice. He felt that competition was good for children. When they were taught at home they were spoiled and self-centered. Private tutors caused apathy, conceit, and /or shyness. In the school setting they would meet with competition and face more of the realities of life. Everybody thinks that whatever produced him is the best of all possible worlds, and Quintilian was no exception. He wrote of his own school days.

Tests of progress were held from time to time, and to earn promotion was a great prize with us, whilst to be head of the class was by far the most coveted honor. The class order was not decided once and for all. Each month gave the vanquished a fresh opportunity to do battle. (Smail, 1938)

In the debate of private tutor versus the school teacher Quintilian said that the teacher found more inspiration with a larger audience. Throughout my teaching career, I found myself sufficiently inspired.

Apparently in none of the ancient cultures did people read silently. There is some evidence that they knew it could be done, but they did not do it. One of the reasons that few scholars took note of that fact is that the Ancient Greeks and Romans used words that could mean "listen" or "read" so interchangeably that translators often could not tell whether reading or listening was meant. Even when alone, individuals read aloud. Reading silently was viewed with considerable suspicion, as if one were trying to hide something. In view of the fact that so few people could read, perhaps it was considered selfish, or at least bad manners to read silently. Hendrickson (1929) says that among some Jews instructions were given to never read the sacred literature with the eyes alone. Even when no sound was to be made, the words should be formed with the lips.

To the ancients, "Silent reading . . . was not apparently unknown; but where it is alluded to, a special motivation or comment seems to be present to explain it as something anomalous" (Hendrickson, 1929). "Reading silently was not, therefore, impossible (though the degree of silence is still open to debate); but it not only was unusual, it was accounted an imperfect and defective method of reading" (Hendrickson, 1929).

The Ancient Romans had to deal with some pretty capricious gods and goddesses. Ovid has one of his characters say, "I read what you had written without a sound, lest my tongue unawares might swear by some god." (Hendrickson, 1929)

Romans in the Christian era were still reading aloud. St. Augustine seems obliged to explain the strange behavior of the venerable St. Ambrose when reading.

But when he read his eyes ran over the page and his heart searched out the meaning, but his voice and his tongue were at rest. Often when I was present - for I have seen him reading thus silently, never in fact otherwise. We would sit there in long silence (for who would venture to intrude upon him so intent upon his study?) and go our way. We hazarded conjectures as to his reasons for reading thus; and some thought that he wished to avoid the necessity of explaining obscurities of his text to a chance listener, or that he avoided thus the discussion of the difficult problems that would arise and prevent him from doing the amount of reading that he had planned in a given time. But the preservation of his voice, which easily became hoarse, may well have been the true reason for his silent reading. (Hendrickson, 1929)

Conclusion

I recognize that my title was overly ambitious and that I have dealt with precious little beyond the ancients. I assure you that I have looked fairly carefully at the history of reading instruction through the 19th Century, and the pattern continues. Let us quickly list a few generalizations that can draw from 5 - 6,000 years of teaching reading.

1. Teachers throughout the ages have used the same of the same techniques. They have used them because they are effective. They are effective because they are consonant with the nature of the written language or with human motivation.

2. The written form of language is incredibly resistant to change. Originally this resistance was based on beliefs that writing came from the gods. For the greater part of the time that writing has been in existence it was controlled by the priestly and upper classes who knew what the control of writing was the control of power. Today resistance to change in writing continues. We know, for example, that the Roman alphabet is inadequate for English, but we will not change it. Consider, if you will, your computer keyboard. It is as plain as a pikestaff that we could type twice as fast if the home keys were the vowels and a couple of the most commonly occurring consonants. Why are they a, s, d, f, j, k, l, semicolon? - because the keys on manual typewriters used to stick.

3. We don't always notice the obvious. It took about 3,000 years to take note of the fact that we could separate written words with a space. It took nearly 5,000 years to discover that we could teach children to read better if we used materials written for children. In English we didn't discover the question mark until 1587, and even now we put it on the wrong end of the sentence. Those and other examples make us wonder what

might be out there that we have not yet noticed.

4. We need to remember that the techniques, motives, and tools that the reformers and theoreticians were advocating through the ages were not in widespread use at the time, otherwise, they would not have been trying to promote them. And , today, many of you have been trying for years to get teachers and parents to employ your ideas about the teaching of reading.

5. Lastly, in any given time, most especially our own, whatever is being promoted is always in a new dress, and we tend to think it is something new and wonderful. Further, the promoters usually present it as if it were a panacea. We are the most advertised and propagandized generation in the history of reading education. Whenever you read or hear about some nine day's wonder in the field of reading stop and analyze its basic elements. I'll bet you find yourself saying, "Been there; done that; bought the t-shirt."

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“Best Practices” Survey Results by College Teachers of Developmental Education

**Chester H. Laine
Michaeline E. Laine
Terry L. Bullock**

Mayer ([1988](#)) defines learning strategies as “the behaviors of a learner that are intended to influence how the learner processes information” (p. 11). Nist and Simpson ([2002](#)), in their review of college studying, argue that many popular learning strategies are not supported by empirical research and that “most of these learning strategies are taught because of tradition or instructors’ personal beliefs about their effectiveness rather than because the empirical research confirms their advantages and benefits” (p. 653).

In this paper, we summarize the responses from a “best practices” survey given to college developmental educators, and we compare what our sample said about best practices with current thinking on learning strategies as revealed in the literature. Finally, we examine whether our respondents formally evaluated the impact of these “best practices,” whether the practices led to other changes in their programs, and the implications of these findings for future research and practice.

Theoretical Frame

Thomas and Rohwer ([1986](#)), using data drawn from actual classrooms, provided college educators with a theoretical model that captured many factors that had an impact on learning, including experiences, ability, materials, task factors, and course conditions. This model remains viable for 21st Century classrooms and reminds us that factors other than learning strategies contribute to students’ success or failure in college classes. In addition to learning strategies, the college educators who responded to our survey addressed learner characteristics, such as prior knowledge and students’ interest in what they were reading or studying.

Methods

The intent of the survey was to document what "best practices" college developmental educators said they were using in their classrooms. A copy of the five questions related to “best practices” appears at the end of this article. In order to send the survey to the greatest number of developmental educators, a mailing list of 443 names was obtained from the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE). The survey along with a cover letter was mailed to all 443 addresses. Thirty-five completed surveys were returned. Although this was only a 13% return rate, we believe that the information we received is useful as a preliminary examination of how college developmental practitioners think about learning and instruction.

Using Thomas and Rohwer's (1986) model and the research literature, we identified sixteen characteristics of research-validated learning strategies. Our list appears at the end of this article. The thirty-seven "best practices" provided by our respondents were compared to this list of sixteen characteristics.

Results

Nineteen of the thirty-seven responses were not directly related to learning strategies. These practices dealt with attendance policies, techniques for quickly learning students' names, policies for resubmitting assignments, and effective icebreakers.

We received no "best practices" that aligned with five of the characteristics found in the literature (items 12 through 16 on the list at the end of this article). These were practices that were taught over an extended period of time; required students to generate elaborations; addressed the cognitive and metacognitive processes students were using when they read and studied, as opposed to just the strategies they were using; required students to monitor their comprehension; or required students to become aware of their personal beliefs about learning. These will be discussed later in this article.

Eighteen of the thirty-seven "best practices" offered by our respondents aligned with eleven of the characteristics of research-validated learning strategies (items one through eleven on our list at the end of the article). The practices were intensive and of significant duration; required students to generate questions about what they had read; required students to identify main ideas and subordinate ideas, make connections among those ideas, and choose a way to visually represent those ideas in a spatial form (e.g., concept maps); involved the blending of motivation and cognition; required students to focus on the teacher's objectives and how the teacher thinks about his or her content domain; required students to use their prior knowledge; involved specific instructor feedback on the students' attempts to use a particular strategy; required students to generate a writer-based summary; required students to use a strategy within a specific context (e.g., authentic task and text); were explicit and direct; or required transfer (e.g., students had to modify a particular strategy for fit a new situation).

Using the model proposed by Thomas and Rohwer (1986) as our frame, in the next three sections, we discuss some of the "best practices" that were related to learning strategies, learner characteristics, and course characteristics.

Learning Strategies

The most researched and validated, although not necessarily the most effective, learning strategies are those designed to help students organize information (Nist and Simpson, 2002). One of our respondents offered "Paragraph Puzzles" as a learning activity that she uses in both reading and writing classes to help students "focus on organization and relationships by recognizing topic and concluding sentences, transitions, and major and minor details." In this activity, students type individual sentences from a

paragraph on to separate slips of paper. The students, working in pairs, arrange the sentences in the correct order. Typically, each pair has the same group of sentences.

Another learning strategy that was mentioned as a “best practice” by several of our respondents was the writer-based summary. A learning strategy rooted in the research on text summarization, writer-based summaries are “external products that students create for themselves in order to reduce and organize information for their subsequent study and review” (Nist & Simpson, 2000, p. 655). Writer-based summaries have been shown to improve students’ comprehension and help them monitor their understanding ([Valeri-Gold & Deming, 2000](#)).

Learner Characteristics

Our respondents also offered “best practices” that addressed learner characteristics. Several noted practices that increased motivation, students’ interest in what they are reading or studying, or ownership of their learning ([Au, 1997](#)). “Students demonstrate ownership by reading books of their own choosing, keeping journals, and sharing books with one another, even when these activities are not assigned by the teacher” ([Au, 2003](#)). Many of our respondents provided their students with opportunities to select texts that were of interest. For example, one respondent requires students to select a novel to read as homework and to turn in weekly reports on their reading. Students may change books until they find one that grabs them and the books need not be finished by semester’s end. For many students this is the one book they’ve ever truly read.

In a similar way, another of our respondents encourages students to select “any fiction book of their choice of at least 150 pages.” He explains that his students are “extremely enthusiastic. Many have not read an entire book as an adult. They love sharing their books in class and their one-page book reviews showed their enthusiasm.”

The resources are not always fiction. One of our respondents provides “supplemental materials that are timely and peak interest.” Another allows her students to “select their own expository texts to read for a developmental reading class. Since interest is a prime factor for ‘hooking’ disenfranchised readers, this has proven successful. Articles come from the newspaper, periodicals, the Internet, etc.” In a final example of the power of choice in generating motivation, one of the college teachers describes how she uses “self-selected fiction and non-fiction books” for reading material instead of “reading texts, workbooks, and programmed materials.” She argues,

Students are far more interested in reading materials they choose, material that relates to their lives. The average student reads between 800-1000 pages per semester. They were incredibly proud of their achievement and they dramatically changed attitudes about the value of books.

Although there is some evidence that prior knowledge can actually interfere with learning ([Alvermann, Smith & Readance, 1985](#)), frequently the greater a student’s prior knowledge, the more likely that student will perform well on an academic task ([Pritchard,](#)

(1990). Several of our respondents referred to activities that they used to help students develop the habit of activating prior knowledge. For example, one of our respondents consistently has her students “write out pre-reading journal entries to tap or enhance their schema.”

Course Characteristics

Many of our respondents described course characteristics that have an impact on learning, such as the pairing of the reading course with a target course, the amount of time devoted to instruction or the degree to which the instruction is explicit and direct. In their review of the research on college study, Nist and Simpson (2000) argue that research-validated strategy instruction should occur within a specific context. One method that is highlighted in their review, and is referred to by several of our respondents, is “pairing” strategy instruction with a high-risk course. In a paired course, the teacher attends the high-risk course, reads the assigned material, takes lecture notes, and then provides instruction on how to study, making sure that the strategies pertain to the tasks and texts in the target class.

One of our respondents described how she taught learning strategies that she knew her students would need in the target class. Throughout the course, she asks the students to share the effectiveness of that strategy with others in that class. In another example, the instructor explains, “My developmental reading course is paired with a credit-bearing course, Introduction to Social Science.” Instead of using a reading textbook, this college educator generates most of her instruction from the text for that paired course. We know from the research that, to be effective, students must practice strategies with authentic texts and tasks in order to determine which strategies are most appropriate. One respondent compiles

a list of 628 vocabulary words used in that book, broken down by chapter, and analyzed according to how frequently each word is used by the author. Because it will be very difficult for developmental students to truly master 628 words, I focus on the 96 words that appear 3 or more times. In short, instead of teaching vocabulary in isolation, I teach words that students actually encounter as they read for the credit-bearing course.

For other respondents, in non-paired situations, learning strategies are introduced within the context of a course assignment, such as a final research project.

Research-validated strategies, like organizing strategies and writer-based summaries are not quickly mastered. We know from the research literature that a substantial amount of time has to be committed to instruction. Such instruction must be intensive and of significant duration. In fact, some of the studies reviewed by Nist and Simpson (2000) saw no effect until after four weeks of intensive instruction in strategy instruction. Several of our respondents described the importance of providing explicit instruction of some duration. One college educator, for example, explained,

We often tell ESL students to use context to understand new vocabulary words, but neglect to tell them how to use context. Using Kate Kinsella’s *Steps in*

Determining Meaning from Context, I demonstrate one to two techniques that we then practice for several weeks before adding the next technique.

Finally, we know that for any learning strategy instruction to be effective, it must be explicit and direct ([Nist & Holschuh, 2000](#)). Among those who addressed this notion were respondents who suggested “direct instruction” using instructional technologies, such as course web sites and computer laboratories. They often referred to some form of computer-assisted instruction to improve comprehension.

Research-Validated Learning Strategies Not Offered by Respondents

We received no “best practices” that aligned with five of the characteristics found in the literature (items 12 through 16 on the list at the end of this article). For example, a learning strategy that is supported by the research is known as “self-generated elaboration.” We know that students can be taught to generate questions about what they read and that this learning strategy can significantly improve their performance on immediate recognition and recall measures, as well as delayed recall measures (Nist & Holschuh, 2000). None of our respondents offered “best practices” that called upon students to generate these types of elaborations.

A learner characteristic that was not addressed by our respondents was students’ metacognitive abilities. We know that even mature readers may have limited metacognitive skills. Many high school and college readers not only fail to monitor their comprehension, they also have monitoring problems when it comes to test preparation and predicting how well they performed on a test. In order to be successful in academic settings, students must have well-developed metacognitive skills. The research indicates that there are large payoffs when students are taught metacognitive skills (Nist & Holschuh, 2000). It is not enough to teach a strategy, teachers must also address the processes underlying the strategy. We want students to focus on the processes they are using when they read and study, not just the strategies they use. If they can learn to think about the cognitive and metacognitive processes demanded in a task, students can define their goals and study appropriately.

Generating and Evaluating Best Practices

As shown in [Table 1](#), most respondents said that they developed their “best practice” themselves. Others encountered these practices at a professional conference, in a journal article, or on an Internet site. Some said that they created the practice, learned it during their graduate studies, or simply did not remember when or how they first adopted the practice.

Table 1 – Percentage of respondents & how they learned about the “best practice.”

Source of Best Practice	# of Responses	% Total Responders (31)	% Total Surveyed (35)
Learned about it at a conference	8	26%	23%
Read about it in a journal/textbook	5	16%	14%
Saw another teacher demonstrate it in a classroom/workshop	4	13%	11%
Developed it on your own	22	71%	63%
Saw it on a website or list server	1	3%	3%
Other—see 3 remarks below	3	10%	9%
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A

[BACK](#)

Although our respondents were very generous in sharing their ideas, less than half of those who describe having a “best practice” formally evaluated it. However, the majority said that implementing these practices led to other changes in their programs.

Conclusions and Implications

Distinguishing Skills from Learning Strategies

Frequently, we were not sure whether our respondents’ “best practices” were skills or learning strategies. Alexander and Jetton ([2002](#)), in their review of learning from text, say that there has been little effort to unpack the meaning of the term strategy (p. 295). They propose two differences relevant to text-based learning: automaticity and intentionality. Skills are “academic habits” or “reutilized automatic procedures” (p. 295). Strategies are consciously evoked when these skills, or typical behaviors, prove inadequate or unsuited to the task at hand. “At such times, students must be cognizant of their performance limitations, intentionally weigh their options, and willfully execute compensatory procedures” (p. 295). They then become strategic.

Therefore, according to Alexander and Jetton (2002.), the same procedures (e.g., finding the main idea, locating supporting details, or making inferences) can fit under both the skill and strategy categories. The appropriate label rests on whether that reader

“consciously evokes the procedure” or is simply functioning in “a typical, automatic way” (p. 296). This distinction is similar to the one made by Holdaway ([1979](#)) when he notes, “The major difference, then, between ‘skills teaching’ and ‘strategy teaching’ concerns the presence or absences of self-direction on the part of the learner (p. 136). Routman ([1994](#)), in a similar manner, argues, “The learner must know how and when to apply the skill; that is what elevates the skill to the strategy level. (p. 135).

Several of the responses we received illustrate this confusion between skills and strategies. For example, one of our respondents referred to the intensive instruction provided by a required computer laboratory component that met one hour per week outside of the regular course. “This self-paced and individualized component is based on a placement test built into the program. Personalized objectives are generated and students read material at an appropriate reading level.” It is likely that some of these students are practicing existing skills, while others are developing learning strategies.

In a similar manner, another respondent, attempting to provide intensive instruction for a significant duration, administers “weekly tests to determine each student’s mastery of course objectives.” These objectives include “getting the main idea, locating supporting details, making inferences, determining bias, using figurative language, learning about propaganda, increasing vocabulary knowledge.” The respondent argues, “Students who listen, take notes, review their notes, and attend regularly perform well on these weekly tests. Frequent testing reduces anxiety.” Are these students practicing skills or learning to be strategic? If the students are consciously evoking a procedure, they are acting strategically. However, if they are simply functioning in a typical, automatic way, they are practicing existing skills.

Future Practice

Nist and Simpson ([2002](#)) argue that there is a scant research base for the strategies typically recommended by practitioners and commercial materials and that most of these learning strategies are taught because of tradition or instructors’ personal beliefs about their effectiveness rather than because the empirical research confirms their advantages and benefits. Our limited survey was unable to support or refute this claim.

We did not uncover many blatant examples of practices that were used solely because of tradition or personal preference. Several respondents highlighted well-supported strategies such as pairing strategy instruction with high-risk courses and encouraging the creation of writer-based summaries. Finally, many of the most validated strategies were not among our respondents’ “best practices,” particularly asking students to generate questions about what they have read and training students to create self-generated elaborations.

Future Research

Our respondents’ failure to offer practices that aligned with these characteristics may have been due to the open-ended nature of our survey instrument rather than to the

fact that they did not employ practices that reflected these characteristics. We know that college developmental teachers use scores of practices. Due to our open-ended format, many of our respondents may have overlooked practices that they currently use. The responses that we received were also based on the self-perceptions of our respondents. These self-reports may have been unreliable. In a future survey, we will specifically list the research-validated strategies for our respondents and include additional closed-ended questions. Barry ([2002](#)) recently used this approach in her attempt to determine what reading strategies her prospective secondary teachers actually used when they assumed teaching positions.

Also, because of the amount of open-ended questions and writing involved, we will consider offering a web site for respondents to type in their answers and e-mail the survey back. This may increase the rate of return. Researchers have noted the use of web surveys is increasing dramatically and provides exciting possibilities for future studies ([Coomber, 1997](#); [Eke & Comley, 1999](#); [Smith, 1997](#)). College developmental educators are often members of a professional organization at either or both the international/national and the regional levels. Using the Internet to survey college developmental reading educators would be an efficient, fast and cost effective means of reaching those most active in the field. In addition, most college developmental educators have access to the Internet through home or school computers. Another advantage is that college developmental educators are becoming increasingly familiar with email surveys and following Internet links.

Researchers report a fast turn-around time, greater convenience for study participants, and more anonymity. Surveys on the Internet give researchers more candid and extensive responses. In addition, using Internet surveys makes it possible to identify and eliminate duplicate responses, follow up on non-responses, and send out other communications easily ([Coomber, 1997](#); [Eke & Comley, 1999](#); [Smith, 1997](#)).

Finally, it is clear that the very notion of “best practices” may be inappropriate. Thomas and Rohwer (1986) argue that there are no generic best learning strategies. Strategies are considered appropriate when they meet the demands of the task and the beliefs and background knowledge of the learner. Moreover, as Nist & Holschuh (2002) explain, “any teacher-directed strategy presented to students should have the potential of becoming generative in nature” (p. 94). In other words, instructors need to scaffold strategy instruction to the point where students can use the strategies independently. Perhaps we have found a way to ask the right questions. Another, perhaps more important question, is how can we move the profession to more research-based strategic teaching?

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Appendix A

“Best Practices” Survey

1. Please describe your “best instructional practice(s)” below and why you think this practice(s) has been so successful with students in your program.

2. Have you formally evaluated your “best practice” using either a standardized test or an informal evaluation instrument? Yes____No____. If yes, would you please name or describe the instrument you have used and the results of this evaluation.

3. Has using “best practices” in your classes led to any other changes in your program? Yes____No____. If yes, please describe.

4. How did you come to learn about and use this practice? (Please check all that apply.)
 a. learned about it at a conference
 b. read about it in a journal/textbook
 c. saw another teacher demonstrate it in a classroom/workshop
 d. developed it on your own
 e. saw it on a website or list server
 f. other (please explain)

5. Do you have any innovative reading courses in your program? Yes____No____ If yes, could you briefly discuss and send a syllabus.

Appendix B

Sixteen Characteristics of Research-Validated Learning Strategies

1. Practice is intensive and of significant duration.
2. Practice requires students to generate questions about what they have read.
3. Practice requires students to identify main ideas and subordinate ideas, make connections among those ideas, and choose a way to visually represent those ideas in a spatial form (e.g., concept maps).
4. Practice involves the blending of motivation with cognition.
5. Practice requires students to focus on the teacher's objectives and how the teacher thinks about his or her content domain.
6. Practice requires students to use his or her prior knowledge.
7. Practice involves specific instructor feedback on the students' attempts to use a particular strategy.
8. Practice requires the students to generate a writer-based summary.
9. Practice requires students to use a strategy within a specific context (e.g., authentic task and text).
10. Practice is explicit and direct.
11. Practice requires transfer (e.g., student must modify a particular strategy for fit a new situation).
12. Practice is taught over an extended period of time.
13. Practice requires students to generate elaborations.
14. Practice addresses the processes students are using when they read and study, not just the strategies they use (e.g., cognitive and metacognitive processes demanded in a task).
15. Practice requires students to monitor their comprehension.
16. Practice requires students to become aware of their personal beliefs about learning.

Reading Connected Text Online: A Fresh Look at the Reader/Text Relationship

Lynne D. Miller

Technology provides access to much more information, more rapidly, than the good old days of library research in which journals and books in paper format provided the bulk of reference material. With technology come different demands on the reader, creating a shift in the reader/text relationship. In her article, Julie Coiro (2003) thoroughly illuminates a variety of ways that use of the Internet is creating a demand for new proficiencies in reading comprehension. Drawing heavily from the RAND Reading Study Group report (2002), she explains how electronic texts with hyperlinks and hypermedia clearly present new and sophisticated demands on readers' abilities to extract and construct meaning. While advanced interactive reading opportunities exist online, in many instances, readers must still use literacy abilities associated with reading traditional paper-formatted text.

The topic for this investigation grew out of personal experiences in reading connected text online. In recent years, I often search online databases for information, usually articles, relevant to various research topics. When I locate a useful article and begin reading through it on my computer monitor, within moments, I find myself wanting to underline key points or jot margin notes. I ascribe to the thinking skill notion that interacting with text using a variety of text markings and making notes frees up thinking as the reader constructs meaning. More often than not, I end up printing the article so that I can make notations directly on the paper copy. Additionally, I usually want to refer back later to different parts of an article, and having a paper copy tends to make this process simpler than retracing steps through a series of web addresses.

Participants and Methodology

Given my personal experiences, I wondered how others deal with issues related to reading connected text on line, so I surveyed 63 graduate students enrolled in an MS in Reading program. Students in this program are required to engage in a variety of research projects that include use of online resources. Further, early in the program, many of the students participate in library training sessions that help develop necessary skills for locating information, including articles, online.

The survey included the following items:

- (1) How often do you use online resources to fulfill requirements for your graduate courses?
- (2) How often do you find yourself having to read journal articles or other connected text (defined as more than 1 page of text written in paragraph form) online to fulfill requirements for your course?

(3) In general, do you find reading connected text online more difficult, less difficult or neither more nor less difficulty than reading connected text in paper format? Briefly explain your choice.

(4) What are the benefits to you for reading connected text online?

(5) What are the drawbacks to you for reading connected text online?

For items 1, 2, and 3, students selected one of the choices given. For item 3, students were also asked to briefly explain their choice. For items 4 and 5, students provided short answers.

Results

All 63 students voluntarily completed the brief 5 item survey forms in writing. Data analysis revealed that students reported they did indeed use online resources to fulfill course requirements (see Table 1) and they often need to read articles or other connected text online (see Table 2). A large number of students reported that they found reading connected text online more difficult than reading connected text in paper format (see Table 3).

Table 1

Frequency of Using Online Resources

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Often	49	78%
Sometimes	10	16%
Infrequently	4	6%
Never	0	0%

n = 63

Table 2

Frequency of Reading Journal Articles or Other Connected Text Online

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Often	48	76%
Sometimes	13	21%
Infrequently	2	3%
Never	0	0%

n = 63

Table 3

Ease of Reading Connected Text Online

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
More difficulty than reading connected text in paper format	55	87%
Less difficulty than reading connected text in paper format	3	5%
Neither more nor less difficult than reading connected text in paper format	5	8%

n = 63

Only a small number of students indicated that they did not experience a difference between reading text online or in paper format. Similarly, only a small number of students indicated that reading text online was less difficult. These students explained that they were able to skim for information more quickly, and they were able to stay more focused on the task when reading on the computer screen.

The students who found reading online more difficult than reading using a paper format offered a variety of reasons to explain their choice. Students indicated that when reading online, there was too much to remember without taking notes or underlining/highlighting key information in the article. Reading online meant that they could not underline/highlight or make notes directly on the article. They indicated that

when they took notes from the article, by handwriting them on sheet of paper or by typing them or cutting and pasting parts of the article (when possible), they had to write so many notes that they felt like they were copying large sections of the article. Students thought that this note taking was too time consuming. Students also reported that they found it more difficult to skip around in the text and then return to a place they had been before. That is, they tended to lose their place more often when trying to skip between different sections of the text to clarify or confirm information.

In addressing survey item 4, which asked students to identify benefits for reading connected text online, the students seemed to be in strong agreement about enjoying access to material. Students' responses indicated that online databases provided rich sources of journal articles and other materials. The students regularly used these databases to locate information for their research and curriculum development projects.

In response to survey item 5, which asked students to identify drawbacks to reading connected text online, students reiterated that they found the inability to underline, highlight or make margin notes problematic. They reported that they found taking extensive notes from articles to be cumbersome and time consuming. A number of students indicated that they found reading from a computer monitor physically draining, both in terms of body posture and eye strain. A large number of students indicated that they solved the problems they encountered when reading connected text online by printing the articles, so that they could write directly on their paper copies.

Discussion

As much as different aspects of literacy may be changing with the emergence of new technologies (Dresang & McClelland, 1999; Leu & Kinzer, 2000), readers must still be able to skillfully extract and construct meaning through what may now be seen as traditional means. Reading connected text on the Internet seems to pose many of the same challenges as reading from a book or journal in which the reader is not permitted to make text markings or margin notes. This survey indicated that when interacting with connected text online, many students felt the need to read and write in traditional ways as they sorted important information and constructed meaning.

Mounting evidence reveals that some tasks on the Internet require different and new sets of literacies (Coiro, 2003). Other tasks, such as reading connected text online, require that readers apply traditional comprehension skills within the new, online context. For students or teachers who have ready access to a printer, making paper copies of online resources seems to be a favored way of gaining access to text that can be written upon. We must be sensitive to the needs of those who may not have the means to print volumes of articles and work with them to develop traditional and technology-based strategies to support their comprehension, retention and retrieval of information found online.

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OF STUDEBAKERS AND READING CLINICIANS

Darrell Morris

A few years ago, a colleague of mine mischievously nicknamed me “Studebaker,” referring to my seemingly-pedestrian work as a university-based reading clinician. I took no offense. In fact, I embraced the moniker as perfectly apt, and took to displaying a photo of this reliable, economical, but unexciting automobile on my office door. Just as the Studebaker went out of style and production in the 1960s, so in recent years have reading clinics—long a staple of effective teacher training—begun to disappear in colleges of education. In this paper, I want to discuss reading clinics—why they came into existence, what they have contributed, and what may be lost to our profession if they disappear. But here at the beginning, I will tell the story of how I (and perhaps other reading educators) first became interested in clinical work, the craft of assessing and teaching struggling readers.

The Handing Down of a Craft

Many years ago, after completing a masters degree in Psychology and serving a short stint as a consulting special education teacher, I realized that I was most interested in the problems poor children confront in school, reading being foremost among them. A good friend of mine, Tom Gill, was enrolled in a graduate program in Reading Education at the University of Virginia. Tom said that if I spent one year at the McGuffey Reading Center, I would learn how to teach a child to read. That sounded good to me.

My professor at the University of Virginia was Edmund Henderson. I quickly realized that he was an experienced scholar who possessed a first-rate analytical mind, but what struck me about Henderson was his genuine commitment to clinical diagnosis and remediation, the applied “nuts and bolts” of the profession. In our reading diagnosis course, a child with a reading problem came to the clinic each week to be assessed. One student in the graduate class administered informal reading tests to the child, and a second student administered a psychological test. The rest of us, along with Henderson, observed this testing through a one-way mirror. In addition, while the child was being tested, a third student conducted an interview with the parents. On Wednesdays, we came together as a group to discuss the child’s case. After the reading, psychological, and parent interview data had been shared, Henderson, a master clinician, delighted in “walking us through” the diagnostic process, always ending with concrete recommendations for instruction. What made a lasting impression on me as a doctoral student was the man’s enthusiasm for and curiosity about this clinical endeavor. I sat in on Henderson’s diagnosis class for three consecutive years. At least once per semester, he would say, with a broad grin, “Isn’t this fun? Do you believe they *pay* me to teach this course?” I remember thinking at the time, “If this full professor, who is knowledgeable and highly intelligent, is this interested in diagnosis and remediation issues, they must be important.”

As graduate students, we also tutored a remedial reader each day under the supervision of Henderson or an experienced doctoral student. The supervision was perhaps

not as close as it might have been, but the important thing was, we had ongoing opportunities to try out techniques that we were learning in methods courses (e.g., language-experience, word sorting, directed reading-thinking activities, repeated readings), and to discuss our teaching successes and failures with an interested group of colleagues. Henderson ([1981](#)) later wrote about his philosophy for training reading teachers:

I am convinced that a year-long practicum should be required for all reading specialists. The work should be carried on under the direct supervision of an experienced clinician who can show by example both the techniques and the exercise of judgment that are needed. No formula will suffice nor will practice by a teacher alone convey what must be mastered... It is only by experiencing the effects of refined teaching that students learning to be teachers are gradually able to free themselves from the false belief that it is the method rather than they themselves that must control the set for learning... Such teaching skill is learned only gradually, by example and practice. (pp. 129-130)

But where and when did Professor Henderson develop his intense interest in and respect for clinical work? Not surprisingly, it was in his own graduate training in the late 1950s under the experienced and watchful eye of another reading clinician, Dr. Russell Stauffer of the University of Delaware. Henderson was Stauffer's first doctoral student at Delaware and, in fact, took his degree in Educational Psychology because there was no doctorate in Reading Education at the time. He divided his time between taking academic psychology and research courses and helping Stauffer run the university's Reading Clinic. When Henderson would excitedly share with his mentor some new psychological finding he had come upon in his academic coursework, Stauffer, a committed scholar himself, would admonish his student: "You go over there and take those psychology courses, but just remember that it's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading."

Henderson never forgot Stauffer's admonition, and he shared it at least once per year with his own doctoral students. *It's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading.* Does this statement simply mean that you learn to teach disabled readers by teaching them in a controlled situation while receiving feedback from an experienced coach? It does, but it also means more than this. Both Stauffer and Henderson believed that you could come to understand the learning-to-read process—the *psychological* process—only by engaging in the teaching act and thinking deeply about what you observe. In fact, they believed that if a current theoretical explanation of reading, however popular it might be, does not comport with what you see children do with your own eyes, the theory should be questioned. In other words, theoretical explanations must always be grounded in the real world of teaching children to read. This perspective offers huge advantages to doctoral students and neophyte professors. For young scholars faced with an overwhelming and steadily increasing research literature on the reading process, clinical experience can help separate the gold nuggets from the dross in a field where dross is abundant.

Let us go back one more generation, to where Russell Stauffer developed his interest in clinical work. Stauffer started out as a sixth-grade classroom teacher in western

Pennsylvania, so he came to graduate school at Temple University with no preconceptions about the importance of careful one-to-one reading diagnosis and instruction. At Temple in the 1940s, Stauffer studied under Emmett Betts, a major figure in the reading field, who just happened to direct the university's Reading Clinic. Stauffer learned the clinical craft from Betts and later took it with him to the University of Delaware. There, he not only directed a reading clinic himself, but also began to adapt clinical teaching procedures for classroom use. For example, he re-popularized the language-experience approach to teaching beginning reading ([Stauffer, 1970](#)) and developed a seminal approach to teaching comprehension—the directed reading-thinking activity ([Stauffer, 1969](#)).

Adapting knowledge gained in a clinical setting for broader use in the classroom is not uncommon in the history of reading education. [Figure 1](#) shows two “family trees” in reading education (there are many such trees) in which clinical knowledge was handed down from professor to graduate student. Each educator listed in the figure directed a reading clinic at a major research university. Note the important contributions that each of these clinician/researchers made to the broader field of reading education.

Figure 1. Two family trees* in the field of reading education.

Temple University	Contribution
Emmett Betts (Temple University, 1940s)	Directed Reading Activity Informal Reading Inventory
Russell Stauffer (University of Delaware, 1950s-60s)	Directed Reading-Thinking Activity Language-Experience Approach
Edmund Henderson (University of Virginia, 1970s-80s)	Developmental Spelling Theory
Marcia Invernizzi (University of Virginia, 1990s-2000s)	Early Reading Assessment (PALS)
University of Chicago	Contribution
William S. Gray (University of Chicago, 1930s-1950s)	Scott Foresman Basal Reader Gray Oral Reading Test
Helen Robinson (University of Chicago, 1940s-1960s)	Causes of Reading Disability
Rebecca Barr (University of Chicago, 1970s) National-Louis University, 1980s-1990s)	Initial Word Learning Instructional Pacing Research
Michael Kibby (SUNY at Buffalo, 1980s-2000s)	Rubric for Reading Diagnosis

* The reading educators listed serve only as generational examples of many who belong to these lines and who have made distinctive contributions to the field.

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If reading clinics have had this much influence on the field of reading education, how did the clinical tradition begin and why in recent decades has it declined, particularly in research institutions? I now turn to these questions.

The Emergence of Reading Clinics in the 1920s

Educational testing in the second decade of the 20th century showed that many schoolchildren were functioning below grade level in reading. In addition, routine screening of army recruits in World War I revealed that many young men had not attained

basic literacy skills in school ([Pelosi, 1977](#), [N. B. Smith, 2002](#)). Given these findings, the budding discipline of Educational Psychology trained its attention on the problem of reading failure, and, in the early 1920s, reading clinics were established at several major universities. Among the first reading clinics were those founded at UCLA (Grace Fernald), University of Iowa (Samuel T. Orton), and University of Chicago (William S. Gray).

According to Pelosi (1977), the early, university-based reading clinics had several purposes: (1) to conduct research into the nature of reading difficulties; (2) to serve children who needed tutoring in reading; and (3) to educate graduate students in reading diagnosis and remediation. If clinic directors like Fernald, Orton, and Gray were to better understand reading disability, they realized they would need a controlled setting in which to closely observe individual children being diagnosed and taught over time. In this sense, one-to-one clinical teaching offered learning opportunities for both the child with a reading difficulty and the university researcher.

In studying reading disability, reading clinics across the country gradually developed a case study approach. This included (1) taking a personal and school history of the student, (2) administering diagnostic tests, (3) developing an instructional plan based on the test results, and (4) monitoring the success of the instruction. Certain procedures were modified over time; for example there was a gradual move from using standardized tests to using informal assessments in the clinic. However, the basic case study approach introduced in the 1930s was still being used at the University of Virginia when I arrived there in 1976. And for good reason: the approach models rational problem solving and can be applied to almost any teaching situation. That is, based on background knowledge (personal and school history) and initial test results, one makes a hypothesis about instruction. One then teaches, assesses the results, and modifies future instruction accordingly.

Over the years, refinements or improvements in the case study approach were driven by clinician/researchers' attempts to understand underlying learning processes ([Kibby & Barr, 1999](#)). At times, this resulted in a relatively unproductive search for the root cause or causes of reading disability. At other times, however, clinical inquiry aimed at revealing underlying learning processes led to significant advances in reading diagnosis and instruction: for example, establishing functional reading levels (independent, instructional, and frustration) in reading diagnosis; developing a simple task that could measure automatic word recognition; sequencing phonics instruction (e.g., the Orton-Gillingham approach); using dictated stories to establish an initial sight vocabulary; using prediction (and confirmation of prediction) to guide the comprehension process; and so on.

The Demise of Reading Clinics in the 1970s and 1980s

From the 1920s through the mid 1970s, graduate training in reading often revolved around the university-based reading clinic ([Morris, 1999](#)). Major figures such as Gates at Columbia, Betts at Temple, Sheldon at Syracuse, Strang at Arizona, and Chall at Harvard were deeply involved in clinical work, and their students, in turn, carried the tradition to universities throughout the country. During this period, all masters students and many

doctoral students in reading education participated in clinical practica that were closely supervised by tenure-track faculty. The field, as a whole, seemed to agree with Russell Stauffer's adage: "It's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading."

Sadly, things have changed. Reading clinics have disappeared at most research universities, and supervised practicum courses, once the core of graduate study in reading, are now an appendage. That is, clinical courses are still included in the course of study, but the faculty commitment and university resources necessary to make such courses viable (e.g., space, reduced class size) are often missing. Let me provide several disheartening examples from my own experience. A few years ago, a promising young graduate of our masters reading program, who possessed *one* year of classroom teaching experience, enrolled in a doctoral program at a major university in the Southwest. On arrival he was promptly assigned day-to-day responsibilities for directing the university's Reading Clinic, and began to teach clinical courses to both undergraduate and graduate students. In this role, he was training some teachers who had more experience than he did in working with disabled readers. Another colleague, who acquired her doctorate at a university that still emphasizes clinical work, accepted a faculty position at a large teacher-training institution in the Northeast. She was using my textbook (*The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*) in a reading practicum course and telephoned me to ask the following question: "How do I personally supervise the tutoring efforts of 25 graduate students when they will be tutoring children away from campus?" Not being versed in magic, I had no answer to her question. And finally, an old friend who directs the reading program at a doctoral-granting institution in the Midwest shared this story with me. He related that his administrative "headache" the previous year had been defending the requirement that doctoral students in reading needed to take at least one clinic course. The younger faculty in his program did not see the need for this requirement. My friend, having graduated from a reading program that required him to take two clinical courses *each* semester, stood fast. His basic argument to his younger colleagues was that no one should receive a doctorate in reading education without having had at least one experience teaching a child to read.

What led to the demise of clinical training in graduate reading programs? There is no definitive answer to this question; indeed, the question is seldom raised by reading educators, especially in print. Here I venture several reasons though surely my list is incomplete.

1. The search for a central or single cause of reading disability proved to be a futile endeavor. Robinson's (1946) important study showed that the etiology of reading problems is complex, with multiple causes usually contributing to the condition.
2. By 1960, much clinically-derived knowledge about reading diagnosis and remedial instruction had been written down or codified in reading textbooks. This may have led to the belief that craft knowledge could be transmitted through traditional methods courses as opposed to labor-intensive clinical practica.

3. Federal funding for reading research, which began in the second half of the 20th century, was seldom targeted for clinical endeavors. The federally-funded methods comparison research of the 1960s, the word recognition and comprehension research of the 1980s, and the motivation and early reading research of the 1990s focused on the testing of theoretical models or on classroom applications. Because funding priorities drive the research and reputations of reading professors at research institutions, scholars who had an interest in hands-on clinical work may have shied away from this mode of inquiry.
4. Clinic supervision required a pragmatic bent, attention to detail, and the ability to work well with people. Sadly, it was often viewed by tenure-track faculty as a time-consuming, energy-sapping obligation, and thus passed off to underlings or graduate students. In other words, clinical work in reading lacked cachet at many universities, where it struggled along as a neglected stepchild or was phased out altogether for lack of interest.
5. Critics maintained that reading clinics were based on a medical or deficit model that overemphasized diagnostic testing and under-emphasized instruction.
6. Critics also noted that most classroom and remedial reading (Title 1) instruction occurs in small groups. Therefore, they questioned the relevance of one-to-one clinical training for teachers who will eventually have to diagnose and teach in small-group settings.
7. Reading clinics and clinical courses required additional institutional resources. For example, classroom space was needed to tutor children and to house a clinic library. Faculty release time or secretarial help was needed to recruit children, talk with parents, reshelf books, and mail case reports. And reduced class size or additional clinical supervisors were needed in teaching practica if teachers-in-training were to receive necessary guidance and feedback (see Morris, 1999). In tough economic times, one can see how the Dean of a College of Education would have been less than enthusiastic about supporting a reading clinic.

The Role of Reading Clinics in Teacher Training

For the most part, research generated in reading clinics focused on understanding the nature of reading difficulties, not on understanding how clinical experiences influence the development of teachers (Kibby & Barr, 1999). Remember, however, that one of the original reasons for establishing reading clinics in universities was to educate teachers in reading diagnosis and remediation (Pelosi, 1977). In the absence of a solid research base, I can only comment on my own experience (and that of colleagues) with regard to the reading clinic's role in training teachers.

My graduate students have routinely told me that the teaching practicum (a 3 semester-hour course in which they tutor disabled readers under close supervision) was one

of the most important courses in their reading program. They say that “the practicum helps them put things together.” I am reminded of one student in particular. She was an intelligent, confident young teacher to whom I assigned two severely disabled readers. After helping her get started, I observed her tutoring lessons twice weekly and together we reflected on her instruction. After a few weeks, this student was teaching so effectively that, in observing her, I was beginning to refine some of my own understandings about clinical teaching. This young teacher was a “natural” who seemed to be gliding effortlessly through the practicum experience. Therefore, I was somewhat surprised when I read the following paragraph in her Masters thesis, completed two years later:

In studying for a Masters degree in reading education, I took courses in the teaching of beginning reading, reading assessment and correction, and even a seminar with a focus on reading disability. However, the course that had the greatest influence on my understanding of the reading process and indeed the course which prompted me to write this thesis was a practicum in the clinical teaching of reading. In this semester-long practicum, I worked with two different clients, meeting with each of them twice a week. My clinic supervisor monitored my lesson plans, observed tutoring sessions, and discussed with me what he saw happening in the lessons. Before I began this practicum, I felt that I had a sound understanding of the reading process; however, when I was engaged in the practicum, the reading process took on a whole new shape. Reading instruction was no longer an abstract sequence of skills, but now a very real conversation. Through these tutoring lessons, I learned how it is that people learn to read. Through these discussions with my supervisor, I was given the language to understand and to think about how this process was occurring ([Mock, 1996, pp. 83-84](#)).

One writer who has helped me understand the value of practicum training—understand what the process offers to the teacher-in-training—is Donald Schön, an organizational theorist at MIT. In his book, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, Schön ([1987](#)) argues persuasively that in learning any complex, professional task (e.g., teaching, lawyering, doctoring, counseling), the student needs to *do* the task, to experience it in the presence of an expert or “coach” who can provide feedback and guidance. If the student is doing the task correctly, the coach’s feedback can be affirming silence. If the student errs or needs help, the coach can step in and model correct technique or provide a verbal suggestion.

Envision a graduate student conducting a phonics lesson (long-vowel patterns) with a struggling second-grade reader. The supervisor (or coach) notices that the lesson is too difficult and that both the child and the tutor are becoming frustrated. The supervisor, on the spot, intervenes, suggesting that the tutor might want to review short-vowel patterns a bit longer before moving to the more difficult long-vowel patterns. This simple intervention accomplishes two things. First, it places the struggling reader at a level where he can perform successfully. Second, by having the child at the correct instructional level (i.e., short vowels), the graduate student is in better position to observe the learning process. Children do not learn when the task is too easy or too hard, and teachers-in-

training cannot observe the learning-to-read process when their students are either bored or in a state of frustration.

Another important role of the clinical supervisor is to help the teacher-in-training relate what he or she is observing in the tutoring lessons to a guiding theory of reading development. Methods courses can transmit theory and knowledge about the teaching of reading. If taught well, such courses describe specific teaching techniques and offer reasons why the techniques work. Nonetheless, it is often in the follow-up practicum course where the student makes the real connection between theoretical construct and pedagogical action, and it is the coach's job to make sure these connections are made. For example, let's say that over a few tutoring lessons a beginning reader becomes more accurate in finger-point reading simple texts. The coach might say to the tutor, "You see, Mary is paying attention not only to the spaces between words but also to the beginning consonant letter in each word. This is helping her track the print, word by word." Such an explanation could be made in a methods class, but it is so much more effective when provided immediately after the tutor has observed the behavior.

Practica and Reading Professors

We have seen what a supervised practicum experience can offer to the teacher-in-training. But what does it offer to the supervising professor who must invest significant time and energy in such a course? Obviously, the practicum context affords the supervising clinician ongoing opportunities to observe children with reading problems and to test remediation hypotheses. But more basically, the practicum grounds the university professor in reality. Theory remains important, of course, but only to the degree that it can help explain the reading problems facing real children in the clinic. Two examples illustrate my point.

Edmund Henderson, my mentor, was trained in the language-experience tradition in the late 1950s. This tradition, which might be labeled holistic or child-centered, emphasized dictated experience stories, directed reading-thinking activities, and creative writing. When Frank Smith's top-down, psycholinguistic model of reading burst onto the scene in the early 1970s, Henderson was quite taken by the model. It matched his philosophy of instruction. Nonetheless, in my graduate school years in the late 1970s, I saw my professor begin to question Smith's (1971) popular explanation of reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game." It is true that Henderson was reading experimental research that countered the "guessing game" model, but it was his experience with children in the McGuffey Reading Clinic that gnawed at his initial acceptance of Smith's position. Henderson realized that it was accurate, automatic word recognition that these disabled readers lacked, not the ability to guess or anticipate upcoming words in text. His insight about the crucial importance of automatized word knowledge put Henderson directly at odds with the prevailing Whole Language movement of the late 1980s and 1990s. However, he did not care. He knew from his clinical work that the centrality of word knowledge could not be ignored in any serious explanation of the reading process.

My second example comes from my own experience and involves the area of severe reading disability or dyslexia. In graduate school, I learned that dyslexia does exist in perhaps 2-3 percent of the population, but that the condition is very difficult if not impossible to treat. The best we could do, I was taught, was to apply traditional methods (a balance of supported contextual reading and direct phonics instruction) and hope for the best.

We remember our graduate school lessons; in fact, they produce a theoretical orientation that guides our later work in the field. After assuming directorship of my own reading clinic at National-Louis University in Chicago, I worked with several children and adults who had severe reading problems. I steadfastly used traditional, balanced reading instruction with these students, but with little success. Later, after moving to Appalachian State University in rural North Carolina, I began to encounter more and more cases of severe reading disability in my clinical work. I could no longer tolerate my ineffectiveness in teaching these children to read. Abandoning long-held theoretical biases, I and a few colleagues began to search for alternative approaches to teaching dyslexic readers. We pursued training in multi-sensory, systematic phonics approaches (e.g., Orton-Gillingham) and, though we have not discovered a quick cure, we are convinced that we are now on a better track in working with the problem of severe reading disability. My point is that it was the face-to-face encounter with dyslexia in the clinic that led me to rethink what I had been taught in graduate school and search for better ways to help students with this devastating problem.

Clinical Training: What Does It Take?

Reading clinics in university settings require resources. They require physical space in which to house the clinic, faculty release time or secretarial help to enroll children and converse with parents, and extra clinical “coaches” (qualified doctoral students or experienced reading teachers) to allow close supervision of the tutoring. Along with these basic requirements, other factors are involved in establishing an effective clinical training program.

First, instruction in a reading clinic should be guided by a comprehensive model of reading development, one that accounts for scientific evidence and defines pedagogical boundaries, but at the same time is sufficiently flexible to accommodate the complexities of clinical teaching. Two models that come to mind are Chall’s (1983) “stages of reading development,” and the more elaborated stage model described by Spear-Swerling and Sternberg (1998). Ideally, teachers-in-training would first be exposed to the model of reading development in their foundations or methods courses; then they would revisit the model in the clinical practicum where, assisted by the coach, they could observe its relevance to practice.

Second, a good clinic or practicum is defined by a finite set of diagnostic and instructional practices. The idea is not to accrue every reading test, reading kit, or reading instructional procedure that has ever been developed. Not only would this crowd the clinic room, but also it would crowd the graduate students’ minds. The basic practices that we

use in our clinic can be written down on the back of a napkin. The goal is for the teacher-in-training to become confident and proficient in using this limited set of important tools.

Diagnostic tools	graded word recognition lists; graded reading passages; graded spelling lists (yield measures of automatized sight vocabulary, oral reading accuracy, rate, and comprehension, silent reading comprehension and rate, spelling proficiency)
Instructional tools	Materials: carefully leveled narrative and information texts (early-first grade through sixth grade); a carefully sequenced phonics curriculum (beginning consonants, short, long, and other vowel patterns, multi-syllable words) Strategies: guided reading to develop comprehension skill (e.g., picture walks for beginning readers; DRTAs for independent readers); word sort or categorization activities to develop word recognition skill; fluency-building activities to increase reading rate (e.g., echo reading, repeated readings, taped readings)

Third, a reading clinic needs a director, a tenure-track faculty member who has standing in the university academic community. The clinic director should understand the developmental reading process, have actual experience teaching children to read, and be committed to helping others learn to teach struggling readers. Further, he or she should be able to impart to graduate students the excitement of clinical teaching; to show them how much can be learned in a tutoring context if they plan, teach, and reflect in a careful manner. And finally, the clinic director should be able to defend the intellectual and practical importance of clinical training to university colleagues who are unfamiliar with and, therefore, lukewarm toward the concept.

In conclusion, we might consider the following questions. In the year 2003, is a clinic director of the kind described above to be found at most universities that train masters-level reading specialists? I suspect not. Maybe more important, how many clinical mentors of this kind are to be found among the reading faculty at research universities around the country? I suspect the answer is, very few. And this presents the field with a huge problem. Newly-minted professors of reading education are, for the most part, produced at research universities. If reading clinics and clinical training have all but disappeared at these institutions, where in the future will we find reading professors who are interested in clinical work? Put another way, where will we find the future Russell

Stauffers, Edmund Hendersons, and Rebecca Barrs? And if such reading educators do not emerge, what will we have lost? The humble Studebaker disappeared in the 1960s, but it was quickly and satisfactorily replaced with other economical automobiles, both domestic and foreign. I am not confident that it will be so easy to replace the university-based reading clinician.

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The Digital Video Documentary: Engaging Students in Ideological Becoming

Timothy J. Murnen

Tapping the *Other* Language Arts Through Digital Video

In my language arts methods courses, my students and I spend a great deal of our time trying to reconcile the actual with the possible. Each week when they return from their visits to their school placements, we confront the realities of what they are seeing and experiencing, even as we unveil a new set of constructs or approaches to the teaching of language arts. And as we proceed, we ask ourselves: Amidst the actual, what is possible; given the realities of life in classrooms, what can we hope to accomplish? This week we have turned to the Writing Process, exploring the actual challenges classroom teachers face amidst the possibilities that the writing process promises. As a compositionist, I believe deeply in the writing process—in the possibilities it offers students to be constructors of meaning rather than passive receptors of information. However, as a language arts methods teacher trying to direct my students to engage their students in literacy-rich activities that involve all six of the language arts, I find myself confronting reading and writing's claims of supremacy. What I mean is that, as I work with my students to create rich language arts pedagogy ([Tompkins, 2002](#)) saturated with opportunities for reading and writing, I find myself pushing them to explore the relatively untapped potential of the other language arts (listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing). In this essay, I want us to consider how we engage the other language arts, by asking: Amidst the actual, what is possible?

One of the “possibles” that I have been exploring this semester is digital video (DV), and its potential to build on the foundations of the traditional essay or research paper, and to engage several of the language arts that written composition alone was not designed to do. This essay focuses on the digital video documentary and its potential to engage all six language arts in ways that reading and writing alone cannot. In order to stake out such an argument, I build on Kay Halasek’s ([1999](#)) work in composition, in which she borrows Bakhtin’s ([2000/1981](#)) concept of ideological becoming, shaping it into an explanation for how students engage the composing process. Extrapolating beyond composition, I argue that if our goal is to provide students opportunities to engage in ideological becoming, we need to provide other genres beyond the traditional essay; one such example is the digital video documentary.

Authoritative vs. Internally Persuasive Discourse

Ideological becoming, according to Bakhtin, is “an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values” (2000/1981, p. 346). He explains further: “One’s own discourse and one’s own voice, although born of another or dynamically stimulated by another, will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of the other’s discourse” (p. 348). Bakhtin also calls this act of ideological becoming “retelling in one’s own words” (p. 341), but which for my purposes I

will gloss as *taking other people's words and making them one's own*. For Bakhtin, all of the words with which we shape meaning for ourselves come from others—from parents, from written texts, from the ongoing discourse in which we engage. Ideological becoming, then, is the act of staking out our own meanings, our own understandings, with words populated with others' meanings and intentions. Bakhtin explains that ideological becoming begins with how we read texts—authoritatively, or internally persuasively: “The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it” (Bakhtin, 2000/1981, p. 342).

Halasek (1999), building on Bakhtin's explanation, argues that we engage in ideological becoming in the act of composing, which consists of the reciprocal processes of reading and writing. Halasek argues that before student writers can stake out their own ideological space in their writing, they first have to learn how to be strong readers who won't simply bow to the authority of the text. She explains that “when a reader reads a text authoritatively, that reader's voice, authority, and subjectivity are undermined. This model of reading valorizes the text and the power of the author and establishes a seemingly objective meaning. Those who read authoritatively do not achieve a dialogic understanding of a text” (Halasek, 1999, p. 122). Conversely, internally persuasive discourse does not demand to be read a particular way, but enters into a dialogue with other texts in order to produce new meaning. Bakhtin explains:

Internally persuasive discourse—as opposed to one that is externally authoritative—is, as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with “one's own word.” In the everyday rounds of our consciousness, the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's. Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word awakens new and independent words, that it organizes masses of our words from within, and does not remain in an isolated and static condition. It is not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is, freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a *struggle* with other internally persuasive discourses. Our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values. The semantic structure of an internally persuasive discourse is *not finite*, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever newer ways to mean.... We have not yet learned from it all it might tell us; we can take it into new contexts, attach it to new material, put it in a new situation in order to wrest new answers from it, new insights into its meaning, and even wrest from it new words of its own (since another's discourse, if productive, gives birth to a new word from us in response). (Bakhtin, 2000/1981)

Internally persuasive discourse functions by stimulating dialogue rather than closing it down. As Halasek says, “Internally persuasive discourse does not demand allegiance but encourages creativity. Meaning-making is achieved by continuously and cooperatively sharing discourses” (Halasek, 1999).

In *Pedagogy of Possibility*, Halasek makes a strong case that ideological becoming is central to the composing process; the process of composing a written text is an act of taking other people's words and making them one's own. But it is also clear that ideological becoming is not limited to the writing process. Students are just as engaged in ideological becoming as they grapple with concepts in classroom discussions, or when they are asked to construct an oral presentation. If we envision our courses as language arts broadly writ, encompassing all six language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing), then it is not difficult to see ideological becoming at stake in all that we do. Lurking beneath our language arts lessons is the goal of bringing students toward ideological becoming, where they are capable of taking other people's words—concepts—and constructing their own arguments, themes, theses, etc. Digital video can function, not simply for novelty sake, but as a genuine means to students' ideological becoming. A case in point is the experience of Kay.

Kay: Video Documentary as Ideological Becoming

Kay was a college freshman in a composition course in which literary texts (novels and short stories) were the central objects of study. During the semester in which I observed this classroom, Kay struggled to stake out her own ideological space amidst the complex and heteroglossic discourse of the college composition classroom—the teacher's discourse, the discourse of more vocal students, and the discourse of the literary texts that students were reading and responding to. How students shape their own subjectivities within the complex social space of the discourse of the classroom has been the object of study of a growing body of research in sociolinguistics and education, as exemplified in the work of James Gee (1999), members of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group ([Floriani, 1993](#); [Green, 1983](#); [Prentiss, 1994](#); [Rex, Murnen, Hobbs, & McEachen, 2002](#); [SBCDG, 1992a](#); [Tuyay, Jennings, & Dixon, 1995](#); [Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993](#)) and others in the field of English composition ([Brandt, Cushman, Gere, Harrington, 2001](#); [Brodkey, 1994](#); [Brooke, 1988](#); [Faigley, 1992](#); [hooks, 1989](#); [Horner, 1997](#); [Spellmeyer, 1989, 1993](#); [Welch, 1993](#)). In the environment of the composition classroom, Kay was a silenced student who rarely spoke in class. Her final presentation, however, stood out among the discourse events of that classroom for its illustration of the creativity with which a silenced student might respond to the complex challenge of ideological becoming—of taking other people's words and making them her own. While most of the other students presented little more than a plot summary with commentary, Kay created a video presentation—a mock interview with Wally Lamb, the author of *She's Come Undone*, portrayed in the video by one of Kay's buddies who lived her dorm. Kay's choice to use video has powerful implications for the teaching and the learning of language arts, and calls on us to explore the extent to which we engage all six language arts in our classrooms.

The challenge for Kay was how to turn a stressful public speaking situation into an opportunity for ideological becoming. Kay had to construct some way to speak in class that maintained a comfort zone for her. Her video presentation provided her this opportunity to speak, and to construct her interpretation of the course, without actually having to do much talking, and in doing so, Kay staked out for herself a silent space from which to speak. To accomplish this silent space, Kay constructed for herself three roles, or subjectivities: one in the classroom outside of the videotape, and two within the confines of the world of the videotape. First, outside of the videotape there was Kay the silent student, uncomfortable with public

speaking, even from a position at her window seat, let alone in a standing position front and center. On a second level, within the video presentation, there was Kay the interviewer, asking questions of the mock author of the novel. And on a third level, there was Kay the author of the script from which both the interviewer and the mock literary author were reading. Through her use of these multiple subject positions, constructed around the video format, Kay crafted a comfort zone from which to enact the assigned objective, which was to demonstrate not only an understanding of the text she had read, but to demonstrate an understanding of the central concepts and issues that had emerged during the course.

In the video presentation, Kay relegated herself to the role of interviewer, using fairly short questions to shape and frame the responses that came out of “Wally Lamb’s” mouth. Lamb did most of the talking, while Kay the interviewer interjected periodically with questions. However, hovering over both the interviewer and the mock author was Kay the author of all of the words that both characters spoke. For instance, as Lamb spoke, he discussed the relationship between his novel and the other novels in the class, and in doing so, he appeared to be the persona who did the work of discussing the key concepts of the course. However, the relationships Lamb drew between his novel and the other novels in class were Kay’s words, Kay’s ideas, scripted onto little blue notecards for the mock author to read. Without having to do the public speaking, Kay the silent student sat mutely while her construction of childhood, and her construction of the class, were enacted by her friend playing Lamb, who seemed to love the spotlight. What Kay created were layers of silent Kay’s who managed to have a great deal to say. Throughout the semester, other students owned the discourse; in her video presentation, Kay owned the discourse, by constructing the discussion in ways that provided her the opportunities to be an ideological being. The video format allowed Kay to speak where other genres or technologies did not, to essentially frame a new subjectivity for herself that other genres did not.

Digital Storytelling

Digital video, as I use the term, refers to media that has been digitized so that it can be edited using readily-available computer software. Primarily, this is video footage shot with a digital camera, or traditional video footage converted into digital format. Kay’s mock interview with Wally Lamb, transferred into digital format, would constitute one example of the use of digital video in the classroom. However, digital video might also refer to other uses, such as still photographs combined with audio and other graphics to create a video document. As Tom Banaszewski ([2002](#)) explains, creating “digital stories does not require a digital camcorder” (p.3). Ken Burns’ *Civil War* documentary might serve as the most widely-viewed example of this second use of digital video, but it is certainly not the only example. Joe Lambert ([2003](#)) and others at the Center for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley have been telling stories through digital video for nearly ten years ([Baldwin, 2003](#)), and teach workshops to interested individuals, including school teachers and professors who want to do this with their students. Out of this movement in digital storytelling, students as young as fourth grade are creating their own digital documentaries (Banaszewski, 2002). With readily-available digital video editing software, now common on most newer computers, any 6th grader can make her own digital documentary, with a little guidance from a teacher who has some idea of how to do this. However, how this is done is not the subject of this essay. Instead, the focus of concern in this paper is on what digital video

can accomplish for students' development. (For information on how to implement digital video, see Banaszewski's article, as well as the detailed "digital cookbook" available online from the Center for Digital Storytelling, <http://www.storycenter.org>.) To illustrate the potential for digital video, I offer the case of my daughter Lily (a second grader at the time) and her geography project on The *Continents*—and how digital video might have played a role in her ideological becoming.

Lily's *Continents* Essay as Digital Video Documentary

Lily's second grade social studies class was working on a *Continents* project. The teacher had divided students into seven seating clusters and assigned each group a continent. As a class, they learned what they could about each continent. For their final project, each student was to write a three page paper about the continent she or he was assigned, by gathering information about the following categories: countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population. Students were to use three sources.

Lily had been assigned the continent of Europe. This meant that she was to explore the continent in some manner in three pages of handwriting paper—those newsprint sheets with the superwide-ruled blue lines and the dotted half lines for lower case letters. Beyond these directives, there were no other guidelines for the project. The students were to do the paper on their own, outside of class. It was a pretty big project for a seven year old to manage. What was unclear, however, was whether the students had to cover each country broadly and generically in their essay, or whether they could focus their three pages on a particular country, or particular aspects of Europe. How students access such a broad project is quite central to ideological becoming, as evidenced in Halasek's argument: "Until they actively engage other's discourses they will be unable to produce their own effective responses" (Halasek, 1999). When the subject matter remains a distant topic to report on, it remains the teacher's project, not the student's. However, when students are given ways (or find their own ways) to access a broad topic like Europe, then they can begin to own the project, to take it and make it their own. As a second grader, Lily didn't know how to turn such a large project into something manageable, or personal, or meaningful. However, as a parent, and compositionist and teacher of language arts, I had some suggestions, which combined family history research, biography writing, and the possibilities of digital video.

For years in my own language arts and college composition courses, I have assigned a biography project which asks students to do their own research, primarily in the form of interviews, of someone who grew up in an earlier generation. In addition to the personal interview process, the student writer must also research an historical time period in which their interview subject lived, or to which their interview subject referred. This seemed like a model Lily might be able to use for her *Continents* project. She could interview her grandmother, whose family has its roots in Germany and France, and access the broad scope of Europe from the inside out, from the personal, from family history. Lily thought it would be a great idea, and after getting approval from her teacher, she began to work on questions that she might use to interview Nana. At the same time, she tried to keep in mind the primary objective of the assignment, which was to be able to say something about the countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population of her assigned continent. She was

beginning to take other people's words and make them her own. In the end, Lily would write a three page paper, but they would be her words, her research, and not simply categories lifted out of encyclopedias or almanacs.

Despite the deeper focus the family history approach gave to the project—or maybe because of it—I began to realize that this project might be even more interesting, and more satisfying for teacher and students, if it were conceived as a digital video project rather than as a traditional pencil and paper essay. What if, as Lily interviewed her Nana, she were able to capture the interview on video? And what if Nana brought with her photographs and other documents which might illustrate the family's relationship to the old country in Europe? And what if, during the interview, Lily were able to elicit from Nana a really interesting story, which might be incorporated into her essay, or which might serve as the structure of a piece of digital storytelling? While Lily worked on her project, I began to imagine what it might look like as a digital documentary, rather than as a traditional essay.

My goal was to explore how a digital video documentary could incorporate all of the components of a traditional essay project, but expand the project to engage the other language arts. For instance, the goal of a digital documentary should not be to replace the writing assignment; it should maintain the writing component, while expanding other language arts components. In the *Continents* project, for instance, students were to gather information from a list of geographical and cultural features—countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population—using at least three sources. Lily gathered her data through a combination of personal interviews, and library and internet research. In the end, she would turn this material into a three page paper. My goal was to use all of the data Lily had gathered, including the three page paper, and incorporate it into the digital video documentary. When Lily interviewed her Nana, I videotaped it. When Nana pulled out photographs and other family documents, such as her grandfather's naturalization papers, I was able to capture those photos and documents on video, which could later be turned into stills or snapshots, and edited back into the final video. And when Nana referred to incidents in history that Lily new nothing about, she turned to print and internet sources.

The documentary that Lily and I created consisted primarily of the interview between Lily and her grandmother, or Nana, in which Nana explains what she knows about her grandfather Wendlin, who emigrated from Germany in the 1880s. As the interview proceeds, Nana shares an interesting set of facts with Lily. Wendlin left his hometown in Germany in 1887, but when Nana returned to visit in 1987, the town was in France, not Germany. Nana explained that the border between the two countries changed hands during the Prussian War, and she shared a hand-drawn map to illustrate just where the town now sits inside the French border. This is a powerful illustration of the value of students doing primary research combined with the digital documentary format. Had Lily approached the *Continents* project by simply gleaning generic facts about Germany or France from encyclopedias and almanacs, she would never have learned about the Prussian War or border disputes between France and Germany. However, as a result of the interview, she was able to turn to traditional sources such as the encyclopedia with a focus and a purpose, to develop an understanding of what the Prussian War was, when it took place, and how it affected and continues to affect people's lives today.

There were, as well, other examples of details that Lily encountered through the interview/documentary process that she might never have known. When Nana visited the old homestead in 1987, an old man—her uncle Louis—came out of the barn wearing wooden shoes, and Nana was able to tell Lily that, much to her own surprise, some Germans actually do wear wooden shoes, at least for working in the barn. Lily also found out that that barn had been bombed during World War II, and had to be rebuilt, but the house was never harmed. And in the video footage, we were able to capture two photographs of the house, nearly identical: one in black and white, taken around the turn of the last century, and one in color, which Nana had taken herself back in 1987—proof enough that the house had indeed withstood the test of a difficult century. The culmination of the documentary was Lily’s voice-over narration, in which she read her three page essay while a series of still photographs slide across the screen to illustrate the points she makes, and the little story she tells. The text, the visual images, and the audio track, wrapped in the personal approach of digital storytelling, combine to articulate a perspective which cannot be achieved by the written text alone.

Implications and Conclusions

So is the digital documentary just a new array of bells and whistles? What does the digital documentary accomplish that the traditional essay or presentation cannot? First, from Kay’s experience, we can see that it provides students another option besides standing in front of class. For students who have ideas to share, but have not yet developed a comfort zone for presenting from the front of the room, the digital documentary allows them a safe space from which to share their understanding. Second, the digital documentary doesn’t simply replace writing. Students still have to learn the conventions of written English. But they have the opportunity to expand or enhance their words by combining those words with video and audio tracks. They have to make choices about how their audience will respond to the combination of images, words, and sounds. They also get the opportunity to take ownership of the project, by personalizing the generic assignment, by developing their own personal viewpoint or perspective. In fact, using visual images to crystallize their perspective may provide students with a deeper sense of how to shape their perspectives through the written word, by prompting them to make words engage their readers’ visual and auditory capacities.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, the digital documentary encapsulates Bakhtin’s theory of how meaning is constructed through dialogue. The digital documentary functions dialogically, by gathering distinct voices to tell their part of an ongoing tale. The student author or director incorporates a layering of multiple voices to tell the story or shape the argument. In the digital documentary we created from Lily’s raw materials, Lily has a clear voice, a clear perspective on the *continents* project; but other voices speak too. For instance, we get to see and hear Nana share her perspective on family history, rather than get it completely filtered through Lily’s write up, as might happen in a more traditional essay. In the video, Nana speaks in her own words. And in Lily’s voice-over narrative, Nana and Papa speak as they try to introduce themselves to Eugenia, Nana’s long lost cousin who still lives in the old family homestead. The culmination of these pieces is that digital video provides students the opportunity to engage all of the language arts, not simply reading and writing, and in doing so, it provides students a means toward ideological becoming. The student author/director must first be a listener in the

data gathering process; she must be able to sift through all of the material—other people’s words loaded with other people’s meanings—to pull out the threads she wants to focus on. Second, she becomes a speaker, scripting and speaking the voice-over that gives structure to the documentary. Furthermore, she is also engaged in viewing and visually representing, sifting through a great deal of video footage and stills in order to shape the story or argument into a coherent whole. This kind of learning, where the language arts are multiply and simultaneously engaged in the act of meaning construction, illustrates the very essence of Short, Harste, & Burke’s ([1996](#)) concept of the authoring cycle.

At its best, digital video leads to ideological becoming. It provides a structure and process by which student authors take other people’s words and make them their own (Bakhtin, 2000/1981), and it functions as a tool ([Vygotsky, 1978](#)) by which students construct meaning. We must keep in mind, however, that ideological becoming is not just the process of writing words; it is the ongoing process of simultaneously shaping one’s own understanding and one’s own identity, or subjectivity. If, as language arts instructors, we are engaged in shaping our students’ ideological becoming, then we need to explore how we engage other language arts besides reading and writing. Digital video has the potential to crack open traditional reading/writing assignments in such a way that students have opportunities to engage all of the language arts—which is, after all, the goal of the language arts classroom.

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Exploring the Home Literacy Environment of College Students

Angela Nickoli

Cindy Hendricks

James E. Hendricks

Children's early experiences with reading are believed to contribute to their later successes or failures in learning to read. The importance of parental involvement in these early experiences has never been in doubt. In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education (reported in [Education Week](#)) identified parental involvement as one of the leading factors influencing the literacy development of our nation's students. Indeed, Karther ([2002](#)) reported that the role of parents in children's literacy development has been well documented.

When educators and researchers are questioned about why children enter school at various stages of preparedness for reading, most respond with an answer that involves some aspect of the home literacy environment ([Burgess, Hecht & Lonigan, 2002](#)). Se'ne'chal and LeFevre ([2002](#)) suggested that a direct relation exists between early home literacy experiences and fluent reading and that early home literacy experiences are indirectly related to later reading performance.

Spiegel ([1994](#)) emphasized that parents play a crucial role in the literacy development of their children; what parents do in their homes (their literacy environment) significantly affects the development of literacy skills and abilities. According to Spiegel, home literacy environments have several components, two of which are the artifacts of reading (books, newspapers, pencils, paper, letters, junk mail, and other print-related material, especially children's materials) and events (reading to and with children). Spiegel concluded that parents of successful readers impart a love of reading and a sense of the value of reading to their children through creating rich literacy environments.

Metsala ([1996](#)) reported that early research on the effects of home environment on literacy focused on family status characteristics (socioeconomic level, parent education level). She stated that later research focused on characteristics of the home environment by identifying a common core of characteristics associated with positive reading outcomes (available children's books, frequent reading to children and with children, special space and opportunities for reading, positive parental attitudes and positive models of reading, frequent visits to libraries, and parent-child conversations).

Mikulecky ([1996](#)) stated that research over the past two decades has established several aspects of parent-child interactions that are associated with children's later literacy success: parental reading to and with children, language used between parent and child, parental conceptions of the roles of education and literacy, and literacy modeling and support present in the home environment.

More recently, Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002) agreed that reliable relations between the home literacy environment and educational and developmental outcomes have been

demonstrated. Furthermore, they explained that to understand the nature of the relations between the home literacy environment and the development of literacy, researchers must conceptualize the home literacy environment as complex and multifaceted. According to Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan, the home literacy environment, “...is a part, albeit a potentially significant one, of the overall environment that plays a role in literacy development” (p. 423).

Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan focused their research on the home literacy environment of early readers. Home literacy environments have previously been studied with elementary school populations; however, in general, there has been a limited amount of research related to the home literacy environments of older readers. Additionally, there has been little research related to the home literacy environments of those who intend to teach our nation’s children about reading. Therefore, this investigation focused on the home literacy environment of college readers. Specifically, the purpose of this investigation was to compare the results of the home literacy environment survey scores of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors to determine if there were differences in the home literacy environments of education and non-education majors.

Methods

Participants

A total of 201 teacher education majors (enrolled in a freshman introductory education course) and 201 non-teacher education majors (enrolled in a freshman introductory criminal justice course) at two Midwestern universities participated in this investigation. Students at both universities were predominately Caucasian. The survey was administered in the fall; thus, most of the students at both universities were in their first few months of college.

Instrument

The Home Literary Environment Survey attempts to establish the literary richness of the environment from which the student has come ([Kubis, 1996](#)). Field-testing on this survey involved two freshman English classes and two senior-level Advanced Learning Program classes. Some questions from the Home Literary Environment Survey, deemed not relevant to the investigation, were eliminated ([see Appendix A](#)).

Procedures

All students enrolled in both introductory courses were given the survey to complete. To ensure anonymity, students’ names were not recorded on the surveys, nor were the surveys coded prior to administration. The teacher education majors’ surveys were duplicated on colored paper to ensure accuracy in coding.

Data Analysis

Each student’s home literacy environment survey was scored. Several items on the survey had multiple response options; thus, they were scored separately. These included items 1

(Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) read to you when you were a young child?), 2 (Who was the person who read to you the most?), 23 (What was the education level of the parent/guardian with whom you spent the most time when you were a preschooler?) and 24 (Number of subscriptions currently coming to your house for your parent(s) or guardian). For coding purposes, a *yes* response was coded as a “1” and a *no* response was coded as a “2”. Thus, a low score is indicative of a positive home literacy environment. Independent samples t-tests were used comparing the teacher education and non-teacher education majors surveyed. For each of the t-tests, a standard .05 alpha level was used.

Results

A total of 402 surveys were coded for analysis. After examining the results between groups, there were significant differences in the home literacy environment between teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors. Out of 20 possible questions, 8 showed statistical significance (3, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 18) at the $p = .05$ level ([see Table 1](#)).

The items that showed statistical significance related to the number of people who read to the student on a regular basis, attendance at story hours or other programs at the library, owning a library card, discussions regarding what was learned in school, parent subscriptions to magazines by parents, student subscriptions to magazines, receiving a daily newspaper, and having friends who like to read books/magazines. The data suggest that the teacher education majors were more likely to have engaged in the aforementioned behaviors more frequently than their non-teacher education major counterparts.

Table 1

T-test Results for Teacher Education vs. Non-Teacher Education Home Literacy Environment Scores

Question	Significance
3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?	$t(400) = -2.303, p = .022$
4. Did your primary care-giver work outside the home before you began kindergarten?	$t(400) = 0.199, p = .843$
5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?	$t(400) = -1.684, p = .093$
6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?	$t(400) = -3.537, p = .000$
7. Do you presently have a library card?	$t(400) = -5.223, p = .000$
8. Do you and your family members give each other books as gifts?	$t(400) = -0.499, p = .618$
9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home?	$t(400) = 0.000, p = 1.000$
10. Do you have a library of your own books at home?	$t(400) = -1.297, p = .195$
11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read?	$t(400) = -0.809, p = .419$
12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) ask what you learned	$t(400) = -2.798, p = .005$

-
- in school?
13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)? $t(400) = -0.229$, $p = .819$
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With respect to the items where multiple choices were presented (1, 2, 23, 24), students were more alike than they were different. For example, when asked if their parent or guardian read to them when they were young, 96% of the teacher education majors answered that they were read to “sometimes” or “often” while 94% of the non-teacher education majors responded in a similar fashion. Similarly, when asked whom the person was who read to them the most, both teacher education and non-teacher education majors reported that the female parent read to them more often (68% and 84%, respectively). Both male and female parent readers accounted for 79% of the responses for teacher education majors and 90% of the non-teacher education majors’ responses.

When asked about the education level of the parent/guardian with whom they spent the most time as a preschooler, 48% of the teacher education majors reported the education level as college graduate or advanced degree. Their non-teacher education counterparts reported 37% of their parents were college graduates or advanced degree holders.

The final question related to the number of subscriptions that the students’ parents received. Of the teacher education majors, 17% reported their parents did not receive magazine subscriptions, while 30% of the non-teacher education majors reported their parents did not receive magazine subscriptions.

Discussion

It is clear from the data that there do appear to be significant differences in the home literacy environment of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors. If Spiegel’s (1994) classification scheme (reading artifacts and reading events) were applied to the results, some additional insight might be shed on the home literacy environments of the students who participated in this investigation. Of the items where significant differences occurred between teacher education and non-teacher education majors, five would be classified as reading events (number of people who read to the student on a regular basis, attendance at story hour, owning a library card, discussing what was learned, and having friends who read) and three would be classified as reading artifacts (parent subscriptions, student subscriptions, newspaper). Thus, the significance lies in those items related to reading events, rather than reading artifacts.

Conclusion

Differences in the home literacy environments of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors were evident in this investigation, although no attempt was made to control variables such as age, gender, or SES. While significant differences did not occur in all areas, it is clear that the majority of differences occurred in the area of reading events rather than reading artifacts. These results support Spiegel’s notion that it is not what parents have as resources but what they do in their homes or their literacy environment that has the most effect

on their children's literacy development. While this finding seems significant, it is important to note that the data were collected from college students' recollections of their home literacy environments.

Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002) suggest that exposing children to home literacy environments rich in literacy activities is beneficial and influences contemporary educational theory and practice. The results of this investigation suggest that not only must educators assist parents in the development of literacy rich home environments, but they must also assist parents in understanding what READING EVENTS they should be doing with their children and how to effectively use the READING ARTIFACTS that they provide for their children.

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Appendix A.

Literary Environment Survey

Please answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

Female parent or guardian
Male parent or guardian
Older brother or sister
Grandparent
Other: _____

3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?

Yes No

4. Did your primary care-giver work outside the home before you began kindergarten?

Yes No

5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?

Yes No

6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?

Yes No

7. Do you presently have a public library card?

Yes No

8. Do you and your family members give each other books as gifts?

Yes No

9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home?

Yes No

10. Do you have a library of your own books at home?

Yes No

11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read?

Yes No

12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) often ask you what you learned in school?

Yes No

13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)?

Yes No

14. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) subscribe to magazines which are mailed to your home? If they do, please list the titles at the end of this survey.

Yes No

15. Do you have your own magazine subscriptions? If you do, please list the titles at the end of the survey.

Yes No

16. Do you remember having subscriptions as a child? If you do, please list what you can remember of them at the end of this survey.

Yes No

17. Is there a newspaper coming to your home on a daily basis?

Yes No

18. Do your friends like to read books and/or magazines?

Yes No

19. Do you discuss books you've read with your friends?
Yes No
20. Do you and your friends recommend good books to each other?
Yes No
21. Did your parent(s) or guardians restrict the number of hour or the shows you watched on TV when you were young?
Yes No
22. Do your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of hours or the TV shows that you watch now?
Yes No
23. What is the educational level of the parent or guardian with whom you spent the most time when you were a preschooler?
Some high school High school graduate Some College
College graduate Advanced degree I don't know
24. Number of subscriptions currently coming to your house for your parent(s) or guardian(s):
0 1 2 3 4 or more

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Writing a Literacy Dissertation: Looking Back, Looking Forward

Jennifer Moon Ro

A. Jonathan Eakle

George Hruby

Leslie Rush

Donna E. Alvermann

Ira Aaron

These are papers from a panel session that focused on research by four University of Georgia doctoral students and introduction from their dissertation chair. Ira Aaron provides a brief reaction to the papers.

Introduction to Writing a Literacy Dissertation

Donna E. Alvermann

Gone are the days when a doctoral student's committee members could expect with a fairly high degree of certainty that the dissertation presented for defense would include five chapters (introduction, literature review, data collection methods, analysis, and implications). Also largely absent among literacy teacher educators are any expectations that the dissertation will conform to a particular methodology narrowly defined and conceptualized. Instead, committees are increasingly working with students whose interests and expertise in scholarly inquiry allow them to experiment with a wide range of methodologies embedded in multiple theoretical perspectives. Their choices in analytic methods and representational formats also vary considerably, ranging from those grounded in postpositivism to poststructuralism.

What these changes in writing a literacy dissertation suggest is that more and more professors of literacy teacher education who serve on doctoral committees are (or soon will be) experiencing a re-education of significant proportions. So great are these changes, in fact, that Nell Duke and her colleagues (Duke & Beck, 1999; Duke & Mallette, 2001) have put forth a call for institutional and faculty support in preparing new literacy professionals for positions in higher education. Specifically, they argue that such preparation "should change in response to the growing diversification of epistemologies and methods employed in literacy research" (Duke & Mallette, 2001, p. 345). It was this argument and its implications for literacy teacher educators that largely influenced us—Jennifer, Jonathan, Leslie, George, and Donna—to propose a session for the 2002 ARF program that would reflect the growing diversity in dissertation writing. We decided that in keeping with the theme of the conference (Looking Back, Looking Forward), it would be advantageous to add Ira's voice to the mix. As the founder of the Reading Education Department at the University of Georgia, Ira was in a unique position. We needed his perspective.

Participants

It should be noted that George, Leslie, and Jennifer have since graduated with a Ph.D. in reading education from the University of Georgia and have taken positions as assistant professors at universities across the United States. Jonathan is in his third year of doctoral study at the University of Georgia at the time of this writing. The participants' four dissertations (both completed and proposed) make use of a range of theoretical frameworks and analyses, including a socionaturalist narrative on the bio-ecological dynamics of reading and literacy development (George), a study of four Korean-English biliterate students' literacy practices (Jennifer), an analysis of the multiliteracies of thru-hikers (Leslie), and a multiliteracies framework for examining how visual and spatial texts are appropriated for various ideological purposes (Jonathan). As the doctoral students' supervisor, I have been on faculty at the University of Georgia since 1982 and have witnessed firsthand the changes in students' interests and expertise alluded to earlier.

Data Sources and Methods

In discussing their alternative approaches to framing and writing their dissertations at the 2002 ARF meeting, Jennifer, George, Leslie, and Jonathan cumulatively relied on the following data sources for their write-ups: reviews of the current research and theory in psychology, anthropology, cognitive science, linguistics, and philosophy of mind, particularly work informed by conceptual advances in the life sciences; data from Korean and English language samples collected from children's literacy practices in their homes, church, and schools; artifacts, observations, field notes, interviews, and journals collected while hiking the Appalachian Trail; and photographs, field notes, and interviews collected at an archaeological site and museum in Mexico City. They also commented on the problems they faced in designing a hybrid conceptual-manuscript dissertation (George), representing bilingual data for a monolingual doctoral committee (Jennifer), creating appropriate tools for analyzing data from an ethnography conducted while hiking the Appalachian Trail (Leslie), and conducting multimodal literacy research at an archaeological site in Mexico City (Jonathan). The analyses they used and the interpretations they drew are part and parcel of the reports that follow.

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The socionaturalist narrative: An approach to the bio-ecological dynamics of reading and literacy development

George Hruby

Dissertation Form

The *socionaturalist narrative* (Hruby, 2002) is a conceptual-manuscript dissertation, a hybrid of two dissertation forms, neither of which is commonly employed in reading and literacy research theses. To my knowledge, no one in our field has ever attempted such a hybrid form. Thus, this dissertation is an experiment in form as well as substance. But the form does allow for a unique demonstration of the substance. It demonstrates the first two of the three hopes for the conceptual argument: that a body of work in life science-informed social science, here termed socionaturalism, can be conceptually, professionally, and pedagogically useful in reading and literacy education research.

Conceptual dissertations consist of a thesis, or rational argument, in the form of a philosophical essay on some particular theoretical question. Broad reviews of the literature are usually included, and extensive analysis and extension of key corollaries to the axioms and categories generated by the question are examined. The number of chapters is indeterminate. *Manuscript dissertations* are commonly employed in the natural sciences. They consist of two or more papers, usually research reports, prepared and submitted to, and preferably published by, scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. A simple introduction, literature review (complementary but not redundant to the literature reviews already contained in the individual papers), and a conclusion bracket these manuscripts, followed by a reference list and any other materials as necessary. Experimental attempts at manuscript dissertations in teacher education have sometimes been called portfolio dissertations.

A *conceptual-manuscript dissertation* is a manuscript dissertation where the manuscript chapters are not merely presented at face value (although they can be read that way, too), but are part of a larger argument set up by introductory conceptual chapters. The manuscript chapters in such a hybrid dissertation may provide the extension of the argument, or they may, as in *The Socionaturalist Narrative*, provide exemplars for the argument.

Overview of the Chapters' Content

There are ten chapters to this particular conceptual-manuscript hybrid dissertation, a reference list, and an appendix. Chapters 1-4, and 10 are the conceptual portions of the dissertation. Chapters 5 through 9 are the manuscript chapters. The conceptual chapters argue for a unique theoretical framework (the socionaturalist narrative) with which to inform reading and literacy research. The manuscript chapters are examples of how this unique perspective can be employed, either as a central theme or as a subtext, in publishable scholarship.

How to conceive of an epistemologically coherent, and metaphysically grounded theoretical framework, or paradigm (Chapter 2), why we in reading and literacy need a new paradigm when we clearly have at least two already (Chapter 3), what the unique theoretical

framework I propose looks like (Chapter 4), and what it could mean for reading and literacy education (Chapter 10), are the contents of the conceptual portion of the dissertation. These chapters demonstrate why socionaturalism could prove *conceptually useful* for our field. The manuscript chapters are all informed by socionaturalism to some extent, and the fact that all have seen print in peer-reviewed journals, or edited volumes, demonstrates that there is some *professional value* in this perspective.

To describe the chapters in greater detail: Following this introductory overview, Chapter 2 briefly reviews the conceptual history of developmental psychology and how historians of that field employed Stephen Pepper's theory of world hypotheses (Bornstein & Lamb, 1999; Learner, 2002; Overton & Reese 1973; Pepper, 1948; Reese & Overton, 1970) to make some sense of it. The history of developmental psychology is found to share certain interesting similarities with the history of reading and literacy education research. But while developmental psychology has moved beyond its paradigm debates, we in reading and literacy education have not. In this chapter I review how developmental psychology got past its nature-nurture controversy in the 1970s, and give Pepper's theory some of the credit. (For ease of reading, I have located the details of Pepper's philosophy of science in an appendix.)

In Chapter 3, the history of reading and literacy education research is reviewed, and compared to that of developmental psychology. The paradigm debates are also noted as are the recommendation by some that we lighten up on theory and get back to pragmatic research (e.g., Dillon, O'Brien & Heilman, 2000; Kamil, 1995; Stanovich, 2000). I argue just the opposite, that we need more theory to complement our research, in particular metatheoretical analyses, and demonstrate how Pepper's theory of world hypotheses can be applied to making sense of the theoretical reading and literacy education landscape.

In Chapter 4, socionaturalism is described in greater detail as a truly organicist-contextualist perspective. Several central concepts, including emergence, transaction, structural-functional analyses, and adaptation are explained in some detail. Empirical and theoretical advances that illustrate these themes are drawn from several of the developmental sciences.

Chapter 5 is the first of five previously published manuscripts. "Cognition and the mind" (Hruby, 1999b), a review of Eric Jensen's *Teaching with the brain in mind*, is a simple book review from *Roeper Review*, a journal of gifted education. The topic of the book reviewed is neuroscience research and its implications for improved teaching practice. It is not a complimentary review. But note the first sentence of the last paragraph: "It may be hoped that both the current coalescing of the neurosciences and the naturalistic turn in philosophy of mind bode well for an eventual neo-naturalistic framework for educational research" (p. 327). I was aware of moves to tie philosophy of mind and the neurosciences together—they had been going on since the 1980s. There was a lot of coalescing going on in computer science, neural network modeling, complexity theory, evolutionary and ecological psychology, and cognitive ethology, too. Neo-naturalism was my general handle for all of this, which I refer to in this dissertation as socionaturalism.

Chapter 6 was originally entitled "The biofunctional theory of knowledge and ecologically informed education research" (Hruby, 2000a) from a special double issue of the

Journal of Mind and Behavior on Ali Iran-Nejad's bio-functional theory of cognition and learning (Iran-Nejad, 1999). In my brief review, I compare Iran-Nejad's theory to the ecological theory of perception held by J. J. Gibson. Still, in the last two paragraphs, I first suggested one of the central ideas in socionaturalism.

Perhaps knowledge and understanding are not about the mechanics of data processing, but about the organic development of epigenetic, ontogenetic, and phylogenetic adaptations to an ecological surround (Bidell and Fischer, 1997; Hendriks-Jansen, 1996; Michel and Moore, 1995). Perhaps knowledge is not about the algebraic manipulation of representations, but about the meaningfulness inherent in the organism's relationship to its perceived world (Bruner, 1990; Clancey, 1997; Neisser, 1993). But an understanding of understanding, as Iran-Nejad suggests, requires a disciplinarily integrative approach that is "wholetheme" in nature, that relates, in other words, to the many aspects of our perceived ecological surround—a surround at once physical, biological, psychosocial, cultural, linguistic, personal, sensory and symbolic (Hruby, 2000a, p. 102).

Chapter 7, originally published as "Sociological, postmodern, and 'new realism' perspectives in social constructionism: Implications for reading research" (Hruby, 2001a), from *Reading Research Quarterly*, examines the topic of social constructionism. I review its history and application in reading and literacy research. Although this work may seem to have little to do with socionaturalism, the new realist and neo-naturalist perspectives described in this article as third wave social constructionism are clearly philosophically related to it. Indeed, socionaturalism presumes a neo-realistic social constructionism.

Contrary to what many brain-based education promoters (and even some cognitive neuroscientists) seem to think, the neurosciences are not epistemologically unrestrained, and if we in the reading and literacy community are ever going to make sense of their research, we are going to need a coherent theoretical frame by which to do so. The neurosciences are not the only area that requires theoretical framing, however. So does educational technology research. Chapter 8 appeared in *Reading Research and Instruction* as "The descent of Internet publications: A review of literacy journals online" (Hruby, 2001b). Don Leu, the guest editor of a special technology issue of that publication, invited this review. Using evolutionary theory to interpret the development of different textual forms is the perspective I employed. See especially the section subtitled "Problems with the evolutionary analogy" for an obvious tie-in to socionaturalism.

Chapter 9 was the keynote address paper published in the *Yearbook of the American Reading Forum, 2000* and entitled "The social construction of literacy development and classroom ecologies" (Hruby, 2001c). This is based on the keynote address I presented that year at the Sannibel Island, Florida, conference as a last-minute stand-in, since P. David Pearson was unable to present due to illness (Hruby 2000b). This paper lays out much of the argument of the conceptual chapters of this dissertation, especially those found in Chapter 3.

Chapter 10 concludes the dissertation by retracing the dissertation's argument, and asserting its success. It then looks forward conceptually and methodologically toward future research. Exploratory definitions of "reading," language, learning, meaning, comprehension,

representation, and communication are offered, and their implications for reading research offered.

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Dealing with Bilingual Texts in a Dissertation

Jennifer Moon Ro

Recently, I was at the local library fingering through the rows of books and reading occasional titles when I realized that I was no longer reading English, but Korean text. I stepped back, and there they were, several rows of Korean books in the middle of English books. Dueling thoughts came to mind; one that these Korean books looked rather disruptive and out of place alongside English titles, and the other that just of moment ago I was able to read these titles as smoothly as I had read the ones in English. I realize that not everyone will have the second thought that I had. This is a simple example of how having access to two languages influence the way I read, react, and interact with text. Being bilingual is sometimes disruptive to the taken-for-granted flow of life lived by those who do not have to ‘deal’ with two languages. This is a long way of explaining why I decided to include Korean texts in my dissertation.

My dissertation (Ro, 2002) involved an in-depth look into four Korean-English biliterate students’ literacy practices in their multiple contexts (home, school, and church). Many of the previous studies with biliterate students have addressed mostly isolated reading skills (Bialystok, 1997; Droop & Verhoeven, 1998; Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Koda, 1996; among others). However, to perceive literacy as only a cognitive set of skills mean that the social contexts wherein these literacy practices are utilized and have meaning are never explored. The underlying notion behind my study was that literacy is a social practice (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 1999; Hull, 2000). According to Hull, literacy is viewed as “social,” as it is “connected to activities wherein people read and write and talk about texts, hold certain attitudes and values about them...” (p. 4). Under the social theory of literacy, different literacy practices exist among the different groups of people rather than a set of skills in individuals.

I collected data in both Korean and English in each of my participants’ three contexts. Being biliterate, I was in a convenient position to record their spoken and written uses in both languages. Under the social theory of literacy, I felt that it was especially important to record exactly what the participants said and wrote because the subtle nuances and meaning may get lost in the translation. Therefore, when writing field notes or analyzing them, the data made sense to me. It was not until I began thinking about writing-up the findings for my monolingual committee did I realize I will have to deal with the problem of representing bilingual materials to a monolingual audience. After consulting with a linguistic professor in my committee, I decided to keep the Korean text in the dissertation. I was at first concerned that the foreign texts that have no meaning for the committee might turn them off to reading it. After all, the Korean alphabet looks drastically different from English. Therefore, including Korean text would be more disruptive to the flow than with Spanish text. Then I thought beyond the present committee-audience, to where there will be individuals who will be able to read Korean texts. As future literacy research will potentially involve texts other than English, I felt that literacy professionals may benefit by becoming more accustomed to research including multiple texts.

The influence of technology has dramatically changed the way we disseminate professional literature. As a graduate student at the University of Georgia, I spent many hours standing in the library searching for articles and books. As an assistant professor at my

institution, I am encouraged to rely on electronic journals. In fact, anyone who subscribes to databases that store literature on literacy is able to access it from the comfort of his or her home. Therefore, in the future, our literature may be read by an audience that extends beyond our English-speaking countries.

Including Korean texts in an English dissertation is not unlike including samples of email messages written by a participant or including students' writing samples with their non-conventional spellings. Including the original Korean texts with pronunciations of the word, coupled with the translation is a more authentic representation. It allows the able reader to readily assess my interpretation of the data by reading the original text. The three forms of representation (Korean texts, pronunciation, and translation) of the same text unit made sense to me as I wrote around those examples. If I had decided to not include the original Korean text, it would not make much sense to me or to future readers who are knowledgeable with Korean text. When I came across a dissertation study about the language use of Korean-English bilingual children, I was surprised to find that the author had not included any original Korean text (Baek, 1992). Ironically, I found it more difficult to read the study because I was never certain to which Korean words (written as pronunciations with translation) she was referring. Therefore, I felt that including original Korean texts used by my participants was necessary.

Deciding to include Korean text into my dissertation meant that I had to 'deal' with practical problems that came along with it. For instance, I had to replace my MS Word with a Korean version of the MS Word program. With the Korean MS Word program, I was able to type both Korean and English texts. However, this was not as easy to do as I first thought. I had to first affix a Korean alphabet sticker onto each of the keys on the keyboard. With the push of the "ALT" key, I was able to switch back and forth from Korean and English letters. However, to my frustration, the "ALT" key did not work on certain keys on the keyboard, and so, when I wanted to type in English, unwanted Korean letters popped onto the screen. Problems with using Korean texts continued during the final stages of the dissertation process. The year that I graduated was the first year where dissertations were to be submitted to the Graduate School in electronic form. The Graduate School's computer did not have a Korean language program installed and my Korean text appeared on the screen scrambled when my dissertation file was viewed. After a few agonizing hours, the problem was resolved, I was able to submit my electronic dissertation (with the Korean text intact) successfully, and I graduated.

To return to my current state of life: I am regularly 'disrupted' by living in a world of two languages and 'dealing' with issues that arise. Not a day goes by when I am not reminded of my two linguistic backgrounds. My daughter has grown since my dissertation writing days. She is beginning to speak and experiment with writing. I am often asked in what language is she speaking her first words or in what language is she beginning to scribble on the walls. I answer, "I don't know. It seems to me to be both, but I cannot be certain." She, too, seems to be taking her time to sort through the two sets of phonemes and dealing with her first issue with living in a world of two languages. My hope as a teacher, researcher, and a mother is that not only will she be ready to live in her biliterate world, but that the world will be ready in practical ways to embrace her biliteracy.

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Full Circle: A Personal/Research Story

Leslie Rush

One important aspect of qualitative research is that the person of the researcher is key. Eisner (1998) describes this as one of the most important features of qualitative studies: “the self as an instrument” (p. 33). In other words, researchers develop sensitivity to a situation that enables us to be able to see what is important in that situation, based on our background, our subjectivities (Peshkin, 1988). There are two aspects of my background that are important to know, in the context of understanding my choices regarding my dissertation, my current employment, my research interests, and this article: I am a long-time avid backpacker, and I taught high school English for 12 years. When I moved to Georgia to pursue doctoral studies at the University of Georgia, it didn’t take long until I began to hear stories about the Appalachian Trail (AT). Thru-hikers, they were called, those people who hiked all 2,160 miles of the AT, and legends about them in Georgia are numerous. I was intrigued and fascinated. I began to think about how I could work in a thru-hike of the AT with finishing my degree and getting a job. It seemed to me that the best time to pursue this dream would be after graduation. However, I also wanted to get a job in academia; I wanted to be involved in teaching and research. I couldn’t imagine going to my (as yet fictional) department head and saying, “Thanks very much for the job offer. I’ll take it. Only first, I’ll be backpacking for six months along the Appalachian corridor.”

So one day, jokingly, a fellow graduate student said to me, “Well, you could do research on the literacy practices of Appalachian Trail thru-hikers.” We laughed. I told a few others about my “new” dissertation topic, and we all laughed together; one, a fellow student who is an exceptionally intense and deep thinker, came back to me the next day and said, “You know, Leslie, you could do that. You could thru-hike the AT and study the literacies of thru-hikers.” So that’s what I did. My dissertation research (Rush, 2002) concerned the multiliteracies and social practices of the community of thru-hikers, and during the six months that I collected data, I was also part of the community, hiking 1400 miles of the AT in the process.

In this article I’m going to be sharing with you some of the issues that developed as I was planning for and carrying out my research, as well as some consequences that I have had to deal with as a result of what one of my committee members called “edgy” research. All of these issues have to do with two elements of my identity: that I am a backpacker; and that I am an academic/classroom teacher. They also spring from my attempt to do research that incorporates both the notion of cultural impacts on literacy and a broad definition of literacy that goes beyond spoken and written texts.

Combining Personal and Research Goals

During both data collection and analysis, but especially important during data collection, was the struggle that I went through to make decisions as both a thru-hiker and a researcher. Rather than viewing these as two separate entities, I see this double identity as occurring on a continuum. Throughout my research and thru-hike, I slid back and forth along this continuum in both my thinking and my actions, sometimes favoring my thru-hiking ambitions and at other

times favoring my research ambitions. Occasionally, I had to rethink the balance of these two identities because of their impact on my research and my body.

Gaining formal access to the thru-hiker community was not difficult, as no institutional entity grants permission to thru-hike; the trail is open to any who choose to use it. Like other thru-hikers, I spent several months planning and preparing for my hike, and when the time came for me to head out, I simply left home and started hiking. I chose to hike northbound, because a larger proportion of thru-hikers choose this route. Gaining informal access, becoming a member of the community of thru-hikers, was a little more complicated.

As a member of the thru-hiking community I adopted trail traditions, such as taking trail names – the nicknames that most thru-hikers adopt during their hikes. I gave myself the trail name “Turtle,” based on a necklace with a jade turtle given to me by a friend a few days before I left. Along with this gift came a card describing the turtle as a symbol of persistence and connection to the earth. I knew that if I wanted to spend six months hiking, I would need perseverance and I hoped that I would become more connected to the earth. I also realized that my hiking pace was going to be a slow one, so the name Turtle seemed appropriate. From the first days of my hike, I introduced myself by this name, and it is as Turtle that I was known for most of my thru-hike. Having a trail name was an important part of being a member of the thru-hiking community.

I also participated in the common practice of reading and writing in shelter registers: blank notebooks left in shelters, in which hikers write their thoughts about the day, communicate with other hikers, draw pictures, etc.

Of course, I was not the only person trying to be part of the community. We were all learning together how best to do this thing we had committed to doing. We learned together about the best way to set up our tents, to pack our gear, to hang bear bags, cook food, clean up, use privies, feed our bodies, and hike. We traded ideas on light but calorie-heavy food items, pieces of gear that would make life easier, such as alcohol stoves to replace white gas stoves, and most of all, we began the trail-long process of getting rid of unnecessary weight in our backpacks.

Throughout the remainder of my thru-hiking experience, I continued these practices: viewing myself as part of the community of thru-hikers, using my own and others’ trail names, signing into shelter registers, and socializing with other hikers. Most importantly, perhaps, I continued to hike north along with other members of the thru-hiking community.

My process of gaining informal access seemed to be fairly smooth and easy. I planned to thru-hike the entire Appalachian Trail, I was in company with others hiking the same trail, I participated in the community’s traditions and ways, and thus I was part of the community. Ultimately, however, the smoothness of my identification with the community of thru-hikers began to backfire. As I began to become more physically fit and capable of hiking longer and longer days, I began to fall in with one of the thru-hiking community’s strongest values: high-mileage days. Originally, I had planned to average 8 miles a day for the first two weeks, 10 miles a day for the next two weeks, and then 12 miles a day for the remainder of my hike. After about

a month, I found myself pushing for more and more miles every day, so that by the beginning of May, I was averaging 16 miles a day. These added miles meant more time spent hiking, which left less time and energy for writing fieldnotes and analyzing data. During the last few days of April and the first 2 days of May, I paid little attention to my role as a researcher. I took no fieldnotes, talked to no one about my research, and began to think of myself as a thru-hiker, and only a thru-hiker.

In early May, my body saved me and saved my research by rebelling. Climbing a steep set of stone steps out of Laurel Gorge, Tennessee, I pulled a muscle in my buttocks, which put pressure on the sciatic nerve, shooting excruciating pain down my right leg. I got a lift into the nearest town, Damascus, Virginia, and spent several days there attempting to get medical help and to handle the continuing and increasing pain, until I finally decided that the pain was unbearable. By May 5th, I was off the trail, perhaps, or so I thought, for good.

During a month and a half of recuperation, physical therapy, and thought, I began to see that by identifying so strongly with the community of thru-hikers, I had neglected the research that had brought me there in the first place. The goal of reaching Katahdin – the northernmost terminus of the AT -- had overshadowed my desire to learn about the multiliteracies of thru-hikers. This forced reminder of my two goals helped me to begin to balance them more carefully. When I returned to the trail in mid-June, I skipped a 400-mile section of the trail in Virginia. This was done partly to give me a chance to make it to Katahdin before it closed in mid-October and also to keep hiking with other thru-hikers that I had known before I was injured. After skipping this section, I knew that I would not be able to hike the entire trail. This knowledge helped alleviate some of the self- and communally induced pressure to hike big-mileage days. I went back to the trail with a clearer focus, once again planning on using my membership in the thru-hiking community to further my research. When I returned to the trail, I was also given an addition to my trail name reflective of my injury; instead of being known as simply *Turtle*, I became known as *Bad-Ass Turtle*.

The struggle to balance my goals as researcher and thru-hiker continued throughout my hike. It was always difficult for me to be forced by my injury to keep an appropriately slow pace. I fretted when people passed me by and when they talked about their plans to hike 20-plus mileage days. I often wanted to hike longer miles than I could comfortably do, in order to feel that I was making better progress toward the goal of Katahdin. And sometimes I did do just that – choosing to hike two back-to-back 20 mile days in Pennsylvania, after which I was so exhausted that I could barely eat supper, much less write fieldnotes and think coherently. I did, however, continually attempt to maintain my focus on both hiking and research, which meant that I saw myself both as part of the community of thru-hikers and as separate from it, as is evident from this comment made when Streisand interviewed me:

Yeah, it's funny. Because I mean I see myself as a thru-hiker, definitely. I have a trail name and I'm hiking every day. You know, I have the huge appetite and all that stuff like most thru-hikers. But in some ways I don't see myself as part of THE GROUP. And also as a researcher, I think I spend a lot of time sort of sitting back and observing and not really being a mover and shaker. Like, I'm not the one who organizes a group of people to slackpack. But um, I don't know, I see

myself as part of the group, cause I'm a thru-hiker. But also I see myself as sort of being different, because I have this secondary or really primary purpose for my thru-hike that really no one else I've met has. (July, 2001)

The tension between my two goals can be seen in my hesitation over my “secondary or really primary purpose.”

When I reached New England, I found it necessary to take some time off the trail for the sake of my mental and physical well-being. Because of the extreme heat in New England during the summer, the scarcity of water, and the emotional impact of being away from family and loved ones for such a long time, I took one week off in August, spending it with a friend in Connecticut, and another two weeks in September to spend with my parents traveling through Maine. Of course, taking this much time off from hiking and doing research meant that I was separated from my thru-hiker community and that I would have to skip even more miles before meeting my fiancée for the last two weeks of our hike and the summit of Katahdin. Skipping these additional miles led to an intensification of the feeling of separation from the community of thru-hikers. At a hostel in Monson, some weekend hikers asked me if I was a thru-hiker, and I began giving a wishy-washy answer about having been a thru-hiker in the past, but taking some time off, and not being sure if I could currently call myself a thru-hiker. In the middle of this exchange, which occurred over the breakfast table, Buffalo, a fellow thru-hiker and research participant, leaned over and whispered to me “You’re a thru-hiker.”

On October 2nd, my thru-hike ended with a summit of Mt. Katahdin, the northernmost point on the Appalachian Trail. Even this summit, which in many ways was a joyous occasion for me, was clouded by my uncertainties about my membership in the thru-hiker community, based on my failure to complete the entire trail. I believe that this uncertainty can be traced to a division within the community itself, over issues of how to define a complete thru-hike.

Making Connections between Research and Teaching

One of the biggest dilemmas I have faced since embarking on this research endeavor, including writing and defending my dissertation, interviewing for jobs, and now writing using my dissertation data, is making connections between my research – which is based entirely on non-school based learning – and possibilities for teachers and classrooms. I have often felt that my research has implications for theory about literacy – especially having to do with providing data to underscore a theoretical construct that previously had little actual research to back it up. I wonder, however, how generalizable my research is to classrooms. In the future, I would like to extend these findings into educational settings. I would like to examine the multiliteracies that students practice both in and out of classrooms. These may be uses of and proficiencies in literacies that are not valued in schools and may reflect styles of learning, knowledge areas, and skills that are necessary for living in the world but that are not addressed by traditional schooling. For example, young people may excel in reading maps, reading their own bodies, reading landscapes, reading and creating multimedia texts, etc. I believe that learning more about these forms of literacies may help us to push the boundaries of education in helpful and transformative ways. This research will involve observing classroom interactions and activities

outside of school to document these literacies. In addition, I plan to interview teachers, students, and parents concerning their experiences with both traditional literacies and multiliteracies.

I would also like to begin to examine what happens when students write in multiple genres; using, for example, Romano's (1995, 2000) conception of a multigenre research paper. I believe that encouraging students to use multiple forms of writing and incorporating the use of technology as part of that push has the potential to engage students, to help them to recognize multiple perspectives, to shed new light on a very stale format (the research paper) and to help students learn about writing in different genres. I see this as key to the type of education that the New London Group (2000) calls for in its description of the changing and challenging global world for which we must prepare students.

Rejoining the Academic Community

After completing my dissertation, I applied for several positions in reading education and in English education. I interviewed for three of those positions and was offered two; I took a position in English education at the University of Wyoming, which I think is absolutely a perfect fit for me as both a hiker and a researcher and a teacher. I see the position I have taken as completing a circle in several different ways. For one, I was an English teacher for many years before pursuing advanced degrees in reading education, and now that I am working at preparing and supervising pre-service English teachers, I get a sense in which I am home. In addition, the state of Wyoming holds many attractions for me as a hiker – it has lots of mountains nearby – and opens up a new world of winter sports that I have never been able to participate in living in the south, as I have. In addition, I believe that the field of English or English education is a bit more open to the types of literacies on that my dissertation explores than the field of reading has been. Now obviously, I haven't done a scientific study of this belief; it is based on the reactions of reviewers to articles and conference proposals based on my dissertation research.

During my data collection period, on several intensely hot days when I wished myself anywhere but outdoors, I thought to myself several times, "Leslie, you could be doing a classroom-based study somewhere indoors, with relative ease. Instead, you're hiking every day for six months, sleeping outdoors, getting filthy. What were you thinking?" During the time when I was trying to secure a job, I found myself asking similar questions. Why did I choose a topic that seems so closely related to my own interests, so unrelated to the topics occupying the interests of those in government and schools?

The answer that I have found, at this point, is that just as I see literacy --- reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and interpreting – as closely related to and dependent on personal, cultural, and ecological ways of being, I see research in the same light. My research is truly mine, in the sense that I created it, I shaped it, I collected and interpreted the data – it comes from who I am – my past experiences with teaching, with the outdoors, with reading and writing, with research. I believe that the research I have done in my dissertation speaks about me, just as I speak about it. And I feel that I am uniquely lucky to have been able to do this research and to have the opportunity to work in a place that values it.

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Multimodality, Literacies, and Dissertations

A. Jonathan Eakle

Recently, multimodal forms of literacy have received much attention (e.g., Alvermann, 2002; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). We see large publishers, such as the International Reading Association, publish online journals with sections devoted to new literacies research and practice (Reading Online, 2003) and the appearance of dissertation work, such as that of my fellow authors, that chart new directions for multimodal literacy studies. Indeed, the literacy research landscape is changing. All one must do to witness these changes is to observe the multiliteracies practiced by young people as they use various aspects of print, the visual, auditory and feelings (e.g., emoticons) in their digital communications. Vanguard literacy dissertation work is needed to keep pace with these transformations.

Thus, as I “look forward” to my dissertation in reading education I find it both fascinating and important to examine the broadening of literacy (Flood & Lapp, 1995) and the reactions against the distinct preference in our traditional field and our culture toward monomodal written texts. Scholars such as Kress (2000) and Bolter (2001) have argued that studying literacy monomodally is no longer adequate in a world dominated by media, one where the visual, in particular, “breaks out” (Bolter, 2001, p.47). The purpose of this paper is to describe a few elementary aspects of multimodal literacy. After a brief theoretical review, I will discuss one of its branches, social semiotics, and sketch how I have begun to use its framework to collect research data.

Semiotics

Tracing multimodality back to its most elemental components led me to the field of semiotics, the study of signs. As Semali and Fueyo (2001) inform us, “the underlying assumption of the study of new literacies is that signs are the basic building blocks of human communication, which takes place in many forms” (p. 5). These basic building blocks include pictures, language, space (social, physical, and abstract), and written texts. Semiotics is at the root of a number of educational theories, such as Vygotskyian constructivism, which examines responses to “self-generated stimuli, which we call signs” (Vygotsky, 1930/1978, p. 39). Signs are communicative units, so it is not surprising that the study of signs is broad, a tree with an immense canopy that contains many branches.

General semiotics is a field laden with abstraction, a formal treatment of signs with hierarchical structures similar to systems such as syntactic grammar (Chomsky, 1964). For instance, Goguen (1998) formulates conductive algebraic proof structures of doubly reversed signs (images of flags). General semiotics certainly has applications, such as pointing to ambiguities in visual compositions. However, it is a branch of semiotics that tends to be decontextualized from the everyday uses of signs; specifically, it is a static system that does not account for the dynamics observed in learning situations (Kress, 2000). In education, how then can researchers utilize semiotics in studying contextual literacy practices?

A contextualized semiotic would attempt to show how multiple signs are used to construct meaning within social environments using texts (broadly defined to include the visual,

auditory, tactile, and spatial). Further, these texts would not be considered in isolation, but would take into account notions of intertextuality. In education, this work has begun, for example, in museums, where reading objects-as-texts is explored by constructivists, often influenced by Vygotsky (see Leinhardt & Crowley, 2002; Paris, 2002). Nonetheless, this line of research focuses principally upon language use and not upon other semiotic modes. To be sure, “learning talk” (Ashe, 2002) is an apt means for studying certain semiotic “meaning-making” processes while individuals interact around objects alone or in groups. Although crucial to consider, this is a limited notion, for other ways of interacting with texts, such as visual ones, are primary literacies (Sinatra, 1986). Of course, reading most texts (Braille would be an exception) involves a visual component, but still studies in education remain principally bound to linguistic codes. Multimodal semiotics attempts to examine all of the senses: sight, hearing, feeling, smelling, a line of research advanced by the New London Group (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) and in detail by social semioticians (Hodge & Kress, 1986; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Lemke, 1995).

Compared to Vygotskian sign theory, in social semiotics there is less emphasis on point-in-time individual stimulus/response learning events; social semiotics acknowledges the broader ideological contents of literacy (Street, 1995). In relation to this stance, central to Hodge and Kress’ (1986) social semiotic are issues of power and solidarity. Further, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) detail aspects of critical multimodal theory of communication, broadly categorized as: (a) discourse, (b) design, (c) production, and (d) distribution. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, designs are the midpoints between concept and expression, production is design organization that is semiotically distributed, articulated, and interpreted. Like other critical theorists, they focus attention on apparatuses of production and consumption. Design, too, is part of this cycle. Design “takes place in the field of social action, and with the agentive force of individual (even if the individual is socially/historically shaped) interests” (p. 63). Therefore, an arguable difference between typical constructivist approaches and those of the social semioticians is that the latter is as much an explicitly political project as it is a social one.

Several aspects of the semiotic design/production/consumption cycle have been of particular interest to me as I advance toward my dissertation research, especially: (a) the creation of visual texts and (b) Street’s (1995) model of literacy: ‘the when, for whom, for what purposes, and in whose interests’ visual texts are produced and the effects these texts have on their consumers. Before I proceed, it is important to mention one other part of my scholarly interest: what the linguist Saussure described as an arbitrariness of signs, an idea later taken up by the poststructural project of deconstruction. To the poststructuralist, language and all other signs are an interpretation of interpretation and thus meaning is always deferred; “There is thus no phenomenality reducing the sign or the representer so that the thing signified may be allowed to glow finally in the luminosity of its presence” (Derrida, 1967, p. 17). The immense literature concerning the poststructural challenge to the interpretation of signs cannot be adequately summarized here (see for instance, Norris, 2002 for an overview of deconstruction). Nonetheless, social semiotics attempts to deflect the poststructuralist challenge by appealing to pragmatics; a practical way to work with signs is to allot signs degrees of transparency within their contexts of use (Hodge & Kress, 1988). A gross example of this reasoning is that the meaning of a McDonald’s sign, the arches, would be more transparent to most people in the West than would be ش.

In the next section of this paper, I will sketch some of my work looking through a social semiotic frame. During the summer of 2002, I collected data in four museums in Mexico City. The data sources of this pilot study included in-depth interviews with museum curators, administrators, and conservators, some of whom are Aztec (Mexica) scholars and archeologists. In addition, I concentrated much of my attention upon collecting observational and photographic data (see Edwards, 2001). A guiding question was how visual and spatial texts were appropriated for various ideological purposes. My readings of these texts are situated in the interpretations of the local expert participants that I interviewed as well as from my reading in historical documents. Some of my data are represented in the following section of this paper.

Mestizo Literacies

The history of the Mexica is complex, full of myth, and a subject of controversial scholarship. Some descriptions chart the migration of the Mexica from an island called Aztlan while others suggest the civilization migrated from local mountain caves where, according to myth, the god Huitzilopochtli in the form of a hummingbird summoned the Mexica to congregate their monumental civilization. Regardless of debates over their origins, most historians agree that the culture was established in Central Mexico in the late 12th century and from that formation, a century later was founded what is now known as Mexico City.

In 1521, the Spaniards conquered the region and the empire that had been established there three hundred years earlier was destroyed (Duran, 1964). The record of how the conquest by the Spanish of the Mexica civilization was conducted includes the destruction of the Mexica temples and other artifacts of the culture, as well as the enslavement of the native peoples. Included in this devastation was the orderly destruction of most of the Mexica texts, codices that communicated through pictographs, iconographs, ideographs and phonetic signs (Boone, 2000). Over time, the Spanish invaders mixed with the indigenous populations, including, but not limited to, the Mexica. The result is that the present-day Mexican population is mostly characterized as Mestizo, and can lay claim to both European and indigenous lineage. This sketch is a history that most schoolchildren in Mexico are taught in their school textbooks.

Aside from classroom lessons and other conventional literacy practices, Mexica history is retold in the streets and in homes visually and spatially. This is perhaps most notable in Mexico City's central square, the Zócalo. There, in the open interior of the National Palace is presented another text depicting the local history, one that is exclusively visual. This text, *The History of Mexico* mural, was executed by Diego Rivera from 1929-1935, following the Mexican Revolution. Rochfort (1997) informs us that during this time the political dynamics and underlying "ideological discourse...formed the basis for a fresh national and cultural identity for Mexico" (p. 83). *The History of Mexico* was a key text in this reformulation of identity, the identity of Mestizo, the mixture of the lineages of the two continents, commissioned by political reformists for this purpose. Rivera's text has three massive pages (walls) with multiple configurations; temporally it can be read from right to left (what I will refer to respectively as pages one, two and three). Spatially it can be read from many positions, in one regard because staircases circle the 2-story text (see <http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/mural2.html> for a virtual tour of this and other public narratives).

Upon what could be reasonably called the first page of Rivera's text, is represented the past, where an orderly image of the pre-Hispanic Mexica civilization is painted. At its axis, the center focal point of this page, is located the heart of the mythological god-king Quetzalcoatl and above him a disappearing, inverted sun (axial centrality is a principal component in occidental painting since at least as early as Giotto—it denotes a region upon which the composition revolves). Mirroring this page is the wall of the future (what I call page three), also an ordered narrative. However, on page three along the vertical axis are images of Marx, the worker and rising sun. Marx, occupies a visual position that, according to Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) grammar of images, is within a "given/ideal" plane (pp.193-194). Further, by pointing with a visual line of force Marx gestures Mexico to a future "given/ideal" utopia. This is a small, but important component of this complex image, but one that points *us* to its ideological intent.

Connecting these two image pages, in the middle is a third, more chaotic and violent page representing the conquest, Mexican Revolution, and political reorganization. In the three-page cosmological scheme, the middle page can be read as Mexico's present, according to Rochfort (1997), a period that has and is fixing the idea of Mestizo into the cultural fabric of Mexico. Central figures on the page are political reformists and a colonial soldier whose sword penetrates a cache of gold coins (want could certainly be read as "capital") that are in the position held on page one (the page of the past) by Quetzalcoatl's heart. A smiling pope, another central figure in this narrative and in present-day Mexican culture, gestures a sign, blessing the coins and these historical events.

The visual text of Rivera spills out from the palace and into the city. It is a text of recurrent public discourse, the search for identity. As any text, Rivera's pages can be interpreted differently and appropriated to serve different purposes, but again, according to social semiotics, some signs are more transparent than others. On the streets of Mexico City, from Rivera's page three, the utopian revolutionary images of Ché, Castro and Rivera himself reappear on T-Shirts, hanging like mobile galleries from vendor wagons in the Zócalo. During my data collection, at the same time and in the same space, protesters circle the massive square advancing their opposition to a state-sponsored airport proposal that will appropriate land from the indigenous 'peasants' in the surrounding countryside; often the land granted to them during the revolution, "all that they have" (see Accion Zapatista Report, 2003). The protesters hold images of the revolutionary figure Zapata and red star banners, salient signs represented in the Rivera murals. Soldiers, like Rivera's, in dark fatigues with automatic weapons keep the peace; they are the signs of Fox's government. In the countryside, peasants are killed over the airport dispute, while other signs, billboards, are erected along the Periferico, the main transportation artery of Mexico City, announcing a Hollywood movie that glorifies the life of the Frida Kahlo (Rivera's wife, see <http://fridamovie.com/>). To be sure, Rivera's revolutionary images (page two) remain visible, but are appropriated and circulated for different purposes, sometimes for protest and at others for commercial purposes.

Page one of the Rivera mural is also appropriated for political and individual purposes. For example, the sun and its movement was a central aspect of Mexica civilization and again is a central sign on Rivera's first page. From reading the sun's movements and other natural signs, the Mexica developed a calendar that was employed for rituals and for practical matters such as planting and harvesting (see <http://www.earthmatrix.com/serie02/cuad02-1.htm>). According to

Boone (2000), the Mexica calendar signifies a 260-day ritual cycle in which 20 days are repeated 13 times. Each of the 20 days has a corresponding name and symbol, such as dog, death, and rabbit that are repeated 13 times. The sun calendar and its signs are represented throughout Mexican popular culture today and are employed in contemporary literacy practices.

In the present-day Zócalo, for instance, the calendar is used to perform spatial literacies. The calendar's ritual iconographic patterns and folklore are enacted in the movements of Mexica dancers, who take on the symbols of the calendar during performances. Boone (2000) described that in Mexica annals, such spatial and temporal movements are related to contemporary Labonotation studies, a standardized system for analyzing and recording human motion, most often used in recording ballet texts (Griesbeck, 1996). A Mexica dancer explains "To the East is white and yellow... The East symbolizes intelligence, the South the will, the West transformation and the North consciousness." Specific movements and positions have been passed on since pre-Hispanic times both orally and through picture texts and through the histories written by chroniclers.

Mexica dancing, like the visual texts of Rivera, serve varied purposes. Dancers in the Zócalo perform in order to display their heritage, to entertain, and for money. For comparison, at night in other public squares of the city young people meet and study pre-Hispanic teachings (multimodal texts such as the codices) and dance the calendar, to connect with their pasts, the "ancient wisdom," for free. In addition, pre-Hispanic era dancing has been incorporated lately in political protests and in other ceremonies, most notably during last year's Papal visit to Mexico, when the Church canonized its first Mexican "Indian" saint (Pope John Paul II, 2002). The public mixture of the indigenous and European traditions, the Mestizo identity, remains as strong as when the Rivera text was planned and executed.

The multimodal literacies of Mexico were central to pre-Hispanic rituals and practices and have been instrumental in the formation of Mestizo identity. These literacies are evident today, not only in the cabinets and halls of the historical museums and in schools in Mexico, but also are living literacies that recur on the walls and in the streets of the city. Dissertation study of these multimodalities may serve education by nudging literacy practices away from its preference toward strictly linguistic forms of communication. Further, it can provide information, "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez & Moll, 1995) that could be helpful to U. S. educators as they encounter classrooms with increasing numbers of students emigrating from Mexico. As our field advances in further multimodal research, studying the discourse, design, production, and distribution of these and similar semiotic chains, should prove to be useful in enhancing literacy theory and practice.

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Reaction to Writing a Literacy Dissertation

Ira E. Aaron

This session was unique in that a major professor, three of her former doctoral students, and one of her current doctoral candidates “looked back, looked forward” as they discussed parts of the three completed literacy dissertations and the one still in progress. Though the four studies were quite different in nature, they all four involved a less traditional and enlarged definition of literacy. The presentations were interesting and well organized. As the presenters talked, I thought of how useful it would have been to have a presentation like this one when I worked years ago with the doctoral seminar in Reading Education at the University of Georgia. The content would be quite helpful to doctoral candidates and doctoral advisors as well as to others interested in literacy research.

In addition to hearing the presentations, I read materials the speakers sent to me prior to the conference. (A Reactor receiving papers in advance at ARF may also be unique!) I also “looked over” (read selected parts) of the three completed dissertations prior to the conference. I was impressed with the quality of their work and with the clarity of their reporting. Completing a literacy dissertation or a dissertation in any field involves a lot of planning, a lot of time, and a lot of hard work – which was evident in the three completed dissertations.

George’s dissertation was more theoretical in nature; Leslie and Jennifer used a case study approach; Jennifer’s study also dealt with Korean-English biliterate students; Jonathan is gathering historical data. As I read the papers, looked over the dissertations, and heard the oral reports, I thought of the many dozens of dissertations I had directed and the many other reading committees on which I had served. Seventeen years ago when I retired, most of the dissertations were loaded with statistics or were theoretical in nature. Qualitative studies were just beginning to show up in Reading Education dissertations. Three of the four studies were quite different from those with which I had been associated. The variety of the four topics in this session made for interesting reading and listening.

All four studies were obviously in areas of interest and concern to the presenters, which likely means that they will continue to work beyond the dissertation in the same areas. The presenters who have not prepared articles for publication based upon their studies should do so. They have findings which need to be disseminated more widely.

Candidates traveling the long and sometimes twisting road to dissertation completion need all the support they can get. The three acknowledgements and dedications call attention to friends, families, and committee members. I recall a dedication in a dissertation completed a half century ago at a university in which I was a doctoral candidate. It stated: “I wish to express appreciation to my wife and children – without whose help I would have finished some three years sooner.” The presenters were much kinder! Jennifer thanked her family members, including her baby who was not too much of a distraction; Leslie (Turtle, as she was known on the Trail) thanked her fellow travelers on the Appalachian Trail; George thanked the people at Harry Bissets (a local restaurant) and those at the Georgia Bar, two places where he had

socialized part-time. In his speaking notes, Jonathan acknowledged and thanked his companion and interpreter for her help and support.

Eyes Like Saucers: Using Multi-Genre Projects to Stimulate the Writing Lives of Teachers and Students

Dan Rothermel

I think back to the beginning of the semester when I, like my students, viewed writing in the classroom as a dreaded chore. Listening to my students come from their English classes complaining about five paragraph persuasive essays and standardized tests made me wary of even mentioning the word writing in fear they'd revolt. As I began to evaluate my own writing, I realized that I had a similar attitude toward the process.

Melissa, middle school social studies teacher

A dreaded chore! She is not alone in her distaste for writing and her fear of the teaching of writing. As a public school classroom teacher for twenty plus years, a supervisor of student teachers, and the lead university professor for a local professional development school in Connecticut, I have seen many resistant students and recalcitrant teachers when it comes to the teaching of writing. As far as the teaching of writing goes, standardized testing has been a good news/bad news proposition. The good news is that standardized testing has grabbed the attention of administrators and teachers and created an urgency to teach writing. The bad news is that too much of the writing instruction is disconnected and prompt-driven, where too many students see no purpose in the writing they are expected to do. What a loss that is! Writing holds such promise for understanding the curriculum and self-exploration for our students. Establishing reasons for students to care to write is the place for effective writing instruction to begin. Multi-genre projects may open such possibilities to teachers and students alike.

The purposes of this paper are: (a) To describe a multi-genre writing project, (b) to speculate on the impact these projects have on preservice and in-service teachers participation, and (c) to speculate on how such participation builds commitment to the teaching of writing.

Framework

While boredom is a leading cause of student dissatisfaction with schooling (Ohanian, 2001), models of teaching that have teacher-centered classrooms that students find boring are still too numerous when it comes to the teaching of writing. Hansen (1998) highlights the importance of students building a community and becoming public and “known” so that they can learn from each other; this is especially true for writing communities. Nelson (2000) underscores the importance of students’ stories in making meaning of their schooling. Graves’ (1994) identifies the value of teachers knowing their students in order for teachers to be effective in the teaching of writing. Multi-genre writing in a learner-centered workshop setting supports the goal of building writing communities where students reveal themselves to each other in the sharing of public writing. Romano (1995, 2000) and Allen (2001) offer a foundation and structure for

multi-genre writing projects and how such writing can be implemented in elementary, middle and high schools. Dewey's (1938) belief in experiential education based in reflection and continuity of experience supports teachers and students using what they learn in writing workshops to inform their future writing and learning experiences. Rather than predominately paper and pencil tests for assessment and evaluation, multi-genre writing projects address Sizer's (1992, 1996) belief in the value of students demonstrating their learning through exhibition.

Description of a Multi-Genre Project

Drawing from Romano's work in multi-genres, I believe that to teach writing well is to first understand oneself as a writer. Indeed, writing helps students understand their relationship to the world (Graves, 1994). Writing teachers and future teachers, then, need experiences as writers before we can expect them to teach writing well. Incorporating elements of Macrorie's (1988) I-Search strategies of self-exploration through writing with Gardner's (1993) work with multiple intelligences, I have my students select an interest of theirs to use as an exploration to find reasons to care about and be engaged in writing. My students experiment with at least four different written genres to tell the stories of this self-selected aspect of their lives. In addition to short stories and poetry, multi-genre possibilities include songs, recipes, pamphlets, lesson plans, advice columns, picture books, chapters from a romance novel, thumbnail sketches, metaphors, television commercials, journal entries, tabloid pieces, monologues, dialogues, shopping network spiels, Venn diagrams, plays, report cards, and news releases. In addition, students include one visual or performance genre related to their subject, which can include drawings, music, Power Point presentations, mock interviews, and video clips. At the end of the semester, students demonstrate their learning by performing or showing their visual and by reading one of their pieces from their multi-genre collection.

In the beginning of the semester, students submit a proposal to me responding to the following points: *Why the multi-genre project is important to them, two to three questions that they hope to answer by doing this project, the exploration into genres they will take, and one to three questions for me.* Midsemester, students provide an update of their progress with the following information: (a) *a preliminary table of contents for their paper*, (b) *one to two paragraphs of their successes and challenges with their multi-genre writing to date*, (c) *one to two sample paragraphs of their writing to date*, (d) *their plan to complete the project on time*, and (e) *one to three questions for me*. I provide formative assessment to them in the best traditions of the writing workshop.

Multi-genre projects allow students to explore literacy and writing in a creative and open structured format. Project themes vary as is evident in the multi-genre writing projects that my students have completed: (a) music performance, (b) that's entertainment (luaus and other meal preparations), (c) great American pastime (baseball), (d) antiques, (e) golfing, (f) butterfly gardens, (g) school clothes (coming of age story), (h) belonging: my past, present, and future self explored, (i) horse back riding, (j) in pinstripe tradition (a love affair with the New York Yankees), (k) Quaddick Lake (summer experiences at a cottage there), (l) shadows, (m) photography, (n) you'll always be "Pooh" to me (about

her son), (o) cheerleading, (p) youth ministry and Christianity, (q) making contact with the self: a personal journey into the martial arts, and (r) a family lifebook. These wide-ranging themes are evidence that students can find many ways to “plug in”, as they make personal meaning when they write.

A Brief Example

A practicing elementary school teacher and graduate student’s multi-genre writing project provides a snapshot of this learning experience as he writes in his reflection:

This was without a doubt the most exciting and introspective assignment of all my college experiences. My enthusiasm was driven by one main element. It was my own personal choice. I was able to experiment with ways that I could combine my love of music with writing and teaching. It is essential that we share our personal talents and passions with our students. This allows them to not only get to know who we are as teachers, but also leads to self-exploration for students.

Greg, third-grade teacher

With passion and commitment, Greg included these genres in his multi-genre writing collection: (a) a short story – “The Audition,” (b) journal entries – “A Week’s Journey of a Teacher/Musician,” (c) words to classical music – “A Troubled Friend,” and (d) a musical poem – “Riding the Rails.” For his performance piece, he gathered the fifteen of us in class together, pulled out his guitar, and sang his composition “Day One Blues.” The first three verses follow:

*Woke up this morning, Not feeling so fine
I stare at the wall and wonder, Will they eat me alive?*

*Tie is straight shoes are laced, Look ready to go
My heart is racing, Says no, no, no*

*Teacher, teach me something I wanna know.
You got to prove to me that you’re for real and not a show.*

Greg’s engagement in multi-genre writing warmed my heart and satisfied his yearning to explore in-depth, to understand himself further, and to celebrate this vital aspect of his life. In turn, Greg can bring these same opportunities to his own students.

Reactions to Participation in a Multi-Genre Writing Project

In a review of the reflections of student writing, a pattern of responses developed such that the words “enjoyment” and “writing” *could* be used in the same sentence. As if they were surprised, students found the writing experience personally meaningful.

I experienced a lot of pleasure in writing it and felt that I learned a lot

about my writing style and myself.

Jamie, a first grade teacher

As a teacher of writing, I was not surprised by the greater understanding of self that Jamie expressed. Taking time to discover and rediscover ourselves promotes the process of self-knowledge and growth. Writing is a good vehicle for this kind of exploration. Another student added:

Initially, I was nervous about doing a multi-genre project. My experiences with writing had unfortunately not been very positive. In school it was always the dreaded thing to do. It always seemed like a negative experience. This outlook on writing has changed drastically because of my experience in this writing class. Dan, I really want to thank you for helping me to enjoy writing for the first time in my life. Even though I don't have aspirations of being a famous writer, I at least can enjoy writing because it doesn't intimidate me anymore... I have learned so much about myself through this writing process. Writing has a way of bringing out parts of oneself that are otherwise afraid to shine.

Loretta, first-grade teacher

Enjoyment for the first time? What went wrong in her years of schooling that only as a graduate student would Loretta find connection and enjoyment in writing? She, too, used the “d” word (dreaded) and added the “i” word (intimidation) to her gut reactions to writing. And these two women are “success stories” of our public school system as graduate students and successful teachers in the classroom!

Self-knowledge and the value of being safe again come through for a sixth-grade teacher:

I found my multi-genre experience very enjoyable and non-threatening. For me, lengthy writing assignments are often associated with certain levels of anxiety. This project however, was a very comfortable experience. I also don't usually make time in my life to write poetry. That also was a fun and interesting experience.

Jewell, sixth-grade teacher

More questions! Why were these teachers so fearful? What can be done so the pattern of dread is not passed on to the next generation? A high school English teacher, offers her reasons why multi-genre writing worked for her:

During the whole project, I really had a great time. I felt personally connected to what I was doing, and so I found myself giving it a true effort. Somewhere in the middle of it all, in fact, I forgot it was an assignment. My revisions and thoughts about what I was writing were never connected to a grade, but rather to an investment in myself. (I hope this is how my students would feel.)

Kristin, high school English teacher

Multi-genre writing became personally meaningful to other students. A high school special needs teacher, too, found personal connections gave meaning to her writing:

As I reflect on my student choice project and this class in general, excitement and anticipation surge through me like an electric current...This class and the student choice multi-genre writing assignment have helped to transport me to my youthful carefree days when my imagination would magically bring me to new and wonderful places.

Rachel, high school special needs teacher

These teachers identified that connections and feelings of personal safety come through as fundamental for the success of multi-genre writing. It is not much of a leap for teachers to conclude that the proper classroom atmosphere sets the stage for writing success.

Other students discussed the importance of freedom and choice in the multi-genre writing projects.

Giving students exposure to all genres lets them practice to see which they are best at. In future writing projects they would have many options from which to choose.

Jamie, first grade teacher.

Throughout the whole process [writing in multi-genre way] I also tried to think of ways that I could set up and use the project in my classroom. I love the connections that are possible, and the freedom it grants the writer. I believe that assignments are meaningful when students have some control over the directions of their learning.

Maggie, high school English teacher

Projects in the classroom tend to be boring, and tend to be feared by students of all ages, but by giving students the freedom to choose whatever genre they prefer, projects may prove to be a bit more exciting and a bit more useful.

Bob, preservice middle school teacher.

As hallmarks of successful writing workshops, choice and freedom resonate with

my students. Education is a collaborative venture with teachers learning about their students as individuals and having the curriculum make daily connections to the lives of their students.

Multi-genre projects seemed to be adaptable and transportable to public school classrooms, as is evident by the directions developed by a third-grade teacher:

Creating a multi-genre classroom

1. *Start your unit by modeling an interest of yours. Show students a high level of enthusiasm and allow them to explore any and all possibilities!*
2. *Have students brainstorm a list of topics they might be interested in presenting or sharing through the magic of writing.*
3. *Allow students to become as creative as possible, guiding them in their exploration of the many types of writing genres available.*
4. *Have fun with it. I've had a great time exploring my love of baseball and students will have the same reaction.*

Andrew, a third grade teacher

Other teachers describe goals, plans, and rationales for including multi-genre projects in their teaching.

My goal is to get my students excited about writing. I am going to continue to work on proofreading skills and some spelling, but am going to focus more on different genres of writing. Next year I am going to have my students do a multi-genre project. I think that they will learn to enjoy writing more once they have experienced this process. I plan on writing with them as much as possible. My students don't often see success in things they do in life, but I'm hoping that they will be able to come away from the experience feeling proud of their accomplishments.

Loretta, first grade teacher

Multi-genre activities will allow me to provide choices of topics that fit within the American history curriculum while letting the students decide how to write about them. They will have the ability to use their imaginations, creativity, and multiple intelligences which will highlight their individual strengths.

Melissa, eighth grade social studies teacher.

Full participation by teachers as companion learners with their students offers students models that bring home the message that writing really *does* matter and that teachers are lifetime learners themselves. The classroom is, indeed, a learning partnership.

Teachers discussed how multi-genre projects have potential to make education meaningful for special needs students.

I've already begun planning with the regular education teachers for next year and I'll be co-teaching writing with the two sixth grade classes. I can hardly wait to begin.

Amanda, middle school special needs teacher.

The beauty of a multi-genre portfolio is that it can easily be adapted to any age or grade level with a few modifications, including length of pieces, number of drafts, and specific genres...Portfolios are excellent for the reluctant writer because they allow students to explore their interests and provide exposure to a multitude of writing...Students are given the opportunity to explore and challenge themselves in writing, and strengths, not their weaknesses become the area of focus.

Rachel, high school special needs teacher.

Teachers identify multi-genre projects as ones where all students have the opportunity to succeed. This fundamental democratic belief needs to be reinforced in word and in practice day in and day out in the classrooms of our country.

Implications for Teachers

Classroom Atmosphere Begins with Safety and Encouragement

In such a setting, students feel they have value and become willing to take the risks that good writing requires. Setting the nurturing atmosphere in the classroom begins with “pointing.” Pointing is telling the writer something you like about the writing. Soon feedback for students can come from classmates telling the writer where they would like to know more and teachers nudging and expecting more from their students. As teachers of writing, we cannot wait until graduate school, as Loretta did, to have our current students find meaning and enjoyment in writing.

Connecting Writing Assignments to Lives of Students is Crucial

When our students make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997), they engage themselves in their own learning. Since the demand of preparing students for standardized testing is strong and real, teachers need to occasionally teach their students the “test writing” genre to give students experiences in that kind of writing. Yet, the large majority of writing time should be spent giving students opportunities for authentic writing so that they can make meaningful connections and learn that writing can have personal value for them.

Freedom of Choice is Necessary for Student Engagement

The power of choice that Greg and others have identified cannot be denied. Including our students in decisions about their own education seems patently obvious. It's time to act on such self-evident truths.

Teachers are the Dominant Models that Writing Matters

Teachers sharing themselves through their “in progress” writing establish themselves as companion learners and reinforce the value of writing in the eyes of their students. Students can learn that adults experiment with word choice, write with humor, wonder about endings, and are, at times, unhappy with their writing after three drafts. Modeling by teachers establishes that the classroom is truly a learning community for all.

Writing can be Empowering for Students.

If we are truly *to leave no child behind*, all our students need access to the best pedagogy and understanding of participatory learning of writing workshops. When we “bond” with students as Routman (2003) suggests, we as teachers demonstrate faith in our students as learners and show that we value them as individuals. The democratic aspirations and understandings of our students will be hollow if we deny them access to writing’s tremendous power for discovery, understanding, and insight.

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Reading, Writing, and Spelling in a Speech-Language Room

**Bob Schlagal, Appalachian State University
Helen White, Catawba County Schools, North Carolina**

I (the second author) have worked as a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in a public elementary school for a good many years now. In the mid 1990s I also became a teacher of reading and language arts. That is, I began to incorporate reading, writing and spelling activities into my speech-language therapy sessions. Part of this move was due to my own growing interest in the language arts (including enrollment in a Master's program in reading) and its potential as a tool in Speech-Language work. Another part of my move into literacy work was my school's commitment to improve reading skills in every area of instruction. The use of reading and writing in my room has been a strong support to my students in their reading and writing development, and it has also strengthened my work as a speech-language pathologist. I would like to share something of my rationale for teaching reading and writing, describe my basic approach, and comment on the successes that I am experiencing.

How It Began

I began to become interested in reading due to the fact that a good number of my speech-language students each year also have reading problems. The connection was clear to me. There are elements of language competency that are important to the development of reading ability. My experience and conclusions in this regard are supported by researchers who now assert that underlying language difficulties are the source of many reading problems. As Boudreau and Hedberg (1999) note, "The coexistence of language difficulties and problems in literacy acquisition has long been observed by clinicians providing services to children with language impairments; however, it has only been recently that researchers have investigated this relationship. Studies have clearly documented the fact that children with language impairments are at risk for difficulties in learning to read and write" (p. 249).

At the same time as I was drawing these conclusions, I began to feel that all of my young clients, whether they had reading problems or not, would benefit from reading and writing activities. I saw in such activities a way to provide an additional modality to help focus attention on elements of speech and language use. That is, I saw reading and writing as ways to underscore and reinforce the skills that I am trying to assist my clients in mastering.

With these thoughts in mind, I was delighted when my school undertook to extend reading instruction into every part of the teaching day. In fact, every teacher in our school--from the physical education teacher to the regular classroom teacher--was required to establish objectives for improving reading. This coincidence of my interest and the school's commitment was just what I needed. Our new initiative gave me the opportunity and support to fully incorporate reading and writing methods into my teaching sessions. Of course, the key concern for me was to make sure that such instruction complemented students' Individualized Education

Plans and advanced my therapeutic goals. This proved to be easier than it might sound, but oral language goals are easily achieved in written language settings.

Speech Pathologists and Reading

Because the field of speech language pathology is very much aware of the connections between language difficulties and reading problems, it has recently begun to move into the area of reading instruction. A powerful impetus for this move has been the research finding that phoneme awareness (the awareness of individual sounds within spoken words) plays an important role in reading acquisition (Adams, 1990; 1996).

In response to the phonological awareness research, many speech-language pathologists who undertake literacy work have adopted intensive drill-based instructional models. These models address reading and writing in the context of intensive code-based training. Such programs restrict students' reading to decodable, phonetically controlled texts that march hand-in-hand with phonic skills that have been pre-taught. Further, these programs generally limit students' writing to encoding teacher-dictated, phonetically-driven sentences or paragraphs. In other words, learners are placed in highly constrained circumstances where errors are least likely to occur. When errors do occur they are immediately corrected, and if necessary the skill is retaught. Most of these programs were developed for severely disabled readers and have a history of success with that population, although transfer of reading to natural language materials is commonly delayed until well into the advanced stages of the instructional sequence. For many students, this transfer may be postponed for years, and many continue to struggle with less structured materials.

At least one program of this kind--perhaps the most popular one with SLPs--was developed through the combined efforts of a speech pathologist and a linguist. As with the aforementioned programs, the Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling, and Speech, or LiPS (Lindamood & Lindamood, 1998), is a highly scripted code-based instructional package. The principle difference is that this program involves extensive and thorough training in the production and classification of speech sounds--a course, quite literally, in the science of phonetics--prior to addressing these things in the context of letters and written words. While such programs have an obvious appeal to speech therapists because they revolve around elements of speech and language with which they are more than familiar, *such programs do not address the diverse needs of my students*. Only a small number of my students suffer from severe deficits in phonological processing (6 per cent, at this time). Further, such programs as we have described do not allow for the focused natural language use that encourages students to exercise and apply skills they are working on. Nor do these programs allow me to monitor freely occurring errors in my students' language use.

My Students

As a speech-language Pathologist, I see children with many and varied needs. I currently serve over 60 children. Some of my students have speech impairments: These range from children who need articulation therapy for a few sounds-in-words like /r/, /s/ or /z/, to those who

stutter or have developmental dyspraxia (an impairment in the ability to correctly pronounce and sequence sounds and syllables) and may need from 20 to 40 sounds in sounds-in-words corrected. I also have students who are language impaired: These students exhibit depressed receptive and/or expressive language skills. They may have word finding disabilities, problems with listening comprehension, difficulty understanding question formats, or problems with vocabulary function. Or they may be too quiet or talk too much. They may also have difficulty with language in the area of morphology (word structures), semantics, syntax, and/or pragmatics, and so on. Again, a limited number of these will experience extreme difficulty with learning to read.

While the problems that SLPs encounter are diverse, one problem that SL Pathologists commonly deal with is the difficulty that many of our students have in making the transfer from corrected sounds or language forms in therapy to correct application in normal language use. It is one thing to learn to produce a correct speech sound in a training session, it is another for that child to apply it correctly in less controlled contexts. It is our contention in this article that reading and writing activities allow my students to extend our speech-language lessons into freer settings while at the same time advancing their literacy skills.

Writing and Language Use

One of the ways to encourage free language use is through writing. Writing is a very important part of my resource room. Each child writes at every therapy session. Writing may seem like an unusual activity in a speech-language room, but I want my students to extend their speech and language issues into written form in order to maximize their communication and language development (Goldsworthy, 1996; Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman, & Yoder, 1991).

Writing in particular seems well suited to helping students develop their competency with phonemic analysis, especially when the spelling of a word is unknown and must be sounded out (Schlagal, B. 2001).

At a very basic level, constructing words with letters emphasizes the phonemic structure of language--that is, it clarifies that there is a sound system of the language that is represented in alphabetic writing. Writing also provides support for learning the specific relationships between phonemes and graphemes. At a higher level, of course, the experience of writing helps make clear how language may be structured to express ideas in writing (MacGinitie, 1991, p. 58).

Meaningful and functional use of written language is enhanced when readers attend to speech sounds at the level of the phoneme and use resulting discoveries about phonemes and letters of the alphabet to guide their writing and reading (Richgels, Poremba, & McGee, 1996, p. 633).

For these reasons every child who comes to my room writes, kindergarten through grade 6.

As a warm-up activity during each session, children seat themselves and individually write a sentence. My rule is that the sentence must contain at least the same number of words as the child's age. When the spelling of a word is unknown to a child, she is asked to "sound it out." I ask children to say the target word out loud slowly. Or, if there are articulation issues, I will say the word myself and model sounding it out. Peers may also help with spelling. Children can help each other sound out words or point out the word on my Word Wall if it is there. (First graders can be quite excited when the Word Wall begins to make sense to them and they can read a growing number of words on it.) In addition, there are dictionaries which older students may use. But for the reasons cited above my primary emphasis is on sounding out words.

When a sentence has been completed, the child must read it to me twice for fluency, pointing to the words as they go. Then they count out the number of words to prove that they have reached the minimum goal.

Kindergarten and first grade children (and those who are severely limited in independent writing) dictate their sentences to me. Using classic language-experience technique (Hall, 1981; Stauffer, 1970), I record exactly the language that I am given, saying each word as I write it in clear, appropriately sized print. As I do this I am getting an ongoing language sample and I am also monitoring articulation errors and noting error locations for later work. Once the beginner's sentence is composed in this way, I model a finger-point reading of it. The child then reads it back twice, pointing to the words. For children who have difficulty with matching spoken to written words, I am right there to catch and support them through an accurate finger-point reading of their sentence. This necessary beginning reading skill (Morris, 1983) is not always well-established among my younger students. If students are pointing to one word while saying another, they cannot use their emerging phonic skill (e.g., beginning consonant knowledge) to assist them with word recognition (Morris, Bloodgood, & Perney, 2003). Kindergarten and first grade teachers are not always able to give the kind of individual attention to children who need to learn this task. When the dictated sentence has been read correctly twice, the child copies it (beneath the dictated sentence) and the sentence sheet is entered in the child's work folder.

The sentence writing (or sentence dictation task) serves to get students seated and on task at the beginning of each session. But it also reinforces a host of skills. Those who are writing are discriminating phonemes to sound out beginning consonants, medial vowels, and final consonants, creating first words and then complete sentences. Those who cannot yet write are reinforcing concept of word--accurate finger pointing--and they are picking up sight words. For example, Christopher, a first grader and an emergent reader who has just been labeled learning disabled, had been absent for more than two weeks. On his first day back Christopher sat down, opened his work folder and read his last dictated sentence word-for-word with accurate finger-pointing.

Children with articulation difficulties are writing sounds that are (or will be) addressed in their speech therapy. The child who has difficulty with the /th/ sound, for instance, may write "fum" for thumb. I am thus able to document a trouble spot and spend time on it in speech therapy. Further, because I have acquired an understanding of developmental spelling, I am also able to monitor the plausibility of children's errors and observe and intervene if students fall into

confusion and begin to use unproductive strategies like guessing at spellings rather than sounding through words.

Many of my students take on sentence length as a challenge and compete with each other to write the longest sentence in the class. One kindergarten boy dictated a complete sentence containing forty words, and my second graders may write entire pages. A dictated sentence is only judged too long if the child cannot control it during the rereadings.

Sentence writing has evolved into other kinds of writing, as well. Some students create journals of daily activities at home and at school, while others create stories or write about themselves and their feelings. Dialogue journals have also grown out of this. Students may write to each other and pass notes back and forth while I am doing individual therapy at the speech mirror. One group of second graders types their collaborative story composition onto the computer. These stories are saved, copied, and illustrated. Then the story may be read again to the teacher or to classmates or parents.

The parents of my students are interested in the evolution of their children's writing. Some have come by specifically to read their children's sentences, journals or stories. In them they can see evidence of evolving skill in the spelling of words as the children become more complete and accurate in rendering them. They can see growing control over sentence forms and increasing productivity. And they can see handwriting improvement over time.

Group Dictations and Group Compositions

Much of the work of speech language pathologists is focused on correcting expressive difficulties. Expressive problems can be seen when children use incorrect verb tenses, use telegraphic speech, begin sentences with him instead of he, or have difficulty explaining what activity they just finished. Expressive problems can also be seen when children cannot form proper questions, cannot retell or sequence stories, or are too quiet. Such children benefit from tasks that support them in developing fuller, more expressive and accurate language. One of the most useful activities that I know of in this context and one that I have used for years is a small group language experience dictation. These group dictated stories are a richer and more developed form of the individual dictated sentences described above.

True to language-experience precepts, I encourage students to create a story that I record in print; and I write down exactly what is said, errors included. Therefore when a child with past tense -ed problems says "My mom pick me up," I write it down. As we read back the sentence before going on to the next, she may catch her error; if not, one of her classmates may. If the error still passes unnoticed, there is a third opportunity: the editing phase when I ask children to proofread sentences looking for specific errors. Once an error has been identified, we make necessary changes and practice the corrected version of the text. Now I have a written record of the error occurring in free speech, and we have a self-corrected form of the child's own language to work with. (If the error is not caught, it will be left for that day. It will be brought up again during a different therapy session when I target past tense -ed.) After each composition, each member of the group will finger-point read the text aloud, with a level of assistance appropriate

to skill level. In this way, the group hears and reads along through the story three to four times. For younger students, this gives the opportunity to absorb sight vocabulary; for more able students, the repetition promotes fluency (Samuels, 1979). Each group's story is then printed and shared with each of the other groups, regardless of their grade.

I continue to use these stories to focus on particular skills. We play games with the stories for points, counting sentences, capital letters, verbs, nouns, homonyms, synonyms, and the like. Groups will even compete to see who can find the problem/solution to the stories when they are composed using a conventional story form.

I encourage 3rd through 6th graders to collaborate on writing their own stories. Each child chooses a different color marker (to identify individual sentences), and together they choose a topic and begin writing on the marker board. Each student reads his sentence aloud after he writes it so the others will see and hear what has been written. Corrections can be made if errors are discovered during the reading. Reading the sentence aloud helps with proofreading and with decisions about word choice and style (Cramer, 1978), but it also helps cue the next writer into what might logically follow in the sequence. On one occasion my principal observed one of these writing groups creating a story. She told me how surprised she was that the children could naturally pull the story together into a coherent sequence while there were four different voices composing the story.

I ask that these group stories contain at least six to ten sentences. I seldom have to remind them of this, because their interest in sharing in the creation of plot leads them regularly to exceed my minimum. In fact, the larger problem lies in bringing stories to a timely conclusion. Once the story is complete, I ask questions about the story and students must read back or identify the part of the text that answers the question. Next I type the story on my computer, print and distribute copies to all of the classes that week. The story also remains on the board for several days, and I find many students reading it out loud when they come into the classroom and wanting to know who wrote it.

Conclusion

The traditional language arts activities that I have integrated into my daily work, are somewhat novel in a speech-language setting. Although my professional organization, the American Speech, Hearing, and Language Association, (ASHA) has recently defined literacy problems as part of the Speech-Language Pathologist's responsibilities, the direction I have taken comes from my own studies in reading and the language arts. These new methods have stimulated interest and excitement among my students, and they have given me new and productive ways of working with speech and language difficulties. My work is primarily an instructional and therapeutic intervention for students with linguistic weaknesses, but it is also an important source of support for busy classroom teachers who have little time for individual remedial work.

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Crossing from Theory to Practice: A Circle of Culture

Bernadine Skowronski

Socio-economic status and race impact education in the United States in a variety of ways but particularly in determining the standards of language used in schools. This emphasis on one accepted conventional form of language often leaves behind students who do not come from the social class or race that this standard represents. Because of this, researchers such as Gee (1996), Freire (1985; 1993), Heath (1983), Shor (1980; Shor & Freire, 1987), and Comber (2001) repeatedly emphasize the need to work with students at their individual education levels, in their home communities, and using their language, that is, in the language that the students naturally use at home and in their communities. These researchers have also promoted a conscious awareness of both the power of language and the political nature of education and how these affect schools and students.

Inspired by the work of these scholars and that of Elizabeth Peavy (2000), I facilitated a circle of culture with a group of GED students at an adult school located in a municipal housing authority neighborhood of a large midwestern city. Drawing on the work of Freire and Macedo (1987), a circle of culture is defined within this paper as a gathering of people interested in identifying an issue they believe is important in their lives, studying it to understand its affect on them more fully, and working to change the ways that it affects their thinking and their lives.

The participants named the project CUPS, which stands for Communicating, Understanding, Participating, and Striving and represents the participants' goals both for themselves individually and for the group. The participants also chose the theme of the circle of culture – Discrimination of Poor Neighborhoods – based on their response to dialogue about their community and its assets during an early session. The initial objective of this pilot study was to learn what happens when members of a group are allowed to share in defining the nature of the inquiry of a research project. In particular, did the participants: Take an active part in dialogues and conceptualization? Engage in additional writing or reading related to the themes? Change the behavior/attendance within the project or the GED program? Additionally, I wanted to learn how circles of cultures work and evolve and what it was like to facilitate one.

The philosophy of Paulo Freire was used to lead the participants through dialogue to critical understandings of issues studied and effects of social and political situations on issues (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This type of dialogue occurred within what Freire and Macedo (2001) called a Culture Circle. Hoff, Eddings, and Peavy (2001) described a circle of culture as participants in a community meeting in a circle to engage in dialogue and action, linking the participants' knowledge and actions to culture. The circle's participants do this through dialogue and conceptualization that leads to action. As action is undertaken, dialogue and conceptualization continue. (Freire, 1993; Hoff et al., 2001; Peavy, 2000) The dialogue requires much more than people talking to each other. Dialogue is the combination of reflection and action, beginning with the naming of the world through the spoken word. Freire and Macedo (1987) described this process as part of reading the world and a necessary first step towards literacy, or reading and writing words.

Critical Race Theory was selected as a lens for analyzing the data from this study due to the setting of the study in a public housing project where the residents are primarily African Americans. The key points of Critical Race Theory (CRT) include: the idea that racism is normal within the American society, the incorporation of storytelling to analyze the components of common culture that oppresses all minorities, the critique of liberalism, and the argument that Whites have been the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Under CRT, racism is argued to be inherent in the original rights built into the U.S.'s history since its beginning through property rights and their original restriction to White men.

Additionally, the stories of the minority peoples are brought out and given voice by their telling and this voice is another way of "naming one's reality" (Ladson-Billings, 1999). This point is similar to Freire's idea that naming one's reality is one of the first steps towards overcoming the oppression suffered by persons denied access to the systems of power in society, namely education, political power, and work that lifts the worker and his or her family out of poverty (Freire, 1993). The use of CRT helped to ensure that stories were given voice, listened to, and responded to within CUPS by all participants, and led to a growing awareness of commonality of experiences - the first step towards change.

Peterson (1999) connected CRT to adult education through the examination of the role that race has played in four key areas of education: curriculum, instruction, assessment and funding. She established the historical problems that many African American have faced and continue to face within the public school systems and adult education programs, such as approaches that "emphasize the poverty, the lack of skills, and the failures of the students enrolled" (p. 85). Peterson also maintained that storytelling – or sharing – can lead to trust and greater learning to overcome these difficulties. Within CUPS, the sharing of stories by all participants led to the development of a mutual trust and willingness to continue exploring the topics. These actions also led to the circle of culture addressing of the ideas of privilege.

Wildman and Davis (1996) described privileged group members as those persons whose characteristics and attributes are the same as the societal norms. They stated that because privilege is not visible to the holder, one from privileged groups, such as white and middle class, may not recognize the benefits that these power systems provide.

Privilege is an important concept within CUPS because I am a white woman who was raised in a lower-middle class household in another Midwestern city several hours distant from the community where CUPS took place. Although the lifestyle I grew up in was decidedly middle class, my parents were both from working class families and worked hard to make ends meet to raise four children solely on the salary of a retail store manager. While we were fortunate never to lack for the essentials, we did not have the more luxurious things that many of my friends and classmates took for granted, such as cable television, new school wardrobes every year, or a family cabin in the northern part of the state. Additionally, my status as a full-time graduate student who has lived, studied, and worked in many different regions of the United States and the world further distinguished me from the students at the school and made me aware that I must be conscious of the privileges of class and race that I had usually taken for granted and how these privileges affected my interpretations of others' experiences, stories, and life in general. Furthermore, the theories of CRT and privilege took on a deeper, more personal, significance when I used them to consider the reception of many Americans to my boyfriend, a

Pacific Islander, whom I have repeatedly observed to be judged by strangers solely based on his skin color.

Setting

This circle of culture took place in the classroom of a social services agency in Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati is historically one of the most racially divided cities in the United States and recently experienced extensive racially-motivated protests. The agency is located within one of the city's municipal housing authority projects and the community served is primarily made up of African Americans. The agency is a non-profit organization that was started more than 50 years ago in response to community needs. It presently offers adult education, emergency relief for food and rental assistance, and other services, and typically serves several hundred clients each year in one capacity or another. Its goal is to help the community residents become more aware of the opportunities to become self-sufficient.

Participants

The participants of this circle of culture were all students in the GED program. A total of ten participants signed consent forms, eight African American women and two African American men, and only these participants' responses were included in the data analysis. Nine of the ten participants requested full confidentiality on their consent forms while the tenth waived confidentiality and requested that her name be used. Consequently, all names used in this article are pseudonyms except for Flora's. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to over 50. There was also a wide range in the levels and skills of the participants, with some participants performing at low levels, based on TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) results, and others almost ready to take the GED test. While the majority of the participants were native to the city, at least three were either from or had lived in other parts of the country. Participants took part in an average of five sessions of CUPS, with one attending only once, one attending three times, two attending four times, two attending five times and four attending seven times.

Methods

CUPS was a participatory action research (PAR) pilot project conducted through a circle of culture. Park (1993) describes participatory research in part as "ordinary people with problems to solve who form a partnership with the researcher, for learning about the dimensions of oppression, the structural contradictions, and transformative potentials open to collective action" (p. 3). This depiction of PAR echoes Freire's (Freire & Macedo, 1987, 2001) description of a culture circle. Within CUPS, the dialogic nature of the sessions encouraged the participants to share their own stories, experiences, and knowledge about discrimination, poverty and neighborhoods. Because this pilot only lasted for nine weeks, it was too short for action, a key component of PAR, to be undertaken. Yet, participants could plan action and conceptualize the possibility of change.

Although the overall theme of the circle emerged through participant dialogue, the initial research questions included: Would the participants take an active part in dialogues and conceptualization? Would participants engage in additional writing or reading related to the themes? Would participants change their behavior/attendance within the project or the GED

program? How do circles of culture work and evolve? What is it like to facilitate a circle of culture? While these questions helped to guide the initial analysis of the data, additional themes emerged from the data (Patton, 1990): project format, trust and respect, and commitment to the project.

The circle of culture met weekly for a period of nine weeks. All sessions took place in the classroom of the social service agency. I both participated in and observed all sessions of the circle of culture. Being aware of Wildman and Davis's (1996) description of privilege, I worked to create an environment within CUPS that ensured that the unconscious privileges granted by society did not silence the stories of the rest of the participants. Along with addressing the topic directly with the other participants, I regularly restated that the reason that we started each session with blank flip chart pages was because not only did the stories and ideas not lie solely with me, but that I did not necessarily have the same stories or ideas that they did, and that I looked forward to everyone sharing their experiences so we could all learn and grow together. I also brought in prompts, based on the weekly discussions, that were used as catalysts for additional discussion and broader understanding of the many components of the circle's themes. These catalysts included a variety of pictures, quotations, and stories that provided perceptions of the themes from many different angles.

All observations were recorded in field notes as soon as possible after the sessions. Personal reflections on the sessions and the meanings of the observations were recorded in a separate journal after the sessions and whenever additional ideas or questions emerged. Seven of the sessions were audiotape recorded with the consent of the participants. Indices were made of the audiotapes, but only selected portions of the audiotapes were transcribed. These portions were selected based on their relation to the key themes that emerged during data analysis. All artifacts created with the participants were collected for analysis, including flip chart pages and collages. Beyond what occurred during the sessions, no additional writing or reading related to CUPS themes took place.

Additionally, three of the ten participants from the circle were interviewed about their involvement in the project. These participants were selected based on their level of participation and consent to be interviewed. Every effort was made to ensure that different levels of participation were represented in the interviews. However, some participants did not agree to be interviewed. All interviews were audiotape recorded, lasted less than thirty minutes, and were conducted at a semi-private location in the school where the participant could express his or her opinions freely.

The data from this project were analyzed throughout the duration of the project via the interpretation of the collected materials and consisted of repeated reading of field notes, personal reflections, tape indices and multiple listenings of the taped sessions. This analysis led to several key themes important to the project – project format, trust and respect, and commitment. These themes were discussed with participants to check validity. The original research questions were also discussed with the participants for validity and relevance to the project. After data collection stopped, all of the materials were analyzed. All analysis was grounded in the qualitative research theory described by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Patton (1990).

The Process

Words Have Power.

The first session of the circle of culture began with a look at the words that the participants commonly used or heard in their homes, school, and community. This approach was used both as a way to generate ideas for the circle as well as to develop the participants' sense of community (Freire, 1993; Hoff et al., 2001). I started the circle by asking the participants to create their own lists of words they used or heard in these three categories and, later, to add their words onto group lists. Once everyone agreed that the common lists contained the most common words or phrases, we examined the lists for similarities and differences. After determining that "bad language" (signifying cuss words) appeared on all the lists, we discussed why this was the case. Among the ideas that emerged during the discussion was that "bad language" was often used to sound cool or just for fun, but that at times it was used to have power over the person addressed. I then guided the group through probing questions to consider how bad language can make a person feel and how these feelings can be different depending on who uses the words and the tone of voice used to say them. We ended the session by conceptualizing the idea of language as "the power that words have to heal or hurt whenever they are used."

What is a Community?

During the second session, prompted by my initial question about what a community is, we discussed the community where the school is located. The participants identified things that were in the community and things that they would like to change about the community. The participants also talked about whether each item on the lists had a positive or negative effect on the neighborhood. This led to a discussion about how sometimes community assets – such as the skills that the people who lived there had – were usually overlooked when people talked about the community. Similarly to what we noted during this session, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) stated that even the seemingly poorest areas of all have individuals and organizations that can be resources for change. The lists were then used to discuss possible themes of the circle of culture. When one of the participants suggested that we use the time to look at discrimination of poor neighborhoods, everyone quickly agreed. This became the overriding theme that was broken into individual parts and explored during the remaining sessions.

"We All Should be Treated Equal."

The third and fourth sessions were spent looking at the issue of discrimination. First, prompted by my question, "What is discrimination?" participants identified different types of discrimination, including work place, gender, age, race, sexual orientation, handicapped, and appearance. Next, we discussed different reasons why discrimination occurs. Reasons for discrimination that participants brought up included jealousy, ignorance, power, prejudice, education, and fear. We continued by matching the reasons to each category of discrimination that had been identified. This matching led to the realization that in all cases of discrimination there were many possible reasons why it occurred. Then, a series of pictures of different types of discrimination was used to further probe the ideas of discrimination, the victims of

discrimination, the effects it has, and how people should be treated. I found these images through an Internet search on discrimination and the pictures included signs prevalent during segregation, protestors for handicapped rights, an African American picketing outside a company that only hired whites, and Asian political picketers. Afterwards, we tried to identify who discriminates and quickly determined that everyone could potentially discriminate against others, even against those who were similar to them. Several of the participants noted that sometimes the discrimination practiced by other African Americans was worse than that of other races. This fits exactly with Freire's (1993) argument that after gaining power the oppressed sometimes become worse oppressors than the original oppressors. Finally, using quotations about discrimination to promote more discussion, the participants began to generalize about what it meant to discriminate or be discriminated against. These quotations were also found through an Internet search and included federal definitions, statements from religious groups, and a United Nations anti-discrimination pledge. Topics of these passages included prejudices, discrimination against Native Americans, and sexual discrimination. Towards the end of session four, Mercy, a woman in her thirties, summarized the discussion with these words, "No matter what you is, we all should be treated equal."

"I Never Knew Poverty was All This."

During sessions five and six, the circle of culture looked at the idea of poverty. First, I prompted discussion by asking "What is poverty?" This led us to generate a list of what it meant to be poor. This list included ideas such as not having insurance, education, money, a home, or good health. With more prompting through my probing questions, the participants expanded the list to include other forms of poverty, such as the lack of morals, spirituality, friendships, or family ties. Using this list, we tried to categorize the kinds of poverty, which led some participants to realize that poverty is not just the lack of money. We determined that poverty could be monetary, spiritual, social, or educational. I then provided the participants with additional prompts to explore different concepts of poverty, including a story about one woman's life in poverty, government definitions of poverty, and several quotations, including bible verses, poetry, and works from the World Bank's Internet collection of the literature of poverty. After discussing these prompts, the participants began to generalize their ideas, saying: "Poverty is a label," and "Poverty is a lack, sometimes of money and sometimes of other things." Finally, we tried to make connections between poverty and discrimination, however this was not explored fully. After these sessions, Mercy stated, "I never knew poverty was all this."

Neighborhood or Community?

During session seven, the key theme was neighborhood. We revisited the ideas about community from session two and compared them to what makes up a neighborhood. We determined that the two words did not mean the same thing because a neighborhood is often defined by geographical boundaries whereas a community is not. Several participants also said that communities are usually united around something while neighborhoods might not be. Some participants shared their personal experiences with neighborhoods and communities, both locally and in other cities, and generalized about why each might form. In particular, the participants brought up the formation of gangs within their neighborhood and in other areas of the city. Reasons given for these gangs being formed were:

“Identity”
“Security”
“For the lack of what [they’re] not getting at home”
“Just to be tough”
 “[To] gain a reputation”

At the end of the session, I asked the participants to make connections between the key themes of poverty, discrimination, and neighborhoods. One of the ideas that they came up with was that titles are deceiving, because neighborhood names were used as a way to describe stereotype areas as rich or poor while not everyone living in those different areas fell into the category used to describe them.

Tying It All Together.

Sessions eight and nine were used to bring closure to the pilot study. During session eight, the participants created collages of their ideas about discrimination, poverty, and/or neighborhoods and shared them with the rest of the circle. Only three of the five participants present during this session actually created collages, the other two said that they were unable to find pictures or words that they wanted to use and spent most of the session flipping through the magazines and pointing out images to the participants sitting around them. The completed collages included images of unity between peoples of every color and the need for all peoples to have relationships. The following transcription of Emerald sharing her collage, chosen because of the way she expressed these concepts, is an example of this:

...And basically just picked out, like, articles on racism, like back in, like, the 1960s and all the boycotting that they did. Umm ... [Pointing to words she'd cut out] Be yourself. ... Um... And this [pointing to a picture], like, picture of the bubble gum... ‘cuz I cut it out to look like a heart and love, I mean it's just pictures of all different colors, like bubblegums and, that could be us. You know, who are we in all these colors? You know. [Pointing to a picture] All kidding aside. This is basically people who think racism doesn't exist, you know, you're kidding yourself because it does. [Pointing to a story headline] Black and discrimination. [Pointing to a picture] The little, you know, what do you call those things, a banner, I guess, and it says, “Make love not war.” And, um, [pointing to a picture] a little boy that looks like he's very sad and I thought that he was sad about racism. And, um, [pointing to a sentence] “Remember when you wanted to change the world?” You know, because I think that we'd like to change racism. I know that I would, I would like to change it if I could.

The last session was used to discuss the preliminary findings from the data analysis. Participants had the opportunity to respond to both the preliminary research questions and the themes of project format, trust and respect, and commitment that had emerged through analysis of the transcripts of the previous sessions. These findings are discussed in the next section.

Findings

The first finding of this project was that active participation in dialogues and conceptualization varied from week to week. From analysis of the transcripts, it appeared that the participation levels often depended upon who was at the session. During some sessions one or two participants dominated the dialogue. There were also a few participants who rarely volunteered their stories but would share when asked directly for their input.

When a participant dominated the discussion for a length of time, others usually would decide that they did not agree with what was being said and begin to talk over that participant's comments. At times, this led us to close the classroom door to ensure that no one else in the building was disturbed. The first time that this happened, I was unsure whether or not I should step in and restore order or just let the participants continue and see what happened. I decided not to take any actions and the participants eventually settled themselves down and the group discussion rose to a higher level of understanding overall. Thereafter, whenever the discussion started to get lively, I just closed the doors and let it happen. I did, however, urge the participants to respect one another's comments and opinions.

The audiotapes and transcripts also revealed that contributions to the dialogue were very much couched in storytelling to share personal experiences with discrimination, poverty, or belonging to a community. This sharing through stories, a key component of CRT, led to a community of trust within CUPS. Moreover, through their stories, the participants began to realize the similarities of their experiences and to develop a greater awareness of how their actions and those of others fit within the greater society. That is, they began to recognize their realities (Freire, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1999). I also shared stories within CUPS, including stories about my storage locker in my apartment complex being broken into and the responses of both White and African Americans to my boyfriend and me when we go out. These stories helped the participants realize that many other people, of all different races, also confront many of the same kinds of experiences that they do. Overall, as CUPS continued and the participants became comfortable with the format, participation levels increased and so did the number of stories told.

When asked about their participation in CUPS, most of the participants said that taking part in CUPS did not affect their normal attendance at school. However, Flora, a participant in her mid-fifties, reported that not only had she altered her personal schedule in order to take part in CUPS, the project also was encouraging her to take advantage of other activities within the school that previously she had ignored, such as programs on raising children. She also said that she was taking ideas from both CUPS and these other programs home to discuss or use with her children and grandchildren. Flora's actions exemplify Freire's (1993) conception of education as a liberatory practice. Her reflections on what she was learning led her to actively and consciously work to transform her world both by participating more frequently and by sharing her new knowledge and ideas at home.

Project format was another important factor of the project because the participants were able to sit anywhere in the classroom that they wanted rather than required to all sit together at

one grouping of tables like during the classes at the school. In this way, students not sure whether or not they wanted to participate could join in if they decided to. This format evolved based on participation patterns and where participants were seated when a session began, because often participants sitting at tables away from the traditional “class table” did not want to move, and since all the tables were close, discussions could take place easily without requiring them to move. One example of this occurred during the second session. Emerald had been working at the table closest to the blackboard (where classes typically gather) when it was time for CUPS to begin. She literally gathered up her work and moved to a different table, saying as she moved “I’m not going to participate.” However, the dialogue that occurred during the session interested her and by the end of the session she was one of the most active participants – even suggesting the overall theme that CUPS chose to work with. After the session, when asked about her behavior by another participant, Emerald said, “I didn’t think it would be this interesting.”

Additionally, almost every week someone who was sitting away from the majority of participants would add a story or respond to something that was said within CUPS. When this occurred, I tried to ensure both that the new participant was included throughout the rest of the session and that the individual was informed about the research project so consent could be obtained. If participation had been restricted to only those in a particular part of the classroom, the project would have been limited in both size and richness of the dialogues. The project format also emphasized that all participants had knowledge, not just me as the facilitator, another key part of Freire’s (1993) concept of liberatory education. Thus, we all learned from each other and became jointly responsible for the project’s process.

Trust was another key theme that emerged during data analysis. We had to trust each other to respect one another’s ideas and not to talk negatively about each other’s experiences. Additionally, the participants had to trust that my intentions were really what I said that they were and that I was not going to use what they said against them in any way. This trust was gained slowly, through the sharing of our stories, as the sessions took place and nothing happened because of something that was said, even when it reflected negatively on the school staff. Finally, the participants also had to trust that I really did come to them without answers already predetermined for the topics. This was particularly important to one of the male participants, Justice, who over several sessions asked me what ideas I had about the topics. Because I had tried to ensure that I did add any ideas that I had that were not already mentioned to the discussion, I asked Justice why he kept asking me what my ideas were. His reply was: “You know how some people, they already have their little whatever mapped out and come to class.”

The last finding was that the commitment of all participants was an important factor in CUPS. Without the participants’ commitment to attend the sessions and to actively engage in the dialogues and conceptualizing, the project would not have succeeded. Additionally, as we arrived at the last sessions and began to look forward to the next phase of the project, Mercy pointed out that the next phase would require even more commitment than this one if CUPS was going to take action. My commitment to CUPS was also important because I had to spend a lot of time outside of the sessions considering the many possibilities that could occur in the discussions and finding as wide a variety of prompts as possible to promote a wide exploration of the themes.

Implications

As Peterson (1999) discussed, approaches that emphasize the knowledge that the adult students already have can make a difference. Allowing these students the opportunity to share their stories led to trust between the students and me and strengthened the sense of community within the school. Projects similar to CUPS should be used more frequently to emphasize the knowledge the students already have in order to contribute to the potential for success in adult education programs and beyond. These projects could provide students with opportunities to learn research skills, work on their writing, and read a wide variety of materials – activities that would help the students with their studies and also, potentially, to develop job skills.

Although CUPS has been a short-term entry into the use of PAR in an adult education program, it has shown that, when given the opportunity to define the direction of their education, adult students are interested in participating. Additionally, CUPS has shown that adult students will actively participate in these projects when they are confident that no repercussions will occur based on the stories they share. CUPS has shown that at least some participants may increase participation and attendance in other school-related activities. Thus, more projects of this nature should be attempted in order to further engage the adult learners in their education. Future researchers should investigate the impact such programs have changing participant's actions in their cultural settings.

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What Preservice Teachers Learn by Using Games in Tutoring.

Mary Timothy, Ed.D.

Arthur Quickenton, Ph.D.

Gayle Turner, Ph.D.

With the concern and movement towards better teacher preparation, universities are implementing tutoring as one possibility for early field experience. Tutoring allows preservice teachers to explore different opportunities and ways to practice strategies and methods to help children learn. Research has been conducted about tutoring in regards to successful tutoring programs. Often children have difficulty learning concepts (Murphy, 2000). The literature supports the use of games as a tool to help children learn and apply concepts. This study examines the potential benefits preservice teachers receive from using games as a tool in helping children comprehend concepts during tutoring in math content area reading. The researchers argue that games are typically under utilized in K-12 classroom instruction and in tutoring. This paper explores this assertion through an examination of relevant literature and research data. Central to this task is the development in preservice teachers of an understanding of the use of games in learning. Components of this understanding include several key elements: (a) games can provide an introduction to a subject, (b) game playing, and the creation of self-generated games can encourage the development of higher order thinking skills, (c) games can provide drill and practice in the selected subjects, and (d) games can be used as a form of assessment.

Movements for educational reforms call for changes in teaching practices, yet it is difficult to change core teaching beliefs and practices (Borko, Flory, & Cumbo, 1993). Change can begin in teacher education programs. This study considers what preservice teachers learn from creating and playing games as a form of tutoring in math. The study examines preservice teachers tutoring fieldnotes/reflections and surveys.

Games

Games have a history of use in some fields of K-12 instruction, particularly in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms (Domke, 1991; Holt, 1995). According to Holt (1995), the use of age-appropriate games enhances instruction in language and literacy development. Domke (1991) reported on ESL instruction in the former Czechoslovakia, where supplies were extremely limited. Both teachers and students created and played games for the purposes of enhancing learning and the games served as a means of assessment of student learning.

Games used as an introduction to a topic or subject can help student reinforce background knowledge. In a study by Hitchcock (2002), he used role-playing games to introduce a time period/topic to be studied. The game motivated his students and they exceeded Hitchcock's expectations. Hitchcock found that playing the game should not be

too complicated and should be interesting enough so that students will spend more time playing the game rather than learning how to play the game.

Game playing has also been conceived of as a form of learning by theorists such as Piaget, Montessori, and Vygotsky. Piaget (1962) believed that it is through various forms of play that children both construct knowledge and promote their cognitive development. Montessori (1912) noted that play is children's work, while Vygotsky (1978) argued that play is central to both the emotional and cognitive development of the child. When children themselves create games to play, they choose the rules they wish to use to negotiate their play, and hence internalize those rules in the process of creation and implementation of the game (King, 1986). Creating and playing games teaches children reasoning strategies and skills; while playing manufactured games such as checkers, according to Fernie (1988), teaches offensive and defensive alternatives within the clear conceptual frame of the game. Games also can motivate children intellectually. Many researchers have found that games motivate students in mathematics by providing them with an enjoyable structure for recalling and restructuring their knowledge (Carr, 1990; Clark, 1997; Fernie, 1988; Hartog & Brosnan, 1994; Hitchcock, 2000; Suydam, 2000).

One key to mastering math is frequent practice. However, repetitive math worksheets are tiresome to both students and teachers (Clark, 1997). Games provide the opportunity to practice math and critical thinking skills (Clark, 1997; May, 1998). The games can be as simple or complicated as teachers or students desire. Clark, (1997) discovered that when her students employed successful strategies during the games, the students were able to employ the same strategies when taking the exams.

Often teachers will use games as a form of drill and practice. May (1998) stated that key to mastering math was frequent practice. She found that by using games as a form of practicing math, students retained the concepts. Bingo (commercial or teacher-made) can be used to reinforce number recognition and concentration (Holt, 1995). ESL classrooms will use Word Bingo (teacher-made) to help students listen for vocabulary words used in a song (Domke, 1991). Math Bingo, teacher-made, was used by a Chicago elementary school to practice solving math problems.

Games allow instructors to assess student learning. In traditional forms of reading assessment, it does not allow instructors to see the process involved in reading, but lets the teacher infer how the student has comprehended (Powell, 1989). In traditional math assessment, the answer is either right or wrong (Lampert, 1988). The math process may not even be seen by the assessor.

Standardized testing has been on the increase across the nation (Powell, 1989; Clark, 1997). Both Presidents Clinton and Bush have proposed national standardized testing in math. According to Ratnesar & Ghosh (1997), "Education experts agree that American public schools badly need tougher—and higher—national standards. National testing would enable parents and schools to measure an individual student's performance against a common yardstick." (p.68) However, those opposed to national testing claim that results from math tests (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997; Wiggins, 1990) will classify poor

and minority students as educationally inadequate. A second concern is that the test results will weigh too heavily in the decision to promote a child to the next grade (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997). National testing also could label schools and teachers with low performances on tests, as failures without examining other important factors such as parental socioeconomic status, per pupil expenditure, classroom size, and intervention programs (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997). With this kind of pressure on performance, some teachers “teach towards the test.” Opponents argue that standardized math texts only examine rote memorization; that is, the recall of what is learned out of context (Nikiforuk, 2001; Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997; Wiggins, 1990), while critical thinking skills and application are not assessed (Wiggins, 1990). Therefore, teaching to these tests results in a curriculum that is filled with worksheets and rote memorizations and devoid of problem solving and critical analysis. Introducing games into such a curriculum will increase student opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving. In addition, game playing can be used in assessing higher order student learning.

Often teachers and researchers look for “authentic” assessments to discover what children are really learning from math (Powell, 1986; Wiggins, 1990). Authentic assessment requires a *performance* of acquired knowledge in pursuit of a worthy task, whereas traditional modes of assessment, such as standardized tests, assess what students *recognize or recall*. Wiggins (1990) contends that teaching which employs authentic modes of assessment improves both teaching and learning; students perform what they have learned, while teachers can directly see how instruction relates to performance. We see game playing as a movement toward more authentic assessment.

Preconceived Knowledge in Preservice Teachers

Students enter teacher preparation programs for many personal reasons, a good number are personal. They come to these programs with existing ideas about teaching and content areas (Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991; Pajares, 1993). One idea students bring with them is the fear of math, and the teaching of math. Preservice teachers may also believe that teaching is transmitting knowledge by standing in front of the class and manipulating what information is shared, or knowing how to present knowledge in such a way that learning appeals to students (Feiman-Nemser, 1985; Holt-Reynolds, 1994). Preservice teachers that enter teacher preparation programs have explicit and idealistic ideas of what teaching is from personal histories as students (Blanton, 1999; Carr, 1998; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). These preconceived ideas held by preservice teachers must be challenged to provide for the possibility of new ways of thinking about teaching and learning. If we expect new teachers to be well informed and to have the flexibility to deal with new classroom situations, critical thinking must then be an essential component of preservice teacher education programs (Knapp, 1992).

Tutoring

Tutoring gives preservice teachers a small taste of teaching in a one-to-one situation by reading with students, supervising homework, and stimulating learning. Tutoring allows preservice teachers to become involved in schools with students

(Fischetti, Maloy, & Heffley, 1988) and apply what they are learning (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000). It fosters the opportunity to learn how to connect with individual students and how to design instruction that will support their learning (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000). Tutors can put into practice what is being learned in the college classroom, by working with individual students while not having the responsibility of dealing with whole classrooms (Korthagen, 1985).

Bates (1984) studied the effects of tutoring reading with secondary education majors. These preservice teachers found tutoring contributed to their professional growth by practicing what they learned, while at the same time reducing anxiety, and promoting positive attitudes. Data suggests that preservice teachers engaged in tutorial programs learned not only about students but themselves through developing higher thinking skills, better communication skills, and good work habits along with reviewing content material (Gausted, 1993; McIntyre, Bryd, & Foxx, 1996). The benefits of tutoring increase if reflection is included in the experience and program (McIntyre, Bryd, & Foxx, 1996; Pajares, 1993). Tutoring provides an excellent opportunity for preservice teachers to explore personal inquiry regarding their beliefs, strategies, methods, and learning.

Method

According to Bogden & Biklin (1998), "If you want to understand the way people think about their world and how those definitions are formed you need to get close to them, to hear them talk, and observe them in their day-to-day lives" (p.32). Qualitative methods were chosen as a form of naturalistic inquiry, which allowed the researchers to approach the setting and the participants without a predetermined hypothesis (Patton, 1990). In the setting in which we collected data, the tutors were assigned to work with students one-on-one, or in small groups.

Participants

Participants in this study were nine preservice teachers enrolled in their first educational course in one of the larger teacher education programs in the southeastern United States. This course included a field experience in tutoring. The tutors represented a variety of subject and grade levels foci. Before students are assigned to their tutoring position in the public schools, they were required to attend workshops to help them prepare them for tutoring. During the workshops, math and reading instructional strategies, and alternative assessments strategies were presented and discussed. In the final workshop, tutors were asked to work in groups and role-play tutoring in math or reading. At tutoring sites, games were available for tutors to use with students.

Nine preservice teachers submitted on-line teacher belief surveys and student biographies at the beginning of the semester. They were collected and examined using content analysis to establish which preconceived ideas were exhibited by the tutors. Tutors' individual on-line fieldnotes/reflections were collected and examined for emerging themes. Three raters independently examined the data for common themes regarding their attitude towards games and the use of games during tutoring. After the

raters completed the independent analysis, they met to discuss the findings and emerging themes.

Data Analysis

For this study, multiple sources provide data: (1) Teacher Beliefs survey, (2) student biographies, and (3) student fieldnotes/reflections. The first two established preservice teachers thinking (preconceived ideas) prior to tutoring. The latter is a reflection of changing perceptions.

The literature establishes that students came to teacher preparation programs with pre-existing ideas regarding teaching. Prior to tutoring, tutors completed a Teachers Belief the survey. The survey focused on tutors' beliefs about learning, through asking for response questions such as: What is learning? How do children learn? What is teaching? Why do children succeed or fail? Through their responses to the questions on the survey, the tutors were encouraged to express what they thought they knew about teaching and children.

Student biographical surveys were completed by students at the beginning of the course. The biographies included students' educational histories, their beliefs and perceptions regarding teaching, and reflections on their relationship to schooling. The biographical survey focused on individual preservice teacher's experiences in public school. The survey asked questions such as: What topics and subject matter were easy and difficult for you to learn and why? Describe your prior school. What strengths do you think you have that will assist you in becoming your ideal of the "good teacher"?

Once the tutoring began, the tutors were required to post fieldnotes/reflections weekly through a course webpage. The nature of the fieldnotes/reflections varied from student to student. Some tutors submitted fieldnotes which were short and descriptive, while others showed depth and perception. Nonetheless, the fieldnotes/reflections revealed students' perceptions about what they were doing, and why. Approximately fifty fieldnotes, from the nine participating students, were examined. The fieldnotes/reflections asked students to examine their experiences after each tutoring session through a series of motivating questions in a structured manner.

The two survey results (biographical survey, and Teacher Belief survey), and fieldnote/reflections were compiled and coded for emerging themes and categories. Responses were tabulated across students by questions and general patterns were described.

Results

The Teacher Beliefs surveys gathered data from nine tutors participating in after-school tutoring. Their responses about teachers and learners indicated certain preconceived ideas of teaching:

- (1) Teaching is the transmission of knowledge: that is, "I teach-you learn."

(2) Teaching is what it was for me in my own schooling. Seventy-seven percent of preservice teachers replied that learning was the gaining of knowledge. One tutor wrote, "Learning is the ability to gain knowledge, experience, and 'instinct.' This may seem like a dictionary definition but it is what I believe learning is."

(3) Learning is the processing of knowledge. Thirty-three percent claimed learning was through the process of knowledge. A tutor responded, "Learning is the ability to process information of a subject matter into understanding it."

(4) Children fail to learn largely through their own fault. Eighty-eight percent said it was the child's responsibility if the child failed to learn, sixty-six percent blamed teachers, and forty-four percent held parents responsible.

Reviewing tutor's ideas about teaching and learning revealed a focus on teachers, and on students being responsible for their own learning. When tutors responded regarding their own learning experiences via the student biographies, two areas were most evident in the responses: interest in subject matter and the qualities of the teacher. When asked why some subject matter was easy and others difficult to learn, 99 percent responded that subject interest was the key to succeeding and/or failure.

When asked about their strengths they have that will assist them in teaching, the answers varied. Forty-four percent said interest in people was their strength, while 33 percent said it was their knowledge base. However, 100 percent believed they were strong in their content area knowledge, while 33 percent believed content area knowledge would be a strength in their teaching. Prior to tutoring, the tutors believed that teaching would be easy if they cared enough about the students and had content knowledge. They thought that they would be able to go to tutoring and relate information and the students would learn.

In analyzing the fieldnotes several patterns emerged. Some of the reflections shed light on what was occurring with the tutors and their own learning. Five major themes emerged from the fieldnotes/reflections: (a) traditional teaching methods were appealing, (b) games were not learning, (c) games could be used as rewards and motivators, (d) there was a need to create games, and (e) games could be used to teach concepts. At the beginning of the semester, tutors did not believe games were teaching tools. In the early fieldnotes/reflections, most students referred to tutoring as re-teaching math using traditional methods such as using worksheets for repetitive practice. One student wrote:

My kids got extra practice on multiplication problems today because they all had a bunch of worksheets with multiplication on it. I hope they have a better understanding of this concept and will need my help even less next time on this subject.

Another tutor explained her process of helping children learn long division. She wrote:

One of the steps of long division is multiplication. It intrigues me to see my girls doing multiplication on their fingers. I am glad that they get the right answers, but

at the same time it saddens me to see that they had lost their speed in doing so. Next time I might drill them a little on multiplication to see where their skills are.

These tutors were exposed to worksheets and drill and practice as they learned mathematics in their own K-12 schooling, and as would be expected from the literature, often tutors rely on personal experiences to help them tutor.

Occasionally in tutoring, children will not need help with homework. This often frustrates tutors. One tutor wrote when she encountered this:

What has worked well for me is playing games with the kids. It is not fun for them or me to do their homework because usually they can just do it on their own. So, playing games has helped me to bond with them, but it is not tutoring.

Later in the semester, this same tutor discovered that she could combine games and tutoring.

I introduced the game, “dots” to them, and they caught on quickly and really enjoyed it. I felt great that I had taught them something, and they were having fun at the same time. The game involves strategy and using one’s mind, so it really did have an academic purpose. I noted one of the girls teaching the game to someone else later. I felt quite satisfied that I had passed something on that they had used.

At the outset of the tutoring experience, tutors were apprised that games were available at the tutoring site. Some tutors used them only as rewards and motivators; the idea that games could teach math concepts had not occurred to them, though the subject had been covered in the pre-tutoring workshops. One student reflected, “I am going to take away that twenty four game [homework assignment] with me and maybe use it for fun with the kids when they get done with their homework early.” Here a game was presented in a homework assignment and the tutor saw it as a game to use as a reward for getting work done early. Another tutor used games as a break from learning and doing homework. This tutor wrote:

I wanted to spend some time playing a game with my students to continue to show them that math is fun. Using the girls’ homework to show them to use reasoning skills, we were able to get two things done at once. The girls enjoyed the game of *Uno* as they needed a break from their homework before they went home.

The tutor continued to say that she had to constantly keep the girls on task while they were doing their math homework.

As the semester progressed, tutors views of games started to change, as reflected in the fieldnotes. Some tutors began to think about creating games to help teach a concept, or to use games as an alternative to worksheets. One tutor reflected:

I will create new challenging games dealing with numbers to increase her attention and awareness in math. This way she can relate to her homework along with fun number games and math won't be too boring for her.

Another tutor shared her ideas about starting to use games as a way to teach math. She wrote:

I was a little frustrated with the multiplication problems, because they are of course so easy and fast for me to do. I was trying to think back to how I had learned to do them so well once upon a time. I felt like I needed a game or something to help them understand what I was explaining.

Towards the end of the semester, students became more comfortable using games as a teaching strategy and games became a part of the tutoring experience. This was evident when tutors started playing games before and during tutoring and also bringing games they had created that related to the concept the students were learning. One tutor wrote:

When he was having trouble with math word problems, another boy took out some money and gave my student situations using the money. My student thought it was a game and loved it, not even realizing that he was learning a math skill at the same time.

Another tutor taught her students the game *Buzz*. She was hesitant about using the game, but found it was successful. She wrote:

Games can help a student learn things as much as a worksheet. Games will also entertain the student and the teacher more. This also allows teachers and students to interact and students to interact with one another if the group is big enough. I was nervous about this game with the fourth graders since it is somewhat challenging for adults who play. I look forward to playing it again.

Different tutors used different games to teach different concepts. One tutor used the game of *Crazy 8* to help her teach math. She reflected:

I wanted to show them how math can be fun by playing *Crazy 8's* and incorporating some math into the set-up of the games. During the game, I was able to integrate math problems such as how many cards they had in their hand by doing subtraction and division. By doing that, they were able to see a reason for math.

Not all the tutors learned that playing games enhanced tutoring in math and reading skills. However, many of the tutors did learn the importance of games in helping students understand concepts and problem solving.

For a significant number of preservice teachers in this study, tutoring opened their minds to new ideas about schools, teaching, learners, and assessment. Preservice teachers came to tutoring with preconceived ideas about teaching and children; however, the tutoring experience provided an opportunity for preservice teachers to re-examine their existing ideas regarding teaching and learning, and allowed them to construct meaning from these new experiences.

Discussion

This study examines what preservice teachers learn from creating and playing games as a form of tutoring in math. Tutoring impacted preservice teachers by encouraging them not only to view schools, teaching, and learners from the perspective of a professional entering his or her chosen field, but also to examine math strategies and practices. Preservice teachers had the opportunity to examine what they thought they knew, and to reshape their beliefs regarding the teaching and tutoring of math. Tutoring gave preservice teachers the opportunity (a) to confront and re-evaluate prior beliefs and preconceived knowledge and (b) to construct new meaning through sensory and cognitive experiences gained in the relationship between tutors and students, materials, and ideas. Tutoring placed preservice teachers into the schools where they examined homework and lesson plans given by teachers, and were able to participate first-hand in experiencing how children learn.

The two surveys and fieldnotes indicated that tutors learned about the work of teachers through homework the teachers assigned to their students. Some of the teachers were also available to the tutors for clarification and directions. Tutors did not see teachers implementing the curriculum during the school day, but they did experience developing and playing games to help students connect with homework. Often tutors were surprised by how students at different grade levels reacted to learning through games.

Initially, tutors described themselves as having a mastery of math content. However, once tutoring started, the tutors became frustrated as they tried to explain math to their students. Though the tutors themselves knew how to do the work, they were unable to explain *how* they were doing it. Tutors began to see that using games could help them explain something to their students by demonstrating math concepts. Tutors began to see how children learn; they began to learn what motivates children, and to understand what interests them. Some tutors confronted reconceptualizing teaching by considering the use of games as a learning strategy instead of as a reward. One tutor wrote:

She [the student] wants to get her homework done as much as she can and she doesn't allow time for us to do other things because she would rather finish her homework. My question arise[s], if it is better to finish her homework or is it better to provide extra time to play games and not finish her homework. I feel that I should allow time for us to play math games and apply what she is doing in class.

The exploration of methods and materials through tutoring was beneficial to tutors as they prepared to become teachers; one tutor found that making multiplication flash cards with her student was more beneficial to the students' learning than completing worksheets assigned as homework. Other tutors invented their own manipulatives for helping students complete worksheets.

Preservice teachers brought with them preconceived ideas regarding games and traditional methods of teaching and tutoring. Their initial ideas regarding education were rooted in their own schooling experiences (Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991; Pajares, 1993). When confronted with new ideas about playing games, preservice teachers reverted to their own schooling, where games were rewards for completing work early. Without constructive intervention, preservice teachers most likely will teach as they were taught. Tutoring was implemented as a required component of preservice teacher education to encourage students to look beyond their established beliefs and examine schooling through a teacher's eyes. The availability of games in a tutoring setting encouraged tutors to develop a revised conception of the nature and purpose of games.

Tutors also learned that simply telling, and then showing students how something is done was not sufficient. Tutors became frustrated when students did not understand what they were told. Tutors began to learn to create a learning situation around which the student was then able to construct meaning. Some tutors used manipulatives, games, context clues (shopping, making change, telling time) and drawing problems to help students understand math concepts and problems.

Most tutors initially believed there was a "formal" mode of teaching through which knowledge should be transmitted. Tutoring, perhaps, opened them up to the possibility that games, puzzles, and other activities, which for them were not commonly associated with teaching, were in fact beneficial to the students and themselves. Tutors mentioned they re-examined their earlier beliefs regarding the nature of teaching and the variety of methods available to help students learn what was presented. Initially, tutors were hesitant to include games for fear they would interfere with the students' homework; they saved games to serve as a reward when homework was completed. Once tutors began to try the different games available, they realized how math concepts were integral to the games. We believe this study points to avenues for assisting preservice teachers developing notions of teaching and learning that will encourage them to transcend notions of teaching as simply the transmission of knowledge.

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Keynote Address Presented at the American Reading Forum 2003

Literacy Research on Student Learning: What Counts and Who's Counting

Donna E. Alvermann

University of Georgia

Websites, newspapers, national broadcasts, and professional journals in education continue to draw large audiences for information about the federally legislated and controversial *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. In the year following its enactment a flagship report entitled *Every Child a Graduate* (2002) appeared on the Alliance for Excellent Education's website <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/EveryChildAGraduate/every.pdf>. The Alliance, a nonpartisan policy group located in Washington, DC, published the *Every Child a Graduate* framework as a means of highlighting the needs of middle and high school students—elements in our society that traditionally have been underserved by federal legislation.

Following the publication of *Every Child a Graduate*, two bills were introduced in Congress—the *Pathways for all Students to Succeed (PASS) Act* (S. 1554, available at <http://www.senate.gov/%7Emurray/news.cfm?id=207153>) and the *Graduation for All Act* (H.R. 3085, available at <http://hinojosa.house.gov/legislation/legislation.cfm?id=419>). These bills, which have yet to gain bipartisan support, nonetheless set the stage for President Bush's *Striving Readers Initiative*, a new \$200 million program that is part of the proposed FY2005 budget. [Note, however, that the amount Congress appropriated for this initiative was only \$24.8 million in Fiscal Year 2005 (J. Amos, personal communication, December 9, 2004)]. The *Striving Readers Initiative*, which is aimed at promoting adolescent literacy and effective reading interventions for secondary school students who read significantly below grade level, will provide funds to approximately 100 school districts for the implementation of demonstrative programs that have shown to be effective in improving adolescents' reading achievement.

Defining the Challenges

The active policy scene just encapsulated is partially fueled by the 2002 report on reading achievement from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)(National Center for Education Statistics, 2003), which indicates that approximately 25% of 8th and 12th grade students read at “below basic” levels. Translated, this means that 1 out of every 4 secondary school students tested could not identify the main idea, comprehend informational text passages, or elaborate on ideas found in the NAEP Reading 2002 passages. Looking more broadly across the age spectrum, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2003) estimates that approximately 10,000 literacy coaches will be required to meet the needs of close to 9 million 4th – 12th graders who read at what NAEP determines “below basic” level.

Although arguably persuasive, the NAEP Reading report's influence on policy makers has paled in comparison to the influence a report issued by the Manhattan Policy Institute on public high school graduation and college readiness rates in the United States (Green & Forster, 2003) has had. According to a study conducted by the Manhattan Policy Institute (Green & Forster), only 70% of all students in public high schools graduate from high school with a diploma. Every day approximately 3,000 adolescents drop out of school. In the 2002-2003 academic year, alone, close to 540,000 students left without graduating. Specifically, the study's findings (Green & Forster) include the following:

- Only 70% of all students in public high schools graduate, and only 32% of all students leave high school qualified to attend four-year colleges.
- Only 51% of all black students and 52% of all Hispanic students graduate, and only 20% of all black students and 16% of all Hispanic students leave high school college-ready.
- The graduation rate for white students was 72%; for Asian students, 79%; and for American Indian students, 54%. The college readiness rate for white students was 37%; for Asian students, 38%; for American Indian students, 14%.
- Graduation rates in the Northeast (73%) and Midwest (77%) were higher than the overall national figure, while graduation rates in the South (65%) and West (69%) were lower than the national figure. The Northeast and the Midwest had the same college readiness rate as the nation overall (32%) while the South had a higher rate (38%) and the West had a lower rate (25%).
- The state with the highest graduation rate in the nation was North Dakota (89%); the state with the lowest graduation rate in the nation was Florida (56%).
- Due to their lower college readiness rates, black and Hispanic students are seriously underrepresented in the pool of minimally qualified college applicants. Only 9% of all college-ready graduates are black and another 9% are Hispanic, compared to a total population of 18-year-olds that is 14% black and 17% Hispanic.
- The portion of all college freshmen that is black (11%) or Hispanic (7%) is very similar to their shares of the college-ready population (9% for both). This suggests that the main reason these groups are underrepresented in college admissions is that these students are not acquiring college-ready skills in the K-12 system, rather than inadequate financial aid or affirmative action policies.

Looking to Literacy Research to Address the Challenges

This paper reports on the status of research into exemplary literacy instruction in the intermediate, middle, and high school years (roughly from grades 4 – 12). Its focus is on addressing the challenges just described by looking for ways to bridge the achievement gap. This gap and how to bridge it is also the focus of a book I recently co-edited with Dorothy Strickland of Rutgers University (Strickland & Alvermann, 2004). The research literature that addresses the gap between basic and more advanced levels of reading growth among preadolescents and adolescents is concentrated largely in the areas of comprehension and vocabulary development. A smaller body of research looks at students' motivation and self-efficacy in learning with and from text. Less well researched but still important is the topic of cultural relevance in teaching.

Each of these topics is discussed in the first three sections of the paper, with particular attention given to research that has been compiled and published in the *Handbook of Reading Research: Volume 2* (Barr, Kamil, Mosenthal, & Pearson, 1991), *Handbook of Reading Research: Volume 3* (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr, 2000), the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (National Reading Panel, 2000), RAND Reading Study Group's *Reading for Understanding* (2002), *Adolescents and Literacy* (Kamil, 2003), and the National Reading Conference's position paper on *Effective Literacy Instruction for Adolescents* (Alvermann, 2001). In the last two sections of the paper, I focus first on redefining exemplary instruction from a New Literacies perspective and then on drawing implications for research and policy.

Comprehension and Vocabulary Development

As a member of the RAND Reading Study Group, I worked for over two years with other literacy teacher educators and researchers, as well as with individuals outside the teaching profession, to develop a list of principles for exemplary literacy instruction at the middle and high school level. Grounded in the existing literature on reading comprehension and vocabulary development, these principles include:

- Effective reading instruction provides students with a repertoire of strategies for fostering comprehension.
- Strategy instruction that is embedded within subject-matter learning, such as history or science, improves students' reading comprehension.
- Effective strategies for teaching students to comprehend complex materials include self-questioning, answering a teacher's questions, cooperative learning, comprehension monitoring, representing information using graphic organizers, making use of different text structures, and summarizing.
- The more explicit teachers are in their strategy instruction, the more successful low-achieving students are in their reading and learning.
- Vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to successful text comprehension, and it is especially important in teaching English language learners.
- Exposing students to various genres of text (e.g., informational, narrative, poetry) ensures that they do not approach all reading tasks with the same purpose in mind.

Drawn from some of the same studies on which the National Reading Panel (NRP) (2000) based its conclusions, these six principles were framed within a sociocultural perspective. Thus, unlike the NRP, which relied solely on experimental and quasi-experimental research studies that were designed primarily to test the effectiveness of certain cognitive processes in comprehending printed texts (often within controlled conditions that did not represent typical classroom learning environments), the RAND Reading Study Group took into account the work of socioculturally situated literacy practices as well (e.g., Dillon & O'Brien, 2001; Guzzetti & Hynd, 1998; O'Brien, 1998; Sturtevant, 1996).

However, because both the NRP and RAND Reading Study Group focused largely on comprehension studies in which individuals read in isolation of one another and recalled information in print-based texts, their respective reports reflect a rather narrow and restrictive view of the reading process. In fact, six of the seven categories of text comprehension that both

groups found effective—self-questioning, answering a teacher’s questions, cooperative learning, comprehension monitoring, representing information using graphic organizers, making use of different text structures, and summarizing—include strategies content area teachers might use if their view of the reading process were one in which students work by themselves to extract information from printed texts. As pointed out elsewhere (Wade & Moje, 2000), this rather narrow view of the reading process risks disenfranchising large groups of students for whom printed texts are not the primary means through which they learn.

Motivation and Self-Efficacy in Learning From and With Text

During adolescence, as well as later in life, it is the belief in the self (or lack of such belief) that makes a difference in how competent a person feels. Perceptions of self-efficacy are central to most theories of motivation, and the research on exemplary literacy instruction bears out the hypothesized connections. For example, providing clear goals for a comprehension task to students who are experiencing reading difficulties and then giving feedback on the progress they are making can lead to increased self-efficacy and greater use of comprehension strategies (Schunk & Rice, 1993). Similarly, creating technology environments that heighten students’ motivation to become independent readers and writers can increase their sense of competency (Kamil, Intrator, & Kim, 2000).

In an extensive review of how instruction influences students’ reading engagement and academic performance, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) concluded that various instructional practices, while important, do not directly impact student outcomes (e.g., time spent reading independently, achievement on standardized tests, performance assessments, and beliefs about reading). Instead, the level of student engagement (including its sustainability over time) is the mediating factor, or avenue, through which classroom instruction influences student outcomes. What this means is that teachers must take into account the degree to which students engage (or disengage) over time in a learning task.

Guthrie and Wigfield’s conceptualization of the engagement model of reading calls for instruction that fosters student motivation (including self-efficacy and goal setting); strategy use (e.g., self-monitoring for breaks in comprehension and analyzing new vocabulary); growth in conceptual knowledge (e.g., reading trade books to supplement textbook information, viewing videos, and hands-on experiences); and social interaction (e.g., collaborating with peers on a science project or discussing an Internet search with the teacher).

Cultural Relevance in Teaching

As anthropologists McDermott and Varenne (1995) have pointed out, all cultures (including schools) are historically evolved ways of “doing” life. Cultures teach people about what is worth working for, how to succeed, and who will fall short. To be concise, one might say cultures are all about *what counts*. Applied to education, this notion of culture takes on a special meaning. For example, what I might view as exemplary adolescent literacy instruction (and thus “what counts” in my preservice and graduate education classes) may differ substantially from what counts as exemplary practice in middle and secondary schools. Moreover, teachers, reading specialists, counselors, and administrators working within the same school may go about this

counting in different ways, to say nothing of how policy makers at local, state, and national levels may do their counting. Thus, it is important to ask not only *what* counts but also *who* is doing the counting—and is it culturally relevant?

Cultural relevance is undeniably important in contexts that are conducive to middle and secondary school learning. For example, Moore (1996) found in an in-depth synthesis of the qualitative research on strategy instruction that the type of strategy taught is less important than the nature of the context in which it is taught, and engaging students in cooperative learning activities is conducive to subject-matter learning. Not surprisingly, the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) found similar support for these practices in the experimental and quasi-experimental research literature on comprehension instruction.

Teachers working within contexts that are conducive to learning provide students with adequate background information and relevant hands-on experience as a means of preparing them to read a textbook, view a video, listen to a tape, or search the Web for related content (Alexander & Jetton, 2000). They also look for ways to integrate reading, writing, and discussion because they know that each of these processes reinforces the other and can lead to improved comprehension and retention of course content (Alvermann, Young, Weaver, et al., 1996; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001; Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). In sum, teachers create exemplary contexts for literacy instruction when they provide students with opportunities to use what they already know as a basis for learning new content in mutually supportive classrooms that celebrate diversity rather than view it as a problem to be overcome or “normalized.”

Urban schools with large numbers of minority students have on occasion sparked some of the most creative teaching to be found anywhere, especially among teachers who have both a deep understanding of a particular subject’s domain structure and a desire to make teaching that subject more responsive to students’ cultural knowledge. For example, Lee (1997; 2001) used *signifying*, which is a form of talk widely practiced within the African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speech community, to scaffold or facilitate her underachieving high school students’ literary responses to the mainstream canon. In writing about her experiences as a teacher in the Cultural Modeling Project that she developed, Lee (2001) explained,

Signifying...involves innuendo, double entendre, satire, and irony, and is dense in figurative language. It often involves forms of ritual insult, but is not limited to insult. An example of signifying might be ‘Yo mama so skinny she can do the hula hoop in a cheerio.’ (p. 122)

Although signifying is valued for language play in its own right, Lee used her ninth graders’ tacit knowledge of this discourse to help them hypothesize the meanings of various canonical texts (especially the tropes, ironies, and satires associated with these texts) and to change their hypotheses as evidence warranted. Lee took on the role of more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1986) as a means of guiding and supporting her class of underachievers as they learned to bridge differences in home and school cultural practices.

By emphasizing the ideological nature of literacy practices, Street (1995) opened the way for seeing them as socially constructed within seemingly absent but always present power relations, a view that is prevalent among individuals who subscribe to a New Literacies perspective (Luke & Elkins, 1998; New London Group, 1996; Willinsky, 1990)—one that takes into account how globalization, new information communication technologies, and multimedia are transforming our ways of knowing and making meaning in a digital world (Alvermann, 2002; Flood & Lapp, 1995; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). These changes are not lost on adolescents or their teachers, and they have significant implications for teaching and learning in content area classrooms.

The term *adolescent literacy*, broader in scope than secondary reading, is also more inclusive of what young people currently count as texts (e.g., textbooks, music lyrics, magazines, graphic novels, blogs, and hypertexts). In fact, it is the case that many adolescents of the Net Generation are finding their own reasons for becoming literate—reasons that go beyond reading to acquire school knowledge of academic texts (Bean & Readence, 2002; Hagood, 2002; Moje, 2000; 2002; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; Nixon, 1998; O'Brien, 2003). This is not to say that academic literacy is unimportant; rather, it is to emphasize the need to address the implications of youth's multiple literacies¹ for classroom instruction. For as Vacca (1998) observed years ago (and it is still the case today), "we know very little about what counts as literacy from adolescent perspectives or the literacies that adolescents engage in outside of an academic context" (p. xvi).

A small but growing body of research on youth's out-of-school literacy practices provides empirical evidence of the dynamic and permeable boundaries between age categories that were once thought separate and hierarchically in opposition to one another. Whether in home-schooling environments (Young, 2000), community-based after-school programs (Alvermann, Young, Green, & Wisenbaker, 1999; Garner, 2002; Hull & Schultz, 2001, 2002), youth organizations (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; Kelly, 2001), or digitally-mediated environments where youth are free to exchange information through anonymous networks (Duncan & Leander, 2000; Lewis & Fabos, 1999), age differences appear to have little influence over the ways in which adults and adolescents alike make use of various literacy practices. In fact, the research on youth's out-of-school literacies complicates the very notion of *adolescence*—a term Appleman (2001) refers to as a status category, or "a kind of purgatory between childhood and adulthood" (p. 1).

This research disrupts certain assumptions about what counts (or should count) as valued literacy practices among people of all ages, while not falling prey to an overly simplistic celebration of youth culture (Hagood, 2000; Hinchman, Bourcy, & Thomas, 2002; Hull & Schultz, 2001; Lewis & Finders, 2002; Sefton-Green, 1998). What this body of research does not provide, however, is an in-depth look at how young people go about developing a sense of critical awareness of the ways in which they are implicated in the production and consumption of popular media texts that do not privilege print.

With few exceptions (e.g., Dillon & O'Brien, 2001; Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2001; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 1999; Moje, 2000; Myers, Hammett, & McKillop, 2000), researchers

interested in adolescents' critical awareness have worked in classrooms where the curriculum is primarily print driven and necessarily constrained by school-based norms for teaching and learning. Thus, it remains unclear as to whether teaching youth to be critically aware using largely conventional print texts within the confines of a school curriculum can sufficiently prepare them to do the same with symbol systems other than print in out-of-school contexts. This concern is not trivial for it marks a very real tension in a post-typographic world (Reinking, Labbo, McKenna, & Kieffer, 1998).

Implications for Instruction and Policy

Although much is known about exemplary literacy instruction for adolescents, the challenge lies in implementing this research in ways that make sense to teachers whose plates are already full and overflowing. This is no small matter. In fact, remarking on the gravity of the challenge, members of the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) noted that despite a fairly well articulated knowledge base on the value of strategy instruction that fosters reading comprehension, such instruction continues to receive too little time and attention in most content area classrooms.

Important as strategy instruction is, there are larger needs not being met, perhaps due in part to a general reluctance among U.S. teachers to move beyond older programs and methods (Anders, 2002) in search of newer and more comprehensive ways of ensuring that youth's literacies in and out of school work together. For that to happen, as well as for the achievement gap to narrow, I propose the following:

- Instruction that is exemplary should take into account adolescents' personal and everyday literacies in ways that enable them to use those literacies as springboards for engaging actively in academic tasks that are both challenging and worthwhile. To accomplish this presumes an openness on educators' and policy makers' parts to think of adolescence as something other than "a kind of purgatory between childhood and adulthood" (Appleman, 2001, p. 1). It also presumes a willingness to view literacy teaching at the middle and high school levels differently. For as Lesko (2001) has so aptly stated, "if we want to see adolescence differently, we must first understand the ways we currently see, feel, think, and act toward youth, or we will merely tinker with the reigning practices" (p. 10).
- Instruction that is exemplary should be embedded in the regular curriculum and make use of the new literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003), including multiple forms of texts (print, visual, and digital) that can be read critically for multiple purposes in a variety of contexts. For this to become a reality, it will be important to teach students how to use relevant background knowledge and strategies for reading, discussing, and writing about a variety of texts. It will require the support of administrators and policy makers who buy into the idea that all students, including those who struggle to read in subject area classrooms, deserve instruction that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive to their needs.
- Instruction that is exemplary should address issues of self-efficacy and engagement. It will need to involve youth in higher level thinking as they read, write, and share orally. It will mean avoiding, as Wade and Moje (2000) recommend, a transmission model of teaching with its emphasis on skill and drill, teacher-centered instruction, and passive

learning, and substituting, instead, a participatory model of instruction that actively engages students in their own learning (individually and in small groups) and that treats texts as tools for learning rather than as repositories of information to be memorized and then all too quickly forgotten.

- Instruction that is exemplary will need to draw from a knowledge base built on both experimental and qualitative research. To continue current U.S. policies for funding and reporting research that largely ignore rigorous and systematically designed qualitative research, in effect, relegating it to the status of a pseudoscience (Gutierrez et al., 2002), will produce at best only a partially informed knowledge base. At worst, such policies will be detrimental to discovering what counts as literacy from adolescents' perspectives. These policies will also deter researchers from exploring ways to integrate the "what counts" into instructional practices that hold promise for bridging the achievement gap. A broadening, rather than a narrowing, of what counts as research on adolescent literacy instruction will produce a knowledge base on which to make instructional decisions that take into account both the "what works and for whom" questions of experimental designs and the "who's counting and why" questions of qualitative research.

Author Note

¹The assumption that literacy exists in the singular has been critiqued by Street (1995) and others (Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanic, 2000; Gee, 1996) for ignoring the socially situated aspects of one's multiple literacies (print, nonprint, computer, scientific, numeric) and their accompanying literate practices. A preference for literacies, as opposed to literacy in the singular, also signals a critique of the autonomous model of reading that has dominated Western thinking up to the present. The autonomous model views reading largely from a cognitive perspective—as a "natural" or neutral process, one supposedly devoid of ideological positioning and the power relations inherent in such positioning. Conceiving of literacies in the plural and as ideologically embedded does not require giving up on the cognitive aspects of reading. Rather, according to Street (1995), the ideological model subsumes the autonomous model of reading in an attempt to understand how reading is encapsulated within broader sociocultural structures (schools, governments, families, media) and the power relations that sustain them.

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Literacy Research on Student Learning: What Counts and Who's Counting

Donna E. Alvermann

University of Georgia

Websites, newspapers, national broadcasts, and professional journals in education continue to draw large audiences for information about the federally legislated and controversial *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. In the year following its enactment a flagship report entitled *Every Child a Graduate* (2002) appeared on the Alliance for Excellent Education's website <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/EveryChildAGraduate/every.pdf>. The Alliance, a nonpartisan policy group located in Washington, DC, published the *Every Child a Graduate* framework as a means of highlighting the needs of middle and high school students—elements in our society that traditionally have been underserved by federal legislation.

Following the publication of *Every Child a Graduate*, two bills were introduced in Congress—the *Pathways for all Students to Succeed (PASS) Act* (S. 1554, available at <http://www.senate.gov/%7Emurray/news.cfm?id=207153>) and the *Graduation for All Act* (H.R. 3085, available at <http://hinojosa.house.gov/legislation/legislation.cfm?id=419>). These bills, which have yet to gain bipartisan support, nonetheless set the stage for President Bush's *Striving Readers Initiative*, a new \$200 million program that is part of the proposed FY2005 budget. [Note, however, that the amount Congress appropriated for this initiative was only \$24.8 million in Fiscal Year 2005 (J. Amos, personal communication, December 9, 2004)]. The *Striving Readers Initiative*, which is aimed at promoting adolescent literacy and effective reading interventions for secondary school students who read significantly below grade level, will provide funds to approximately 100 school districts for the implementation of demonstrative programs that have shown to be effective in improving adolescents' reading achievement.

Defining the Challenges

The active policy scene just encapsulated is partially fueled by the 2002 report on reading achievement from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)(National Center for Education Statistics, 2003), which indicates that approximately 25% of 8th and 12th grade students read at “below basic” levels. Translated, this means that 1 out of every 4 secondary school students tested could not identify the main idea, comprehend informational text passages, or elaborate on ideas found in the NAEP Reading 2002 passages. Looking more broadly across the age spectrum, the Alliance for Excellent Education (2003) estimates that approximately 10,000 literacy coaches will be required to meet the needs of close to 9 million 4th – 12th graders who read at what NAEP determines “below basic” level.

Although arguably persuasive, the NAEP Reading report's influence on policy makers has paled in comparison to the influence a report issued by the Manhattan Policy Institute on public high school graduation and college readiness rates in the United States (Green & Forster, 2003) has had. According to a study conducted by the Manhattan Policy Institute (Green & Forster), only 70% of all students in public high schools graduate from high school with a diploma. Every day approximately 3,000 adolescents drop out of school. In the 2002-2003 academic year, alone, close to 540,000 students left without graduating. Specifically, the study's findings (Green & Forster) include the following:

- Only 70% of all students in public high schools graduate, and only 32% of all students leave high school qualified to attend four-year colleges.
- Only 51% of all black students and 52% of all Hispanic students graduate, and only 20% of all black students and 16% of all Hispanic students leave high school college-ready.
- The graduation rate for white students was 72%; for Asian students, 79%; and for American Indian students, 54%. The college readiness rate for white students was 37%; for Asian students, 38%; for American Indian students, 14%.
- Graduation rates in the Northeast (73%) and Midwest (77%) were higher than the overall national figure, while graduation rates in the South (65%) and West (69%) were lower than the national figure. The Northeast and the Midwest had the same college readiness rate as the nation overall (32%) while the South had a higher rate (38%) and the West had a lower rate (25%).
- The state with the highest graduation rate in the nation was North Dakota (89%); the state with the lowest graduation rate in the nation was Florida (56%).
- Due to their lower college readiness rates, black and Hispanic students are seriously underrepresented in the pool of minimally qualified college applicants. Only 9% of all college-ready graduates are black and another 9% are Hispanic, compared to a total population of 18-year-olds that is 14% black and 17% Hispanic.
- The portion of all college freshmen that is black (11%) or Hispanic (7%) is very similar to their shares of the college-ready population (9% for both). This suggests that the main reason these groups are underrepresented in college admissions is that these students are not acquiring college-ready skills in the K-12 system, rather than inadequate financial aid or affirmative action policies.

Looking to Literacy Research to Address the Challenges

This paper reports on the status of research into exemplary literacy instruction in the intermediate, middle, and high school years (roughly from grades 4 – 12). Its focus is on addressing the challenges just described by looking for ways to bridge the achievement gap. This gap and how to bridge it is also the focus of a book I recently co-edited with Dorothy Strickland of Rutgers University (Strickland & Alvermann, 2004). The research literature that addresses the gap between basic and more advanced levels of reading growth among preadolescents and adolescents is concentrated largely in the areas of comprehension and vocabulary development. A smaller body of research looks at students' motivation and self-efficacy in learning with and from text. Less well researched but still important is the topic of cultural relevance in teaching.

Each of these topics is discussed in the first three sections of the paper, with particular attention given to research that has been compiled and published in the *Handbook of Reading Research: Volume 2* (Barr, Kamil, Mosenthal, & Pearson, 1991), *Handbook of Reading Research: Volume 3* (Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr, 2000), the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (National Reading Panel, 2000), RAND Reading Study Group's *Reading for Understanding* (2002), *Adolescents and Literacy* (Kamil, 2003), and the National Reading Conference's position paper on *Effective Literacy Instruction for Adolescents* (Alvermann, 2001). In the last two sections of the paper, I focus first on redefining exemplary instruction from a New Literacies perspective and then on drawing implications for research and policy.

Comprehension and Vocabulary Development

As a member of the RAND Reading Study Group, I worked for over two years with other literacy teacher educators and researchers, as well as with individuals outside the teaching profession, to develop a list of principles for exemplary literacy instruction at the middle and high school level. Grounded in the existing literature on reading comprehension and vocabulary development, these principles include:

- Effective reading instruction provides students with a repertoire of strategies for fostering comprehension.
- Strategy instruction that is embedded within subject-matter learning, such as history or science, improves students' reading comprehension.
- Effective strategies for teaching students to comprehend complex materials include self-questioning, answering a teacher's questions, cooperative learning, comprehension monitoring, representing information using graphic organizers, making use of different text structures, and summarizing.
- The more explicit teachers are in their strategy instruction, the more successful low-achieving students are in their reading and learning.
- Vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to successful text comprehension, and it is especially important in teaching English language learners.
- Exposing students to various genres of text (e.g., informational, narrative, poetry) ensures that they do not approach all reading tasks with the same purpose in mind.

Drawn from some of the same studies on which the National Reading Panel (NRP) (2000) based its conclusions, these six principles were framed within a sociocultural perspective. Thus, unlike the NRP, which relied solely on experimental and quasi-experimental research studies that were designed primarily to test the effectiveness of certain cognitive processes in comprehending printed texts (often within controlled conditions that did not represent typical classroom learning environments), the RAND Reading Study Group took into account the work of socioculturally situated literacy practices as well (e.g., Dillon & O'Brien, 2001; Guzzetti & Hynd, 1998; O'Brien, 1998; Sturtevant, 1996).

However, because both the NRP and RAND Reading Study Group focused largely on comprehension studies in which individuals read in isolation of one another and recalled information in print-based texts, their respective reports reflect a rather narrow and restrictive view of the reading process. In fact, six of the seven categories of text comprehension that both

groups found effective—self-questioning, answering a teacher’s questions, cooperative learning, comprehension monitoring, representing information using graphic organizers, making use of different text structures, and summarizing—include strategies content area teachers might use if their view of the reading process were one in which students work by themselves to extract information from printed texts. As pointed out elsewhere (Wade & Moje, 2000), this rather narrow view of the reading process risks disenfranchising large groups of students for whom printed texts are not the primary means through which they learn.

Motivation and Self-Efficacy in Learning From and With Text

During adolescence, as well as later in life, it is the belief in the self (or lack of such belief) that makes a difference in how competent a person feels. Perceptions of self-efficacy are central to most theories of motivation, and the research on exemplary literacy instruction bears out the hypothesized connections. For example, providing clear goals for a comprehension task to students who are experiencing reading difficulties and then giving feedback on the progress they are making can lead to increased self-efficacy and greater use of comprehension strategies (Schunk & Rice, 1993). Similarly, creating technology environments that heighten students’ motivation to become independent readers and writers can increase their sense of competency (Kamil, Intrator, & Kim, 2000).

In an extensive review of how instruction influences students’ reading engagement and academic performance, Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) concluded that various instructional practices, while important, do not directly impact student outcomes (e.g., time spent reading independently, achievement on standardized tests, performance assessments, and beliefs about reading). Instead, the level of student engagement (including its sustainability over time) is the mediating factor, or avenue, through which classroom instruction influences student outcomes. What this means is that teachers must take into account the degree to which students engage (or disengage) over time in a learning task.

Guthrie and Wigfield’s conceptualization of the engagement model of reading calls for instruction that fosters student motivation (including self-efficacy and goal setting); strategy use (e.g., self-monitoring for breaks in comprehension and analyzing new vocabulary); growth in conceptual knowledge (e.g., reading trade books to supplement textbook information, viewing videos, and hands-on experiences); and social interaction (e.g., collaborating with peers on a science project or discussing an Internet search with the teacher).

Cultural Relevance in Teaching

As anthropologists McDermott and Varenne (1995) have pointed out, all cultures (including schools) are historically evolved ways of “doing” life. Cultures teach people about what is worth working for, how to succeed, and who will fall short. To be concise, one might say cultures are all about *what counts*. Applied to education, this notion of culture takes on a special meaning. For example, what I might view as exemplary adolescent literacy instruction (and thus “what counts” in my preservice and graduate education classes) may differ substantially from what counts as exemplary practice in middle and secondary schools. Moreover, teachers, reading specialists, counselors, and administrators working within the same school may go about this

counting in different ways, to say nothing of how policy makers at local, state, and national levels may do their counting. Thus, it is important to ask not only *what* counts but also *who* is doing the counting—and is it culturally relevant?

Cultural relevance is undeniably important in contexts that are conducive to middle and secondary school learning. For example, Moore (1996) found in an in-depth synthesis of the qualitative research on strategy instruction that the type of strategy taught is less important than the nature of the context in which it is taught, and engaging students in cooperative learning activities is conducive to subject-matter learning. Not surprisingly, the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) found similar support for these practices in the experimental and quasi-experimental research literature on comprehension instruction.

Teachers working within contexts that are conducive to learning provide students with adequate background information and relevant hands-on experience as a means of preparing them to read a textbook, view a video, listen to a tape, or search the Web for related content (Alexander & Jetton, 2000). They also look for ways to integrate reading, writing, and discussion because they know that each of these processes reinforces the other and can lead to improved comprehension and retention of course content (Alvermann, Young, Weaver, et al., 1996; Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001; Tierney & Shanahan, 1991). In sum, teachers create exemplary contexts for literacy instruction when they provide students with opportunities to use what they already know as a basis for learning new content in mutually supportive classrooms that celebrate diversity rather than view it as a problem to be overcome or “normalized.”

Urban schools with large numbers of minority students have on occasion sparked some of the most creative teaching to be found anywhere, especially among teachers who have both a deep understanding of a particular subject’s domain structure and a desire to make teaching that subject more responsive to students’ cultural knowledge. For example, Lee (1997; 2001) used *signifying*, which is a form of talk widely practiced within the African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speech community, to scaffold or facilitate her underachieving high school students’ literary responses to the mainstream canon. In writing about her experiences as a teacher in the Cultural Modeling Project that she developed, Lee (2001) explained,

Signifying...involves innuendo, double entendre, satire, and irony, and is dense in figurative language. It often involves forms of ritual insult, but is not limited to insult. An example of signifying might be ‘Yo mama so skinny she can do the hula hoop in a cheerio.’ (p. 122)

Although signifying is valued for language play in its own right, Lee used her ninth graders’ tacit knowledge of this discourse to help them hypothesize the meanings of various canonical texts (especially the tropes, ironies, and satires associated with these texts) and to change their hypotheses as evidence warranted. Lee took on the role of more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1986) as a means of guiding and supporting her class of underachievers as they learned to bridge differences in home and school cultural practices.

By emphasizing the ideological nature of literacy practices, Street (1995) opened the way for seeing them as socially constructed within seemingly absent but always present power relations, a view that is prevalent among individuals who subscribe to a New Literacies perspective (Luke & Elkins, 1998; New London Group, 1996; Willinsky, 1990)—one that takes into account how globalization, new information communication technologies, and multimedia are transforming our ways of knowing and making meaning in a digital world (Alvermann, 2002; Flood & Lapp, 1995; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003). These changes are not lost on adolescents or their teachers, and they have significant implications for teaching and learning in content area classrooms.

The term *adolescent literacy*, broader in scope than secondary reading, is also more inclusive of what young people currently count as texts (e.g., textbooks, music lyrics, magazines, graphic novels, blogs, and hypertexts). In fact, it is the case that many adolescents of the Net Generation are finding their own reasons for becoming literate—reasons that go beyond reading to acquire school knowledge of academic texts (Bean & Readence, 2002; Hagood, 2002; Moje, 2000; 2002; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999; Nixon, 1998; O'Brien, 2003). This is not to say that academic literacy is unimportant; rather, it is to emphasize the need to address the implications of youth's multiple literacies¹ for classroom instruction. For as Vacca (1998) observed years ago (and it is still the case today), "we know very little about what counts as literacy from adolescent perspectives or the literacies that adolescents engage in outside of an academic context" (p. xvi).

A small but growing body of research on youth's out-of-school literacy practices provides empirical evidence of the dynamic and permeable boundaries between age categories that were once thought separate and hierarchically in opposition to one another. Whether in home-schooling environments (Young, 2000), community-based after-school programs (Alvermann, Young, Green, & Wisenbaker, 1999; Garner, 2002; Hull & Schultz, 2001, 2002), youth organizations (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; Kelly, 2001), or digitally-mediated environments where youth are free to exchange information through anonymous networks (Duncan & Leander, 2000; Lewis & Fabos, 1999), age differences appear to have little influence over the ways in which adults and adolescents alike make use of various literacy practices. In fact, the research on youth's out-of-school literacies complicates the very notion of *adolescence*—a term Appleman (2001) refers to as a status category, or "a kind of purgatory between childhood and adulthood" (p. 1).

This research disrupts certain assumptions about what counts (or should count) as valued literacy practices among people of all ages, while not falling prey to an overly simplistic celebration of youth culture (Hagood, 2000; Hinchman, Bourcy, & Thomas, 2002; Hull & Schultz, 2001; Lewis & Finders, 2002; Sefton-Green, 1998). What this body of research does not provide, however, is an in-depth look at how young people go about developing a sense of critical awareness of the ways in which they are implicated in the production and consumption of popular media texts that do not privilege print.

With few exceptions (e.g., Dillon & O'Brien, 2001; Chandler-Olcott & Mahar, 2001; Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 1999; Moje, 2000; Myers, Hammett, & McKillop, 2000), researchers

interested in adolescents' critical awareness have worked in classrooms where the curriculum is primarily print driven and necessarily constrained by school-based norms for teaching and learning. Thus, it remains unclear as to whether teaching youth to be critically aware using largely conventional print texts within the confines of a school curriculum can sufficiently prepare them to do the same with symbol systems other than print in out-of-school contexts. This concern is not trivial for it marks a very real tension in a post-typographic world (Reinking, Labbo, McKenna, & Kieffer, 1998).

Implications for Instruction and Policy

Although much is known about exemplary literacy instruction for adolescents, the challenge lies in implementing this research in ways that make sense to teachers whose plates are already full and overflowing. This is no small matter. In fact, remarking on the gravity of the challenge, members of the RAND Reading Study Group (2002) noted that despite a fairly well articulated knowledge base on the value of strategy instruction that fosters reading comprehension, such instruction continues to receive too little time and attention in most content area classrooms.

Important as strategy instruction is, there are larger needs not being met, perhaps due in part to a general reluctance among U.S. teachers to move beyond older programs and methods (Anders, 2002) in search of newer and more comprehensive ways of ensuring that youth's literacies in and out of school work together. For that to happen, as well as for the achievement gap to narrow, I propose the following:

- Instruction that is exemplary should take into account adolescents' personal and everyday literacies in ways that enable them to use those literacies as springboards for engaging actively in academic tasks that are both challenging and worthwhile. To accomplish this presumes an openness on educators' and policy makers' parts to think of adolescence as something other than "a kind of purgatory between childhood and adulthood" (Appleman, 2001, p. 1). It also presumes a willingness to view literacy teaching at the middle and high school levels differently. For as Lesko (2001) has so aptly stated, "if we want to see adolescence differently, we must first understand the ways we currently see, feel, think, and act toward youth, or we will merely tinker with the reigning practices" (p. 10).
- Instruction that is exemplary should be embedded in the regular curriculum and make use of the new literacies (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003), including multiple forms of texts (print, visual, and digital) that can be read critically for multiple purposes in a variety of contexts. For this to become a reality, it will be important to teach students how to use relevant background knowledge and strategies for reading, discussing, and writing about a variety of texts. It will require the support of administrators and policy makers who buy into the idea that all students, including those who struggle to read in subject area classrooms, deserve instruction that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive to their needs.
- Instruction that is exemplary should address issues of self-efficacy and engagement. It will need to involve youth in higher level thinking as they read, write, and share orally. It will mean avoiding, as Wade and Moje (2000) recommend, a transmission model of teaching with its emphasis on skill and drill, teacher-centered instruction, and passive

learning, and substituting, instead, a participatory model of instruction that actively engages students in their own learning (individually and in small groups) and that treats texts as tools for learning rather than as repositories of information to be memorized and then all too quickly forgotten.

- Instruction that is exemplary will need to draw from a knowledge base built on both experimental and qualitative research. To continue current U.S. policies for funding and reporting research that largely ignore rigorous and systematically designed qualitative research, in effect, relegating it to the status of a pseudoscience (Gutierrez et al., 2002), will produce at best only a partially informed knowledge base. At worst, such policies will be detrimental to discovering what counts as literacy from adolescents' perspectives. These policies will also deter researchers from exploring ways to integrate the "what counts" into instructional practices that hold promise for bridging the achievement gap. A broadening, rather than a narrowing, of what counts as research on adolescent literacy instruction will produce a knowledge base on which to make instructional decisions that take into account both the "what works and for whom" questions of experimental designs and the "who's counting and why" questions of qualitative research.

Author Note

¹The assumption that literacy exists in the singular has been critiqued by Street (1995) and others (Barton, Hamilton, and Ivanic, 2000; Gee, 1996) for ignoring the socially situated aspects of one's multiple literacies (print, nonprint, computer, scientific, numeric) and their accompanying literate practices. A preference for literacies, as opposed to literacy in the singular, also signals a critique of the autonomous model of reading that has dominated Western thinking up to the present. The autonomous model views reading largely from a cognitive perspective—as a "natural" or neutral process, one supposedly devoid of ideological positioning and the power relations inherent in such positioning. Conceiving of literacies in the plural and as ideologically embedded does not require giving up on the cognitive aspects of reading. Rather, according to Street (1995), the ideological model subsumes the autonomous model of reading in an attempt to understand how reading is encapsulated within broader sociocultural structures (schools, governments, families, media) and the power relations that sustain them.

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Family Literacy in the Context of Welfare Reform

Ray Wolpow

Eunice N. Askov

Let us start our discussion of family literacy with a look back to January 1931, at which time the National Education Association provided American business leaders with “carefully thought-out predictions of material and social changes in this country” that would be “probabilities” by the year 1950 (“*What shall we be like in 1950?*” 1931, p. 43-44). On the material side, probable achievements included:

1. A system of health and safety that will practically wipe out preventable accidents and contagious diseases.
2. A system of housing that will provide for the masses homes surrounded by beauty, privacy, quiet, sun, fresh air, and play space.
3. A flat telephone rate for the entire country at moderate cost.
4. Universal air transportation at low cost.
5. A system of paved, beautiful highways will connect every part of the nation.
6. The further development of school buildings and playfields until they will exceed in nobility the architectural achievements of any other age.
7. The organization of industry, business and agriculture to minimize uncertainty and depression.
8. The perfection of the insurance system to give universal protection from disaster, unemployment, and old age.
9. The extension of national, state, and local parks to provide convenient recreation areas for all people.
10. The perfection of community, city, and regional planning to give to all surroundings increasingly beautiful and favorable to the good life.
11. The shorter working week and day, so extended that there will be work for all.

On the social side the probable achievements listed included:

12. Hospitalization and medical care will be available for all who need them.

13. There will be a quickened appreciation of the home as a center of personal growth and happiness.
14. Educational service, free or at small cost, will be available from the earliest years of childhood throughout life.
15. The free public library will grow in importance, leading the way toward higher standards in maintained intelligence.
16. The nation will achieve an American standard of citizenship which means wholesome community life and clean government.
17. Crime will be virtually abolished by transferring to the preventive processes of the school and education the problems of conduct which police, courts and prisons now seek to remedy when it is too late.
18. Avocational activities will become richer, leading to nobler companionships and to development of the creative arts.
19. Ethical standards will rise to keep pace with new needs in business, industry, and international relations.
20. The religious awakening will grow in strength until most of our citizens will appreciate the importance of religion in the well-ordered life.

We Americans have yet to realize all of the ambitious possibilities listed above. Nonetheless, with the benefit of 72 years of historical perspective one could argue that we are making substantive progress towards most. With this in mind, the authors of this paper wish to revisit predictions 11 and 14, especially as these may be related to efforts made in the last ten years to improve economic self-sufficiency and literacy development of families consisting of low-income/low-literate parents and their young children.

First, through a review of the literature, the impact of current welfare and educational reform legislations on the educational performance of children of low-income families will be discussed. Then, keeping in mind the importance of federal programs designed to give children an “even start”, the most beneficial instructional and programmatic “ingredients” of family literacy programs, as revealed through current research studies conducted by the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State, will be discussed. Finally, implications and points of interest raised by the audience during the ARF 2003 Panel will be summarized.

The Impacts of Welfare and Educational Reform

The United States has embraced two important policy shifts in the past ten years—one in welfare and the other in education—both inspired by political movements advocating increased personal and institutional accountability. These goals include reducing economic dependency on the State among adults and increasing educational attainment for children. The literature reveals

that demands created by these policies often clash with potential consequences for low-income parents and their children.

We have known for some time that parents play a critical role in both their children's academic achievement and their children's socio-emotional development. Most contemporary educators are aware of the various influences as well as the many barriers to parent involvement in their children's schooling (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Whereas finding time to realize the potentials of this role is a challenge for most parents, recent welfare reform programs have added to the challenge faced by American's working poor. In 1998, 5.3 million low-income children between the ages of 6 and 12 had either two parents or a single parent working after school (Halpern, 1999). There is an estimated 20 - 25 hour per week gap between parents' work schedules and students' school schedules (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998).

Inadequate income, irregular shifts, overcrowded schools, and uneven quality in after-school care burden many low-income families, many of whom are working increased hours. These same parents, many of whom are themselves poorly educated and low in literacy skills, are expected to help meet the greater accountability goals of the education reform movement by monitoring homework, helping children organize time, and assisting student learning by reinforcing basic skills taught during the school day. Thus some argue that the increasing number of hours that poor parents, particularly single mothers, spend in the workplace is having a negative impact on parental capacity to help their children over the increasingly challenging hurdles of elementary school. (Newman and Chin, 2003)

Although there is considerable discussion in the literature on how schooling affects students as well as about the role families may play in the success of schooling (Gamoran, 1996), scientific studies of how school and welfare reform is affecting children in these families are first coming to the fore. In their comprehensive examination of findings from six separate evaluations of recent welfare and employment programs, Morris, Huston, Duncan, Crosby and Bos (2001) report:

1. Programs with mandatory employment services, which required parental employment without also increasing income, had "mixed" effects on children. "Only one of the six programs affected test scores at all...The pattern of impacts appeared to be more closely associated with particular sites than with program characteristics...." (p. 44-48)
2. "All of the programs that provided earnings supplements without mandatory employment services improved children's school achievement...Children in the program group had an average score that was 4 percentage points higher than the average score of children in the control group." (p. 20-21)
3. Programs that included earning supplements that increased *both* parental employment and income also produced "reduced behavior problems, increased positive social behavior, and/or improved...[the] overall health" of elementary school-aged children. (p. ES-4).
4. "The positive effects of earnings supplement programs on children were most pronounced for the children of long-term welfare participants." (p. 33-34)

5. Even the programs “with the most benefits to children left many families in poverty and many children at risk of school failure and behavior problems. These programs do not eliminate the need for child-focused interventions and reforms that promote school achievement and reduce behavior problems.” (p. ES-5)

In summary, requiring parents to work without increasing their income above welfare payments seemed to affect their children’s achievement negatively. This finding makes sense in that the parents are now absent from the home without additional means of providing alternative childcare. The most positive effects were obtained when parents were able to earn more income through work. However, child-focused intervention programs, like family literacy, were still necessary.

Two of the studies examined in the Morris et al. (2001) monograph considered the effect of welfare program reform on adolescents in low-income families. Both indicated that parents’ transition from welfare to work may decrease adolescents’ school achievement. In a subsequent study of four major welfare programs Gennetian et al. (2002) concluded:

1. “Adolescents’ school progress was affected adversely by a variety of welfare and work policies targeted at single parents. Averaged across studies, the impacts are small, but any harm to these high-risk youth is noteworthy...;” and that
2. ...adolescents who had younger siblings experienced the most pervasive and troubling negative effects as a result of the programs.

The average impacts in these programs on “grade repetition and receipt of special educational services for emotional, physical or mental conditions” were also unfavorable. Adolescents with younger siblings experienced the “most troubling effects on school performance and were most likely to be suspended or to drop out.” They were more likely to have substantial responsibilities to care for their younger siblings, while those who did not have younger siblings were more likely to either work to help support the family, or to participate in “unstructured out-of school activities.” (Gennetian et al., 2002, p. 45-49)

One study of a program that encouraged employment among single-parent welfare recipients revealed, alongside benefits for elementary school-aged children, that the adolescent children of parents in this program were more likely than their control group counterparts to engage in minor delinquency and to use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. (Morris & Michalopoulos, 2000).

Nonetheless, holding school children and their lower-income parents to high standards hasn’t lost much of its appeal. President Bush (2002) caught the public mood when he argued that softening standards results in the soft tyranny of “low expectations” and further warned, “children are segregated by low expectations, illiteracy and self-doubt.” Given the current political and economic climate, what role can family literacy programs play in helping poor families realize these expectations? What research can best guide the implementation of these programs so that they are able to serve low-income and low-literate families?

Family Literacy Programs

Family literacy programs operate under the assumption that the parent can and should be the child's first teacher and with an inherent "value added" dimension not associated with other early childhood education programs. Through their participation, low-income, low-literate parent/teachers receive both valuable adult education and the tools and training necessary to play a critical role in their children's future academic achievements. (Philliber, Spillman, & King, 1996; Wasik, Dobbins, & Herrmann, 2001) Family literacy, as defined by the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy programs (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I as reauthorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001), typically includes four instructional components: Adult basic and literacy education, parenting education, structured interactive literacy time between parent and child, and early childhood education.

The National Even Start Association or NESA (2002) reports that the population served under the Even Start Act includes 80% of the families having an income below \$15,000, more than 40% of whom have incomes below \$6000. NESA also reports that participants have low levels of education (86% have not completed high school, as compared to 27% of Head Start parents). What is more, dependence upon public assistance, which supports families of unemployed adults, has now become time-limited, as was described in the previous section.

Family literacy programs are typically conducted during the day. With the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act or PRWORA (US Congress, 1996), the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)(2002) became concerned because the large numbers of parents attending these programs who are welfare recipients. Therefore it was deemed important to incorporate work-related activities as part of the adult education component of family literacy programs. In fact, NCFL reported in *Momentum* (November 2000) that the number of parents expressing employment-related goals at the time of entry into family literacy programs dramatically increased with the passage of PRWORA (1996) from 1% in 1991 to 37% in 1999. NCFL (2002) also reported that the percentage of families receiving public assistance at entry ranged from 81% in 1991 to 45% in 1999, showing that parents have moved into the workforce during that time period.

Thus, adults coming to family literacy programs now have two needs: To improve their literacy and employability skills and to foster their young (birth – age 8) children's literacy skills for academic success in school. How effectively can this be done? How valid is the assumption that participation in adult/family literacy education will improve the ability of the parent to serve as the child's first teacher? And in light of this, is it fair to assume that as adults improve their own literacy and language skills they will, in turn, foster the development of children in various developmental domains?

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State decided to test these assumptions using an existing database. The database was derived from the Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation of Family literacy conducted by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (ISAL) at Penn State, which is affiliated with the Goodling Institute. Since 1998, the ISAL has been conducting the statewide evaluation to track the performance of adults and their

children in all of the family literacy programs in Pennsylvania. The research question was: What are the effects of parental participation in a family literacy program on children's developmental skills as measured by early childhood assessments?

A quasi-experimental design was used to test the research question. Data were collected from families who participated in Pennsylvania's family literacy programs between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 (2001-2002 program year). It had been established in prior research (Kassab, Askov, Weirauch, Grinder, & Van Horn, 2004) that greater participation in adult education was associated with significantly greater outcomes on adult education tests. The next question that is addressed here is whether or not increased participation in adult education would be associated with significant gains in early childhood developmental measures.

To assess children's growth and development, the family literacy programs chose from among three criterion-referenced assessment instruments to assess children who ranged in age from birth to 5 years of age. The instruments for children age three to five (inclusive) included the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile-Revised (LAP-R). For children who ranged from birth to 3 years of age programs were able to use the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP). Not all children were administered each domain of the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. Across the different analyses for the COR, sample sizes ranged from 194 to 198. For the LAP-R, sample sizes ranged from 431 to 444, while for the ELAP, sample sizes ranged from 450 to 498.

Each of these instruments measures essentially the same developmental skills using a slightly different definition for each depending upon the methodology of the instrument. The developmental skills the COR measures include initiative, social relations, creative representation, music and movement, language and literacy, logic and mathematics, and the average across these domains. The LAP-R and ELAP both measure the following domains: gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, and self-help. Slight differences exist with these two instruments where the LAP-R measures personal/social and pre-writing while ELAP measures social/emotional and no writing domain.

In order to test the research question, a series of models were estimated that included variables indicating whether hours of parental participation in a particular component of the family literacy program influenced the children's developmental skills, as measured by the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. The following variables were controlled in all analyses: Age of the child at the time of the assessment, whether the child had participated in an educational program prior to his/her enrollment in the family literacy program, and whether special services needs were identified for the child since the child enrolled in the family literacy program (Grinder, Kassab, Askov, & Abler, 2004).

Results

Results indicate that intensity of participation in adult education, that is the number of hours of parental participation in adult education, had a significant effect on most of the developmental skills measured by the ELAP, which is administered to children less than three years of age. Specifically, greater parental participation in adult education was associated with

children's higher fine motor ($p<0.06$), cognitive ($p<0.06$), self-help ($p<0.01$), and social/emotional ($p<0.001$) posttest scores on the ELAP. Furthermore, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher ELAP language posttest scores ($p<0.05$) as would be predicted in the family literacy model.

For the LAP-R, preschool children in families with more interactive literacy between parents and children hours had higher posttest scores on the cognitive domain ($p<0.001$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy did not seem to result in higher posttest scores for the other domains on the LAP-R. In addition, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher COR creative representation posttest scores ($p<0.05$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy was not related higher posttest scores for the other domains on the COR.

The finding that adult education and parenting education (in the case of language skills) were associated with ELAP posttest scores has important implications. Parents' participation in family literacy appears to have the greatest impact on the very youngest children's developmental skills which do relate to later literacy acquisition. This result may have occurred because these components (adult and parenting education) led to increased self-esteem or self-confidence among adult participants, and this in turn may lead to more positive interaction with their very young children. Darling and Lee (2003) speculate that adult education provides two functions to parents by attending family literacy programs. First, by increasing their education, parents are able to provide a more economically stable environment for their children. Second, through family literacy programs, parents may "change their perspective on literacy, recognizing and capitalizing on their role as their child's first and most important teacher" (p. 383).

This research, furthermore, supports the efficacy of the family literacy model. As parents develop their own literacy skills, they are better equipped to foster the literacy and language growth in their very young children. This relationship is most clearly evident in very young children (ages birth to 3 years old) where the parents are not only the primary teachers but also the greatest developmental influence. This study demonstrates the important linkage that exists between the parents' education and children's literacy and language development. It reaffirms the assumption of family literacy programs that parents can and should be the child's first and most important early teacher.

Implications Brought Forth During Panel Discussion

Reaction to, and subsequent discussion of, the information presented by the panel included, but was not limited to comments/concerns about the 72 year-old goals, the crushing demands placed on welfare families, the need for more research to guide the use of limited funding, the current climate demanding "scientific research," and the "value-added" of family literacy programs.

How optimistic we educators must have been in 1931! We believed, with passion, that in but twenty years we could and would accomplish incredible goals, thus truly make a difference. Now, some 72 years later such sanguine confidence is seen mostly in the eyes of students entering the field. Is it that we family literacy veterans have been sobered by the crushing

realities of the low-income, low-literate families with whom we work? Or is it that we are frustrated by the implementations of a decade of education and welfare reform policy shifts, many of which have served to further devastate the lives of low-income parents and their children? Or is it that we have come to realize that the goals of family literacy programs are intergenerational and therefore need be measured longitudinally over generations? Would longitudinal research meet the current demand for “scientific research” and if it did, how could we possibly construct control groups?

Whether veterans or newcomers, participants agreed that we need research to help us focus our resources on those programs that do “make a difference.” Herein, the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State provides us with data affirming that parents can and should be the child’s first teacher and that family literacy programs do provide an inherent “value added” dimension not associated with other early childhood education programs by providing low-income, low-literate parent/teachers both valuable adult education and the tools and training necessary to play a critical role in their children’s future academic achievements. Referring to the study of four major welfare programs by Gennetian et al. (2002), and noting the harmful effect of current welfare policies on the academic achievement of adolescents, one participant asked, “Is there not yet another ‘valued-added’?” He added, “I can’t help but wonder how many of the low-income, low-literate adolescents who are currently dropping out of high school are future mothers/participants in family literacy programs?” The participant was told that participation in teen family literacy programs has, indeed, been on the rise. Interventions that break the intergenerational cycle of low literacy and poverty are very much needed, especially in the context of welfare reform where everyone is expected to work regardless of their family commitments.

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Gleanings From Literacy Research For The Education Of Harvest Wolf

Thomas Cloer, Jr. Furman University

“All composite things must pass away. Strive onward vigilantly.” These, according to tradition, are the final words of the historical Buddha (Leavell, 2001, p. 259). I will revisit them later. It’s good to be back in Florida where one can relax, retire, revote, and recount. In fact, here is where your vote counts, and counts, and counts. They don’t just cheat in football. It seems ironic, however, that a state so renowned for its football power would come to be known for its electile dysfunction.

As some of you may have inferred, in the twenty-four years I have participated in ARF, I am not a Slythering, blue blooded member of the educational aristocracy. My deep, abiding, and sustaining roots are from the riffraff scum, the proletariat. I come from a road less graveled on Stinking Creek. The peasant stock of Appalachia, from which I emanate, would actually find the moniker “proletariat” ingratiating. It has a good rhythmic quality to it – proletariat. From the road less graveled on Stinking Creek, one could see the moon coming over the mountain in Mason jars. We raised everything we ate and made everything we drank. As young irresponsible adults, we used to play this game where we would sit in a circle and pass the shine around to each one. The point of the game was for someone to get up and leave, and the others try to guess who left.

Harvest Wolf

My grandma’s folks moved into Hanging Dog, my birthplace in the Western North Carolina Mountains, and intermarried with the Wolf Clan of the Cherokees. Thus, I was proud and thankful when my daughter, Shana Cloer Newton, named her darling baby boy, my grandson, Harvest Wolf Newton. My daughter had married a tall, powerfully built man whose major and degree from college was in history, but whose quest was to be a park ranger, and to be in tune with nature. Harvest Wolf was soon to become the epitome of health, vigor, and imagination. We spent all our free hours between sessions at Furman, and during free time away from Dad’s ranger duties, camping, fishing, hiking, and loving the Blue Ridge, the Blue Wall, as the Cherokees called the escarpment, and the Great Smoky Mountains. Harvest Wolf’s most enjoyable part of it all was to play baseball, football, and creative made-up ball with Grandpa. He was the talk of the camps where we camped for weeks at a time and fly fished in the cascading streams of Western North Carolina, Northern Georgia, and East Tennessee. He loved to skinny dip and wear nothing but his hat. Campers shot videos, honked, and took pictures of Harvest skinny dipping with his hat as we all swam in the icy waters of Appalachia. Harvest Wolf couldn’t get enough of those mountain rivers.

Tragedy Pays a Visit

As school was about to begin in September of 2002 at Furman, I received a call from my wife whose voice hinted of trouble. Harvest Wolf, whose second birthday was to be celebrated that same month, had suddenly and inexplicably collapsed in a restaurant, and was in intensive care in the Greenville Hospital System. When I arrived, it was clear that Harvest was seriously sick. The pediatrician diagnosed the problem as viral meningitis/encephalitis.

After an unconscionably short stay in the hospital, he was released while still unable to walk or even sit. Then came the tragic day when my terrified daughter called and said Harvest had suffered a seizure, lapsed into a coma, stopped breathing, and had been airlifted to a special children's hospital in Asheville, North Carolina.

My wife and I then made the longest drive I have ever undertaken, although I have never missed an ARF conference, and have only flown to one. I live on the North Carolina/South Carolina border. I thought I knew about long trips. As we approached Caesar's Head State Park, at the top of the Blue Ridge Escarpment where Harvest lived and his dad was the Park Ranger, I began to weep as I passed a certain sign. It was a sign that Harvest and I had read thousands of times as we stood before the words and he ran his hands from left to right, mimicking me as I said, "Rim of the Gap Trail; All hikers and campers must register." Then my good colleagues, I totally lost it, and for once in my life I couldn't regain my composure. All of a grandpa's love for a toddler, and a realization that one's worst nightmares can indeed come true caused me to crash and burn.

When we arrived at the hospital in Asheville, the helicopter that had brought Harvest Wolf was still on its pad. Furman's chaplain met us as we stepped off the elevator and we all hurried to intensive care. Harvest was on a respirator and was still in a coma.

When we talked to Harvest's doctor, she told us that she believed he was a victim of the LaCrosse Virus. This mosquito-borne virus had attacked hundreds of children in thirteen states, and was really active in the mountains of Western North Carolina, East Tennessee, and West Virginia. Spinal fluid had been sent to the Raleigh Center for Disease Control to confirm the virus. When asked for the prognosis, none of the doctors would give us a word of encouragement. They clearly doubted that Harvest was going to survive.

For days and nights we stood by his bed as the redundant respirator kept Harvest Wolf tethered to Grandpa's world where there were tractors to drive, gardens to till, and woods to explore, and rivers, so many rivers, for skinny dipping. One evening the doctor came in and said the respirator was going to be removed to see if Harvest might breathe on his own. If he couldn't, the respirator would be started again right away. Harvest made the transition, but remained in a coma.

Harvest Wolf is Alive!

The neurologist, we called him Dr. Gadget, came to us and said the MRI results showed that Harvest Wolf had suffered a massive stroke to his tiny brain stem, through which all neurons must pass. This had paralyzed Harvest. He further said that Harvest was at very high risk for learning problems, developmental problems, epilepsy, language difficulty, etc. Dr. Gadget, totally unable to relate to humans in need of encouragement, held back nothing.

My daughter and son-in-law, after numerous days and nights without sleep, finally had collapsed into bed. My wife and I were keeping watch over Harvest when I suggested that she catch a little rest in the intensive care waiting room. I was sitting in a straight chair looking with tear-filled eyes at my darling grandson. It was 3:30 a.m., and an old mountain night hunter accustomed to lost sleep was on watch. Suddenly, Harvest opened his eyes -- both of them -- and stared straight at me. I sprang to my feet and said excitedly, "Hey sugar!"

Although Harvest hadn't eaten in days, a food tray had been left earlier that evening. I noticed a cup of old jello on the tray and said to Harvest, "You want Grandpa to give you some jello? Huh? Would you like jello?" Harvest managed a slight nod, enough for me to realize a positive response. I stepped outside the room, motioned with urgency to the nurse, and eagerly said "Harvest wants some jello; Harvest is awake!"

"What kind of jello?" came a question back to me.

"Never mind what kind of jello -- just bring any you have -- quickly."

I opened the jello, dropped in the spoon, and Harvest opened his mouth! Harvest chewed and swallowed, then stared at the spoon. I acted as if I didn't know that he would want more. After batting his eyes and looking at me, and then at the spoon, I said, "Harvest, did you want Grandpa to give you more jello?" He looked at me for about five seconds and then said loudly and clearly, "Yeah!"

All the angels in heaven clapped and gave each other high fives. An old turkey gobbler roosting just below Harvest's house gobbed as a barred owl hooted. The ravens, so thick in the trees on the cliffs near Harvest's house, all made their guttural sounds trying to say "Harvest Wolf is alive! Harvest Wolf is alive!" The deer that had walked daily through his yard and the giant black bear that had just walked across his driveway jerked their heads into the air and smelled for the scent of Harvest Wolf as the forest echoed with the sound, "Harvest Wolf is alive! Harvest Wolf is alive! Harvest Wolf is alive!"

Harvest started regaining his functioning that night. He had to start over as if he were newly born, and learn to sit, crawl, stand, and, hopefully, walk. His progress has been nothing short of miraculous. Harvest continues now in several types of therapy. He loves hippo therapy with horses the best. This has helped with his balance, his motor skills, and even more importantly, his affective domain. He did develop epilepsy for which he has been on medication.

My daughter asked me if I could glean anything from literacy research that might help Harvest Wolf with his language development and subsequent reading and writing. She further stated that she would probably home-school him, and what did I think of that?

Quintessentials for Harvest Wolf's Literacy

So, these gleanings are not comprised of mere pedantic rambling or some dialectic excursion where an army of words are marching forth through a conference in search of an idea. These for me represent the quintessentials for Harvest Wolf's literacy.

The new South Carolina 2002 English Language Arts Standards still state different listening, speaking, reading, and writing standards. Teachers are very commonly required to take these fragmented standards and arrange them into some cohesive classroom program. This really requires teachers to put back together that which never needed separating in the first place. Many of these standards across the nation came from Educational Seagull Consultants. I learned about these at ARF. We have many South Carolina Educational Seagull Consultants. Do you know what a bonafide Educational Seagull Consultant is? It is a consultant who flies in, makes a lot of noise, shits on everything, and then flies away.

We now see more clearly that reading is just one integral part of a multifaceted human communication sequence that also includes listening, speaking, and writing. Allen (1976) suggested that the basic question is not whether we teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but whether we deal directly or indirectly with communication experiences.

First Gleaning

We must integrate Harvest Wolf's listening, speaking, reading, and writing. By that, I mean whoever teaches Harvest must value, use, and make useful what he has experienced, listened to, and has heard and said himself. The Language Experience Approach to Reading holds great potential for him and avoids the problem of plugging in at language recognition or reading. Harvest's oral language background will be valued, used, and made useful for his other language arts learning. The inherent difficulty of materials will be minimized when Harvest's teacher uses personal writing to learn how to recognize words (Cloer, 1990). Direct teaching of the word recognition skills will occur within the framework of Harvest's personal language, and a hole in the hedge between reading and writing will be utilized fully. All those studies on phonemic awareness (Juel, 1991; Scarborough, 1989; Stanovich, 1986; Wagner, Torgeson, & Roshotte, 1994) which show that the ability to hear sounds in words predicts future reading achievement will be covered by writing for Harvest and in front of Harvest. When one writes or transcribes a child's personal language, language falls apart naturally as we spell, and then comes back together naturally as we reconstruct the talk put down on paper.

Harvest's personal language will include all the necessary ingredients for teaching him to read and write. Many of the words used by Harvest Wolf, John Grisham, and Truman Capote will be the same. The words of highest frequency will occur naturally as they would in any other material. Reading will be viewed initially as a process of reconstructing oral language that has been transcribed. Harvest will be taught that ideas can be verbalized, written, and verbalized again.

Allen (1976) made obvious the problems associated with language arts classes that focused only on language recognition. Allen emphasized language acquisition, language prediction, language production, and language recognition.

We must also have multifaceted language arts goals that attempt to: (1) teach language that makes reading possible; (2) teach strategies for acquisition, decoding and comprehending; and (3) make avid readers and writers.

Language Acquisition

There is one thing, I believe, on which all literacy educators could agree. Reading aloud to Harvest, which actually started before conception, is probably the most essential aspect for learning to read and write (Chomsky, C., 1972; Durkin, D., 1966; McCormick, S., 1977).

Heath (1983) found that children of parents who related storybook reading to real life experiences did better in school than children of parents who asked questions that only required repetition of facts. Anything that Harvest hears from a book can be related to his parents, his Grandpa, his home, his life. By doing that, we increase the likelihood that the brain will store information long-term.

What things can be read aloud? We can start with really great children's literature. The Children's Choices from the October issue of The Reading Teacher, and Teachers' Choices from the November issue of The Reading Teacher offer a beginning point. Both of these lists can be obtained from I.R.A. Of course, Aaron and Hutchinson's (2002) contenders and winners of children's book awards from five English speaking countries will be a source of numerous read-alouds for Harvest. In fact, last year when Bob Jerrolds (2002) traced reading instruction back to the garden of Eden, I caught only one error. It wasn't Adam there in the garden, it was Aaron, Ira Aaron doing something related to children's literature! Ira has been a force in reading longer than anyone I know. Well Ira and Sylvia, your research will really matter in Harvest Wolf's learning.

We will refer often to Sarah Dowhower's (1997) marvelous work with wordless books. Will that research make a difference in Harvest Wolf's learning? I have never found anywhere in the literature, Sarah, a more comprehensive, helpful, and necessary type of research. One can certainly benefit from those wordless concept books with familiar sequences, counting books, months of the year, and the naming and labeling books. The thematic books that are wordless will allow Harvest and his instructor to talk

and write the text for these hundreds and hundreds of wordless books. They can change the written text and write different texts for the same books!

When Harvest shows the ability to listen for longer periods of time, Trelease's (1992) Hey! Listen to This should be utilized along with Trelease's Read Aloud Handbook (1995). These two references alone should furnish enough read alouds to do Harvest until he draws his first Social Security check. The giant treasury of read-alouds in Trelease's third edition includes wordless books, predictable books, picture reference books, picture books, short novels, novels, poetry, fairy tales, folk tales and different anthologies.

Language acquisition will need to occur daily. Another language component essential to early reading is knowledge of language prediction.

Language Prediction

Advocates of an holistic approach to reading believe that children learn to read by reading. Both of my children learned to read by reading. They were given opportunities to read meaningful, predictable, materials where their ears simply guided their eyes. They then figured out for themselves the manner in which grapheme-phoneme correspondences work. My daughter was reading on an eighth grade level when she began first grade. The principal called me and said he was going to place her in a sixth grade classroom for reading! He stated that was as high as the grades went in the school. Furthermore, Shana was to do all the workbooks, or else she might have "gaps" in her skill knowledge. This is a classic case of a faulty paradigm. We don't learn to read in order to do workbooks.

Gibson and Levin (1975) in their classic text, The Psychology of Reading, made an excellent point. When learning any complex task, it is a good idea to start working on the very thing you're trying to do, or as close as you can get to the real thing. We have seen the mayhem, the demolition derby, the wrecked paradigm of giving training on each tiny component of reading and then trying to integrate them. Predictable texts of all types help mitigate the demolition derby sponsored by narrowly designed phonics programs that separate the symbols from real meaning and put all the emphasis on the symbols.

Bridge (1988) made some excellent instructional recommendations that focused on holistic approaches to reading that are consistent with a constructivist view of the reading process. First, beginning reading instruction should begin with meaningful, functional texts. This includes environmental print, instructions, recipes, riddles, letters, storybooks, and a variety of others. Every teacher of early grades in any of my classes at Furman is asked to make meaningful, functional texts of their own instructions, admonitions, and "teacher talk" that they use every day before their classes. This integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a most meaningful way. Smith (1982) has always maintained that a prerequisite to reading is learning that print is meaningful.

By now, everyone in the literacy business has seen research on the value of predictability. Bridge (1988) did a marvelous job of reviewing the literature and showing how the cognitive and affective domains are both affected positively by children reading many texts that are highly predictable. The need for early fluency is great, and highly predictable texts can cause early fluency to happen! Harvest's ears can guide his eyes!

I have stumbled upon an insight I wish to share with my colleagues. Since I started in literacy, there have been two problems that have not been resolved in reading. One is individual differences. Wouldn't it have been nice if all children would have come to school ready to read? But even after Bill Clinton declared that all children should be ready for school, and after our current esteemed president declared that no child shall be left behind, children are not ready for school and children are being left behind. Individual differences are at the very foundation of this debacle concerning high stakes testing. Kids are different.

Secondly, since all children are different, we have to be careful when we make assumptions about texts used to teach reading. Are the concepts and language familiar to the child? Are the concepts and language interesting to the child? Does the child give a fiddler's fart about the concepts or activities described in the text?

We can deal with both these problems by doing what Sylvia Aston Warner (1963) said about putting our hands into the minds of children and using what we get on our hands to teach them how to read. We deal with comprehension by beginning with comprehension. By using the language and the experiences of a child in initial reading instruction, we circumvent the problems associated with plugging in at reading without taking into consideration the listening and speaking of a child.

Higher Level Texts

Chomei (1972), a downsized Shinto priest stated the following:

Ceaselessly the river flows, and yet the water is never the same,
while in the still pools the shifting foam gathers and is gone, never
staying for a moment. Even so is man... unenduring as the foam on
the water. (p. 1)

It seems not that long ago that we met for the first ARF conference and I was excited about Durkin's classic comprehension study (1978-1979). Durkin did something that changed the direction of reading comprehension instruction in the late 70's. She sought to define comprehension instruction and comprehension assessment in order to research these in the schools. She defined comprehension instruction as the activities in which the "teacher does or says something to help children understand or work out the meaning of more than single isolated word." (Durkin, 1978-1979, p. 488).

Durkin (1978-1979) started a veritable firestorm when she defined comprehension assessment as activities in which the "teacher does/says something in order to learn

whether what was read was comprehended" (p. 490). That distinction, I believe, was the most important happening in reading comprehension in the 20th century.

In the monumental research study that followed, reading comprehension instruction and assessment were defined and measured. Thirty classrooms were observed in 17 schools in 13 different school systems in the state of Illinois. Grades three through six were observed during Reading and Social Studies. Social Studies was observed to determine if teachers taught reading in the content areas. The research went throughout the school year.

In this writer's opinion, the results forever changed the teachers' manuals for basal readers, the reading methodology textbooks, the preparation of teachers, and the publications of all the assistant and associate professors in literacy trying to obtain tenure and promotion. The results showed that out of 300 hours of observation, 44 minutes of "instruction" occurred. The most time went to comprehension assessment and assignment giving. No teacher during the year saw the Social Studies period as a time to help with reading.

I started dividing reading comprehension instruction into two major eras, B.D. and A.D., Before Durkin and After Durkin. The era B.D. was explained by Spache and Spache (1973):

One group emphasizes long lists of comprehension skills and the need to develop these. . . . Apparently this group believes answering a lot of questions, time after time, will enable the student to show whatever type or degree of comprehension later reading tasks demand. Another group of experts believe that the answer to comprehension development is to start with students' experiences and interests and exploit them (p. 558).

In 1989, A.D., I looked at the ten years of research after Durkin had audaciously suggested that initial questions didn't count as comprehension instruction (Cloer, 1989). Durkin had said that teachers must first explain, describe, model, and demonstrate before questioning students.

Unfortunately, the term direct instruction used in relation to comprehension in the 1980's was to be confused with the general term direct instruction B.D. and all the baggage affiliated with it. The term "direct instruction model" was originally introduced by Science Research Associates through the Distar programs. These programs, by Engelmann and Bruner (1969) simply programmed the teacher and attempted to make all reading lessons fool-proof. Becker (1977) supported the model by stating that teachers don't have the time to find appropriate words and examples, or how to sequence things correctly. The teacher's role B.D. was very limited. If one announced here at ARF in the 1980's that the session was about direct instruction in comprehension A.D., members were less likely to get up and go feed the pelicans. The direct instruction to be associated with reading comprehension in the eighties emphasized the teacher and children more.

There were numerous good examples of this new type of direct instruction A.D. where students were being given declarative knowledge, verbal explaining about what was to be learned, when to use it, and why it was useful (Aulls, 1986). Modeling by the teacher was to become a major aspect of basal comprehension lessons.

I (Cloer, 1989) reviewed positive outcomes in research studies where direct instruction A.D. was given in how to summarize (Brown & Day, 1983; Taylor, 1986), how to make a comprehension map (Taylor, 1986; Reutzel, 1986), how to understand metaphors (Readance, Baldwin, & Head, 1986), how to use narrative structure to comprehend (Fitzgerald & Spiegel, 1983), and how to critically comprehend (Patching, Kameenui, Carnine, Gersten, & Colvin, 1983). All these studies had very positive outcomes.

Since Harvest Wolf's affective state in relation to his literacy will be just as critical, of course, as his cognitive state, his instructor will need to use whatever strategy that has proven to be most reinforcing affectively. Since Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) concluded that children who basically taught themselves in student-centered classrooms had lower achievement, less creativity, curiosity, and self-esteem, we must be sure to explain, describe, model, and demonstrate before expecting Harvest Wolf to have a go at it. This also leads smoothly and nicely into my last gleanings regarding the affective domain.

The Affective Dimension

I know that Harvest will be asking daily the ancient Biblical question, "Who do ye say that I am?" Our answers to that question must provide him powerful invitations that say formally and informally, verbally and nonverbally, that he is a valuable, capable, and responsible reader and writer (Purkey & Novak, 1984), and that he and Grandpa have descended into the bowels of hell, and all the devils therein will not be able to remove one little dot over one of the "i's" in any of the invitations that have been issued. Whatever is done for Harvest Wolf in relation to invitations is done forever.

Alexander Dumas in the Three Musketeers (1962) said it so well. He said that a person who doubts himself is like a man who would enlist in the ranks of his enemies and bear arms against himself. He makes his failure certain by being the first person to be convinced of it.

The person working with Harvest will need to be aware of the types of things associated with the affective domain and language arts. Our most recent large-scale study at Furman (Cloer & Ellithorp, 2001) studied the relationship of teachers' self-perceptions and classroom practices to students' self-perceptions as writers. This study involved 802 students from 34 different classrooms in 13 different schools in urban, suburban, and rural elementary settings. We found, of course, that reading aloud was highly related to three different self-perception scales for males. This is an important gleaning for Harvest. When we read to him frequently, he will have better self-perception as to how he is progressing, not only in reading, but also in writing.

Nothing, however, triggered more discussion than our finding of an inverse relationship between the teachers' self-perceptions as writers and the childrens' self-perceptions. The higher the score on the teacher's self-perceptions as writers, the lower the score of the children's self-perceptions as writers. These data do not suggest that we ourselves need to be inept, and thereby make inexperienced writers feel good about their own ineptitude. They do clearly show, however, that there is a veritable need to be careful and sensitive as to the signals we send students. Probably, all of you can remember a teacher who was so good at something such as math, physics, or educational statistics that it seemed hard for the instructor to tolerate your own ineptitude as you tried through successive approximations to become better.

The negative correlation between teachers' self-perceptions about their writing and students' self-perception as writers is a troubling one that must be addressed. One hypothesis is that the teachers, in their passion for good writing, place too much early emphasis on the mechanics of writing while failing to meaningfully interact with the writers' content. Hillerich (1985) pointed to research which showed that students who received reactions to their ideas, instead of beginning with corrections to mechanics, actually had fewer mechanical errors. Writing teachers who believe that for every action on the part of a writer there is an equal and opposite criticism from a teacher, listen up!

There seems to be a phenomenon at work between teacher and student in writing instruction and assessment that is not evident in reading. We have found only high positive correlations between teachers' love of reading and children's recreational reading. In writing, however, a student leaves a paper trail. There is a product in writing that involves capitalization, punctuation, organization, grammar conventions, etc. Conversely, when a child reads purely for pleasure, there is not a tangible product to examine, analyze, and criticize unless there are worksheets or comprehension questions. These worksheets are perceived by the student as concomitants to academic reading, not "real" reading for pleasure.

We did an earlier study (Cloer & Pearman, 1993b) that showed how critical teachers as readers really are. When the teachers in the study loved to read, as measured by how much they read silently each week for pleasure, their students loved to read. This study has an important gleaning for Harvest Wolf. It points to the veritable importance of positive modeling by those who wish to inculcate within their students a lifelong love of reading.

Do you recall teachers in your school years who made a difference for you? I personally had the joy of encountering two teachers who obviously loved to read and shared their ebullient joy with their students. Mrs. Bailey always read books aloud that she found most satisfying. She shared treasures of literature I remember to this day. Mrs. McGhee was a teacher who read voraciously and modeled to us constantly how good literature of all types could awaken powerful imagery and stir our deepest emotions. She genuinely reinforced us when we read and imagined, laughed, cried, and shared our pleasure in doing so. Both of these teachers taught me immeasurably more than the mechanics of reading. Ms McGhee did not become a master teacher because of

“assmosis,” advancement by kissing up to the principal. She knew what really mattered in teaching. Assessment

I must not leave out assessment for Harvest Wolf. I must assess whether or not he has positive attitudes about reading. I will start with the Elementary Reading Attitude Scale (McKenna & Kear, 1990) for grades 1-6. Harvest likes Garfield and will identify easily with his four different states of mind from very happy to really pissed.

The assessment of attitudes changed forever with publication of the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) by Henk and Melnick (1995) and the Writer Self-Perception Scale (WSPS) by Bottomley, Henk, and Melnick (1997/1998). The research behind these instruments suggests that students' self-perceptions of their reading and writing ability will affect subsequent reading and writing achievement in various ways. Those students who hold more positive perceptions will likely pursue more reading and writing opportunities. Students who hold more negative self-perceptions related to reading and writing will expend less effort and demonstrate less persistence. These are two more instruments that I will really put to good use with Harvest. He can't slip below the 50th percentile or a standard deviation below the mean; we can't let that happen!

Another study we did showed how males became negative toward reading very early in school, and their attitudes toward academic and recreational reading dropped very significantly as they progressed through the grades (Cloer & Pearman, 1993a).

We found in another study (Cloer & Dalton, 2001) that males and females differed significantly in their self-perceptions as readers even when their standardized test scores were not significantly different. Males were more negative in their self-perceptions. We also found that a group of females with significantly low standardized reading achievement scores had higher self-esteem as readers than boys who had significantly higher standardized reading achievement on the same test.

Our study (Cloer & Ross, 1997) showing how standardized reading test scores predict self-perception as readers made us ask the obvious question. Should these tests which do not resemble an authentic pleasurable literary endeavor predict self-esteem as a reader? The standardized reading tests are very different from books that have interesting, dynamic characters doing exciting things. Real reading of enjoyable literature involving authentic stories with predictability and charm is a very different experience from reading a set of passages followed by a series of questions designed to “catch” students who are not test-wise.

Boys are really susceptible to low self-esteem as readers, even when they score well on these tests. Our studies show the need for students to see themselves as readers who read, and not just readers who could read. We hypothesize that girls who read recreationally for pleasure may not score high on a test designed to catch them. However, with the girls the recreational reading may preserve their self-esteem as readers, even if their standardized reading test scores were low.

We must begin to address the negative attitudes of boys if we are to be successful in creating lifelong readers. This study suggested that if we could get boys really interested in reading recreationally for pleasure, their negative attitudes about school might ameliorate as well. Since boys cause most of the mayhem in school, this is of pressing import. The implications for Harvest are obvious. We must find what interests him and proceed to fuel that interest.

Recommendations for Instruction From Our Affective Research

Based on the affective research from these studies, the following recommendations are offered:

1. First and foremost, put emphasis on the content of Harvest's writing as interesting and important before working through successive approximations at punctuation, spelling, grammar, etc.
2. Give reading and writing tasks that are not too difficult for him.
3. Make him more physically and mentally comfortable during reading and writing projects.
4. Give more frequent and concrete illustrations of progress in reading and writing. Model and point to examples of the enjoyment, appreciation, relaxation and gratification that we, and Harvest, can gain from reading and writing.
5. Solicit more positive reinforcement and shared enthusiasm from other kids, other parents, and interested others.
6. Provide Harvest with a rich array of engaging literature that is frequently read aloud.
7. Use much predictable reading material and patterned text for reading and writing that allows Harvest to be successful.
8. Monitor body language closely to make sure positive messages are sent to Harvest regarding his reading and writing. Harvest Wolf's self-perception as a reader and writer can tolerate no less in his quest for literacy.
9. And lastly, make sure we live out a guiding divine principle for all educators. Anything genuinely worth doing by my beloved grandson is worth doing poorly when he cannot do any better. That includes motor skills, playing music with Grandpa, and yes, reading and writing.

Good Bye Old Friends

All composite things must pass away. Change is inevitable, except from vending machines. Good literacy researchers, I will retire at the end of this thirtieth academic year at Furman University, and will assist with the education of Harvest Wolf. But I'd like to return to the American Reading Forum with Harvest Wolf after two decades if I am still vertical, or even diagonal. He will be the presenter and I will be the reactor. He will simply tell you about his journey, how he obtained literacy, and hopefully about his genuine love of the language arts.

All composite things must pass away. Strive onward vigilantly. Good-bye for now old friends.

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Copyrights Conundrums and Perplexing Permissions

Sarah L. Dowhower

This past February (2003), I contacted the editor of a well-known scholarly journal (for privacy, I will call it Journal X) to track down the owner of an online image. His first comment brought me up short. *“Everyday I’m confronted with the mess we call copyright law. In truth this mess adversely affects academia, particularly in the areas of scholarly publishing and global dissemination of knowledge—issues to which I am deeply committed.”*

As I hung up the phone, I realized (with some dread) that I was wading into a quagmire (theoretically and practically) as I pursued the permissions for 33 painting images in my conference paper to be published in the American Reading Forum Online Yearbook (Dowhower, 2002). Before that conversation, the librarian at Appalachian State University had warned that the process of getting permissions was very labor intensive and time consuming. Talk about red flags! But before I get to that story, let me give you some background by briefly summarizing the relevant copyright laws for online publishing and the theory behind them.

Copyright Law Affecting Online Publications--In Brief

“Copyright law is central to our society’s information policy and affects what we can read, view, hear, use or learn” (Litman, 2001). It is, also, our system for protecting and encouraging scholarly research, creativity and open dissemination of knowledge.

Maintaining equilibrium between the right to research, discuss, and critique the works of others and protecting and encouraging creative works through the copyright laws is very difficult. “Resolving 9 sometimes conflicting claims requires policymakers, in the words of the Supreme Court to strike a ‘difficult balance’ between rewarding creativity through the copyright system and ‘societies competing interest in the free flow of ideas, information and commerce’ ” (Heins, 2003).

The Copyright Act of 1976 (Title 17) provides the basic framework for the laws we have today. (See [Stanford University Libraries](#) for an explanation and the document.) Two important aspects of this law are critical to this discussion (a) Public Domain and (b) Fair Use. *Public Domain* means publications or works not protected under patent or copyright. This allows free exchange of knowledge. *Fair Use* allows reasonable public access to copyrighted works without paying as long as there is no commercial gain. Education, parody, criticism, news reporting, research, scholarship, and commentary are all examples of fair use. Section 107 of Title 17 gives four tests that courts should use to determine if there is fair use or not: (See [US Code Fair Use](#).)

1. Purpose (commercial vs. nonprofit educational);

2. Nature of copyrighted work (a factual reproduction may be considered more fair use than a highly creative work);
3. Amount of copyrighted work used (whole or part); and
4. Effect on potential market (profit).

Two additional laws were passed in 1998, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and the Copyright Extension Act that have had an extraordinary impact on copyrights.

In 1994 Clinton initiated a proposal called the Green Paper advocating that everything on the Internet be copyrighted. As a result, The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) went into law in 1998, with the hope that it would clear up Internet copyright issues. This hasn't happened because the law was vaguely written and to many minds, incoherent. The result has been a series of lawsuits (everyone has heard of Napster and other big cases) that are trying to clarify the act (King, 2000). I will summarize some of these court battles as they relate to various online publishing issues later on in the paper.

Another 1998 law called the Copyright Extension Act (also known as the Sonny Bono Act) extended the term of copyright protection to nearly a century for corporations and even longer for individuals and their heirs. This translates into a 20-year freeze on copyrighted works before they go into the public domain. A 2003 court challenge (*Eldred v. Ashcroft*) supported by publishers and librarians, upheld this ruling. (See [Copyright Extension Act](#).)

Conundrums of Copyright Laws

The laws and the numerous digital copyright court cases that have ensued are what Journal X's editor meant by “the mess of copyright law and the threat to academia and democratic dissemination of knowledge.” Looking at the big picture, several scholars would agree with his negative assessment of the whole situation, e.g., Heins, 2003; Litman, 2001; Vaidhyanathan, 2001. The basic message of these three academics is that in the last 30 years copyright law has locked up expression, shrunk available works in the public domain and worked against scholarly creativity.

1. Jessica Litman, a law professor at Wayne State, suggests in *Digital Copyright* (2001) that because of these laws and court battles, big business (recording studios, movie studios, and publishers) and aggressive copyright lawyers are systematically restricting the information all people can get and hurting the research and scholarly community.
2. Siva Vaidhyanathan, a cultural historian and media scholar at NYU argues persuasively in *Copyrights and Wrongs* (2001) that “in its current punitive, highly restrictive form, American copyright law chokes cultural production and

expression. The whole concept of “intellectual property” has tipped the balance of public and private interest in favor of the private sector.”

3. In an online public policy report, *Why Copyright Today Threatens Intellectual Freedom* (2003), Marjorie Heins (First Amendment lawyer and Director of NYU Free Expression Policy Project) suggests that the “digital rights management” (DRM) of the last 30 years which controls the access and use of creative materials is inconsistent with a free and democratic copyright system. By and large, the two federal laws passed in 1998 (described above) have distorted the system by favoring industry at the expense of public’s interest in accessing, sharing and transforming creative works.

Example of a Copyright Court Case Directly Effecting Online Journals

Now, let us look at an example of a court case that hits close to home--that is, the resounding ramifications of a court ruling on a scholarly online journal.

As compared to our ARF Yearbook, the scholarly publication I mentioned earlier is a heavyweight! Journal X is one of the oldest academic journals in the world. With the help of an online archiving database and a major grant, Journal X has recently scanned all the editions published in the last 120 years. Thanks to our colleagues at Appalachian State University, ARF also has archived online all the Yearbooks (i.e., papers presented at the yearly conferences) published in book form (1981-2001). While ARF gives free access and global electronic viewing and copying for the Yearbook, the professional organization that publishes Journal X allows free access on a read-only basis on the Internet. They use a software program that allows worldwide viewing, but only copying or downloading if the reader is a subscriber or paying member of the organization.

The rationale behind this self-archiving of peer reviewed scholarly journals is eloquently expressed by the Open Society Institute, a foundation set up by George Soros. The Institute’s Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) believes that “free and unrestricted online availability to all refereed scholarly journals removes the barriers to open access and builds a future in which research and education in every part of the world can flourish;” thus providing a “foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge” (BOAI, 2002).

One recent court case has made this goal of BOAI difficult in the United States, particularly for scholarly Internet publications. In the Tasini Case (see Ebbinghouse, 2001), the Supreme Court ruled in 2001 that freelance writers should be compensated for electronic copies of their work. At no time did the publishers (the New York Times Co.) seek the consent of the authors nor were they compensated when their individual works were put into an electronic database. This sounds fair and right.

However, the Supreme Court made that decision on the basis of a strange rationale—that of bundled vs. unbundled works. The judges ruled “the databases did not reproduce and distribute the articles as part of a collective work.” In practical terms, this means that when professional organizations put the papers from their journal into a different database without signed author contracts, they cannot allow access to those separate papers (unbundled) on the website for fear of litigation. To protect the organization from copyright infringement under the *Tasini* decision, the Journal X editor had to make a major revision to the website. Now when a reader clicks on the title of an individual article, the whole journal issue appears. Being apprehensive, Journal X’s editor sees the publication moving to contracts—although how he would contact the early authors, when most are dead, is indeed a problem!

Perplexing Permissions

Next, I would like to take this issue of copyright to a more personal level. In January and February of 2003, I spent six intense weeks getting 33 image permissions for my discussion of paintings of children and family literacy (Dowhower, 2002). Many good things came out of the endeavor—I’ll highlight two of them.

Museums Without Walls

First, my research on literacy paintings, as well as the process of getting permission to use the images, underscored an amazing cultural shift quietly taking place in the last five years. As the Internet has facilitated worldwide access to scholarly journals, so too, has it unwrapped the whole world of art. In addition to museums and galleries opening up their collection to be viewed online, a number of quality web-based image archives have become available without charge. By giving unlimited free access to great art, “these institutions (and online collections) are engaging in an educational mission unlike any the world has ever seen--a museum without walls in the truest sense” (Phelan, 2003).

To help access these “museums without walls,” there is available a wonderful art history search engine called *Artcyclopedia* created by John Malyon ([Artcyclopedia: The Fine Art Search Engine](#)). I immediately contacted Mr. Malyon with the hopes that he could give me the permissions I needed since most of the paintings in my paper were available through his website. This was a dead end because *Artcyclopedia* does not own the copyrights to any of the images.

Image search engines, like *Google*, *Alta Vista* and *Artcyclopedia* are allowed to exist because of another court ruling in 1999, *Kelly v. Arriba Soft* or more popularly, the **Ditto.Com** Case. The court ruled that when thumbnail images are created as navigational aids, they fall under fair use. Thumbnails are not considered infringement because “of the transformative nature of using reduced versions of images to organize and provide access to them” (see [Kelly v. Arriba, 1999](#)). A more recent ruling upheld the 1999 decision with respect to fair use of thumbnails but reversed its ruling on use of inline

linking. Search engines now can only link images to the original websites and cannot display the full-sized images on their site ([See Revised Ruling](#)).

Generous Professionals

Secondly, those I contacted for permission to use copyrighted images were, for the most part, incredibly professional and helpful. Although the process was slow and involved numerous contacts, the majority of rights and reproduction personnel from various art collections worked with me to grant permissions. Amazingly, 16 different museums and galleries worldwide gave me rights to use their images without any fees--a heartening response.

In fact, most of the professionals I communicated with underscored my faith in academia and the art world in general! I will give you four examples. The curator of the National Gallery of Australia at Melbourne went beyond my request by offering me an additional work by the impressionist E. Phillips Fox called *The Lesson* which I added to my discussion of parents teaching children to read. (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 31.)

Several art history scholars who have created wonderful comprehensive online “image archives” and hold rights to the pictures on their website were exceedingly generous. Fred Ross, Director of the *Art Renewal Center* ([ARC International - The Art Renewal Center](#)) granted permission to use three quality images from his website and then introduced me to the work of a new artist, William Bouguereau—giving me authorization for several of the artist’s paintings. I added the amazing image of a child reading (entitled *The Difficult Lesson*) to the first section of my paper. (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 16.)

Lastly, (and much to my relief) Dr. Emil Kren of Hungary gave me rights to download seven paintings when several large museums did not respond to my faxes and emails or wanted to charge me for permission to use their images. Drs. Kren and Daniel Marx are the creators of the nonprofit *Web Gallery of Art* with 12,000 images of European art between 1150-1800 ([Web Gallery of Art](#)).

One contemporary art gallery was exceedingly supportive. Painter Brenda Joysmith and her husband Robert Bain are deeply committed to the cause of advancing Afro-American literacy. In fact, their Gallery in Memphis had a month-long exhibition called “Literacy: Within Reach” showing Blacks in the act of reading and writing. They munificently offered the painting called *The Ritual of Goodnight* in addition to the two others I requested from their website ([Joysmith Gallery and Studio](#)). (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 36.)

Thus, thanks to the research support of a museum, two online image archives and a contemporary gallery, I was able to bring the initial total of 33 paintings to 36. While the quality of the paper was enhanced by the whole process of gaining permissions, the journey was not without its challenges. I will briefly describe seven rather intriguing dilemmas.

The Seven Dilemmas

1. The peeling onion effect.

Intellectual property rights to visual images can be like peeling an onion—a real conundrum. This is how the Conference on Fair Use (1996) explained the problem:

Often, a digital image is several generations removed from the visual image it reproduces. For example, a digital image of a painting may have been scanned from a slide, which was copied from a published book that contained a printed reproduction of the work of art; this reproduction may have been made from a color transparency photographed directly from the original painting. There may be intellectual property rights in the original painting, and each additional stage of reproduction in this chain may involve another layer of rights. (CONFU, 1996)

You can see the problem: “*Who owns the image?*”

The best example I encountered of this “peeling the onion effect” was the first image in the paper. (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 1.)

This painting on a Greek vase is at a website entitled *Images of Orality and Literacy in Greek Iconography* assembled by Andrew Wiesner in 1996 ([Orality and Literacy](#)). The caption says that the owner of the vase is the private Henri Seyrig Collection and the photo is from a paper by J. D. Beasley from a 1948 issue of *American Journal of Archaeology* (AJA). After weeks of searching, I find that Andrew Wiesner, now a banker in NYC, had scanned the image from Beasley’s article when he was in graduate school and put it on the Internet along with other Greek literacy images. His mentor Dr. O’Donnell says Wiesner assembled the image collection himself and so owning them, would be glad to “propagate them in scholarly endeavors.” After talking to the publications director of AJA, it is questionable if Wiesner owned the image just because he scanned it and AJA does not own the photo even though it is in their journal. The author is dead so there is no way of knowing if he photographed the vase himself or if he used a slide or photograph that was owned by the Seyrig Collection. Finally, after numerous emails and dead-ends (article author Beasley is dead and Seyrig Collection has been impossible to locate), AJA said that it would have no problem if I used the image from the journal, based on fair use and good faith effort to find the original owner of the photograph.

2. “The already there” dilemma.

As I searched for image owners, I was haunted by the realization that the Internet had multiple digital image reproductions of most of the paintings I put in my paper. For example, if you put “Pompeii Sappho” into *Google Images Search Engine*, you will get at least nine different sites with similar pictures of the *Portrait of a Young Writer* that I

received permission to use from the Naples National Archaeology Museum's website. (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 4.)

Not only were there multiple sites, I soon determined that at least 75% of the 33 images in my paper were on the web without copyright permission—and had been for many years!

Several individuals in the mid-to-late 1990s developed online image archives by scanning paintings from books and other sources, e.g., Carol Gerten-Jackson, Olga Mataev, and Mark Harden. These three wonderful nonprofit educational art resources sites give free, unlimited access to thousands of painting reproductions—the majority of the images I needed permissions for were on these websites.

Both *CGFA Virtual Art Museum* created by Carol Gerten-Jackson ([CGFA](#)) and *Olga's Gallery* originally developed by Olga Mataev to help children learn art history ([Olga's Gallery Online Art Museum](#)) did not answer my requests. However, Mark Harden, developer of *The Artchive*, emailed me that he regrettably has been forced to take off some paintings from his site (e.g., Matisse, Picasso and Dali) because he did not have permissions for the images. Like Gerten-Jackson and Olga, Harden has an extensive copyright page that cautions that the thousands of scanned images are just for personal nonprofit and educational use ([The Artchive](#)).

What is of import here is that the three sites do not hold the rights to the painting images and they do not give the sources of their scans. They claim “fair use”, particularly since most paintings are in the public domain. For me the big question was why couldn't I do the same? After all, ARF Online is a nonprofit, noncommercial, professional, educational publication.

3. The “publishing” dilemma.

Of course, *publication* is the operative word here. As Dr. Christine Sundt (a scholar on image rights) suggests, the accepted practice is to require image permissions for online publishing, like those in book form. Requiring consent and fees are carry-over traditions based on copyright laws for publishing images in hardcopy (Sundt, 2003b). The Conference on Fair Use (1996) published the following statement:

3.3 Use of Images for Publications.

These guidelines do not cover reproducing and publishing images in publications, including scholarly publications in print or digital form, for which permission is generally required (CONFU, 1996).

As private and public museums and galleries have expanded their online collections over the last few years, they also have added clear guidelines for the use of images on their websites. For the most part, they state in their reproduction and rights page that images may be used for personal or educational purposes, but not in any publications—printed or electronic—with special permission. In truth, the

stipulation on museum websites that images cannot be downloaded without permission into digital publications has not been tested in the courts, nor has the accepted practice of requiring permissions and fees for reproductions of paintings in the public domain downloaded into scholarly not-for-profit papers.

Another court battle (*Bridgeman v. Corel*, 1999) gives some weight to questioning these museum practices. The judge ruled that a photograph of two-dimensional works whose very intent is to replicate a work in the public domain is not itself an original work of art and is not subject to copyright. “Since such a case had never before arisen, many museums for years have operated under the assumption that they hold copyright in such reproductions and invoke it to control the use of images of works in their collection” (Szczesny, 1999).

4. The “holding paintings hostage” dilemma.

Works in the public domain may be freely copied and used by anyone. Note that except for three paintings by contemporary artists, ALL the works in my paper were in the public domain. At first blush, you would think that I would have little trouble putting these images in my paper without charge. Think again.

Unfortunately, the digital images of paintings taken by museums photographers are generally NOT free—the museums claim they are protected by copyright and therefore can charge for their use. The situation is best explained by Tyler T. Ochoa, who at the time was an Associate Professor at Whittier Law School. He argued “where the public does not have access to the original painting, the ONLY way it has to reproduce the painting itself is to reproduce a reproduction of it. Unless we hold that photographs can be freely copied, the painting, as a practical matter, is not in the public domain” (Ochoa, 1999).

However, museums do not give the public free access, because most will not allow the public to take photographs or they demand a special charge for the right. “Museums restrict access to the originals for many good reasons (it takes time and money to make good reproductions), but also because it gives them a monopoly on reproductions” (Ochoa, 1999).

Thus for educators, researchers and the general population, museums are establishing a continuous copyright of works in the public domain. Barry Szczesny, American Association of Museums Government Affairs Counsel explains it this way:

To have museums who argue vigorously (and rightly) on the one hand for “fair use” and on the other to assert perpetual copyright (by taking photos over and over again) over works which have fallen into the public domain would be seen by some as a bit of a double standard and would be all the more troubling coming from institutions with educational missions who hold their collections in the public trust (Szczesny, 1999).

5. The double standard: economics over scholarship.

Indeed, I soon learned through my inquiries that museums and galleries raise money by requiring fees for online image use in a variety of creative ways: (a) by charging for permission to incorporate an image into an Internet publication; (b) by further requiring that the institution MUST supply the reproduction of the image for which the author must pay extra; (c) by levying fees for the length of time the publication will appear on the Internet—i.e., perpetual re-occurring costs; and/or (d) by charging for world-wide circulation. Even while offering educational discounts, most of the 16 public and private collections I contacted initially requested one or more of these fees. I began to identify with a question proposed by an art scholar (Sundt, 2000) who humorously inquired “Why do I have to mortgage my house to put illustrations in my book?”

The image below from the Roman Catacombs is not in my paper because of the exorbitant charges that the Vatican required. (Note: For this discussion, I made a low resolution scan from a photograph. The work is in the “public domain” and I claim “fair use” based on US Title 17 and the *Bridgeman v. Corel* decision that said an exact photograph of a two-dimensional work in the public domain was not original enough to be subject to a copyright.)



My request to the Photographic Archive of the Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra (PCAS) was to use the black and white image that I reproduced from a book--without charge. In an email response, the Minister said, “The PCAS could not grant my request.” Furthermore, the charge would be 41 Euros to purchase a color digital image, 129 Euros to put the image in an online journal, and 129 Euros for worldwide circulation—a total of 299 Euros or \$390.91.

In another example, the Tate Collection in London emailed me that it does not grant permissions for free and would only charge the educational rate of \$15 a year for the next ten years. I would have to reapply to extend the permission. I replied that the

fee was unconscionable for a work in the public domain and I would take the image out of my paper, supplying a link to the image at the Tate Online site (see [Martineau Painting, Tate Online](#)). (See Dowhower, 2002, Figure 30 discussion)

Indeed, why do I have to mortgage my condo to use images in my online paper?

6. Unprepared for the digital age.

What also became clear as I corresponded with reproduction representatives of various art collections was that they were staggeringly unprepared for the digital age. Museums seem to be operating in the limited mind-set of publications in printed form, which required image reproductions of high quality. As you will surmise from the examples below, the interchanges I had were both frustrating and humorous.

In this age of high-tech, what surprised me most was the problem of communication. Several large museums never responded, even though I used the email addresses and fax numbers supplied on their websites. One museum Webmaster said he daily throws away whole batches of emails—that is why he did not respond until my third try. I got his attention that time by entitling my email “Do Not Delete. Desperate, Dr. D.”

Of all the collections, The National Gallery of London was the only one who had a website to electronically request copyright permissions. The site was impressive and well designed--giving multiple options for navigation, including a page spelling out permission requirements for any use of its copyrighted images. Unfortunately one option was missing. There was no avenue to request the use of a digital image from their online collection ([National Gallery Picture Library](#)).

After reading my letter clearly asking for permission to download an image from the museum website into an online publication, representatives repeatedly responded by offering me a transparency of the image to be sent through the mail. One very prestigious international museum even replied back that they did not have electronic images—I humbly pointed out that they had hundreds on their website!

Several museums with a huge number of paintings displayed online, said they did not allow images to be downloaded for reproduction purposes. One of their concerns was use of lower resolution of online images as compared to those used in hardcopy publications. Subsequent to explaining that the lower quality of 72 DPI was fine for my purposes, one European museum gave permission to use the image from its website. After pleading my case over several weeks of emails with two major US museums, they each generously emailed me a free image—exactly the same size and resolution as the one I had downloaded from each website!

Perhaps the most humorous reply was when one museum asked that I submit my request in *writing* (i.e., mail or fax) after I had sent a two-page letter with a permission form via e-mail!

7. The web--a tangle of practice, tradition, law and scholarship.

As a way of recapping and pulling together this “mess of copyright laws and practice,” I would like to conclude with an issue that has become near and dear to my heart over the last year and a half—that of the tangled web of scholarship and image copyright on the Web!

In a talk to the American Association of Museums in May 2003, Professor Christine Sundt from University of Oregon, Eugene, succinctly put the digital scholarship dilemma this way. “There is real conflict between practice and tradition, law and museums” and “there is real distinction between hard core exploitation and creative, scholarly use of images” (Sundt, 2003a).

Dr. Sundt argued “for raising the bar for commercial uses to cover and eliminate cost for scholarship.” She made the following points:

1. For professors, scholarship IS mandated by universities, not just an option;
2. Because of the expense, color images are seldom possible in low-budget scholarly publications;
3. An educator is unlikely to reap profits from scholarly publishing; and
4. Regrettably, museums have gone well beyond copyright law in making their requirements for image use (e.g., images cannot be used in digital publications without permission). They are able to do this because (a) the law is vague; (b) “image” publication is not well defined; and (c) traditional practices of book publication are wrongly extended to the Internet. (Sundt, 2003a; Sundt, 2003b).

As an audience of literacy educators, I am sure the ironies of Dr. Sundt’s comments are not lost on you. As a forum for educational ideas and research, the American Reading Forum has been at the forefront of online journal publication—with that comes the challenge of how to handle images. The ease of scanning and downloading images into Internet publications truly has confounded the issue of ownership as pictures proliferate on the Web. It remains to be seen whether economics, law, museums, tradition or scholarship will prevail. The results will either open up new opportunities for research and dissemination or truly limit education and creative scholarship.

How wonderful that the public, as well as scholars, have growing access to paintings on the Internet (truly an evolving museum without walls) and how unfair that educators (who are generally not paid for their work) have to jump so many hurdles to put images in research, non-profit publications. As to the copyright conundrums and

perplexing permissions of illustrative images on the Internet and six weeks of “begging” for free permissions, I have come to one conclusion. Art collections should be PAYING US for showcasing their works in a worldwide forum!

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From Practitioners to Researchers: Facilitating Classroom Research

Rosalind Raymond Gann

Jane E. Melendez

East Tennessee State University

Melissa Bray

Churchill Elementary School

Stephanie Mann

Mount Carmel Elementary School

Teresa Young

Fairmont Elementary School

Introduction

We are living an era when a physicist is heading the National Panel on Literacy, and only four of its members have had hands-on experience with the teaching of reading, or the administration of reading programs (National Panel on Reading). We cry “foul!” arguing the expertise of the literacy profession has been swept to the side. Yet we ourselves can be guilty of the same disregard for the contributions of those who labor long and hard in our field. I speak of the failure to include the voices of K-12 practitioners in many of our reading conferences and journals, or even at times to recognize that those who teach reading daily would have important things to say. In part, the problem is one of professional discourse and dialect. Professors and researchers can be embarrassed by the way their elementary and secondary school colleagues talk. K-12 teachers are socialized to speak in a discourse that is anecdotal, situationally specific, and embedded in concrete detail. Here is an example:

To help her students develop schemata for understanding a reading on the early life of Abraham Lincoln, a fourth grade teacher has her students build “log cabins” out of popsicle sticks and school glue. While they are building, she has students imagine what it would be like to live within one of these structures. The activity generates much productive discussion. The students understand the reading. When she discusses the project with colleagues, her talk is replete with admonitions on how to unstick the tops of glue bottles and how important it is that structures be left to dry on paper towels, not on the tops of desks.

The teacher in this case, employs a discourse that North has described as “lore” (1987), which he characterizes as an oral tradition for conveying guidance to fellow educators. Lore is easy to caricature. It is not a discourse of power (Fairclough, 1995). Such discourses do not “play” well in many of our academic reading conferences and journals.

This paper relates an experience in which I (Gann) required a group of seasoned teachers—all masters’ degree candidates in reading—to design action research projects in their

classrooms. In the course of the project, the teachers not only developed teaching strategies that might interest the rest of us; they became fluent in the language of research, a discourse of power. The control of such discourses is vital in an era that fails to respect the contribution of classroom practitioners to the educational enterprise, minimizes it through a process some have called “deskilling” (Shannon, 1989), and often treats teachers as mere technicians of the testing process.

Arguably, today’s K-12 teachers are measured and tested at least as much as their students. Despite creativity and motivation, teachers exist in a professional culture of accountability, where it is assumed they must be told what to do with specific structural mechanisms in place to assure they do it (Stephens, 1998). Politicians and the public are obsessed with romanticized visions of an educational past where rules were enforced and students learned basics. Teachers are assumed to be the “passive recipients of the dictates of experts,” and incapable of self direction (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 2). Uninformed by the knowledge base of teachers, research is often removed from the reality of practice in today’s society, and reforms are imposed on the schools from the outside, limiting the effectiveness of the reforms.

Elementary and secondary teachers seldom learn to perform research, and when they study research the techniques are rarely the sort that can be applied in a classroom. For example, positivistic modes of research require investigators to control artificially devised experimental groups and conditions, in a way unachievable in a practitioner’s own classroom. Broadly speaking, however, research is asking questions, making predictions, and showing evidence for what one does. It is about actively seeking knowledge and using it (Boomer, 1987). This is why action research paradigms are so useful to classroom teachers. The notion that teachers as well as academics and professional researchers can engage in research is grounded in democratic social theory which assumes that educational research is not the exclusive preserve of an elite minority (Kincheloe, 2003). In classroom action research, the investigator identifies a problem, reads what others have done in similar circumstances, and formulates a strategy for addressing the problem in a particular setting. The investigator keeps records of how well the intervention works and shares the results with other educators (Stringer, 2004). He or she behaves as teacher and researcher at the same time (Mills, 2000). The research is integrated into pedagogic practice. The method, which was first developed by Kurt Lewin in the 1930’s, is plastic and can merge with a variety of educational ideologies. Some writers (e.g., Stringer, Mills), seem to value action research most as professional development for teachers. Others, like Kincheloe, stress its knowledge generating capacity and its potential for stimulating organizational change within schools.

Getting Started: Rosalind Gann

In the Fall of 2002, when I undertook teaching Content Area Reading to ten experienced classroom teachers in the Reading Masters Program at East Tennessee State University, I had no intention of requiring them to do action research. I was new to the faculty, and content area reading was not my specialization. I followed the established syllabus and textbook. Having been a K-12 educator, I was accustomed to writing materials to supplement content area textbooks. I planned to cover the textbook, to show the teachers how to write supplementary materials, and to assign them term papers. But grading the first assignments was humbling. The teachers, most of

whom worked in low-resource and otherwise challenging schools, were already developing highly appropriate learning materials for their students. They already knew the material in our textbook. While a few of the students were slightly newer to the field, the class was mostly composed of creative reading practitioners, who had much to teach me and others in the profession. They were ready to learn new modes of discourse so they could make their own contributions to professional knowledge. Action research would be a worthwhile way of addressing the issue. I therefore upgraded the term paper to the designing of an action research project.

Taking Action: Jane Melendez

About mid semester of fall 2002, Dr. Gann told me that she had included an assignment, which required the students in our Reading MA cohort to develop action research proposals as a component in the course, Reading Instruction in Middle and Secondary Schools. This assignment meant the students would be in possession of action research proposals at the end of the fall semester. I suggested Dr. Gann inform the students that I would have them conduct and report their action research as a part of the practicum course I was scheduled to teach in spring, 2003. While the students had been reluctant to develop the action research proposals in the beginning, the opportunity to carry out their research boosted their willingness to produce the proposals. Action research was then included as a major component of our practicum course. The students conducted several well-designed, creative projects in their classrooms, and it was a pleasure for me to observe their research processes. Toward the end of the semester, we worked on their written reports, and they learned to be cautious about the sorts of claims that can be made related to informal classroom research. They produced well-written action research reports.

The students were to graduate in May 2003, and they were facing the culminating experience for their program – evaluative interviews with their committee members. I suggested to them that we convert the process to a Reading MA symposium for which we would gather on a Saturday and they would present their research to each other, the members of their committees, and other interested faculty. They were very enthusiastic about the idea, and we conducted the 2003 Reading MA Symposium during late March. Our students' presentations were very well received by all present. Faculty commented on the creativity of the action research projects and professionalism with which the students presented their reports. We will continue with this format for our Reading MA program.

Student Action Research Projects

Of the ten students in the Reading MA program, all completed the project satisfactorily. Three of the graduate students further refined and edited their work, presenting it at the 2003 American Reading Forum Conference. Excerpts from their papers appear below. These particular papers were selected because they reflect the quality and range of the projects, and also because their authors were willing to spend the additional time required to edit them for publication. The projects reflect long-standing interests and professional competencies of their authors. The value of the assignment was to challenge these accomplished educators to discuss their activities in the discourse of research.

Excerpts From “Involving Parents in their Children’s Reading Development”

by Melissa Bray, M. A.

Introduction

A parent’s active role in a child’s education has proven to be a key factor in a child’s successful schooling. Parental involvement has positive effects on students’ academic achievement, work ethic, self-esteem, attendance, motivation, and social behavior. “Parent involvement is a necessary part of the education process...”, says Sherlie Anderson (2000). Parental involvement can take many forms – volunteering at school, attending meetings, encouraging the child to try new and harder tasks, maintaining contact with teachers, practicing new skills with the child, or assisting the child with homework. “Passive forms of involvement are better than no involvement at all”, say Kathleen Cotton and Karen Reed Wiklund (1989).

This is especially true of developing a child’s reading ability. Research has shown that parental involvement can positively impact the reading achievement of students (Cotton & Wiklund, 1989). Students who receive extra help from their parents make significant gains in reading achievement when compared to students who do not receive extra help from their parents (Faires, Nichols, & Rickelman, 2000). “Getting parents involved in their children’s reading, regardless of the type or the intensity..., leads to improvements in students’ ability to read and... in students’ interest and enjoyment of reading” (Rasinski & Fredricks, 1989, p 84-85).

Setting

The school, which was the setting for this study, is in a rural community in Northeast Tennessee. The student population was 352 students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. There were three general education classrooms per grade level. There were two special education resource classes and one Comprehensive Development Class (CDC). The school is a Title One school, which indicates over 50% of the student population qualified for free or reduced lunch based on household income. The population involved in this study was 17 first, second, and third grade students who were served in a special education resource classroom. All 17 of the students received special education services for reading and 12 of the 17 students received special education services for math as well. Fourteen of the students had been identified as having a learning disability in the area of reading or reading and math. Two of the students were health impaired and one was language impaired. The purpose of this research was to investigate the effect that parental involvement at home could have on the reading achievement of special education students.

Methods

Letters were sent to the parents asking permission for their children to be included in the study. The letter went on to ask if parents would be willing to commit to assisting their children with reading at least four nights a week. They were then given the opportunity to attend a training session. The response to the letters determined which group the children and their parents were assigned to. The first group was comprised of students whose parents were actively

involved and who were trained in reading strategies to use with their children. This group was designated Group A. The second group consisted of students whose parents agreed to be actively involved with their children's reading assignments, but they were not trained in any special techniques or methods. This group was designated Group B. The third group included students whose parents gave permission for their children to be included in the study, but did not want to participate themselves. This became Group C. The children's reading levels were assessed by administering the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery – Revised (WJ-R). The WJ-R was given as a pre- and posttest.

The parent training sessions included a simplified format for using reading cueing systems. Strategies included how to effectively use context clues, phonics and syntax when encountering an unknown word, and how to model reading, cueing systems and questioning techniques. Parents were also given the option of attending an individual training session where they observed the researcher reading with their children using the strategies presented in the training session. In an effort to maintain the integrity of the research, there were no changes made in the classroom setting or teaching methods used during this study. The only variable changed was the level of parental involvement. The frequency and duration of the parental involvement was checked by having parents sign a reading log each night and by verbal verification from the students.

Results and Discussion

All 14 parents agreed to read with their children four nights a week for 20 to 30 minutes. Five of the 14 parents agreed to attend a reading training session, but only two parents actually attended. Reading logs documented that 9 of the 14 parents read with their children at least four nights each week. The response to the training sessions resulted in Group A having two students whose parents were actively involved and trained in using cueing systems. Group B had seven students whose parents were actively involved but not trained in using the reading cueing systems. Group C consisted of five students whose parents were not actively involved.

The results of this study strongly suggest that parental involvement may improve the reading achievement of special education students. The students whose parents were trained to use the reading cueing systems made more improvements than those whose parents were not trained or were not involved. Substantial improvements in students' reading were shown by most of the students whose parents were actively involved but not trained. These results imply that parental involvement impacts students' reading performance positively and suggests that parental training may make parental involvement more effective.

Excerpts from "Teaching Fifth Graders to Understand Graphs and Charts"

by Stephanie Mann, M.A.

Introduction

It has been my experience over the past five years that students have a difficult time reading and interpreting the information given in charts, graphs, and maps in content area

subjects. I have observed students paying little or no attention to the visual aids provided in their textbooks. When visual aids are linked to the chapter reading, I have found that students consider them to have little connection to what they are learning. Why do students have trouble reading and interpreting visual aids in content area subjects? Students need to be taught the value and importance visual aids provide to learning. The purpose for my study was to better equip students with visual and reading strategies that would allow them to correctly interpret visual aids in content area subjects. The research addressed the following questions: Will hands-on instruction prove effective in developing skills in reading and interpreting visual aids in content area subjects? Will the hands-on instructional method make a difference in student ability to interpret visual aids? Do skills used when students create their own visuals increase their ability to interpret them in textbooks?

Setting

The location for the study was a rural school serving kindergarten through fifth grade. There were 18 teachers and 331 students. Approximately 40% lived in nuclear families while the other 60% lived in a single or “zero” parent homes. Of the student body, 46.3% received free or reduced-price meals. All students spoke English as their primary language.

Review of the Literature

A number of the studies have explored how students utilized the visuals in their textbooks. According to Mesmer and Hutchins (2002), students were able to explain detailed science processes, but when asked a multiple-choice question they often produced the wrong answer. The students thought that the visuals were irrelevant and did not take the time to use them. Arnold & Dwyer; Booher; Decker & Wheatly; Holiday, Brunner, and Donais; Rigney & Lutz (as cited in DuPlass, 1995), compared the performance of students who were presented material with and without graphic displays. The results of the studies provided evidence that students’ comprehension improved when they were taught with graphics as opposed to when they were taught with little to no graphics. DuPlass (1996) used a three-step strategy provided by Mannhood, Biemer, and Lowe (cited by DuPlass, 1996) for teaching the interpretation of graphical images. As a result of using this strategy, DuPlass’ students who were not able to read or interpret charts and graphs beforehand were able to read and interpret graphic information after the instruction.

Methods

The students created three graphs each during their social studies class during a six weeks period. Verbal permission was given to me by my principal to conduct this study. Letters were sent home to parents requesting permission for their children to participate. Of the 55 fifth grade students, 47 participated in the study. The study sample was reduced to 40 students due to transfers or absenteeism that affected testing. Students were identified by their textbook numbers during the study.

The class discussed different types of visuals provided in their textbooks before beginning their assignments. This allowed the teacher to determine the students’ prior knowledge

of visual aids. Once the teacher had collected the students' background information, a foundation was laid for in-depth instruction about visual aids. The students determined topics they wanted to use for school surveys. One week was spent determining survey questions, gathering the information needed in order to complete a bar, line, and circle graph, and generating a survey form for all students to use. Some of the choices were favorite sports, favorite cars, and favorite pets. After all survey data had been collected, each student created a bar graph showing the results of the first survey, a line graph showing the results of a second survey, and a circle graph showing the results of a third survey. Students were required to provide titles, keys, and all labeling for each graph. Once graphs were completed, each student explained his/her graph to the class. Graphs were displayed for the entire school to see and read. Students were assigned two graphs to review before beginning the study. They answered sixteen questions that were associated with the graphs. The students were assigned the same two graphs and questions at the conclusion of the study. The scores from these tests were compared to determine differences in skill levels used to read and interpret visual aids at the beginning of the study and its conclusion. I also collected data over the six-week period through observations and documented it through note taking. I wrote about the students' reactions, work, and progress at the completion of each day in a reflective journal. This allowed me to monitor student progress in skill development, to identify needs for additional instruction following the study, and to reflect on the study.

The students' answers to the pre-tests and post-tests were analyzed to see if the students had paid attention to the material that was presented only in the visual aids. Some questions were formatted so students would only know the correct answers if they had paid attention to supplemental text and information given with visual aids. The answers allowed me to determine if the students read the supplemental text or merely looked at the graphics.

Results and Discussion

The "hands-on" approach proved to be a beneficial means of increasing students' understanding of content area graphs. Skills developed by students while creating visual aids also improved their skills for correctly interpreting visual aids in content area material. Comparisons were made to see if students' interpretations of charts and graphs increased by using student created visuals as a method of teaching. It appeared that many of the students' skills in correctly reading and interpreting visual aids improved. Of the 40 students who participated in this study, 19 students improved in their ability to interpret charts and graphs, while 21 students' ability to interpret these visual aids remained approximately the same.

Students often look at graphics and bypass the supporting text and information. Their attention is often caught by the image, but they tend to disregard the meaning of the information presented. The purpose of my research was to determine if student awareness of the graphics in content area textbooks could be increased and if their interpretation skills could be improved. The research indicated that many of the students did benefit from this method of instruction. The students who showed the most improvement were the students who performed at a level that was below average in the areas of social studies and science. This study suggests that this method of instruction, which uses a hands-on approach, benefits low-functioning students the most. Follow-up research might use resource or low average students as a population to see if the results are consistent.

Excerpts from: Increasing Spelling Proficiency Through Writing

Teresa Young, M.A.

Introduction

The intent of this project was to promote increased proficiency in students' spelling through meaningful writing instruction and practice. Efforts to teach students to read often focus on the reading process while neglecting to balance instruction with writing and spelling. This research took place at an elementary School located in an older neighborhood that many years ago was deemed prestigious and where only the affluent lived. Today, it is a Title I school serving approximately 230 students, predominately white, with 45 students being served in special education. This study focused on the spelling difficulties of a group of special education third grade students' and examines both weekly spelling tests and written work. The special education group consisted of eight boys and one girl ranging in ages between eight and ten years old from two third grade classrooms. This group receives "pull out" instruction in the special education classroom in reading and language arts for two hours daily on third grade level with the current textbook. The basal includes spelling words; grammar lessons were taken from the weekly story.

It has been the responsibility of the special education teacher to develop and implement strategies to teach learning disabled and sometimes unmotivated students to improve their spelling skills during the reading and language arts class. How could these special education students' spelling be improved in written language daily practice and on their weekly spelling assessments? Was the current curriculum the right curriculum for teaching reading, written language and spelling skills to this population? What is the most effective strategy for long-term retention of spelling that would enable these students to communicate in writing?

Review of the Literature

Degeneffe and Ward (1998) developed a program to increase the application of spelling skills in students' writing. In a study by Boyd and Talbert (1971) on characteristics of good and poor spellers, visual and auditory discrimination were found to have a high correlation with spelling ability, revealing that visual discrimination is more closely related to spelling ability than auditory discrimination. To meet learners' different learning styles and needs, Boyd and Talbert (1971) suggested that frequently used spelling lists and a variety of activities should be used. Many words in spelling need to be over-learned so that they may be written without conscious thought by students. Drill and practice of writing and re-writing spelling words is not an effective strategy because a student may see a word that he is learning to spell, yet reproduce it incorrectly without any metacognitive process. Active intellectual involvement is necessary in learning to spell. Ediger (2000) discussed the acid test of student achievement in spelling, the actual application of correct spelling of words in functional written products without weekly spelling tests. Students should be given spelling words that have relevancy to them. Cued spelling strategies developed and researched in Scotland is a simple procedure that promotes spelling mastery through motivated practice and memory cues developed by the students

(Topping, 2001). Students are paired with partners, either peers or parents, in the learning process. Both students and their partners check the correct spelling of the words, read the words, and write the spelling words. The cued spelling technique distinguishes itself from traditional spelling methods by having the students develop their own cues for remembering the correct spelling of words. In an action research program to increase application of students' spelling skills in their writing that targeted first graders in a city school, three interventions consisting of establishing a print-rich environment, implementing direct teaching of spelling strategies, and creating student centered activities were implemented (Bleck, Crawford, Feldman, & Rayl, 2000). The first grade teachers had used the traditional drill and test teaching method while using commonly basic written words for weekly tests. Teachers had chosen spelling words randomly for each thematic reading unit, and they were inhibited in teaching spelling skills to their students by the lack of time allocated in the daily language arts schedule. The print-rich environment began developing when the teacher modeled writing a paragraph about a child in the classroom, and posted that paragraph on the wall for children to refer to when reading and writing (Gentry & Gillet cited in Bleck, Crawford, Feldman, & Rayl, 2000).

An action research by Angelisi (2000) was conducted in a third grade classroom for three weeks. It focused on the pros, cons, and effects of three different spelling strategies and activities. The study used the traditional rote, drill, and memorization spelling strategy that is typically used in classrooms and introduced two different strategies of phonemic awareness and word identification. Results showed that the traditional method caused all students in the study to show frustration with this strategy incorporated to learn spelling. Laminack (1996) offered observations of the success of any spelling strategies lies in children using them. Teachers can get a sense of how children use various strategies to spell as they write through observation, questioning, and analysis of writing samples. However, curricular and instructional decisions are not left to the classroom teacher to decide upon; the one person who knows the students' needs most. When spelling instruction is a matter of moving students through the spelling textbook, teachers do not have to make any decisions about what to teach and when to teach it. Yet, when writing is the focus with spelling instruction as a part of it, then teachers must rely on their own knowledge of spelling in use. This comes from their professional training, and experience as writers and observers. A balanced literacy program requires a supportive classroom environment that is rich in print and resources for supporting the work of students as readers and writers.

Methods

The study population was a group of nine third grade special education students in pull out language arts instruction. Parents received a letter explaining the project that asked for permission for their children's participation. New strategies and procedures for spelling instruction in this study involved small-group rotation in fifteen-minute intervals of activities. Emphasis was placed on students learning functional words from a frequently used word list in everyday writing. Special education students have limited experience with writing, especially on-going creative writing that involves editing.

Spelling words were chosen from the *Guide to the Rank List* (Becker, Dixon, & Anderson-Inman, 1980), in addition to the ten to twelve spelling words for each weekly story in the basal textbook. Students had twenty spelling words on weekly tests. A pretest was given for

each set of one hundred words in order to determine words the majority of the special education group did not spell appropriately. This was done to eliminate redundant work on skills already mastered by the students.

The study population of nine special education students was divided into groups of three. At the beginning of each week, the students were given their weekly spelling list. During the language arts class, each group rotated through three different skill centers. The skills were a grammar lesson from the basal with direct instruction, a writer's workshop, and an individual spelling activity. Each center activity was 15 minutes long. The language arts class consisted of an hour with three 15-minute rotations.

The grammar skills consisted of direct instruction from the basal's workbook, skills book, and assessment. Grammar lessons included nouns, pronouns, adjectives, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviations. One skill was studied each week with assessment each Friday. The vocabulary words were included in the lessons from the basal. The writer's workshop was comprised of a written activity where students wrote sentences, paragraphs and letters. The students worked individually on a modeled and pre-directed writing assignment for 15 minutes daily. The students were required to use all their spelling words in their writing assignment each day. Neat handwriting, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, content, and spelling were emphasized in the students' writing. Daily work was graded on spelling accuracy. Written work was assessed daily, and feedback was given to the students in written and verbal form. The final written assignment was due at the end of each week.

The individual spelling activities were worksheets. Students were familiar with the format. A different custom-designed spelling activity was presented daily. These activities used the weekly spelling words and incorporated visual-perceptual skills, spelling and phonemic patterns, and fine motor skills to meet the students' individual needs. Activities included alphabetic order, crossword puzzles, coding, matching, missing letters, jumbled words, word search puzzles, and copying. These activities were rotated weekly to motivate student participation and interest.

A weekly spelling test was given on Friday from the spelling list tape-recorded by the teacher. This test was presented in the traditional method in which a word was pronounced in isolation, and pronounced again in a sentence. Students checked and corrected their own tests with the use of an answer key. This helped the students take ownership of their work.

Results and Discussion

The researcher gathered baseline data that consisted of special education students' spelling errors on pretests of frequently used words from the *Guide to the Rank List*. All students' daily grades and written products for spelling proficiency and writing accuracy showed an increase in accuracy and proficiency. In comparing students' work samples from the beginning of the six weeks to the end of the six weeks, students were able to develop sentences and paragraphs that were much more meaningful and fluent. Their attention to details in all three activity centers improved. Overall, the special education students' handwriting was also more legible. Data collection of the fourth six weeks spelling tests and averaged grades, in comparison

to the second and third six weeks spelling tests and averaged grades, showed a 9.8% decrease in the majority of special education students' grades instead of the desired increase.

When interviewed, students stated that they preferred the learning environment of the daily skill centers to the traditional spelling instruction. They agreed that they would like to continue the group rotation activities after the action research was completed. The researcher observed improved spelling on daily work. Students' handwriting improved in sentences, paragraphs and letters. Written work improved through meaningful and fluent content. The researcher noted that this strategy required more preparation time for daily activities, generated more papers to grade for student feedback, and necessitated more worksheet copies to be printed for students' use. However, the researcher was able to teach more curriculum skills successfully to the students than in the traditional setting.

Based on the analysis of the data on weekly spelling tests and six weeks' grades, the students did not show improvement in the use of correctly spelled words. The project did not prove to have a positive impact on special education students' spelling performance on tests reflected by grades during the fourth six weeks grading period.

There were obvious limitations to this study when one reviews the factors that may have interfered with the research that caused the undesired results. The short time span of six weeks for students to learn the new routine and for the researcher to collect data may have had a negative effect on the outcome of the project. Also, the inclement weather and holidays shortened five of the six weeks by as little as one day and as much as three days during the research. The students' increased absenteeism due to influenza during this study may have been another factor causing lower grades. Or, it may be the case that careful selection of appropriate words for study should be considered. Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnson (2000) and others argue that words selected for spelling should be organized around sound, visual, or meaning patterns, selected to match students' levels of orthographic development (Henderson, 1990; Schlagal & Trathen, 1998; Templeton & Morris, 2000) Given these limitations, one may conclude that further action research should be considered in order to compare results to this study.

Reflecting on Student Action Research Projects

The papers excerpted above represent the thoughtfulness and creativity of the K-12 reading practitioners we regularly encounter in our Reading Masters program. Long before they arrived in our classes, these accomplished teachers were developing strategies for addressing the often daunting circumstances under which they work. We can claim no credit for having taught Ms. Bray how to help parents of special education students to use the multiple cueing systems for which she gained understanding in her reading diagnosis courses. We did not teach Ms. Mann how to show fifth graders to read and create graphs. Ms. Young's strategy for teaching standard spelling to special education students is her own intellectual property. What this joint project supplied to the teachers was another discourse, that of action research. It is an important discourse for teachers to know and control, for it is a discourse of power. In these times when persons far removed from the classroom seek to control methods teachers use in equipping

children with literacy, it is vital that teachers assert their claim to direct the educational enterprise.

Conclusion

This paper has related how three exemplary teachers—representatives of a class—learned to use the language of action research for their classroom projects. We continue to hope that they and teachers like them will continue to present, write and publish so that their work will influence the future of education in general and reading education in particular. In the popular press, teachers like Ms. Bray, Ms. Mann and Ms. Young are sometimes called “Veterans.” There is a reason they are called this. These women are the heroes of the educational system. The conditions under which they work are often daunting. They are blamed for societal problems not of their making, and their expertise is not always respected.

We hope they will continue writing and sharing what they know, and we hope the reading profession will listen. In this paper, they have agreed to speak in the discourse of academic research. However, in the future, we hope the academic community will have the professional humility to listen respectfully when K-12 teachers speak in their accustomed professional discourse of teacher lore.

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PARTICIPATING AS LITERACY VOLUNTEERS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

**Sharon Kossack, Florida International University
Ellie Friedland, Wheelock College
Janet C. Richards, University of South Florida**

International representatives at the 2000 World Education Forum unanimously acknowledged education as a “fundamental human right....key to sustainable development and peace and stability” (World Education Forum, 2000). They launched the Education For All (EFA) initiative, a collaboration between governments, organizations (e.g., World Bank and UNESCO), civilian groups and associations which dedicates resources to form within- and cross-county projects designed to provide education for “every citizen in every society” (World Education Forum, 2000). Their goal: 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015.

Having worked with developing educational systems for some time, this resolution seems an impossible dream. Social, political, and educational realities in developing nations seem to move at cross purposes to thwart progress. However, we have experienced, dedicated individuals determined to make a difference in literacy within their own sphere of influence. In this article, we share such developing initiatives: They are in Abaco, Bahamas; Guatemala; and northern Thailand. In this article we share our individual and collective volunteer experiences. As outsiders, we try to represent “what is subtle and significant...making public what (we have) seen, enabling others to see this as well” (Pitman & Maxwell, 1992, p. 746).

Our stories should not be viewed as comprehensive, but might best be viewed as cameos of the situations in which we worked. Nor should they be viewed as entirely objective, for we can only offer our perceptions of what we experienced, viewed through the lens of our own culture and experience. By sharing what we experienced, we hope to expand appreciation of the complexities of such initiatives while emphasizing the strong spirit of the in-country participants with whom we worked. In spite of the diversity of the projects, each author came to understand to a deepened understanding of the courage, self-reliance, dignity, and determination of the in-country participants.

Abaco, Bahamas (Stateside Contact: Sharon Kossack, FIU)

Context and Historical Perspective

The schools across the Caribbean still feel the effects of the British Colonial System of education (Perry, de Ferranti, Ferreira, & Walton, 2003). The British who occupied these countries structured colonial society to prevent those at the bottom of the power structure from learning to read and write. Literacy is power. And power is not often freely given over by an occupying force.

Schools in the Bahamas are organized in two tiers, primary (K-5) and secondary (grades 6-12), paralleling the British educational structure. There is no graduation or diploma. Students

build knowledge toward taking tests at the end of their secondary years which qualify them for university and/or certain careers. Because teachers are relatively scarce most begin teaching right out of high school. After teaching begins, there is little opportunity (or desire) to extend knowledge through in-service or educational conferences. Thus many teachers have limited knowledge of literacy process and are less likely to provide the best available instruction. This problem is compounded by the lack of libraries and print materials.



Abaco is a collection of remote out-islands in the Northeast part of the thousands of islands called The Bahamas (see map, above, <http://www.abacolife.com/map.html>). The number of residents limits the gene pool within such small, self-contained communities. Lack of knowledge of the genetic implications of intermarriage results in unusually high incidents of autism, deafness, blindness, elective mutism, mental retardation, behavior disorders, language anomalies. Medical assistance comes in the form of limited, widely-spaced, regional nurse-staffed clinics. This precludes much-needed genetic counseling, prenatal care, emergency assistance or post-partum intervention. Special supportive programs such as pre-school screenings, developmental instruction or early intervention do not exist. This combination of factors contributes to an inordinately high percentage of academically struggling students. Residents of out-island communities struggle with meeting the needs of children who present a staggering variety of learning disabilities. Their learning is made more frustrating by limited instructional resources. Students must share books and must leave them in the classroom. Pencils are broken into two halves so everyone will have something with which to write.

There are limited number of ways to earn money in the Bahamas. There are no income or property taxes. Tourism remains the predominant means of income. The tourist taxes (exit fees), permanent non-Bahamian resident property taxes, and duty applied to all incoming goods constitute the sole tax base. These are insufficient to pay for much needed services. Outside sources of funding are similarly limited. For example, the World Bank no longer classifies the Bahamas as an emerging nation because of its per-capita wealth. But this wealth reflects the wealth of the part-time residents and not the reality of its citizens. Poverty-stricken immigrants compound the problem by absorbing limited available jobs and by draining medical and educational resources.

In addition, educational funding is a low national priority. Larger population centers such as Nassau and Freeport absorb most of the available resources. Even when educational evaluations can be obtained for special needs students in outlying islands, few suggestions can be

used because educators in remote areas lack the knowledge, training, or resources (e.g., medicines, instructional materials or equipment) to implement them.

All of this came painfully to light when an Abaco resident, Mrs. Evelyn Major (M.S. in Counseling, Seaton Hall) adopted twin boys from an orphanage. James and Vincent soon showed severe developmental, emotional, physical difficulties stemming from the living conditions in the orphanage. They were the only two survivors of approximately a hundred children housed in a concrete-floor, barracks-like institution. In 1996, she sought to enroll the twins in school. Their applications were denied. Public (Ministry) schools and private academies had no services that would accommodate special needs children. So Mrs. Major began seeking help, contacting literally hundreds of potential resources.

As parents of special needs youngsters learned of potential assistance via the “coconut telegraph”, more and more began to seek help for their children. Over time, parents of special needs youngsters banded together to pool resources that launched and sustained a grass-roots initiative called Every Child Counts (ECC), a literacy and special education program.

Though various institutional entities supported it (e.g., the local Catholic church and Florida International University), ECC gained its strength from a network of hundreds of community volunteers. An early example of this kind of grassroots volunteering is Eric’s father, a contractor. Eric had Down’s Syndrome. Because ECC’s first classroom was a dilapidated trailer, Eric’s father spent a hot Caribbean summer renovating his son’s first classroom, despite a variety of financial and familial crises. At last, when he offered Mrs. Major money toward an air conditioner for this room, she refused, pointing out all he had already done. He insisted, saying with tears in his eyes, “Don’t you understand, Lyn? For years I have not been able to be a proper dad for my son. I knew of no way to help him but to love him. You have finally given me a way to do this. You will accept this money!” (E. Sawyer, personal communication, 1997) The money was accepted and applied to pay for Eric’s aide.

Over time, and as a result of various appeals in and outside the country, a network of diverse volunteers began to form hoping to address the needs of Mrs. Major’s children and others like them. Among those who came to help were some of the following. Volunteers from Florida International University’s (FIU) College of Education focused on curriculum and intervention related to early childhood and reading. They trained clinical educators to diagnose and provide entry-level instructional suggestions. A private Speech Therapist, Jacqueline Sullivan (Orlando), supplied special education resources and training. Dr. Edwin Demeritt (Director of the Neuro Developmental Clinic in Nassau) brought his intervention team consisting of a speech and language specialist, social worker, nurse, occupational therapist, and physical therapist. Another team from the states provided community and physical therapy equipment and resources.

Project Activities: Every Child Counts Literacy and Special Education Programme;
(http://www.fiu.edu/~kossacks/every_child_counts)

Academic Years 1996-2000 Early Goals.

Every Child Counts was formed to offer assistance, materials, and training to students who struggle academically, some of whom are learning disabled. ECC works to provide 1) direct service to academically struggling youth in the form of diagnosis and, when needed, adapted instruction or suggestions for intervention, 2) training for teachers in reading, writing, special education, and mathematics, 3) resources (books, equipment), and 4) funding to sustain the program. ECC initially provided assessment and recommendations and a FIU professor and graduate students delivered monthly training for all interested teachers, parents, students, and volunteers. The following is a listing of some milestones in ECC's development.

Academic Years 1997-1999.

The first special education teacher to get involved (a volunteer from the US) enabled ECC to provide direct pull-out work with students as well as extend additional assistance to students in the schools. Monthly training was continued and expanded. Because the project needed to be community-owned, volunteers were actively recruited. Abaco has a great number of active educationally-oriented service clubs and this provided the first step toward building local capacity.

September 14, 1999 – Hurricane Floyd.

Hurricane Floyd devastated the island. Two schools were completely flattened and all others sustained such damage that materials and equipment were barely salvageable. Because of its clinical educator training, ECC had an educator network in place that served as a form of “bucket brigade” allowing relatively easy distribution of over 20,000 pounds of books and materials to all schools and settlements. Relief work to the schools raised ECC’s profile through a newly launched website (<http://coconuttelegraph.net/forums/>) on which we posted pleas for books and materials. A great number of people from all over the world thus became aware of the project. We received audiovisual equipment from a California media company (overhead projectors, computer projectors), computers, and software. People stopped by the school to leave bags of books. The response continues to build.

2000-2002.

A dilapidated trailer was renovated to become the first ECC classroom. There the more severely disabled children could be given direct instruction. All other services continued, including diagnosis and intervention for children in every settlement on Abaco, monthly training for hundreds of educators, development of well-trained and ECC-certified Clinical Educators (discussed below), and the development of a professional library.

2002-2003.

ECC, gaining new students almost daily, needed more space. An unused convent was converted into a school which serves as the Every Child Counts Learning Centre. Initially thirty learning disabled students from all over Abaco and surrounding islands were given adaptive instruction there.

Hundreds of volunteers worked to teach life skills, assisted in grant writing, provided training, and tutored. A volunteer couple donated all the equipment necessary to set up a dive shop and enabled dozens of Abaco youth to learn how to dive and become dive instructors. One of our ECC students, Souvenir, became a certified dive instructor. Although he reads at a pre-primer level, his motivation was so great that he learned the dive tables and the skills necessary for him to certify!

By this time, over a dozen educators and volunteers in Abaco had worked to attain ECC Clinical Educator Certification. This training verifies their competency to diagnose and suggest or provide remedial intervention for academically struggling students. ECC provides training and materials free of charge. In return, trainees agree to offer assessment and diagnostic reports to anyone who requests. As a result of the quality of the work of these volunteer educators, the Bahama's Education Ministry recognizes ECC Diagnostic/Prescriptive Reports as official reports. This experience appears to have been an incentive for further professional development. Clinical Educators have presented at Florida Reading Association and International Reading Association conferences. One Clinical Educator was recruited to teach for the College of the Bahamas. Others seek to complete undergraduate and masters degrees to further their careers.

2003-2004.

The staff and students continue to grow. By this time five teachers provides their unique contribution to over fifty students. The lead teacher, Mr. Marsden Lawley, (M.S. in Exceptional Education from FIU) provides vocational training and mentored internships that allow the students self-sufficiency upon graduation. Mrs. Pamela Hepburn, (A.A., Barry University) works with the primary (1-4th grade) children. Melanie Masada's (M.S., Early Childhood) provides early intervention with the preschool children and Ellen Hardy (B.A., English) works with the more severe disabilities until they can be merged into regular classrooms. A part-time special educator, Monica Bianci, works with students with hands-on learning. Children have learned all about the plants on the island while they harvested orchids that will be prepared for sale to tourists. They learn about animals via a petting zoo boasting donated rabbits and chickens and an injured dove they rescued after the hurricanes (Frances and Jeanne). All the work with the students at ECC is designed to make them independent and self-sufficient.

Because of the continued growth in numbers of students and the complexity of instructional goals, more space was needed. A Vero Beach based group offered to build a new wing if ECC could provide the materials. They assembled workmen and students on Spring Break. In the two weeks they were there, sidewalks were poured, a basketball court was poured over the foundation of the old burned-down church, and a large, airy classroom was built. This wing now provides a living classroom where the students can learn practical skills which began with apprenticeships with the local plumbers, electricians, and carpenters who finished off the building.

Sept. 2004-5: Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne and Rotary Community Clinic Collaboration.

Once again Abaco was devastated by two hurricanes, Frances and Jeanne, less than a month apart. Two schools were so damaged they were unable to open during the 2004-5 academic year. The ECC facility, however, located high on a ridge, was spared.

Still there was progress. ECC was able to link up with the Abaco Rotary Club to provide community reading clinics in outlying settlements. Clinicians came together from all over the islands to caravan to a location and provide a rapid screening diagnosis. In these situations, a short report is compiled and suggestions for instruction are provided. Follow up training is provided to show teachers how to use these techniques.

Clinical Educator training continued. After two years of study, seven new educators were certified as Clinical Educators, three of which serve secondary students.

2005-2006.

Funded by local philanthropists, a new wing with three classrooms will be built by the same group from Vero Beach that erected the first expansion. Land in the back of the ECC Learning Centre will be bulldozed to create a soccer field and a new home for the Disney-donated playground equipment and a tent-cafeteria. Two new educators will join the staff, one youth minister will teach the older students construction skills as they complete the inside of the new wing and another special educator will work with behaviorally handicapped youngsters.

Ongoing – Transition to the World of Work.

If ECC had not provided training that enabled the students to be self-sustaining after graduation, it would have failed. Initially ECC students were matched to unique jobs in the community. (ECC has placed successful interns at a marine electronics company, a local restaurant, a resort, and in an apprenticeship with a local sculptor, for example.) Volunteers teach students marketable skills such as garment painting and crafts; ECC reproduces students' art work on note and holiday cards, raising money for the purchase of materials. Students raise orchids for sale. They have their own garden and raise chickens which become lunch for the school. There are plans in the works to have a fish farm, to supply fish for the local restaurants. Plans are in the works to build a sheltered home for functionally able students, and to maintain a thrift shop that would provide low-cost food and goods to the community.

Lessons Learned from the Every Child Counts Literacy and Special Education Programme

Community Perceptions.

Because ours was a grassroots project, initiated by a parent, many educators—from local ones all the way up to the Ministry of Education--were suspicious about what we were doing to Abaco children. Educators worried that the significant parental support we received for the project would undermine the authority of the schools, and that testing would reveal program inadequacies, and that results might be published, thus shaming the community. One principal forbade her teachers from attending our trainings and discouraged parents from using Every Child Counts' services.

Initially we were defensive and viewed these community reactions as criticism. We did not realize that these suspicions were useful and could help us reframe our approach in more effective ways. Here are some examples.

There is an understandable concern among many developing countries about outside perceptions of their educational systems and literacy rates. As mentioned above, concern about the ECC project extended up to the Ministry of Education, which carried out an unannounced spot check on an assessment. We were fearful about such a visit, but quickly learned that when our processes are open and shared, much is gained. As a result of our openness and the quality of our work, the Ministry granted official and public endorsement of the project. But we had also feared the consequences of the Ministry endorsement. Contrary to our expectations, this official endorsement enhanced ECC's credibility and opened the doors for broader participation. Though the Ministry has never contributed to the project monetarily, the referrals via Ministry contacts have provided resources we sorely needed.

Nonetheless, schools remained sensitive that reports would shine negative light on their programs. This prompted a revision of the clinical reports. Rather than referring to student *deficits* we began to refer to *growth areas*, and *range of potential* replaced the notion of grade level performance. We embraced the lesson of person-to person communication as a means of building understanding. Instead of sending a report, we now speak to the parents, administrator, teacher, and student when possible and as soon after the diagnosis as we can, emphasizing the positive performances, complimenting the school, then gently indicating next steps. In addition to attaching descriptions of recommended strategies, we briefly demonstrate them and are developing video/CDs so there is a greater chance there will be effective intervention.

During our work in training clinicians we discovered that there were cultural differences that caused me to modify my customary mode of teaching and sharing. When introducing new techniques I often lent credibility to them by referring to stateside teachers who have used such methods successfully. This was often taken as bragging. In order not to be seen as looking down on local educators, we learned to confirm the methods they employed and then share other approaches that "*might be used*."

We also learned that although ECC never charged for any of its services (with the exception of tuition at the school), Abaconians could not countenance this. They wished to do their part and we learned to accept the fresh-caught lobster, conch, and fish as payment in full for services.

Professional development.

We quickly learned that there was little incentive for continued professional development among teachers. Attaining a teaching position was viewed as an end point. Because it is so difficult to get teachers in more remote communities, a large percentage of the teachers do not have (or need) terminal degrees. And because there are no pay increases for additional training, there is little incentive to continue professional development. We therefore recognized that

though ECC provides its services at no charge, trained clinicians should be allowed to charge fees, though few did.

Further, due to the lack of books and other materials, we have learned to work with what is at hand, like teaching comparison and contrast or main idea by using objects rather than texts. Bringing the latest teaching tools in for training sessions was not helpful as these would not be locally available.

A goal of our work is to build expertise. We found, however, that although many Certified Clinicians had become skilled with diagnosis and intervention, they were not comfortable providing training to others. They feared making mistakes and being seen by peers as “putting on airs.” As a result we have experimented with creating training modules based around power point and video presentations. Clinicians have been willing to use these to facilitate training sessions.

Self-efficacy, decision making and priorities.

Perhaps the most important thing that we learned was how important it is to assist individuals in making a project such as ours there own. One cannot simply impose a model from outside on another culture. Initially, I tended to imprint my own values and expectations on the project. For example, the development of a centralized professional library was one of my pet projects. I was mystified as to why this not seen as priority in Abaco. Professional library space and bookshelves it turned out was far better used for teaching their children. Once we began working collaboratively to set goals, releasing responsibility and ownership to the community whenever possible, there was no end of volunteer assistance.

Resiliency.

Humans are infinitely resilient (Brooks, 2001). In spite of ridicule, rejection, labeling, and the like, ECC students have willingly taken on the responsibility of being young adult learners and future adults within the Abaco community. More than simply providing important educational services, we were helped to see the importance of finding what the students could do and assisting them to build on those capacities. Our students now are working happily as valued employees in local restaurants, resorts, and other businesses.

Self emergence.

Teaching for me became far less about the materials we rely on here than the human interaction. Materials can get in the way. The eyeball to eyeball teaching allowed me to be much closer to those I taught in a way that is much more real. I learned to have Plan B, C, and D when the electricity went out or the airline left me without handouts.

I came to sense when someone wasn’t understanding; I learned to see past the exquisite politeness of the residents (who perceived questioning an instructor as an insult) and found ways to check participant understanding in ways that didn’t cause offense. And I came to understand

the value of long-term involvement. The “blow in, blow off, blow out” training that doesn’t work in the states doesn’t work in Abaco either.

The most profound lesson was always what I did, rather than what I said. Some who came to help caused enormous harm by engaging in shocking or offensive behavior on their own time--nothing is private in a small island community—or through arrogant or incompetent teaching. Those who committed to the project and understood the mission of the project and the enormous toll it takes on one emotionally, physically, and spiritually made the most significant contributions.

Guatemala (Stateside Contact: Ellie Friedland, Ph.D.)

Background

Guatemala is a developing country with a recent history of dictatorship, political violence, disappearances, and oppression. The military controlled the government until 1985, and even though civilian leaders were elected after that, the military still exercised ultimate control (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 2003). Today the government is again in transition, and the future is unclear.

Official figures state the Guatemalan rate of illiteracy for adult males as 25%, and 40% for females (UNESCO, 2001). However, Edgar Contreras, editor of the newspaper La Prensa (one of the two major newspapers in Guatemala City) estimates that the true illiteracy rates are probably more in the range of 50-60% for males, and higher for females (E. Contreras, conversation, August 22, 2002). Almost half the population over 25 years of age has had no schooling at all, and only 8% have completed primary school (Perry, et al., p. 437).

Students can specialize in education in their last two years of secondary school. This is the only education required to teach in the public schools. Teachers may have classes of 60 to 90 children, and the average student: teacher ratio is 40: 1(UNESCO, 2001). Public schools have some textbooks, but not many. Other supplies are also scarce.

Activities: The Guatemala Literacy Project

In 1989 a few educators from Guatemala and the United States began to work together as volunteers to improve literacy education in Guatemala. They were individuals who met each other and decided to work for change. They had no government sponsorship or agency grants, in fact, no funding at all. Early in their partnership they decided not to seek funding, but to remain a grassroots teacher-to teacher partnership.

The Americans, led by Marcia Mondschein of Long Island, New York, were members of the Nassau NY Reading Council of the International Reading Association. The Guatemalan educators were from various universities and public schools. Together they created an international literacy project that has thrived for fifteen years, and continues to serve hundreds of Guatemalan teachers and children every year.

Here is a chronological overview of the Guatemala Literacy Project from 1989, when the Nassau Reading Council (NRC)/Guatemalan partnership began, to the present.

1989-ongoing.

Groups of educators from the US volunteer to travel to Guatemala twice a year as workshop leaders. During each trip they, along with Guatemalan workshop leaders, provide several days of workshops for educators in Guatemala. The Guatemalan educators are responsible for and arrange all workshops, including volunteer translators. In addition, a different group of Guatemalan educators visit Long Island, NY each year to attend professional conferences, visit local school districts and meet with teachers, students and administrators to exchange educational ideas and practices.

1991-1993.

NRC worked with Guatemalan educators to form the Guatemalan Reading Council, which became the Guatemalan Reading Association, fully affiliated with the International Reading Association.

1991-ongoing.

The GRA holds monthly workshops for educators throughout Guatemala. More than 300 educators voluntarily attend each month. Many Guatemalan educators who have participated in the Partnership have begun or returned to higher education programs and have attained degrees. Some have become teacher trainers throughout Latin America.

The National Reading Conference (NRC) donates mini-libraries (each consists of 150 new, high-quality children's books in Spanish) to Guatemalan public schools. The GRA distributes the libraries to schools whose teachers have consistently attended monthly GRA workshops. As of January 2004, more than 250 mini-libraries have been distributed. NRC raises the funds for mini-libraries by selling Guatemalan handicrafts at IRA national, state and local conferences. All profits are used for the purchase of books. The only expense paid before profit is the cost of the handicrafts.

1993-ongoing.

Every two years the GRA and the NRC have sponsored an international literacy conference in Guatemala City. At each conference, 1500-2000 Guatemalan educators participate in workshops on the latest techniques and strategies in education. Presenters have traveled from Central and South America, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, and nine states in the US. The International Literacy Conference sponsored by the GRA and NRC in 1999 was the Latin American Regional Conference of the International Reading Association.

Lessons Learned- Guatemala Project

Why has this international literacy project continued for fifteen years, while many similar projects (and their positive effects), end after a few years? Why do hundreds of teachers in Guatemala and the United States volunteer their time and spend their own money to teach and attend the Project's professional education workshops, while other professional development programs struggle for teacher attendance? What can other educators who want to create educational change in developing countries learn from the Guatemala Literacy Project? I offer here my answers to these questions, based on my ten years of experience with the Guatemala Literacy Project, and my conversations and interviews with several Guatemalan and American educators who work with the project.

Project Leadership.

One aspect of the project that stands out as unusual and that project leaders view as an important reason for its long-term success, is that all decision making with regard to the project has always been done by the Guatemalan teachers, not by the Americans.

The Guatemalan Reading Association members decide the kinds of workshops that will be offered, when and where they will be offered, who will visit the United States, and which schools will receive mini-libraries. They base these decisions on teachers' attendance at reading council meetings and their willingness to share expertise by organizing or giving workshops themselves. The reading councils organize workshops for teachers throughout the year, and twice a year they organize the workshops by teachers from the United States.

This is clearly an important reason for the longevity of the project. After all, the Guatemalans know much better than we do what they need and what will serve them. But the recognition of this obvious fact is immensely powerful, and surprisingly unusual. Many Guatemalan educators have told me stories of international aide projects that have come, and gone, from their schools, and have left little impact. Some of these projects offered supplies the teachers couldn't use like computers or overhead projectors.

Other programs donated books to schools, but never talked with administrators or teachers about what to do with the books. Those who donated such books probably never found out that the books often stayed in boxes in administrators' offices. Books are often considered so precious that school directors tell teachers that they will have to pay for any books that are damaged by their students. Since a book costs as much as a teacher earns in three or four months, they choose not to risk their livelihood and do not use the books (A. del Cid, conversation, February 23, 2003).

Independence from Funding Sources.

The teachers who began the Guatemala Literacy Project decided not to seek funding or grants that would have time limits. The Guatemalans were familiar with change programs that offer materials and training for a year, or a few years, and then simply stop. The change that begins from such projects also stop when the money does. They wanted to be able to sustain their project, and so decided to raise their own funds.

For example, the mini libraries created in public schools are fully funded by the sale of Guatemalan handicrafts at professional conferences in the United States. Marcia Mondschein buys handicrafts in bulk during her two trips a year to Guatemala. She and the other American volunteers carry them home in their luggage (everyone is told to bring only one suitcase so she/he can carry one full of handicrafts). Volunteers then sell the handicrafts at professional conferences, and all profits are used to buy books for mini-libraries. More than 250 mini-libraries have been created this way.

Independence from Government Sponsorship.

Marcia Mondschein remembers cool receptions from unresponsive teachers when she first offered workshops in Guatemalan public schools as part of the new Guatemala Literacy Project in 1989. At first she and the Guatemalan teachers offering the workshops were puzzled by teachers' reluctance to participate in the interactive, engaging literacy activities they offered. But when they had the opportunity to talk further with teachers, they learned that the teachers assumed they were from the government. They did not trust the government, and so were immediately suspicious of any programs that were brought to the schools.

The project leaders began to tell participants at the beginning of workshops that they were not from the Guatemalan government or the US government and that they were not funded by any agency. They explained that they were teachers from the US and from Guatemala who wanted to share and exchange ideas and learning. From then on teachers received them not only with willingness and enthusiasm but also with musical programs, performances, and special snacks (M. Mondschein, personal interview, August 20, 2000).

Voluntary Participation and Choice.

The Guatemalan government does offer professional development workshops to public school teachers. The content and approaches vary depending on the government in power, but such workshops are almost always mandatory for teachers. Like in the US, this can lead to resentment and resistance from educators. From the beginning, all programs offered by the Guatemalan Literacy Project have been offered by volunteers who make it clear that attendance is voluntary.

In addition, at least four or five different workshops are usually offered, and teachers choose which to attend. I took this kind of thing for granted based on my own experiences until the first International Literacy Conference in Guatemala in 1999. The Guatemalan Reading Association members had written the schedule of workshops for the first day on a huge sign in the entrance area of the conference, in addition to the schedule in the conference program.

When I arrived I noticed large crowd of teachers standing in front of this sign. I wondered why they were milling about and thought maybe they didn't understand how to register or where to go next. I saw a teacher I knew and approached her. I asked her why she was waiting here, and I was surprised to see tears in her eyes when she turned to answer me. "We have never had such choices before. It's overwhelming," she said, choking on the words. "I

can choose what to learn about. It's remarkable" (R.E.G. de Luarca, conversation, February 20, 1999).

Cultural Competence.

Culturally competent educators make the effort to learn the values and views of the culture in which they work. They then "provide professional services in a way that is congruent with behaviors and expectations that are normative for a given community" (Green, 1995, p. 89). It is important that we Americans adjust to the culture and realities of the people with whom we work. We are used to doing things our way, and that is not appropriate when we are guests in someone else's country, school, or home. Here are some important lessons I've learned in Guatemala. Many will apply to other places.

I have learned to always honor the language(s) of those present. If I don't speak the language, I make sure I have a translator. I am careful not to hold conversations in English when people present don't speak English. In fact, I have found that the more I try to speak their language, the more people appreciate my effort and understand that I respect them and their language. They seem to welcome my ideas and opinions even more than they did before I tried (and often, failed) to communicate in their language. Similarly, it is vital to make sure all written information, including visual aides, and workshop handouts are in the language of the people present.

It took me a while to learn that "bilingual" does not always mean that people speak their language and English. For example, in Guatemala, "bilingual" usually means that people speak Spanish and a Mayan language. Bilingual people often do not speak English. If people speak English, it is often their third or fourth language.

We are careful to show respect when donating materials and find out ahead of time what the people know they can really use. For example, the Guatemala Literacy Project mini libraries contain only new, high quality books in Spanish. The Project volunteers always find out from the Guatemalans what resource materials people are likely to have and not to have. We offer only ideas and strategies that can be implemented with available materials. For example, we have learned not to bring overhead transparencies to a place unlikely to have overhead projectors; not to talk about use of computers in education to people who don't have access to computers; not to talk about special education services to educators who have none; to bring crayons and paper for our workshops, and to give them to the teachers when we leave. (I brought markers to Guatemala until I learned that crayons are more expensive than markers, more rare, and much more desirable—they last much longer).

One of the biggest adjustments for many of us in Guatemala is to follow the cultural mores in relation to time and not to misinterpret or demean them. For example, in Guatemala time is much more flexible than it is in the US. People are usually late for appointments, and tasks might or might not be completed when they tell you they will be completed. This is frustrating for many Americans who see this as a sign of incompetence or of not caring. We have to recognize that it does not have that meaning in this culture. It is our job to adjust.

We have also had to learn cultural styles of communication that are different than ours. It's difficult for us not to assume that everyone should communicate on the same schedule or in the same manner that we Americans do. For example, when we are planning our trips to Guatemala to lead workshops for the Project, we usually don't find out where we are going, who and how many people we are teaching, or what day or time we will be in any particular city. The Guatemalans in the Literacy Project usually give us this information when they pick us up to drive us to a workshop. Until we Americans know better, we are likely to send email after email in the months before we go to Guatemala, asking for this information, and getting anxious and upset when they don't send it. They don't, and they always get us where we need to be when we need to be there.

I have also learned to remember that assumptions about how adults and children relate to each other are different in different cultures. I am careful not to apply American cultural assumptions in other cultures. For example, in Guatemala, children show great respect to teachers. I have often seen a teacher leave a classroom of 50-60 five year olds to come outside to talk with us visitors, and the children sit quietly and wait for her to return. When I first saw this, I assumed that discipline must be harsh and rigid to elicit such quiet passivity. But I have learned that there is no need for harshness or rigidity. Children behave because they respect teachers.

These are just some of the specific ways I have learned to respect the Guatemalan culture and work in partnership with people whose ways of being in the world are very different from mine. There are many other examples, and many more lessons to learn. The teachers who work with the Guatemala Literacy Project are deeply dedicated, and are always enthusiastic participants in learning and teaching.

Many of us Americans keep going back to Guatemala with the Project because the work is so gratifying and exciting. At the end of a workshop, there is often a line of teachers waiting to talk to the presenters. The teachers often want to know how they can learn more, where and how they can get books in Spanish on the topic, or they want to give a specific example in their teaching experience and discuss how to apply what they learned in the workshop to that experience. Often they wait patiently in line to say "Thank you."

Northern Thailand (Stateside Contact: Janet Richards, Ph.D.)

Working with Burmese Refugee Teachers in the
Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project

Please Note: Because of security considerations, the Burmese teacher's name in this manuscript is a pseudonym. Government officials changed the name of Burma to Myanmar in 1986, but the term Burma continues to reflect the broader recognition of Burma throughout the world.

Background

Currently, there are well over 90, 000 Burmese ethnic refugees living in Thai government-regulated camps along the Burmese/Thai border. Some have lived in the camps since the early 1980s, and more refugees arrive every day (Sell, 1999). The majority of the

refugees are not allowed to work outside of the camps. Their tribal affiliations include Karen, Kachin, Shan, and some Mong and Lahu (see McCaskill & Kampe, 1997, for specific data about these indigenous groups). These groups have sought autonomy from the Burmese government for over 50 years. Because of their continued struggle for a voice in policies that affect human rights, many have been incarcerated, or they have risked persecution from the current Burmese military regime. In order to survive, they have fled their villages, and escaped through the jungle to take refuge in northern Thailand.

Other political refugees come from Burmese mainstream society. These dissidents from larger towns and cities such as Rangoon and Pegu Township have had opportunities to attend universities and to work in Burma. But, they too, have had to leave their country. Political dissent is not allowed in Burma (*Christian Monitor*, Sunday, August 29, 2004).

Because of their political activism, many teachers have had to escape from Burma. They live and teach in the jungle camps near small northern Thai villages such as Mae Hong Son and Mae Sot. Their lives were dramatically changed when they arrived in Thailand, and their predicaments, struggles, and achievements are largely unknown to the western world. They can never return to their country to visit their families and they often use pseudonyms because they fear that if they disclose their real names, they and their families will be captured and persecuted. Most of the teachers are responsible for teaching 50-60 students who speak various dialects. Their classrooms are three--sided bamboo huts on stilts. They have minimal teaching supplies, few books and no electricity or running water. They receive a minimal salary. Some of the teachers are 16 years old with a tenth grade education. Others have degrees in teaching or degrees in other disciplines. All of the teachers teach admirably and skillfully in the camps under adverse conditions. They do not complain or seek pity for their circumstances. Rather, like exemplary teachers everywhere, they are committed to teaching their students.

Serving as an RWCT volunteer scholar in the northern Thai jungle, I asked some of the Burmese RWCT teachers to tell me their stories in an attempt to try to understand their unique experiences from their perspectives. The following story told by Paw Po illuminates one teacher's educational, social, and political struggles. Paw Po has lived in Thailand for 25 years. She holds important positions in the community. For example, she directs an orphanage, and she works with many community organizations. Paw Po is a woman with strong leadership abilities. It is her hope and mine that her story will provoke readers of this manuscript to learn more about the indigenous and mainstream people of Burma and the current Burmese situation.

The Story of Paw Po: A Woman Warrior

Paw Po is not my real name. You might say it is my nickname. Like so many other teachers from Burma, I cannot use my real name because I might be discovered and get arrested, or my family might be sent back to Burma and be persecuted. I have been in Thailand since 1987. I walked through the jungle to get here. I have a husband and five children. The children's ages range from 20 to five.

My father lives in the orphanage with us. He is disabled. During the war, he lost both of his legs from gangrene. He got infections in his legs, and we could not get any medicines to help

treat him, so he has no legs. He was one of the top Karen army opposition leaders. Both my parents were freedom fighters.

The orphanage-school I direct serves about 80 children, although sometimes there are 180. We have five teachers and three volunteers. We receive aid from many non-government groups (NGO's). Just the other day, three young women drove up in an old truck. They had traveled about six hours to deliver food and clothing to the children. One woman was from Great Britain, one was from the United States, and one was from Thailand. They volunteer for a special project called Partners. They gave us lots of raisins and other food and donated clothing that we can put to good use. We also receive funds from an organization called Burmese Refugee Care.

Before I came to Thailand, I was a jungle warrior. I was a guerilla fighter. I fought with the Karen Army for ten years. I narrowly escaped from my village. I did it during a New Year's festival. There had been fighting around my camp so I knew I had to leave. Now, I am acting Chair Person of the Migrant Education Committee, which is a group of classroom teachers and other educators who work for Burmese migrant children in Mae Sot.

Project Activities

Recently, the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Program (RWCT), a well-known, award-winning program connected to the International Reading Association, initiated a three-year project with the Burmese refugee teachers. The project serves Burmese educators in five different camps along the northern Burmese/Thai border that are mainly inhabited by Karen and Karenni people. The project is supported monetarily by United States Aid for International development (USAID) and two programs funded by the philanthropist, George Soros: the Open Society Institute, and the Burma Project based in New York City. RWCT is committed to helping teachers learn how to promote students' active learning and critical thinking abilities – a dramatic change from traditional rote learning associated with Burmese education (Lwin, 2003). When teachers complete the first year of their RWCT training, they become trainers themselves, and they work with new groups of teachers. Thus, the project is self-sustaining because it is structured to continue when RWCT volunteers complete the three-year project.

The Burmese Project demonstrates similarities to many other RWCT projects offered in Western Europe. Two volunteer scholars selected from approximately 70 volunteers in the United States, Great Britain, Australia, and Canada travel together as partners. After an overnight stay in Bangkok, partners travel on to northern Thailand to meet the in-country Project Director and the Project interpreter.

Following a series of instructional activities in eight RWCT Guidebooks, the volunteer scholars offer three-to-five all day workshops to the Burmese teachers. The Guidebooks ensure continuity of instruction and promote group collaboration, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. When the Burmese teachers demonstrate competency in what has been offered in the Workshops, they become Workshop leaders and share their knowledge with a new group of teachers.

Understandably, The Burmese Project also varies from other RWCT western European Projects. Language difficulties pose problems. The teachers come from various indigenous tribes and therefore, speak different dialects. There are few teaching supplies available, including

books. Consequently, few lessons are text-based. In addition, unlike the teachers in RWCT western European Projects, the Burmese teachers' education differs considerably. Some teachers are teenagers who have not yet completed high school. Others hold a degree in business, or mathematics, but have no teacher training. Some have a teaching degree.

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned from this project are twofold and can be generalized to other educational contexts. 1) On-going funding is a necessity to ensure that educational projects remain in place, and; 2) Teachers everywhere are resolute, strong, and determined to succeed despite adversity.

Currently, the Burmese RWCT Project is struggling. Funding is limited and precarious. Like so many educational initiatives, a great deal of money was offered at the beginning of the project and once the project experienced some success, budgets tightened. The in-country RWCT leader, Dr. Thein Lwin, and the Burmese teachers are determined to keep the project going by seeking alternative funding. In a poignant e-mail message Dr. Thein Lwin (2003) recently wrote:

I have expected this situation before, now the reality comes. Funding has been withdrawn. However, I could manage to extend the RWCT workshops in the third year within the second year funding, as we have promised to the local community for three years. The RWCT project has been growing its momentum in many different parts of Burma and it should be continued. I would be grateful if you could kindly suggest me to get funding from other sources to continue the project.

There is no doubt that this project will continue at least for another year. Some volunteer scholars have offered to pay their own expenses to travel to Thailand and offer RWCT workshops. The indigenous tribal teachers are also determined to continue the project by teaching other Burmese educators. In all likelihood, the RWCT Burmese Project as we know it today may very well segue into a grassroots movement supported by the Burmese educators who are resolute in their determination to keep the project alive. As one Burmese teacher told me, "We know we have to work together if we are to succeed."

Some Conclusions: What Have We Learned?

Across all of these projects several threads emerge that bind the experiences together and offer lessons to others wishing to assist emerging literacy projects.

Socio-political Realities

It is, on the surface, puzzling why efforts to provide literacy for children--a self-evident good from our point of view--would not be enthusiastically embraced by host societies. Without directly experiencing the complex social, political, and educational contexts within emerging nations one cannot begin to comprehend the viewpoints, interests, and motivations that provide a dynamic force that moves such projects for change. Certainly the life-threatening circumstances in Thailand dramatically accentuate obstacles for educational presence; socio-political forces in more gentle contexts like Guatemala and Abaco are no less compelling. The grassroots nature of the leadership serves as a common bond across each of these projects. These projects eschewed

governmental help, even though the need for funds was crippling. Freedom to move ahead unfettered by governmental restrictions or restraint was a necessary step to success in these contexts.

Resiliency

Robert Brooks' (2001, p. 7) guideposts for raising resilient children provides a unique construct for the effective interactions across these projects and I use it now to frame their commonalities. Brooks states that the "basic foundation of any relationship...is *empathy*...to see the world through (another's) eyes." Each of the authors writes of learning to listen actively, of responding to the educators of the host countries from their perspective. In each case, our hosts rewrote our scripts; and they ultimately reframed the realities in their country, clearly seeing the obstacles but actively seeking ways to circumvent them. Failing to work cooperatively and sensitively with local needs and priorities dooms even the most ambitious and well-funded programs to frustration and failure.

A key need for those participating in international projects is *acceptance* and appreciation (Brooks, 2001, 7). In this article the separate authors illustrate this as they write respectfully about the people and circumstances within these projects, citing the substantial obstacles each faced, while celebrating the special achievements that occurred despite those obstacles. This was an important dimension in the development of these programs. Clear appreciation of participants' concerns, efforts, and successes, and participants' respect for volunteers' expertise and guidance were essential to creating the interpersonal good will that enabled the projects to flourish.

"Identify[ing] and reinforce[ing] *islands of competence*" (Brooks, 2001, p. 7) in the on-going projects also contributed to their success. Each program developed by evolving around the felt needs that it *most effectively* addressed. Though the impact of these projects has been larger than the original needs it set out to meet, each began by helping participants work to their strengths.

Ultimately, the success of these projects hinges on *local ownership and control*. What works at home will not necessarily work abroad. It is by working from the inside, assisting those who know their needs best in attaining their goals and by using the resources at hand that undertakings such as these can take root and grow. Most importantly, we must always remember that we are outsiders and will always have something new to learn about the people with whom we work as well as about ourselves as human beings and as educators.

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Reading Specialists: Do They Do What They “Do?”

Christine Mallozzi
Chet Laine
University of Cincinnati

In this article, using interview data from eight reading specialists, we examine the roles and responsibilities assumed by reading specialists. Although identifying the essence of what it means to be a reading specialist is a continuing goal for researchers, during the past decade, several studies have more clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of this important group of reading professionals. Several studies reveal that the *International Reading Association Standards for Reading Professionals* (Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association, 1998) are being used in whole or in part by teacher preparation programs in the United States (Barclay & Thistlewaite, 1992; Gelheiser & Meyers, 1991; Tancock, 1995; Bean, Trovato, Armitage, Bryant, & Dugan, 1993; Bean, Trovato, Hamilton, 1995).

These standards, revised in 2003, provide criteria for developing and evaluating preparation programs for reading professionals. At the time of this study, the revised standards (Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association, 2003) were not available. Although these standards emphasize the performance, knowledge, and skills of candidates completing a preparation program, they indicate a caliber of higher performance expected of a seasoned professional reading specialist. Standards states, “The increased focus on candidate performance . . . is a response to the shifts in the field of education toward a focus on the outcomes of learning rather than inputs” (2003).

Since the roles and responsibilities of reading specialists are constantly changing, administrators and reading specialists often perceive reading specialists’ roles differently (Barry, 1997). Classroom teachers’ expectations for a reading specialist are different still (Maleki & Herman, 1994; Tancock, 1995). Other factors, like Title I funding guidelines, contribute to the changing role of a reading specialist (Quattroche, Bean, & Hamilton, 2001). Only recently have researchers actually surveyed reading specialists to determine who they are, what they do, and the changes they perceive in their roles (Bean, Cassidy, Grumet, Shelton, and Wallis, 2002). However, these large survey studies have been unable to gather the more detailed descriptions possible through one-on-one interviews and classroom observations. This more detailed description is what we set out to do.

Methods

Procedures

One of the authors contacted, via e-mail or telephone, 22 reading specialists that she knew through graduate courses and professional settings. The participants were selected if they currently served as reading specialists and were willing and available to

be interviewed. Eight reading specialists volunteered for this study. All of the participants, identified by pseudonyms, were female and were employed at various rural, suburban, and urban schools in southwestern Ohio (Table 1). They all taught in primary and/or intermediate settings. The eight participants had a wide range of years of experience, both as classroom teachers and as reading specialists. The reading programs, in which six out of the eight reading specialists worked full time, were funded by U.S. federal government Title I monies, district monies, or a combination of both. Seven out of the eight participants had earned their masters' degrees as well as an Ohio Reading Endorsement. In Ohio a Reading Endorsement may be added to any standard teaching license and is valid for teaching learners in grades P-12. One participant was currently working toward both her master's degree in reading and the Ohio reading endorsement. If a reading specialist responded favorably to being interviewed and observed, a mutually agreeable time and location to meet was established. At that initial meeting, the goals of the research were described, participants read and signed informed consent forms and an interview and/or observation time was established. The interviews took place in the various workplaces (e.g., school classrooms and offices) of the participants.

Data were collected in the late summer and early autumn of 2003. The following data were gathered to capture the actions, beliefs, responses and voices of the reading specialists: (a) audio taped interviews of each reading specialist to be transcribed, (b) written notes of each interview with reading specialist, and (c) informational material volunteered by the participants.

The interview questions (Table 2) were adapted from the results of a study by Bean et al. (2002) and focused on the roles of reading specialists. Participants' responses to questions were audio taped. Each of the informal semi-structured interviews lasted between 35 and 50 minutes. Initially there was a period of introductions and polite conversation in an effort to make the interviews as informal and non-threatening as possible. To transition to the actual interview the interviewer presented the purpose of the study as "finding out what reading specialists do." The interviews started with collecting background information about the participant, followed by open-ended questions to gather information about her role as a reading specialist. The interviewer asked several more specific questions as needed for clarification and ended the session by asking if the participant could add anything not yet discussed that would aid the researchers in their goal of exploring the role of reading specialists. After analysis of the data, some follow-up questions to gain and clarify information were asked via e-mail.

Data Analysis

Following each audio-taped interview, questions and responses were transcribed. A total of 360 minutes of interview data were recorded. Once transcribed, the interview transcripts amounted to 72 single-spaced pages of interview questions and responses. Using content analysis techniques established by Holsti (1969), Miles & Huberman (1984) and Viney (1983), the transcribed interviews were analyzed. The transcriptions were read and reread. Initially, the survey literature, our own experiences, and the IRA competencies suggested codes.

Using colored pencils, descriptive codes, such as “responsibilities for assessment,” “serving as a resource,” or “responsibilities for instruction,” were assigned to sentence or multi-sentence segments. Codes were changed, deleted and added as seemed appropriate. Eventually, the single most appropriate code was assigned to each segment. Not every piece of the interview was coded. Looking for patterns, themes, causal links, and repetitive emergent categories were noted. The original twelve codes were eventually expanded into 64 categories (Table 3).

In addition to coding, reflections were jotted down as marginal notes or remarks. These captured feelings and new hypotheses about what was being said, doubts about the quality of the data, second thoughts about the meaning of the speakers, mental notes to be pursued later, or cross-allusions to something that appeared in another interview.

Results

Our professional organization’s recommendations for the roles of the reading specialist (International Reading Association, 2000) relate to three specific areas: instruction, assessment, and leadership.

Instruction

In the area of instruction, the professional organization argues that reading specialists are to “support, supplement and extend classroom teaching.” These multiple roles created some concern for our participants. The sample reported guided reading as the most used method of instruction. All participants mention some form of phonemic awareness or word study instruction, as well as independent or semi-independent reading, as part of their repertoire. This reading instruction occurred in several different settings.

All eight reading specialists reported being involved in some form of “pull out” instruction, although only one used it exclusively. This is not in synch with the 37% reported by Bean and her colleagues (2002), but more congruent with Quattroche, Bean, and Hamilton (2001), who acknowledge an increased focus on in-class programs. Six out of the eight instructed in a “push in” setting in the classroom, and a few also taught the students as a whole group within the classroom. One district opted to spend their Title I monies in a way that allowed their reading specialists to work with any student in the school. This instruction was delivered in a combination of pull out, push in, and team teaching whole groups. The sentiments involved in trying to “support, supplement and extend classroom teaching” depended on the setting for instruction.

Regarding the small group pull out, one participant expressed, “It’s a more informal comfortable atmosphere. I mean I think that . . . they’ll go ahead and try and sound the word out. And the other children, because they struggle, are not so fast to correct them. They’ll give them the time that they need. Whereas in a regular setting they often times are corrected by other kids even when they make the attempt.” Several participants admitted that the small-group pull out program was more comfortable. They

liked having their own reading room. It provided a quiet environment where they could access their supplies at any moment. "Instructionally, I'm making more progress when I pull them out," says another participant, "as far as the amount of material and really getting at their individual needs."

Those teachers who engaged in a push in program had mixed feelings. Noise, having to carefully plan, and having to tote around supplies were listed as disadvantages in these programs. In support of pushing in, our informants believed that their students experienced a sense of community and felt better about themselves. Several reading specialists strongly advocated going into the classroom to work with children. "The reality is that there are special projects or things that the students need assistance with, and I find it very helpful . . .," stated one informant. "The students in the building kind of know who I am and they don't think of me as only working with certain students because technically I can assist other kids." Another participant in a push in program acknowledged that she favors teaching in the classroom:

I really like working in the regular teacher's classroom because the kids aren't missing much from that classroom. I'm in there. I see what's going on. It helps me to support what's going on in reading and writing in the classroom, and I can help. . . . I see how my kids perform as opposed to what might be the median in the class as well as the top of the class. I see how they are grasping things, so I, um, get to see an awful lot of their interactions in the classroom with their teachers, with their peers, with the subject matter that is being taught. . . . The kids I deal with, by and large, are the least capable of going back and picking things up in the classroom. So I really like the in-class work a whole lot better.

Within the area of instruction, the IRA standards also point to the need for collaboration. The issue of collaboration emerged among our participants as a point of contention. Many of our informants, although they incorporated information from the regular teacher's classroom, planned their lessons alone. The communication ranged from a very routine exchange of plans ("Every week they fill out a form, telling me what skills, what stories they're working on, and anything they specifically want.") to a harried chat ("I spend a lot of my planning time before and after school hours running from classroom to classroom and just talking briefly, trying to catch a teacher and talk. . ."). Informants who provided reading services to students in more than one classroom had to coordinate with an average of eight different classroom teachers. These reading specialists then wrote their plans individually, using the classroom teachers' input as a guide.

Several reading specialists remarked about the lack of scheduled planning time within the school day. One participant's only scheduled planning time was during lunch/recess time, and due to a rotating cafeteria and recess duty schedule, she lost that planning time once or twice a week. Two of the eight reading specialists traveled to other schools during the day reported that this was a significant constraint on their time for planning. As a result, our informants were forced to plan before and after school.

One reading specialist's schedule required establishing co-planning time with every one of her students' teachers. This accounted for 25% of her school day. "Every week I meet at least once to have contact and receive updating about their reading goals for their students that week." Despite the scheduled time, she said she feels like she gets more done on her own. "Sometimes planning with the other teachers is worthwhile and sometimes it's not. And it really depends on the type of personality you're working as to whether they're up to co-planning or [not]."

Although assessment results were used to design and deliver individualized instruction, directives from classroom teachers were stronger influences in overall planning for our informants. Our data indicate a stronger influence than presented in Bean et al. (2002). For instance, one participant remarked:

If the regular teacher says we're working on cause and effect this week . . . then I'll make sure that my kids are also learning cause and effect. . . . If they're working on fantasy then we'll work on fantasy. . . . I'll work on just whatever the grade level goals are. I match those goals, but I'll use readability material at a lower level.

A few participants expressed frustration at changes in directives and information given to them by the regular classroom teachers, even after communicating about plans. "I mean sometimes I have what I think I'm going to work on that day, but when I arrive the teacher will indicate that, you know, there is something of higher priority. And so I just do whatever I'm told." One reading specialist alluded to a perceived hierarchy between classroom teacher and reading specialist. "I really feel like in a way they are my boss. I do what they need and work in what the students need at the same time."

Nearly twenty years ago, Fraatz (1987), in her case study interviews with regular classroom teachers and reading specialists, found a similar phenomenon, reading specialists often defined the special needs of their students in terms of the needs of the regular classroom teacher. She called this "the tail wagging the dog (p. 19)." In an effort to be supportive of the classroom teacher, the reading specialist often set aside her own expertise and what she knows is best for the child. The reading specialists in our study felt this same need to be supportive of the regular classroom teacher. In Fraatz's study as well as in ours, reading specialists were often concerned that they were helping the regular classroom teacher or the school's testing mandate more than they were helping the children.

Assessment

In the area of assessment, the IRA position statement (International Reading Association, 2000) maintains that reading specialists have "specialized knowledge of assessment and diagnosis that is vital for developing, implementing, and evaluating the literacy program in general, and in designing instruction for individual students." Moreover, he or she "can assess the reading strengths and needs of students and provide that information to classroom teachers, parents, and specialized personnel such as

psychologists, special educators, or speech teachers, in order to provide an effective reading program." Despite this "specialized knowledge of assessment and diagnosis" only two of the eight reading specialists reported being involved in the assessment that qualifies the students for the instructional programs implemented by the reading specialist. Most of the qualifying assessments were in the form of formal standardized tests, administered in a whole group setting. The qualifying assessments were not always uniform from grade to grade, thus the eligible scores differed from grade to grade. When the state mandated achievement test results were available, those scores took precedence over other standardized assessments in determining eligibility in the reading program. The two reading specialists involved in the qualifying assessment employed reading inventories and/or the standardized assessment from the Reading Recovery Council of North America.

Regarding informal assessments, reading specialists reported using running records as a primary assessment tool. Bean et al. (2002) found observations to be the primary assessment tool used by reading specialists. Although many of our informants mentioned using observation to get a better sense of their students, they did not refer to observation as an assessment tool.

The nature of providing the assessment information to others differed according to the audience. Seven out of eight of our reading specialists stated that they communicated student assessment results to teachers informally. "I just try to be proactive as far as making myself available. Getting into the classrooms and talking specifically to them about what they're seeing as opposed to what I'm seeing or confirmation as to what I'm seeing. Sharing work samples, and asking to see samples of the work that they are doing in the classroom," said one informant, a Reading Recovery teacher in a pull out program. Many conveyed that they met with teachers at lunchtime, before and after school, and at grade level meetings to talk about students. The reading specialists who said they communicate with parents about students' performance explained that this information is exchanged mostly during parent-teacher conferences. Two informants reported providing a supplemental progress report, and one specialist actually gave reading grades to the students for their pull-out reading performance. One participant said she assisted the regular classroom teacher with grade reports but was not responsible for them. Most of our informants stated that they were not involved in this aspect of assessment. Providing information to administrators and specialized personnel about students' assessments occurred at more formal times, as reported by our informants. Individual student results were discussed at formal IEP or MFE meetings. Rankings of students' scores were transmitted in formal reports.

When asked about areas of change in her role as a reading specialist, informants with more than four years of experience as reading specialists expressed that assessment, both formal and informal, had increased. However the perceived purpose for the increased testing varied among our informants. One reading specialist used assessments to "[design] instruction for individual students," the purpose established by her professional association (International Reading Association, 2000). On the other hand, one of our informants pointed to the fact that assessment could help her make the most of

her limited time with individual students. Another experienced reading specialist viewed assessment as removed from instruction. “There is much more reliance on [assessments] to measure student progress, school progress, district progress. You know, it’s just across the board of a school district, so that’s, that’s been huge.” Another participant felt that state mandates were responsible for the increased testing. “It just depends year to year of what the state wants.”

Leadership

Finally, our professional organization’s position statement (International Reading Association, 2000) argues that reading specialists provide leadership and serve as a resource to other educators, parents and the community. This leadership role, as reflected by the responses of our eight informants, is evident in several different ways. Reading specialists reported serving as a resource to teachers, especially those teachers with less experience in education. Informally, when solicited by other teachers, the participants said they offered their opinions about students, both who did and did not qualify for specialized reading services. Several reading specialists also shared book titles, ideas, and strategies with their colleagues. More formally, five out of the eight participants modeled reading lessons in a whole group setting while the regular classroom teacher observed. The reading specialists also indicated that they lead staff development programs on various topics such as types of assessment, state mandated testing, and writing prompts. Often these topics were suggested by an administrator who did not stay for the staff development session. “[They] definitely pop-in when we’re doing [in-services], but they don’t normally sit through them and take notes,” said one of our informants.

This same informant spends the majority of her time in “professional development with classroom teachers in a more formal leadership role” (International Reading Association, 2002). She reported that her job consists of going into the classroom and modeling reading lessons, and observing and serving as a coach to the 70 classroom teachers with whom she works. This reading specialist provides full day and after school sessions for teachers. She also teaches graduate level courses and professional development workshops. Part of her duties also includes serving as a resource to parents in the community. This parental resource role was common among our informants.

Reading specialists noted that early on in their intervention efforts, parents have many questions about the reading program, criteria for qualifying, and scheduling conflicts with other classes. Many of these questions are addressed at parent information nights in the beginning of the year. Later in the year, information about literacy is conveyed during parent-teacher conferences, telephone conversations, and/or through written notes. Several reading specialists said they send home “Reading Connection,” a newsletter with tips for families on reading and literacy. Reading specialists said they trained parent volunteers for special programs like Ohio Reads, a program that allows volunteers to work with children having difficulty. One participant also provides modeled teaching to parents. “I find that with parents they mainly want to know about

how to help their own child. They are not interested in, like, reading theory or how we teach reading here . . . or what resources are available. They want to know what I can do to help my child.”

A few reading specialists in this study shied away from the formal title of “reading specialist,” although seven out of eight participants had earned an Ohio reading endorsement and at least a master’s degree. The eighth participant was currently working toward her endorsement and master’s degree in reading. All had assumed many of the roles of reading specialists in their schools, but some feared being seen as a pseudo-administrator; they worried that in the role of a reading specialist they would no longer be viewed as a teacher. One said, “I hate to use the word “specialist” because I like to put myself as an equal to every classroom teacher and not someone that is a step above them.” Some participants brought in experts from outside the school to speak with teachers about literacy issues, one participants said, “[because] we kind of thought maybe it was better to have an outside person introduce some of the things, so it didn’t seem like we were saying, ‘Here – you need to do this.’” Studies by Fraatz (1987) and Tancock (1995) echo our findings. The reading specialists in Fraatz’s study “approached classroom teachers with caution and a measure of deference” (p. 70). They downplayed their supervisory functions and treated classroom teachers as peers. Tancock found that elementary teachers in her study viewed reading specialists as supportive, rather than as a source of special expertise and leadership.

Some of our informants were annoyed by the administrative duties they had to assume, duties that pulled them away from the day-to-day interactions with children. Many counted paperwork among the least important aspects of their job, except when it related to helping them address the individual needs of their students. Even with that type of paperwork, several participants spoke of the disproportionate amount of time they spent on the details of those tasks compared to the help it afforded the children. One specialist commented on the legal aspects of this paperwork: “The state has changed the volume of paperwork that they require; some of it is obviously for legality reasons . . . In the past students maybe have been placed in special programs, and maybe inappropriately placed. So we’re being, you know, extremely cautious to make sure there are a lot of paperwork items that are required for that.”

All of our informants found that more and more was being put on their plates. One of the most demanding parts of their jobs related to testing. Several informants named testing as one of the greatest areas of change in their position over the years. Although testing was not listed in Bean et al. (2002) as a major area of change, paperwork and accountability were. Several reading specialists acknowledged the dramatic increase in paperwork and accountability was due to an increase in testing and other assessments. Many felt that although their expertise was in reading, writing and language instruction, increasingly they were being forced to provide instruction in test taking strategies. Six of the eight reading specialists felt that this added responsibility for teaching test taking strategies left less time for reading instruction.

Two of the participants in the same school district were under an administrative mandate to meet specific curricular standards from the state. The district was a low income, urban district whose students often moved both within the district and out of the district. The rationale for the administrative mandate, as stated by our two participants, was to establish consistency within district building and across districts within the state. Teachers, according to this administrative argument, would have a better understanding of the background knowledge of a student moving in from another district or moving from one building to another within the district. Each week teachers were given a specific set of skills and strategies, to be replaced with new skills and strategies in the following weeks. One reading specialist described the mandate as “test driven” and “developmentally inappropriate for [her students].” Another respondent expressed frustration at having plans placed on her by administrators who do not understand her students’ needs:

For example this week it says, identify or recognize short and long vowel patterns. Well, most of the first graders that I’m working with don’t know all of their short vowels yet. And we’re actually working on trying to get them to notice ending sounds. So to compensate . . . I’m really just incorporating short vowels even though I know they don’t all have ending sounds yet, and I’m just starting in the short vowels. . . . That’s not very appropriate for them.

Several of our informants told us that state mandated tests and other assessments left little time for much else. As one participant put it:

I think as the curricular demands get stronger, there is so little time for me or anybody else that teaches to do the kinds of things that I used to do. I mean, I used to be able to visit classrooms and do read alouds. I used to visit classrooms and do book reviews. . . . For a couple years, I would invite the [students] five at a time, to have lunch with me, and we would read books. I’d read to them, and then they were invited to bring a special book with them and tell how much they liked it. Oh, it was just great! It was just wonderful. But there’s no time for that anymore. It’s just, I can’t do it, just isn’t time and I miss that.

Conclusions and Implications

The reading specialist’s role in instruction and collaboration is a complex one affected by curriculum, interpersonal relationships, and the needs and wants of others. It is not enough to give reading specialists more time to collaborate with their colleagues, although time is severely limited. It is necessary to prepare reading specialists and other teachers to use that collaboration time effectively to meet the needs of the students (Quattroche, Bean, & Hamilton, 2001). Too often, as in our study, the reading specialist feels compelled to support the classroom teacher’s existing program, rather than draw on her own expertise and training to help the children.

Testing affects whether or not students qualify for assistance from the reading specialist, and it affects instruction because it often falls to the reading specialist to set aside reading instruction for test taking instruction. Success to some degree is measured by performance on these tests. It is clear from our respondents that assessments, especially state mandated tests, have a powerful influence on their day-to-day lives. Administrators, in conjunction with reading specialists, need to reevaluate the time devoted to testing. Within schools, and across the wider community, professionals need to decide how much of the reading program is about teaching children to read and how much is about teaching children to take tests.

Our data suggests there is some sort of perceived hierarchy within schools, particularly among classroom teachers and reading specialists. Some research indicates that some elementary teachers view reading specialists as support staff ready to aide the regular classroom teacher in her requests (Fraatz, 1987, Tancock, 1995), suggesting that they hold a lower place on this perceived hierarchy. Yet our data indicate that some reading specialists take leadership roles within their schools and districts. However, when they use their expertise to provide professional development, they are often viewed as administrators. These findings need to be explored further. These perceptions affect interpersonal relationships and have an impact on the quality of the instruction that children receive.

Our findings have implications for the design of preparation programs for both reading specialists and classroom teachers. The revised standards (Professional Standards and Ethics Committee of the International Reading Association, 2003) place added emphasis on leadership and student advocacy. However, our findings, as well as those of Fraatz (1987) and Tancock (1995), reveal that both classroom teachers and reading specialists have some apprehension about these new roles. Teacher preparation programs can help both classroom teachers and specialists begin to see how specialists can use the expertise they gained through training and experience and more competently serve as literacy leaders and student advocates in the school community.

Bringing about a meaningful change in a complex setting like a school building requires collaboration. Fullan (2001) describes the fragile nature of these collaborative efforts:

When we try to look at change directly from the point of view of each and every individual affected by it, and aggregate these individual views, the task of educational change becomes a bit unsettling. When we are dealing with reactions and perceptions of diverse people in diverse settings, faulty communication is guaranteed. People are a nuisance but the theory of meaning says that individual concerns come with the territory; addressing these concerns is educational change. (p. 295)

Despite the changing demands on reading specialists, the informants in our study all agreed that students' needs should determine the role of a reading specialist (Bean,

Trovato, & Hamilton, 1995). As students' needs change, so does the role of the reading specialist.

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Table 1
Study Participants

Reading Specialist	Current Teaching Assignment	Location	Full or Part Time	Years of Experience as Reading Specialist	Years of Experience in Education	Graduate Degree Earned	Special Literacy Training	Program Funding
Belinda	Primary, intermediate, middle	Rural	Full	4	9	Masters in Literacy	Reading Recovery training & Ohio reading endorsement	District
Dee	Primary	Urban	Full	10	15	Masters in Literacy	Reading Recovery training & Ohio reading endorsement	Title I
Erin	Primary	Urban	Full	2	2 plus	Currently working on Masters in Reading	Currently working on Ohio reading endorsement	Title I
Franki	Primary & intermediate	Suburban	Full	9	30	Masters plus 60 hours	Ohio reading endorsement & Ohio reading supervisor's license	Title I & district
Jill	Intermediate	Suburban	Part	4	16	Masters in Education	Ohio reading endorsement	Title I & district
Randi	Primary	Suburban	Full	10	20	Masters in Literacy	Ohio reading endorsement; Reading Recovery trained	District
Sarah	Primary	Suburban	Full	17	17	Masters in Literacy	Reading Recovery training & Ohio reading endorsement	Title I & district
Sheri	Primary & Intermediate	Suburban	Part	23	30	Masters in Reading	Ohio reading endorsement	Title I & district

Table 2
Interview Protocol

At what school-age level(s) do you work?

Level: Primary Intermediate Middle School H.S. College

What developmental area is your school?

School: Suburban Urban Rural

Do you work part-time or full-time as a reading specialist?

Working as a reading specialist: Part-time Full-time Other:

How many years have you worked as a reading specialist?
worked in education?

Number of years experience: Reading Specialist: _____ In education: _____

What is the source of funding for your reading program?

Funding: Federal Government Title 1 Grant Other:

Function: Please tell me about your job.

Instruction: What is your role in instruction of students? How often do you instruct students? What are the groupings for instruction (individual, small group, large group)? What percentage of your time is instructional? Do you work with teachers, administrators, parents, etc.? Tell me about that. Where does this instruction of students take place? What are the advantages and disadvantages of pullout, push-in, or both, whatever applies to your situation?

Assessment: Tell me about assessing students. How much time do you spend assessing? What assessment tools do you use? How often do you rely on each assessment tools?

Resources to teachers, school, etc.: Do you ever serve as a resource to the people you work with? (Teachers, Administrators, Parents) What kind of leadership roles do you take??

Administration: What administrative tasks do you have? How often do you do them? What are your views on administrative tasks? Do you have any other duties like cafeteria, recess, etc.?

Beliefs: Can you comment on the importance of the tasks you do? Which tasks seem most important? Which tasks seem least important? Are you consistent in performance with the level of importance you assign to each task? Is the amount of time you spend reflective of the quality and importance you assign to each tasks?

Changes: Have you noticed changes in your role within the past 5-6 years? What have been the areas of greatest change? Have your roles changed? Has there been a decrease or increase in: Paper work, resource to teachers, instruction in c/r, involvement in special education, with parents? What has been the area of greatest change?

Table 3
Original Codes & Expanded Categories

Assessment done by reading specialist	Grouping
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running records • Phonemic awareness / word study • Inventories • Standardized • Work samples • Sight words • Self-assessment • General • Formal • Assessing teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push in • Pull out • Whole group • General • Teacher attitude
Assessment qualifying for program	Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General • Formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phonemic awareness / word study • Independent reading • Strategies and skills • Guided reading • Literature circles • Vocabulary • Content comprehension • Minilessons • General • Writing • Test taking skills
Administrative tasks	Miscellaneous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Scheduling • General • Attendance • Report cards / Progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duties • Management • Accomodations / Test administration • Training • Professional development • Professional service
Beliefs on tasks	Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time fits • Time doesn't fits • Most important • Least important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On own • With teachers • With administration • By administration
Changes in role	Resource
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testing / Assessment • Trends in reading • General • Time • Accountability • Viewed as a pseudo-administrator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Administrators • Parents • Mentorship from others • Feelings
Communication	Special Needs Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Administrators • Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic • Behavior • Physical

Understanding the Relationship Between Attitudes Toward Reading and Home Literary Environment

Angela Nickoli, Ball State University

Cindy Hendricks, Bowling Green State University

James Hendricks, Ball State University

April Smith, Ball State University

It is generally acknowledged that positive reading attitudes lead to positive reading experiences, which, in turn, lead to higher academic performance. Wang (2000) explains that children's literacy development determines their future success in reading and whether or not children read is determined by their attitudes toward reading. According to Wang, "If children do not like reading or they think reading is boring, their negative attitude toward reading will hinder their reading improvement" (p. 120).

In 2001, Panofsky reported that the marginalization of research and theory on affective domain issues in literacy "reflects a much larger avoidance in the dominant traditions of western science...The consequence of this avoidance is that issues of feeling/emotion/affect can become invisible in both research and, importantly, practice" (p. 45). Ignoring or marginalizing attitudinal research may cause teachers to downplay the importance of developing positive attitudes toward reading, particularly at the secondary school level (Panofsky). Tchudi and Mitchell (1999) argue, "Too often the affective domain in secondary classrooms is pooh-poohed" (p. 199).

Factors Affecting Attitudes Toward Reading

A number of recent studies have focused on identifying factors that influence the development of positive attitudes toward reading in secondary students (Bintz, 1993; Kubis, 1994; Metsala, 1996; Spiegel, 1994; Walberg & Tsai, 1983).

Walberg and Tsai (1983) concluded that factors contributing to a positive attitude toward reading among adolescents included believing that reading is important, enjoying reading, having a high self-concept as a reader, and having a verbally stimulating home environment where verbal interaction takes place regularly.

In a study by Bintz (1993) secondary students identified the presence of positive role models (parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, neighbors, relatives) as one of the factors responsible for their love of reading. Bintz reports that these role models created "reading families" or "communities of readers" whose members valued and supported reading.

Spiegel (1994) reported that what parents do in their homes (their literacy environment) significantly affected the development of positive attitudes toward reading in their children. According to Spiegel, home literacy environments included, among other things, artifacts (books, newspapers, pencils, paper, letters, junk mail) and events (reading to children).

Kubis' (1994) research investigated factors influencing attitude development. She concluded that students attribute their positive attitudes toward reading to a significant event or person. According to Kubis, students who were read to as children and who owned personal book collections had more positive attitudes toward reading than those who did not. Also, in her study, families of students with positive attitudes toward reading received more magazines and at an earlier age than the families of those with negative attitudes. One event that influenced positive attitude development was visiting the public library and possessing a library card.

Metsala (1996) reported that one factor that contributes to successful experiences in school is the children's literacy-related home experiences. Metsala identified a common core of characteristics associated with positive reading outcomes: readily available children's books, frequent reading to and with children, special space and opportunities for reading, positive parental attitudes and models of reading, frequent visits to libraries, and many parent-child conversations.

More recently, Reutzel and Fawson (2002) identified eight themes that permeated six national reading research reports. One such theme was Home-School-Community Partnerships. It is important to note that four of the six reports cited here specifically mention that school-home partnerships are essential for children's reading success. It is this connection that the present study sought to investigate.

Present Investigation

Understanding home experiences and parents' perspectives on literacy are important considerations in building connections between the home and the school. Although there are factors known to positively affect attitude toward reading, the relationship between adolescent attitudes toward reading and home literary environments should be more fully explored. The purpose of this investigation was to examine the relationship between the attitudes of college students toward reading and the literary environment in which they were raised.

Participants

A total of 402 college freshmen volunteers from two Midwestern universities participated in this study. Students at both state-supported universities were predominately Caucasian. Two survey instruments were used to document these students attitudes toward reading. The survey instruments were administered in the fall; thus, most of the students at both universities were in their first few months of college.

Instruments

The two instruments used to measure attitudes toward reading were the The Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey (Tullock-Rhody & Alexander, 1980) and The Home Literacy Environment Survey (Kubis, 1994). Test-retest reliability of the Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey scale was determined to be 0.84. Validity of the survey was established by including items constructed from secondary students' comments, a t-

test score of 4.16 discriminating between students perceived as having a positive attitude and those having a negative attitude; and by acceptable correlations between items retained on the final scale and the total scale (Tullock-Rhody & Alexander). The survey included 25 statements that allowed students to respond with a five point Likert scale. A very positive score received a score of five, and a very negative score received a score of one (Tullock-Rhody & Alexander); thus, scores on the survey range from a minimum of 25 to a maximum of 125.

Regarding The Home Literary Environment Survey, Kubis states that its purpose is to establish the literary richness of the environment from which the student has come (1994). The survey consists of 30 questions; 20 require a yes/no response; 6 require students to select from alternatives (multiple choice), and 4 require subjective answers. Kubis field- tested The Home Literary Environment Survey using two freshman English classes and two senior-level Advanced Learning Program classes. No items were changed on the survey after the field-testing.

To facilitate a comparison between the students' reading attitudes and home literary environment and for cohesiveness in responding, the two instruments (The Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey and the Home Literary Environment Survey) were retyped and combined. Questions, deemed not relevant to the investigation were eliminated from the Home Literary Environment Survey. Questions eliminated were three subjective response items related to titles of magazines, one subjective item related to critical reading event, two multiple-choice items related to birth order, one multiple-choice item related to "real" readers, and one yes/no questions related to parents' restriction of television viewing (see Appendix).

Procedures

Students were told that the purpose of the study was to evaluate the relationship between their attitudes toward reading and the home literary environment in which they were raised. All students were told that completing the survey was voluntary; they were also instructed not to write their names on the surveys, regardless of whether or not they completed the surveys.

Data Analysis

All 402 students completed the combined inventories. After scoring the responses on the Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey, the researchers identified the top 25% of the scores ($n = 116$) as having the most positive attitudes toward reading and the bottom 25% ($n = 120$) as having the most negative attitudes toward reading. While 25% of the scores would be closer to 100, all surveys with the same score were included in the investigation. The researchers further analyzed these 236 surveys for home literary variables.

Finally, frequencies of responses on the Home Literary Environment Survey from the students in both the positive and negative attitude groups were calculated. A Chi-square Test for Independence ($p = .05$) was used to determine whether significant relationships existed between variables in the students' home environments (according to the Home Literary Environment Survey) and the students' attitudes toward reading as defined by the Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey.

Results

Attitude scores for the 116 students with most positive attitudes toward reading ranged from 95 to 124 (125 points possible), with a mean of 106.19 and a standard deviation of 7.56. The range for the 120 students with negative attitudes toward reading was 29 to 65; the observed mean was 52.86 with a standard deviation of 8.5. The frequency of responses on the Home Literary Environment from the students in both the positive and negative attitude groups were compared (See Appendix). Note that Item 22 ("Do your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of hours or the tv shows that you watch now?") was eliminated since most of the responders were living on campus.

The Chi-square Test for Independence ($p = .05$) compared each item on the Home Literary Environment Survey with those students who demonstrated a positive attitude toward reading and those who demonstrated a negative attitude toward reading as determined by the Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey (see Appendix). Significant differences were noted between those students identified as having a positive attitude toward reading and those students identified as having a negative attitude toward reading on all items except two. The items were Questions 2 and 4.

Question 2 asked about the person who read to the student the most. There did not seem to be a significant relationship between the responses given by those identified as having a positive attitude toward reading and those identified as having a negative attitude toward reading. A similar conclusion can be drawn for Question 4. There did not appear to be significant differences between the responses given by those identified as having a positive attitude and those identified as having a negative attitude toward reading regarding whether the primary caregiver worked outside the home.

Discussion

The results of this investigation are similar to the results obtained by Bintz (1993), Kubis (1994), Metsala (1996), Spiegel (1994), and Walberg and Tsai (1983) and as reported earlier. Further, using Spiegel's (1994) notion of "artifacts and events" that lead to a positive attitude toward reading, it is evident that students who were identified as having a positive attitude toward reading report experiences in the home that include both artifacts and events. That is to say, this investigation lends support to the argument that there is a correlation between owning and having access to books, newspapers, magazines, and library cards (Items 7, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17) and positive attitudes toward reading.

This study also lends support to the position that specific kinds of events contribute to positive attitudes toward reading. Such events include such things as being read to as a child, visiting the library, attending story hours, discussing books or magazines with family or friends, having educated parents who show an interest in what the children are reading and who ask about school learning, who recommend books and restrict television watching, and the like (Items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 20, 21, 23).

Among her observations about reading attitudes, Stokmans (1999) concludes that attitudes are stable dispositions that have been acquired over time through direct and indirect experiences with reading. The kinds of experiences to which Stokmans refers may be the “artifacts and events” found and occurring in the homes of students who have positive attitudes toward reading. Perhaps what is created in these homes is what Walberg and Tsai (1983) called “reading families” or “communities of readers” whose members value and support the activity of reading.

The importance of knowing the reading attitudes of students has relevance for teachers of all students. Understanding how students feel about reading early in their academic careers may allow teachers to construct courses and employ instructional strategies that build on positive attitudes toward reading and eradicate negative attitudes. The results of this investigation demonstrate that it is important to provide both reading artifacts (books, newspapers, etc.) and reading events (reading circles, reading aloud, etc.) if students are to develop positive attitudes toward reading.

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Appendix:

Summary of Student Responses to Home Literary Environment Survey

Were you read to as a child?					
N = 236	Often	Sometimes	14	Never	
Positive	102				
Negative	30	75		15	
2. Who was the person who read to you the most?					
Female	Older	Grand	Other		
N = 236	Parent	Parent	Sibling	parent	
Positive	12	9	3	16	76
Negative	8	9	4	5	92
3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?					
N = 235	Yes			No	
Positive	107			9	
Negative	39			80	
4. Did your primary caregiver work outside of the home when you were young?					
N = 235	Yes			No	
Positive	72			44	
Negative	63			56	
5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?					
N = 236	Yes			No	
Positive	114			2	
Negative	98			22	
6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?					
N = 236	Yes			No	
Positive	87			29	
Negative	34			86	
7. Do you presently have a library card?					
N = 236	Yes			No	
Positive	103			13	
Negative	72			48	
8. Do you and your family give each other books as gifts?					
N = 236	Yes			No	
Positive	99			17	
Negative	33			87	
9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home?					
N = 236	Yes			No	
Positive	111			5	
Negative	66			54	

10. Do you have a library of your own books at home?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	94	22
Negative	28	92

11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	101	15
Negative	35	85

12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) often ask you what you learned in school?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	110	6
Negative	83	37

13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	106	10
Negative	65	55

14. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) subscribe to magazines which are mailed to your home?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	106	10
Negative	58	62

15. Do you have your own magazine subscriptions?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	84	32
Negative	31	89

16. Do you remember having subscriptions as a child?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	110	6
Negative	46	74

17. Is there a newspaper coming to your home on a daily basis?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	101	15
Negative	65	55

18. Do your friends like to read books and/or magazines?

N = 235	Yes	No
Positive	106	10
Negative	74	45

19. Do you discuss books you've read with your friends?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	98	18
Negative	34	86

20. Do you and your friends recommend good books to each other?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	98	18
Negative	28	92

21. Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of hours or the shows you watched on tv when you were young?

N = 236	Yes	No
Positive	62	54
Negative	31	89

22. What is the educational level of the parent or guardian with whom you spent the most time with when you were a preschooler?

N = 236	Less than a College Graduate	College Graduate	or higher	—
Positive	86	30		
Negative	67	53		

To obtain the positive and negative attitude responses, the Rhody Secondary Reading Attitude Assessment Survey (Tullock-Rhody & Alexander, 1980) was used. It was typed in its entirety and labeled Section A on the handout given to students. The 23 items from the Home Literary Environment Survey (Kubis, 1994) were typed on the same handout and identified as Section B. Eight items were eliminated from the original survey. Questions eliminated were three items related to titles of magazines, one item related to critical reading event, two items related to birth order, one item related to “real” readers, and one related to parents’ restriction of television viewing.

Parents' Voices in the Discussion of the Rights of Readers

Victoria J. Risko

Peabody College of Vanderbilt University

Mona W. Matthews

Georgia State University

Laurie Elish-Piper

Northern Illinois University

Sheryl Dasinger

Jo Ann F. Bass

Valdosta State University

How amazing that those tails and circles and little bridges joined together formed real letters! And that those letters could make syllables, and those syllables, one after the other, words. He couldn't believe it. And that some of those words were familiar to him--it was magical! (Pennac, 1992/1999, p. 44).

That is the way Pennac described his son's first attempts to read. By the time his son reached his adolescent years, he struggled to complete the reading material assigned by his teachers and had lost interest in reading.

Now he is a reclusive adolescent in his room, faced with a book he cannot read. His desire to be elsewhere creates a smoky film between his eyes and the page. He is sitting in front of the window, the door closed behind him. Stuck on page 48. He can't bear to count the hours it took him just to get to this forty-eighth page. (Pennac, 1992/1999, p. 20).

Pennac's experiences with his son, coupled with his reflections on how adults read books, led him to create the Reader's Bill of Rights, rights that all readers, including young readers, should be granted. The ten rights are

1. The right to not read.
2. The right to skip pages.
3. The right to not finish a book.
4. The right to reread.
5. The right to read anything.
6. The right to escapism.
7. The right to read anywhere.
8. The right to browse.
9. The right to read out loud.
10. The right to not defend your tastes (Pennac, 1992/1999, pp. 170-171).

Intrigued by Pennac's discussion of readers' rights, we decided to survey and interview teachers and students, and now parents to determine if these respective groups agreed with Pennac's perspective. Are these rights important for teachers? For readers? And if these rights are important, should they be applied uniformly or are there situations and/or personal preferences that may lead to differential use of these rights? Once we identified these guiding questions, we initiated our inquiry.

Our first investigation on the topic of the Reader's Bill of Rights found that the 131 preservice and inservice teachers who responded to our survey agreed with all the rights except the *right not to read*. Almost half of the teachers did not agree with this right. When asked which rights best represented their actions, they identified five rights (i.e., right to reread, the right to read anything, the right to escapism, the right to read anywhere, and the right to browse) that more closely resembled them and three rights (e.g., right to not read, right to skip pages, right to not finish) that did not (Elish-Piper, Matthews, Johns, & Risko, 1999).

The next year we asked 268 preservice and inservice teachers to identify rights they viewed important for themselves and rights important for their students. We learned that the teachers afforded themselves more rights than they afforded their students (Elish-Piper, et al., 2000).

The third study involved 200 sixth-grade students who were asked their perceptions of their rights as readers when reading for pleasure and when reading their school assignments. The students in this study felt they had more rights as readers during recreational reading than during academic reading (Matthews et al., 2001). For example, students believed that during recreational reading they could read anywhere, skip pages, browse through the text, and stop reading if they were uninterested. For academic reading, however, they felt responsible for the knowing the content and were less likely to browse or skip pages or choose not to finish their reading.

In the fourth investigation, we surveyed 157 fifth and sixth graders and found that they believed they had more rights when reading during free time than when reading to complete assignments the teacher gave them. When asked why they responded as they did to specific items, we discovered that the students tended to think of reading as text specific, were concerned about performing well on reading tests, and lacked an aesthetic response to reading (Bass et al., 2002).

We interviewed 12 students in fifth through eleventh grades in our fifth project. When asked about recreational reading, all the students thought it was ok to reread and most thought it was ok to use their imaginations and escape to another place. Younger students were ambivalent about whether it was ok to choose not to read something, but older students thought it was ok not to read something. In the area of academic reading, most responses related to tests and grades. Most students thought it was ok to read out loud, but they didn't like to do it. Younger students tended to view themselves as having fewer rights related to academic reading than older students (Elish-Piper, et al., 2002).

Two purposes guide this paper. First, we report findings from our sixth and most recent research. In this study we surveyed parents to determine their perceptions of the rights their children were entitled to as readers. Second, we discuss three additional reading rights (of students) that we believe are essential for supporting the literacy learning of children and adolescents.

Parents' Perceptions

Building on our former research, we were interested in parents' beliefs about their children's reading rights. For this study, we surveyed a group of parents and asked them to discuss the rights of their children when they read for school and for recreation. In the following material, we discuss our procedures, analysis, and findings.

Methods

Participants. Parents of 122 children in grades K-12 in school systems in a southern state responded to the survey. The schools were all within a 50-mile radius of a southern regional university. Of the 122 respondents, 68 were the parents of girls and 54 were the parents of boys. The group was divided into parents of primary grade students (K-2) and upper elementary through high school students (3-12). There were 90 parents of primary grade students and 32 parents of upper elementary through high school students. Parents were assured that there were no right or wrong answers and that their child's grade would not be affected by their responses.

Instrument. The survey instrument was developed based on Pennac's Reader's Bill of Rights (1992/1999) as well as previous surveys administered to teachers and students. Revisions were made to the wording to reflect instructions to parents concerning their children and suggestions from participants at Problems Court sessions at the American Reading Forum conference (Elish-Piper, et al., 2000; Matthews, et al., 2001; Bass, et al., 2002). The survey was divided into two sections. On each part, the respondents rated on a Likert-type scale (A=Strongly Agree, B=Agree, C=Not Sure, D=Disagree, and E=Strongly Disagree) their extent of agreement with the statements. Five points were assigned to A, four points to B, three points to C, two points to D, with E having one point. The first ten statements related to children's rights during recreational reading done during students' free time outside of school. On the second part, the respondents rated their extent of agreement with 10 statements related to academic reading during school lessons or assignments. In an open-ended question, parents were asked to make comments if they chose to do so. Surveys requested that each respondent identify his or her child's gender and grade level.

Analysis. Descriptive statistics were generated for each item. T-tests were run to determine if there were significant differences in parents' perceptions related to their children's rights for academic versus recreational reading. A bonferroni correction was applied to account for multiple t-tests ($p=.05/10=.005$). The data also were analyzed using a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine differences in the opinion of parents on the basis of gender and grade level. The parental comments were analyzed for patterns and illuminating responses.

Results

Rights associated with reading purpose. To determine if there were differences in parents' perceptions of their children's rights as readers during recreational and academic reading, the means for the paired questions were analyzed. In Table 1 we display the results of this analysis.

Table 1

All Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Rights as Readers

Item	Free time reading not at school M (SD)	Academic reading at school M(SD)	Difference	t (N=122)
1. Choose not to read	3.23 (1.30)	1.64 (.80)	1.59	12.59*
2. Skip pages	2.64 (1.25)	1.75 (.83)	.89	7.76*
3. Not to finish	3.25 (1.23)	1.66 (.77)	1.59	13.75*
4. Reread	4.47 (.74)	4.40 (.82)	.07	.799
5. Read anything	3.49 (1.37)	2.42 (1.08)	1.07	7.90*
6. Escape from real world	4.07 (1.02)	3.30 (1.19)	.77	7.06*
7. Read anywhere	3.61 (1.28)	2.89 (1.21)	.72	7.44*
8. Glance through	3.98 (1.10)	3.55 (1.30)	.43	4.61*
9. Read out loud	3.97 (1.10)	3.87 (1.04)	.10	1.15
10. Not to explain choice	3.05 (1.38)	2.35 (1.01)	.70	5.90*

*p<.0005

For all ten paired questions, parents afforded their children more rights related to free time reading done outside of school than academic reading done at school. There were significant differences in all but two of the questions. These exceptions were the right to reread and the right to read out loud. Parents generally do not believe that during academic reading their children should have the right to (a) choose not to read, (b) skip pages, or (c) not finish what they read. These results are consistent with students' perceptions of their own rights obtained when they were surveyed (Matthews, et al., 2001). Teachers also were consistent in limiting these

rights for students, although that particular survey did not differentiate between recreational and academic reading (Elish-Piper, et al., 2000).

Rights associated with gender and grade level. A two-way analysis of variance was conducted to determine if there were differences in parents' perceptions of their children's rights according to the children's gender or grade level. We report the results of these analyses in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Rights as Readers by Grade Level

Categories of responses	Parents of younger children N=90	Parents of older children N=32	Difference
Free time reading outside school			
M	30.46	36.03 *	6.43
(SD)	(7.35)	(4.75)	
Academic reading at school			
M	27.15	29.97**	2.82
(SD)	(5.07)	(4.72)	

*Grade level free reading ($F_{1, 121}=19.92$, $p<.0005$)

**Grade level academic reading ($F_{1, 121}=15.62$, $p<.005$)

Table 3

Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Rights as Readers by Gender

Categories of responses	Parents of boys N=54	Parents girls N=68	Difference
Free time reading outside school			
M	30.87	32.51	1.64
(SD)	(7.35)	(4.75)	
Academic reading at school			
M	26.80	28.63	1.83
(SD)	(5.07)	(4.72)	

Gender * free reading ($F_{1, 121}=1.15$, $p=.29$)

Gender * academic reading ($F_{1, 121}=3.36$, $p=.069$)

Generally, there were differences in parents' perceptions of their children's rights by grade level, but not by gender. Parents of children in grades 3 and above perceived their children to have significantly more rights in both the free reading ($F_{1, 121}=19.92$, $p<.0005$) and academic reading categories ($F_{1, 121}=15.62$, $p<.005$). Parents of girls perceived their children to have slightly more rights related to both free reading and academic reading. However, there was no statistically significant difference in responses for free reading ($F_{1, 121}=1.15$, $p=.29$) nor academic reading ($F_{1, 121}=3.36$, $p=.069$) between parents of boys and girls. There was no significant interaction between gender and grade level for free reading ($F_{1, 121}=.21$, $p=.65$). Additionally, there was no significant interaction between gender and grade level for academic reading ($F_{1, 121}=.35$, $p=.55$).

Not many parents chose to respond to the open-ended comment question. Those who did reinforced the results of the survey. The following quotation is characteristic of the feelings of several parents:

Free time is different to us--it means you put in your opinion and pick things you might want to learn about or you enjoy. However, anytime an assignment is given, we believe our child is to submit to the leadership of his teacher and do the best he can. Thank you for asking our opinion.

Three Overarching Rights

While engaging in the six studies on the rights of readers, it became clear to the researchers and attendees at previous Problems Court sessions at ARF that some of Pennac's rights (1992/1999) overlapped and focused on closely related areas such as "the right to skip pages" and "the right to not finish," but other broad, significant rights were not included. These concerns led the researchers to discuss and examine their own recent experiences in schools, their roles as teacher educators, and the literature from both professional and popular presses. Through these processes, the researchers identified three overarching rights that they believe are critical for helping students become engaged, motivated, lifelong readers. These rights are:

1. the right to a competent, caring, qualified literacy teacher.
2. the right to choose reading material for both academic and personal reading purposes.
3. the right to instruction that is individually appropriate.

These rights are situated in a challenging political and educational climate characterized by legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) that mandates high-stakes testing and advocates the use of structured instructional programs that focus on the individual components of reading rather than promoting lifelong reading. In this present climate, educational administrators, teacher educators, teachers, and parents find themselves struggling to reconcile the federal and state mandates that are pushing literacy education toward a more mechanistic, skills-based view of reading with the realities of the lives of children and adolescents in our schools. In the current debates about NCLB and state policies related to reading instruction, the researchers feel strongly that the voices and rights of

students must be considered and addressed. By identifying and examining the three overarching rights for (a) a competent, caring, qualified teacher, (b) choice, and (c) individually appropriate instruction, the researchers aim to include the voices, experiences, needs, and concerns of students in the discussion about reading instruction in our schools.

The Right to a Competent, Caring Qualified Teacher

How is the right to a competent, caring, qualified teacher defined? The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (1996) states that the educational birthright of every child is to have a “competent, caring, qualified teacher” (p. 6). Such a teacher is a skilled educator who is respectful, kind, and knowledgeable about what he/she teaches, as well as fully certified in the area where he or she teaches. According to a national poll about public attitudes toward education, 90% of Americans surveyed supported the belief that the best way to improve student achievement is to provide a qualified teacher in each classroom (Haselkorn & Harris, 1998). Although the right to a competent, caring, qualified teacher appears to be fundamental to our educational system, it is not a reality for many children and adolescents in our country’s public schools (NCTAF, 2003)

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) has brought the issue of highly qualified teachers to the forefront of political debate and public awareness. NCLB defines a highly qualified teacher as having “full certification, a bachelor's degree and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Research by Ingersoll (2001) and Wayne and Youngs (2003) illustrates the positive correlation between teachers who possess certification in their teaching field and student achievement. Clearly, having certification in the field where one teaches is important, but other important attributes of excellent teachers also warrant consideration.

Simply having certification may not guarantee that a teacher possesses the types of knowledge necessary to be an effective teacher for all students. Shulman's categories of the knowledge base for teaching (1987) provide a more fine-grained view of the dimensions of teacher knowledge. Shulman's categories include content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge; curriculum knowledge; pedagogical content knowledge; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts; and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values. In other words, teachers must develop expertise not only in their field but also in how to teach effectively. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) supports this view of expert teachers by stating, “To be effective, teachers must know their subject matter so thoroughly that they can present it in a challenging, clear compelling way. They must know how their students learn and how to make ideas accessible so that they can construct successful ‘teachable moments.’ Research confirms that teacher knowledge of subject matter, student learning, and teaching methods are all important elements of teacher effectiveness” (p. 6). Specifically in the area of reading, *Standards for Reading Professionals*, published by the International Reading Association (2003), charge teachers with having expertise in the following aspects of reading instruction: foundational knowledge; instructional strategies and curriculum materials; assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation; creating a literate environment; and professional development. In summary, we argue that all students have the right to be taught by skilled teachers who possess deep knowledge of content, pedagogy, and students.

Beyond the dimensions of knowledge necessary for effective teaching, teachers must be caring and respectful in their relationships with their students. Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984) advocate that teaching be characterized by an ethic of care that frames education as a worthwhile human activity wherein each student is honored as competent and capable of learning, and educators take responsibility for teaching all students. In this view of education, teachers strive to create a climate of trust, respect, and mutual responsibility that promotes students' cognitive development as well as their development as whole persons. When students and their parents sense that teachers truly care about the children and adolescents in their classrooms, productive working relationships result, which are likely to lead to increases in student achievement and engagement with learning (Noddings). We argue that the right to a caring teacher is a fundamental right for each and every student in our schools.

The highly effective literacy teacher also has an additional attribute that contributes to success--he or she is a reader and writer who is passionate about helping students develop into lifelong readers and writers (Kolloff, 2002; Ray & Laminack, 2001). By sharing a love of literacy with students, teachers are able to promote a lifelong habit of reading and writing in students. We believe that all students deserve to be taught by teachers who model their love of reading and writing in and out of school so that students may become lifelong readers and writers themselves.

Why is the right to a competent, caring qualified teacher significant? Research studies on the relationship between teacher expertise and student achievement indicate that teacher quality has a significant impact on overall student achievement in schools (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wayne & Youngs, 2003), as well as on reading specifically (Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, & Hampston, 1998). If we expect students to achieve academically, it is clear that we must provide highly competent teachers in each classroom.

Unfortunately, in low-income, urban and rural schools across America, many teachers possess neither the basic requirement of a teaching certificate in the field in which they teach nor the other attributes discussed previously in this section (NCTAF, 2003). Unless careful attention is paid to developing and retaining high quality teachers in schools attended by low income students, serious concerns are warranted about promoting education that is decidedly undemocratic and unequal. Such unequal education is likely to result in cultural reproduction wherein class structures are reproduced, and the poor stay poor and find themselves with few, if any, opportunities to better their economic situations or make educational and life choices that others in our country have available to them (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu, 1991; Foucault, 1970). In other words, "Teaching quality will make the critical difference not only to the futures of individual children but to America's future as well" (NCTAF, 1996, p. 2). We can no longer apply the right to a caring, competent, qualified teacher for only some students in some schools. All children, regardless of race, linguistic background, socioeconomic status, geography, religion, or gender have the educational birthright to a "competent, caring, qualified teacher" (NCTAF, 1996, p. 6).

The Right to Choose Reading Material for Both Academic and Personal Reading Purposes

How is the right to choose reading materials defined? This right for students to select reading materials to support their learning and for recreation is viewed by researchers and literacy educators as essential for sustaining students' interest and engagement in reading and writing. Personal interests and preferences may guide choices. Monson & Sebesta (1991) differentiate the two constructs; preferences are associated with texts students might like to read while interests are associated with what they are actually selecting to read. Influencing preferences and interests are factors such as students' out-of-school experiences, efforts to take agency for one's own learning (Nieto, 2000), efforts to be successful and free from anxiety that comes from assigned texts that are too difficult for the reader (Rubenstein-Avila, 2003/2004), and building one's identity as a reader (Pajares, 1996). To support both preferences and interests, students need access to multiple genre of texts (including web based and multimedia texts), multicultural materials, popular texts (such as magazines and comic books), and multiple levels of reading materials. Researchers, such as Galda (1982), find students' reject school texts when their own expectations and preferences for reading material are not available to them.

Recognizing the power of self selection on students' reading engagement and sustained interest in reading, the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association recently asserted that students' right to choose at least some of their reading materials in school is a desired attribute of high quality instruction for children and adolescents. In two position statements, *Adolescent Literacy* (IRA, 1999) and *Making a Difference means Making it Different: Honoring Children's Rights to Excellent Reading Instruction* (IRA, 2000), the board of directors advocated for students' access to multiple forms of texts and the right to choose what they read for academic and personal purposes.

Why is the right to choose reading material significant? Researchers argue that self selection of reading materials is a requirement for instructional programs that are aimed toward sustaining engagement and interest in reading, developing strategic and independent reading habits, fostering feelings of self worth and self efficacy, and enhancing deeper processing of text ideas (e.g., Finders, 1997; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). In many classrooms, however, students are not provided with this opportunity for choice. Instead, transmission models of teaching, prescribed curriculum and textbooks, tracking students through prepackaged leveled texts, and required lists of out-of-school reading material inhibit students' agency over their own reading selections. Recognizing the limitations of fixed curriculum on students' learning, Csikszentmihalyi (1991) warned that scripted and transmission models often produce students who choose not to read and argued that "the chief impediments to learning are not cognitive. It is not that students cannot learn; it is that they do not wish to" (p. 115). Unfortunately, this warning has not been heeded; current attempts to help "every child" pass state literacy tests is associated with higher uses of scripted and teacher-driven curriculum and fewer opportunities for student choices.

As literacy educators, we expect our students to be active and strategic learners—learners that monitor their understandings, that persist in their reading and writing efforts, that adjust their learning strategies to the demands of the text, and that make connections between their experiences and texts they read. Unfortunately, these forms of active learning and participation may not be present in all reading and writing programs. For example, as reported earlier in this paper, the students we surveyed told us they had few choices (for adjusting their reading habits)

when asked to read for academic purposes. This finding is particularly problematic when we juxtapose it with studies that identified an increase in disinterest and passivity in school reading as students progress from the elementary to middle school grades, a finding reported for both successful and less successful and reluctant readers (Bintz, 1993; Worthy and McKool, 1996).

Bintz (1993), Ivey and Broaddus (2001), and Worthy and McKool (1996) studied the reading habits of reluctant readers and concluded that lack of choice of reading materials and few opportunities to read what they *were allowed* to choose contributed to negative attitudes about reading in school. Yet as Bintz learned, those students described with negative and passive attitudes in his study, often read for pleasure and to obtain information out of school. Further, Bintz noted that these students were highly engaged, persistent, and strategic when reading out of school the materials that interested them. Finders (1997) described this activity as the “literate underground” of students—a place for reading success that may not be accessed by schools. These findings coincide with Deci’s (1992) claim about the importance of interests to guide activity... “freely doing what interests them... when so motivated, their behavior is characterized by concentration and engagement; it occurs spontaneously and people become wholly absorbed in it” (p. 45).

Being “wholly absorbed” in one’s reading or intentional about selections can be catalysts that spark interest in additional reading and for deepening content and world knowledge. Analyzing the development of expert readers, for example, Alexander (2003) asserts that expertise is impacted equally by the factors of knowledge acquisition, adoption of strategic actions, and interest and persistence. Similarly, Schiefele (1991) associates learning with interest and engagement—all necessary elements for deepening understandings of concepts under study.

To accommodate students’ right of choice, we do not expect that all school reading materials will be chosen by the students. Rather we envision literacy instruction that is inquiry- or problem-based and that provides access to multiple texts, including both teacher and student selections. Teachers may choose to provide access to common texts for all class members; access to texts for all students can be instrumental for building shared knowledge among class members, inviting different perspectives, and for engaging in dialogic learning formats that can deepen personal knowledge. Additional texts, chosen by students to pursue their own questions and interests, can afford opportunities for students to read what they can and want to read (Fairbanks, 1998; Ivey, 1999; Tomlinson, Moon, & Callahan, 1998; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999) and opportunities to bridge across cultural and linguistic differences (Farnan, 1996).

The Right to Instruction That is Individually Appropriate

How is the right to instruction that is individually appropriate defined? Ideally, the goal of each instructional literacy event, whether implied or explicit, is to enhance an individual’s ability to enjoy, construct, comprehend, and create written and oral language. Consideration of our third right, the right to instruction that is individually appropriate, is central to achieving this goal. (This phrasing is borrowed from Supporting Young Adolescents’ Literacy Learning, a joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Middle

School Association (IRA & NMSA, 2001). This right situates its meaning in current views of the nature of the learner.

Position statements developed by professional organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (1997), IRA and NMSA (2001) propose a multi-dimensional view of learners. Learners are perceived as individuals with different linguistic, cultural, affective, and ethnic characteristics (IRA & NMSA, 2001). Acknowledging that students possess differences is critical when planning literacy instruction not only because there is general acceptance that schools should respect each learner, but also because the foundations of literacy are formed from the learners' experiences within their home communities. Support for this assertion is found in Wells' (1999) discussion of the emergence of six modes of knowledge. Three of these modes, instrumental, procedural, and substantive, represent the knowledge individuals acquire through their day-to-day interactions with others in their home communities. This knowledge is the foundation upon which the other three modes of knowledge, aesthetic, theoretical, and meta, are built. Schools are one of the institutional settings in which the latter three modes of knowledge are constructed. For that reason, Wells' notions of knowledge suggest that ignoring the linguistic, cultural, affective, and ethnic differences among students increases the possibility for failure for those whose understandings are not evident in the school's expressions of literacy (Shannon, 1996; Wells, 1999)

Why is the right to instruction that is individually appropriate significant? Several factors support the significance of this right to students' literacy learning. First, simplistic views of reading as the acquisition of a set of discrete skills have been replaced with lifespan views which represent learning to read as a process that begins at birth and continues through life (Alexander, 2003). These broader views of literacy learning account for the multiple functions and reasons individuals use oral and written language as they expand their range of use from their home, to school, and to work.

Second, the increased cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in American schools makes it essential for teachers to use the children's embedded understandings about language and meaning-making as a bridge to institutional and school-based literacy practices. Thus, the long-held practice of using one basal reading program, delivered in one way, and at the same pace to address the reading needs of all students is inadequate for a growing diverse population.

Third, the hardest-to-teach often are the ones who are unable to "move beyond" the instruction. Clay's (1991) work demonstrates that even when a group of children share a common cultural and ethnic background, approximately 20% will require intervention beyond the typical classroom instruction. Clay suggests that although many children are able to make connections between process and practice even though they may be absent from the teachers' instruction, those designated as the hardest to teach are not able to make these connections. Their success is often contingent on a teacher's ability to identify the individual's needs and then design instruction to meet those needs.

Last, images of who we are as literate beings influence our perceptions of who we are as human beings (Bruner, 1996). Bruner asserts that there are two principal components of self: (a) the ability to initiate and participate in an event and (b) the evaluation of the success of that

participation. Further, schools are integral to children's developing conceptions of self because they are often the first institutional setting in which they get to try out and evaluate their participation. If this reasoning is applied to children's participation in literacy events, successful participation in these events has consequences not only to their developing perceptions of themselves as readers and writers but also their developing perceptions of themselves as learners.

Discussion from the Problems Court

The results of the survey of parents' perceptions of their children's rights as readers suggest that parents afforded their children more rights during free reading than academic reading. Parents, however, appeared reluctant to allow their children to skip pages during recreational reading. These findings led some attendees at the ARF Problems Court session to raise questions about the parents' reading level, socioeconomic level, and cultural background. It was pointed out that parents may not read as well as their children and that the readability of documents sent home to parents is often too high. One participant suggested that we add another right, the right to a literate home environment.

The finding that parents who responded to the survey were fairly consistent in limiting their children's rights during academic reading generated questions and comments from Problems Court participants about reading instructional approaches and materials. Although many reading approaches are implemented in the schools represented in the survey, many used the Accelerated Reader (AR) program. An attendee stated that prescriptive approaches such as AR were killing children's motivation to read. It was noted that one parent who responded to the survey indicated that the schools were ramming reading down children's throats with so much emphasis being placed on reading.

The right to a competent, caring, and qualified teacher produced discussion concerning teacher certification. Many in attendance expressed their concerns that alternative certification routes are undermining teacher educators who are trying to prepare competent, caring, qualified teachers. For example, a person in Georgia with a degree in any area can now pass Praxis II and be certified to teach for five years.

The parent survey indicated that there was limited parental support for allowing children to have much choice of material during academic reading. This finding sparked the discussion of the need for individualized instruction in today's schools. When instruction is too narrow, too many children are not reached. Teachers' judgment is critical in deciding the type of instruction needed by individual students, and teachers must be given flexibility in what they do in their classrooms, including the flexibility to encourage students' independent choices about reading selections.

Although our research into the rights of readers has produced some new understandings, questions remain. What issues stand in the way of making those rights a reality? What can we do to make these rights a reality? What rights have we omitted that are important?

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Appendix
Reader's Bill of Rights Parent Survey

Directions for Use

The Reader's Bill of Rights Parent Survey is a quick survey of parents' perceptions of the rights their children have as readers. It consists of 20 items and takes approximately five to ten minutes to complete.

This survey is part of a research study conducted by Dr. Sheryl Dasinger at Valdosta State University. Participation is entirely voluntary and neither you nor your child will be identified in any way. This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Your child's grade will not be affected by your responses. Your completion of this survey indicates your consent to participate in this study.

The first ten items are related to recreational reading, which is reading that is done during students' free time outside of school. The second ten items are related to reading during school lessons or assignments. Think carefully about each item and answer the item as honestly as possible.

If you have any comments, please make those on the last page. Please indicate if your child is a boy or a girl and his/her grade in school.

If you have additional questions, please call:

Sheryl Dasinger, Ph.D.
Department of Early Childhood & Reading
Valdosta State University
229-249-4925

PLEASE RETURN THE SURVEY BY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2003.

Reader's Bill of Rights Parent Survey

Please complete the following information about your child and make comments if you choose to do so.

My child is Female Male

My child is in the _____ grade.

Comments:

Part I- Directions:

Sometimes students read during their free time just because they want to read. Mark each item according to your child's rights as a reader.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to choose not to read.	A	B	C	D	E
2. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to skip pages.	A	B	C	D	E
3. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to not finish what they read.	A	B	C	D	E
4. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to reread.	A	B	C	D	E
5. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to read anything.	A	B	C	D	E
6. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to escape from the real world.	A	B	C	D	E
7. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to read anywhere.	A	B	C	D	E
8. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to glance through what they're reading.	A	B	C	D	E
9. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed to read out loud.	A	B	C	D	E
10. When my child reads during their free time, they should be allowed not to explain their choice of reading material.	A	B	C	D	E

Part II- Directions:

Sometimes students read during their free time because they have lessons or assignments given to them by a teacher. Mark each item according to your child's rights as a reader.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to choose not to read.	A	B	C	D	E
2. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to skip pages.	A	B	C	D	E
3. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to not finish what they read.	A	B	C	D	E
4. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to reread.	A	B	C	D	E
5. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to read anything.	A	B	C	D	E
6. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to escape from the real world.	A	B	C	D	E
7. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to read anywhere.	A	B	C	D	E
8. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to glance through what they're reading.	A	B	C	D	E
9. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed to read out loud.	A	B	C	D	E
10. When my child reads for lessons or assignments, they should be allowed not to explain their choice of reading material.	A	B	C	D	E

Primary Grade Reading Instruction Empowered Through Research-Based Knowledge

Ann Sharp, Ralph E. Reynolds, Kathleen J. Brown, Amy Morris, and Susan Gunn

Introduction

What would you do if you were a member of a major school district and during a school board meeting a group of discontented parents waved Adams' (1990) book, "Beginning To Read: Thinking and Learning About Print", and asked, "What do you know about this book? And if nothing why not?" This incident actually happened. These parents were concerned that their children were not receiving the benefit of instruction based on the twenty years of theoretical and applied research explicated in the book.

This incident became the impetus for reading instruction reform within the district. Seeking counsel from an educational department of a large western university, the district put into motion a wide scale plan. Projected within that plan was a professional development reading program (PDRP) that would focus on and support scientifically based reading research. The program design was the result of a joint effort by the university reading professors, district leaders, and researchers.

Program Design

Seven components of reading acquisition were identified (six of which later became the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) standards: phonological awareness, explicit systematic phonics instruction, word study, fluency, comprehension strategies instruction, vocabulary instruction and writing. These components were the emphases of the program and considered core to effective reading instruction (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Three orientations or approaches to reading were identified: code-based, whole-language, and integrated. A code-based approach utilizes the phonics component with little care to the other components of reading acquisition (Diederich, 1973). A whole-language approach utilizes the component of writing with an emphasis in the use of literature and affective measures such as motivation (Bergeron, 1990). An integrated approach utilizes all seven components of reading acquisition.

Ten academic courses (30 credit hours) focusing on seminal research were created: theories and models of reading; beginning reading instruction; comprehension instruction; content area reading; diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties; reading assessment; writing instruction; children's literature; evaluation of reading programs; and cultural diversity. Two courses a semester were offered over five semesters.

The PDRP would take a proactive stance towards understanding reading research and understanding the nature of science. This dual focus would be developed to facilitate appropriate

criteria in evaluating the quality of reading research and to encourage the use of this understanding to drive classroom practice.

Methods

To evaluate and describe changes in the teacher participants, the researchers and the professors together designed interview protocols to answer three descriptive, interpretive questions. First, how did the teachers' orientation toward teaching reading change? Second, how did their actual classroom practice change? Third, how did teachers' disposition toward reading research change?

Participants

From the 25 participants of the PDRP, interviews were reviewed and narrowed to three participants who typify differing initial orientations to teaching reading. Also, only primary grade teachers were chosen because basic reading processes are developed in the primary grades (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998; Adams, 1990). A cross case comparison study was implemented to evaluate how the program was affecting the participants and provide foundational information for a future full-scale analysis. Participants all began the program unfamiliar with reading research or reading theory. They were all considered to be excellent teachers by their principals and co-workers. However, though successful, each of them spoke of being dissatisfied with classroom results. Pseudonyms are used.

Diane is a first grade teacher who initially presented herself as a code-based teacher. Jill is also a first grade teacher who initially presented herself as a whole-language teacher. Kim is a second grade teacher who initially presented herself as a whole-language teacher.

Design Limitations

Data collecting procedures produced design limitations. Data collection did not begin until after the PDRP was actually started. The pre interview was conducted towards the end of the first year. This required the teacher-participants to remember what their opinions and practices were like before the PDRP. Also, only one observation was conducted after the PDRP was completed producing heavy reliance on self-report measures. In addition, there are no outcome measures on student learning to evaluate whether the PDRP truly impacted student achievement.

Additionally, participant selection can be viewed as a design limitation. Teachers allowed to enroll in the PDRP met selection criteria of high grade point average, willingness to take risks, cross-generational professional experience, academic records, and reputation as a teacher. Perhaps a more normal sampling would not yield such strong positive results.

Procedure

A one hundred thirty question interview protocol was developed (Appendix A). It included open-ended questions that were carefully designed to reduce researcher influence on participant responses (Spindler & Spindler, 1992). It solicited demographic information as well as explicated what the participants knew about reading, reading theories, and literacy practices. It

was designed to uncover the participants' understanding of the reading process, their approach to reading instruction, and their disposition towards reading research. Example questions are: What is your definition of reading? Describe your reading block? Tell me what you know about the different approaches to reading (i.e., whole language, phonics, based instruction, etc.). Has research influenced your practice?

The interview protocol was administered to all participants during the end of the first year of the program (pre), and again at the completion (post) of the program, making possible comparison of the participant's responses. Research assistants trained in the interview process administered the protocol. All participants of the program were interviewed individually with each interview taking approximately an hour and half. All interviews were recorded on audiotape and later transcribed for analysis.

Videotaped observations of the participant's classroom practice were conducted at the completion of the program. In addition, a third videotaped interview was conducted to ascertain the participant's intentions behind the instructional actions observed. Researchers functioned as observer-participants (Merriam, 2001); they were present but did not actively participate in classroom activities.

Data Analysis

Researchers have noted that gathering data related to participants' thought processes raises a number of validity issues (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To reduce these concerns, Miles & Huberman suggest triangulation: the collection of data from multiple sources that do not share the same potential for error. Triangulation was achieved through the use of the pre and post interview protocol, videotaped classroom observations, the third videotaped interviews, and quantitative tabulations from the protocols and observations.

Data from the primary protocols were transferred to an electronic database where each question from the first and second interview could be viewed simultaneously and analyzed for change (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Graduate assistants reviewed, coded and rated the protocols for three types of change: instructional orientation, teacher practice, and research disposition. Also, they flagged any evidence of the seven components of reading acquisition. An inter-rater reliability of 88.25% was achieved.

Reduction of the data was based on questions that seemed to yield consistent change across participants. For instance, when asked to define reading, all three participants' pre and post responses yielded change in instructional orientation. Therefore, that protocol item remained a part of the analysis. However, questions that asked for theoretical information (i.e., How do you define Behaviorism?) yielded little consistent change across participants and were dropped from the analysis. Tabular materials were created (Miles, 1979) using counts of various phenomena. Data from the interviews were analyzed and compiled using content analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Developments of vignettes for the three teachers were developed out of the analysis.

Results

Findings represent changes made by the three participants studied and will be presented in the following order: first, changes in orientation toward reading instruction, followed by changes in reading instruction in the classroom, and finally, changes in disposition towards reading research. These three are demonstrated with graphs and video clips representing the participants and the changes they made. (Appendix B has written quotes from the videos.)

Shifts In Initial Orientation Towards Reading Instruction

Shift in orientation of reading instruction is demonstrated in Table I. It is based on fifteen items from the protocol that were coded consistently as self-report orientation of the preferred reading approach across the three participants. The percentages seen in the table represent how many of those fifteen items indicated one type of approach. The same fifteen items were again used in the post interview to determine if any change had been made. A definite shift for all three teachers was seen from an initial orientation to an integrated reading approach.

Table I.

Shift in Orientation

Teacher	Pre Interview	Pre Orientation	Intervention	Post Interview	Post Orientation
Diane	88%	Code Based		100%	Integrated
Jill	77%	Whole Language		87%	Integrated
Kim	86%	Whole Language		91%	Integrated

Diane's shift went from code-based to integrated reading instruction in her first grade classroom. Her pre interview showed her as a Reading Mastery teacher. She did straight decoding, reported no use of literature, and used only small reading groups. She said that her students didn't read more than two or three minutes per day even though she had a ninety-minute block dedicated to reading instruction. In contrast, Diane's post interview spoke of comprehension strategies, literature, learning theories, situated cognition, whole group instruction along with small flexible groups, phonological awareness, and teaching reading all day long as she incorporated different reading components throughout her other subjects.

Jill's shift went from whole language to an integrated reading instruction approach in her first grade classroom. During her pre interview she speaks of reading a lot of literature, writing stories using literature, having books of choice, and embedded phonics. Her reading instruction was a ninety-minute block. The post interview showed her still reading an abundance of literature, writing on a daily basis, and having books of choice, but she was now using explicit

systematic phonics instruction, phonological awareness activities and teaching reading throughout the entire day.

Kim's shift was from an initial whole language approach in her second grade classroom to an integrated reading approach. In her pre interview she indicated that phonics was not needed as part of a reading instruction. She placed her instructional focus on writing using real literature to provide models, and on having children read books of personal interest (these books were not necessarily at their reading level). She read a lot to her students and had a ninety-minute reading block. Revealing her shift, Kim's post interview showed she felt phonics was critical for reading instruction. She was still using real literature to model writing, but reading materials were now suited to reading levels of individual students. She incorporated reading instruction throughout the instructional day rather than using the ninety-minute block.

Shifts In Classroom Reading Instruction

Protocols and video observations were examined for evidence of inclusion of the seven components of reading acquisition within the participant's instructional practice. Findings showed shifts in classroom practice and changes in reading instruction. Table II indicates how many of the three teachers were using each of the seven components of reading acquisition in their classroom instruction before and after the PDRP. Edited video segments of actual teaching moments illustrate the seven components.

Table II.

Seven Components of Reading Acquisition

Component	Teachers using: Pre	Teachers using: Post	Link to video
Phonological Awareness	0	3	Video link
Explicit Systematic Phonics Instruction	1	3	Video link
Word Study	1	3	Video link
Fluency	3	3	Video link
Comprehension Strategies Instruction	0	3	Video link
Vocabulary Instruction	2	3	Video link

Writing	2	3	Video link
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Shifts In Disposition Towards Reading Research

Findings in changes of disposition towards research were evidenced throughout the protocol as participants voiced their opinions about research. During the pre interview, statements like the following were common: “Didn’t influence my practice” and “Hadn’t read it.” During the post interview statements shifted to: “Totally influences”, “Read it a lot”, “Understand it”, “Supported my teaching”, and “Tells me why.” A quote from Diane characterizes pre-intervention attitudes towards reading research and the post-intervention shift in attitude.

Discussion

Despite a predictable resistance toward change (Berliner, 1987), participants experienced shifts in orientation and disposition towards research. Their reading instruction became consistent with implications derived from scientifically based research. Why did this program promote this degree of change? The authors think it is a multi-dimensional interactive process incorporating the sustained, intense involvement of the participants over a two-year period. During this process they were required to become knowledgeable, critical consumers of research. They were able to apply this research concurrently in the classroom. They were able to reflect, receive feedback, and change their classroom practices in a supportive environment.

Implications

Successful, effective professional development must have the following components: sustained, intense involvement; active participation; opportunity for processing and application; support from professors and fellow participants; and access to up-to-date research information.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

ID # _____

I. DEMOGRAPHICS

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Where did you receive your certification?

What is your certification/degree?

Education: (highest degree held)

College GPA--Bachelors:

GPA--Master's:

Number of years teaching:

List the schools and grades in which you have taught and number of years in each grade.

Number of years teaching experience in current grade:

II. INTERVIEW

1. What is your definition of reading?
2. What is your definition of writing?
3. What do you think happens when students read?
4. Do you think your own experiences in learning to read have influenced your teaching?
5. Do you think reading and writing relate?
 5. a. How?
6. Every teacher approaches reading differently. These questions are not an evaluation, but to see how you teach. I am going to ask you about your Reading / Language Arts block and I want you to just go through each component. I am going to take notes, and then we will come and talk about each component individually. Right now, I just want you to name the components off for me in a list form. Ready? What do you do when you teach Reading / Language Arts?
- 6.a. How long is your block?
7. Let's go back and talk about each individual component. I want you to tell me why you include what you include, and what you hope it accomplishes. Let's talk about...
8. If you could change anything in your R / LA block, if you could create the R / LA block of your dreams, what would it look like? What would you do differently?
9. What grade level do you teach?
10. What goals do you have for your students with regard to reading?
11. In your own language, how would you describe yourself as a reader? Why?
On a scale of 1 - 10 how would you rate yourself?
12. How would you rate yourself as a reading teacher? Why?
How would you rate yourself on a scale of 1 - 10?
13. How would you rate yourself in comparison to other teachers? Why?
Would you consider yourself below average, average, or above average?
14. Who do you consider an exemplary reading teacher? What makes them exemplary?

15. How much control do you have over what you teach in your Reading / Language Arts block?

Now rate the control you have on a scale of 1 - 10.

16. Has your feeling of control changed over time? With different principals or in different schools or districts?

17. Now that you have been through the Co-op, do you feel that your principal or that the district would listen to advice from you about the teaching of reading in your classroom?

18. Over the years, different approaches of teaching reading have been developed. What can you tell me about the different approaches?

19. I am going to ask you about some other approaches. Can you tell me what you know about them, and what you think the advantages and limitations are about each approach?

Ready?

- A. Whole Language.
- B. Phonics.
- C. Decoding by Analogy.
- D. Direct Instruction.
- E. Explicit Instruction.
- F. Balanced Literacy Approach.
- G. Cuing Systems.
- H. Basal Series.
- J. Comprehension Strategies Instruction.
- K. Literature Based Instruction.

20. What are the major influences on how you teach reading in your classroom? Prompts (How do you decide on the materials you use? Do you use a commercial program?)

Which one? How long have you used it? Have you taken any inservice on it? What else has influenced how you teach reading?)

21. Who do you consider the nations leading experts in reading? Why?

After they have recalled all they can, prompt for the rest.

- A. Marilyn Adams
- B. Pat Alexander
- C. Richard Anderson
- D. Nancy Atwell
- E. Isabell Beck
- F. Maria Carbo
- G. Lucy Caulkins
- H. Jean Chall
- I. Maire Clay
- J. Pat Cunningham
- K. Linea Ehri
- L. Ken Goodman
- M. Phil Gough
- N. Jerome Harste
- O. David Pearson
- P. Chuck Perfetti
- Q. Gay Sue Pinell

R. Michael Pressley
S. Ralph Reynolds
T. Reggie Routman
U. Connie Weaver

- 22 Has the way you teach reading ever changed? Tell me about it.
23. What caused you to change the way you teach reading?
24. Has research influenced your practice?
 a. -How do you define scientific research?
 b. -Where do you go to find it?
 c.-What books, articles, journals do you read?
 d.-Of those, which has been the most influential?
25. Who are the people that influence your practice the most? How?
 -How are you familiar with these people?
26. Has your basic philosophy of teaching reading ever changed? If yes, how and why?

III Theoretical Knowledge

27. Now we are going to talk about the theories of learning. Once again, I just want you to name them off and then we will go and talk about each theory individually. Ready? O Kay, What do you know about the theories of learning?
28. I'm going to list a few theories. Just tell me if you are or are not familiar with it, and like I stated earlier, we will talk about each one in isolation.
 -Behaviorism
 -Connectionism
 -Constructivism
 -Human Information Processing
 -Schema Theory
 -Situated Cognition
 -Social Perspective Theories

Now I am going to ask you more specific questions about the theories with which you are familiar enough with to discuss. Ready?

29. You stated that you knew about Behaviorism.
 A. How would you define Behaviorism?
 B. What influence do you think this theory has on our understanding of the reading process?
 C. Has this theory influenced your own teaching of reading? How?
 D. Do you think this theory has application to instruction? How?
 E. What do you think this theory assumes about learning?
 F. Do you think this is a good theory in terms of how students learn? Why?
 G. Could you rate this theory on a scale of 1 - 10 in terms of how students learn?
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Is there anything else you would like to add about the co-op?

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Diane's quote:

"We did reading mastery, which was pretty much just a straight decoding, not literature based at all...I've come to realize how much there is with the comprehension strategies. And you know the literature things that you do. As well as all the decoding things you do. It's pretty all-encompassing..."

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Primary Grade Reading Instruction Empowered Through Research-Based Knowledge

Ann Sharp, Ralph E. Reynolds, Kathleen J. Brown, Amy Morris, and Susan Gunn

Introduction

What would you do if you were a member of a major school district and during a school board meeting a group of discontented parents waved Adams' (1990) book, "Beginning To Read: Thinking and Learning About Print", and asked, "What do you know about this book? And if nothing why not?" This incident actually happened. These parents were concerned that their children were not receiving the benefit of instruction based on the twenty years of theoretical and applied research explicated in the book.

This incident became the impetus for reading instruction reform within the district. Seeking counsel from an educational department of a large western university, the district put into motion a wide scale plan. Projected within that plan was a professional development reading program (PDRP) that would focus on and support scientifically based reading research. The program design was the result of a joint effort by the university reading professors, district leaders, and researchers.

Program Design

Seven components of reading acquisition were identified (six of which later became the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) standards: phonological awareness, explicit systematic phonics instruction, word study, fluency, comprehension strategies instruction, vocabulary instruction and writing. These components were the emphases of the program and considered core to effective reading instruction (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Three orientations or approaches to reading were identified: code-based, whole-language, and integrated. A code-based approach utilizes the phonics component with little care to the other components of reading acquisition (Diederich, 1973). A whole-language approach utilizes the component of writing with an emphasis in the use of literature and affective measures such as motivation (Bergeron, 1990). An integrated approach utilizes all seven components of reading acquisition.

Ten academic courses (30 credit hours) focusing on seminal research were created: theories and models of reading; beginning reading instruction; comprehension instruction; content area reading; diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties; reading assessment; writing instruction; children's literature; evaluation of reading programs; and cultural diversity. Two courses a semester were offered over five semesters.

The PDRP would take a proactive stance towards understanding reading research and understanding the nature of science. This dual focus would be developed to facilitate appropriate

criteria in evaluating the quality of reading research and to encourage the use of this understanding to drive classroom practice.

Methods

To evaluate and describe changes in the teacher participants, the researchers and the professors together designed interview protocols to answer three descriptive, interpretive questions. First, how did the teachers' orientation toward teaching reading change? Second, how did their actual classroom practice change? Third, how did teachers' disposition toward reading research change?

Participants

From the 25 participants of the PDRP, interviews were reviewed and narrowed to three participants who typify differing initial orientations to teaching reading. Also, only primary grade teachers were chosen because basic reading processes are developed in the primary grades (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998; Adams, 1990). A cross case comparison study was implemented to evaluate how the program was affecting the participants and provide foundational information for a future full-scale analysis. Participants all began the program unfamiliar with reading research or reading theory. They were all considered to be excellent teachers by their principals and co-workers. However, though successful, each of them spoke of being dissatisfied with classroom results. Pseudonyms are used.

Diane is a first grade teacher who initially presented herself as a code-based teacher. Jill is also a first grade teacher who initially presented herself as a whole-language teacher. Kim is a second grade teacher who initially presented herself as a whole-language teacher.

Design Limitations

Data collecting procedures produced design limitations. Data collection did not begin until after the PDRP was actually started. The pre interview was conducted towards the end of the first year. This required the teacher-participants to remember what their opinions and practices were like before the PDRP. Also, only one observation was conducted after the PDRP was completed producing heavy reliance on self-report measures. In addition, there are no outcome measures on student learning to evaluate whether the PDRP truly impacted student achievement.

Additionally, participant selection can be viewed as a design limitation. Teachers allowed to enroll in the PDRP met selection criteria of high grade point average, willingness to take risks, cross-generational professional experience, academic records, and reputation as a teacher. Perhaps a more normal sampling would not yield such strong positive results.

Procedure

A one hundred thirty question interview protocol was developed (Appendix A). It included open-ended questions that were carefully designed to reduce researcher influence on participant responses (Spindler & Spindler, 1992). It solicited demographic information as well as explicated what the participants knew about reading, reading theories, and literacy practices. It

was designed to uncover the participants' understanding of the reading process, their approach to reading instruction, and their disposition towards reading research. Example questions are: What is your definition of reading? Describe your reading block? Tell me what you know about the different approaches to reading (i.e., whole language, phonics, based instruction, etc.). Has research influenced your practice?

The interview protocol was administered to all participants during the end of the first year of the program (pre), and again at the completion (post) of the program, making possible comparison of the participant's responses. Research assistants trained in the interview process administered the protocol. All participants of the program were interviewed individually with each interview taking approximately an hour and half. All interviews were recorded on audiotape and later transcribed for analysis.

Videotaped observations of the participant's classroom practice were conducted at the completion of the program. In addition, a third videotaped interview was conducted to ascertain the participant's intentions behind the instructional actions observed. Researchers functioned as observer-participants (Merriam, 2001); they were present but did not actively participate in classroom activities.

Data Analysis

Researchers have noted that gathering data related to participants' thought processes raises a number of validity issues (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To reduce these concerns, Miles & Huberman suggest triangulation: the collection of data from multiple sources that do not share the same potential for error. Triangulation was achieved through the use of the pre and post interview protocol, videotaped classroom observations, the third videotaped interviews, and quantitative tabulations from the protocols and observations.

Data from the primary protocols were transferred to an electronic database where each question from the first and second interview could be viewed simultaneously and analyzed for change (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Graduate assistants reviewed, coded and rated the protocols for three types of change: instructional orientation, teacher practice, and research disposition. Also, they flagged any evidence of the seven components of reading acquisition. An inter-rater reliability of 88.25% was achieved.

Reduction of the data was based on questions that seemed to yield consistent change across participants. For instance, when asked to define reading, all three participants' pre and post responses yielded change in instructional orientation. Therefore, that protocol item remained a part of the analysis. However, questions that asked for theoretical information (i.e., How do you define Behaviorism?) yielded little consistent change across participants and were dropped from the analysis. Tabular materials were created (Miles, 1979) using counts of various phenomena. Data from the interviews were analyzed and compiled using content analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Developments of vignettes for the three teachers were developed out of the analysis.

Results

Findings represent changes made by the three participants studied and will be presented in the following order: first, changes in orientation toward reading instruction, followed by changes in reading instruction in the classroom, and finally, changes in disposition towards reading research. These three are demonstrated with graphs and video clips representing the participants and the changes they made. (Appendix B has written quotes from the videos.)

Shifts In Initial Orientation Towards Reading Instruction

Shift in orientation of reading instruction is demonstrated in Table I. It is based on fifteen items from the protocol that were coded consistently as self-report orientation of the preferred reading approach across the three participants. The percentages seen in the table represent how many of those fifteen items indicated one type of approach. The same fifteen items were again used in the post interview to determine if any change had been made. A definite shift for all three teachers was seen from an initial orientation to an integrated reading approach.

Table I.

Shift in Orientation

Teacher	Pre Interview	Pre Orientation	Intervention	Post Interview	Post Orientation
Diane	88%	Code Based		100%	Integrated
Jill	77%	Whole Language		87%	Integrated
Kim	86%	Whole Language		91%	Integrated

Diane's shift went from code-based to integrated reading instruction in her first grade classroom. Her pre interview showed her as a Reading Mastery teacher. She did straight decoding, reported no use of literature, and used only small reading groups. She said that her students didn't read more than two or three minutes per day even though she had a ninety-minute block dedicated to reading instruction. In contrast, Diane's post interview spoke of comprehension strategies, literature, learning theories, situated cognition, whole group instruction along with small flexible groups, phonological awareness, and teaching reading all day long as she incorporated different reading components throughout her other subjects.

Jill's shift went from whole language to an integrated reading instruction approach in her first grade classroom. During her pre interview she speaks of reading a lot of literature, writing stories using literature, having books of choice, and embedded phonics. Her reading instruction was a ninety-minute block. The post interview showed her still reading an abundance of literature, writing on a daily basis, and having books of choice, but she was now using explicit

systematic phonics instruction, phonological awareness activities and teaching reading throughout the entire day.

Kim's shift was from an initial whole language approach in her second grade classroom to an integrated reading approach. In her pre interview she indicated that phonics was not needed as part of a reading instruction. She placed her instructional focus on writing using real literature to provide models, and on having children read books of personal interest (these books were not necessarily at their reading level). She read a lot to her students and had a ninety-minute reading block. Revealing her shift, Kim's post interview showed she felt phonics was critical for reading instruction. She was still using real literature to model writing, but reading materials were now suited to reading levels of individual students. She incorporated reading instruction throughout the instructional day rather than using the ninety-minute block.

Shifts In Classroom Reading Instruction

Protocols and video observations were examined for evidence of inclusion of the seven components of reading acquisition within the participant's instructional practice. Findings showed shifts in classroom practice and changes in reading instruction. Table II indicates how many of the three teachers were using each of the seven components of reading acquisition in their classroom instruction before and after the PDRP. Edited video segments of actual teaching moments illustrate the seven components.

Table II.

Seven Components of Reading Acquisition

Component	Teachers using: Pre	Teachers using: Post	Link to video
Phonological Awareness	0	3	Video link
Explicit Systematic Phonics Instruction	1	3	Video link
Word Study	1	3	Video link
Fluency	3	3	Video link
Comprehension Strategies Instruction	0	3	Video link
Vocabulary Instruction	2	3	Video link

Writing	2	3	Video link
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Shifts In Disposition Towards Reading Research

Findings in changes of disposition towards research were evidenced throughout the protocol as participants voiced their opinions about research. During the pre interview, statements like the following were common: "Didn't influence my practice" and "Hadn't read it." During the post interview statements shifted to: "Totally influences", "Read it a lot", "Understand it", "Supported my teaching", and "Tells me why." A quote from Diane characterizes pre-intervention attitudes towards reading research and the post-intervention shift in attitude.

Discussion

Despite a predictable resistance toward change (Berliner, 1987), participants experienced shifts in orientation and disposition towards research. Their reading instruction became consistent with implications derived from scientifically based research. Why did this program promote this degree of change? The authors think it is a multi-dimensional interactive process incorporating the sustained, intense involvement of the participants over a two-year period. During this process they were required to become knowledgeable, critical consumers of research. They were able to apply this research concurrently in the classroom. They were able to reflect, receive feedback, and change their classroom practices in a supportive environment.

Implications

Successful, effective professional development must have the following components: sustained, intense involvement; active participation; opportunity for processing and application; support from professors and fellow participants; and access to up-to-date research information.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

ID # _____

I. DEMOGRAPHICS

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Where did you receive your certification?

What is your certification/degree?

Education: (highest degree held)

College GPA--Bachelors:

GPA--Master's:

Number of years teaching:

List the schools and grades in which you have taught and number of years in each grade.

Number of years teaching experience in current grade:

II. INTERVIEW

1. What is your definition of reading?
2. What is your definition of writing?
3. What do you think happens when students read?
4. Do you think your own experiences in learning to read have influenced your teaching?
5. Do you think reading and writing relate?
 5. a. How?
6. Every teacher approaches reading differently. These questions are not an evaluation, but to see how you teach. I am going to ask you about your Reading / Language Arts block and I want you to just go through each component. I am going to take notes, and then we will come and talk about each component individually. Right now, I just want you to name the components off for me in a list form. Ready? What do you do when you teach Reading / Language Arts?
- 6.a. How long is your block?
7. Let's go back and talk about each individual component. I want you to tell me why you include what you include, and what you hope it accomplishes. Let's talk about...
8. If you could change anything in your R / LA block, if you could create the R / LA block of your dreams, what would it look like? What would you do differently?
9. What grade level do you teach?
10. What goals do you have for your students with regard to reading?
11. In your own language, how would you describe yourself as a reader? Why?
On a scale of 1 - 10 how would you rate yourself?
12. How would you rate yourself as a reading teacher? Why?
How would you rate yourself on a scale of 1 - 10?
13. How would you rate yourself in comparison to other teachers? Why?
Would you consider yourself below average, average, or above average?
14. Who do you consider an exemplary reading teacher? What makes them exemplary?

15. How much control do you have over what you teach in your Reading / Language Arts block?

Now rate the control you have on a scale of 1 - 10.

16. Has your feeling of control changed over time? With different principals or in different schools or districts?

17. Now that you have been through the Co-op, do you feel that your principal or that the district would listen to advice from you about the teaching of reading in your classroom?

18. Over the years, different approaches of teaching reading have been developed. What can you tell me about the different approaches?

19. I am going to ask you about some other approaches. Can you tell me what you know about them, and what you think the advantages and limitations are about each approach?

Ready?

- A. Whole Language.
- B. Phonics.
- C. Decoding by Analogy.
- D. Direct Instruction.
- E. Explicit Instruction.
- F. Balanced Literacy Approach.
- G. Cuing Systems.
- H. Basal Series.
- J. Comprehension Strategies Instruction.
- K. Literature Based Instruction.

20. What are the major influences on how you teach reading in your classroom? Prompts (How do you decide on the materials you use? Do you use a commercial program?)

Which one? How long have you used it? Have you taken any inservice on it? What else has influenced how you teach reading?)

21. Who do you consider the nations leading experts in reading? Why?

After they have recalled all they can, prompt for the rest.

- A. Marilyn Adams
- B. Pat Alexander
- C. Richard Anderson
- D. Nancy Atwell
- E. Isabell Beck
- F. Maria Carbo
- G. Lucy Caulkins
- H. Jean Chall
- I. Maire Clay
- J. Pat Cunningham
- K. Linea Ehri
- L. Ken Goodman
- M. Phil Gough
- N. Jerome Harste
- O. David Pearson
- P. Chuck Perfetti
- Q. Gay Sue Pinell

R. Michael Pressley
S. Ralph Reynolds
T. Reggie Routman
U. Connie Weaver

- 22 Has the way you teach reading ever changed? Tell me about it.
23. What caused you to change the way you teach reading?
24. Has research influenced your practice?
 a. -How do you define scientific research?
 b. -Where do you go to find it?
 c.-What books, articles, journals do you read?
 d.-Of those, which has been the most influential?
25. Who are the people that influence your practice the most? How?
 -How are you familiar with these people?
26. Has your basic philosophy of teaching reading ever changed? If yes, how and why?

III Theoretical Knowledge

27. Now we are going to talk about the theories of learning. Once again, I just want you to name them off and then we will go and talk about each theory individually. Ready? O Kay, What do you know about the theories of learning?
28. I'm going to list a few theories. Just tell me if you are or are not familiar with it, and like I stated earlier, we will talk about each one in isolation.
 -Behaviorism
 -Connectionism
 -Constructivism
 -Human Information Processing
 -Schema Theory
 -Situated Cognition
 -Social Perspective Theories

Now I am going to ask you more specific questions about the theories with which you are familiar enough with to discuss. Ready?

29. You stated that you knew about Behaviorism.
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- 39. What courses did you find most useful in the co-op, and what courses did you find the least useful in the co-op? Are there any suggestions you have for Dr. Reynolds and or Dr. Brown?

Is there anything else you would like to add about the co-op?

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Family Literacy in the Context of Welfare Reform

Ray Wolpow

Eunice N. Askov

Let us start our discussion of family literacy with a look back to January 1931, at which time the National Education Association provided American business leaders with “carefully thought-out predictions of material and social changes in this country” that would be “probabilities” by the year 1950 (“*What shall we be like in 1950?*” 1931, p. 43-44). On the material side, probable achievements included:

1. A system of health and safety that will practically wipe out preventable accidents and contagious diseases.
2. A system of housing that will provide for the masses homes surrounded by beauty, privacy, quiet, sun, fresh air, and play space.
3. A flat telephone rate for the entire country at moderate cost.
4. Universal air transportation at low cost.
5. A system of paved, beautiful highways will connect every part of the nation.
6. The further development of school buildings and playfields until they will exceed in nobility the architectural achievements of any other age.
7. The organization of industry, business and agriculture to minimize uncertainty and depression.
8. The perfection of the insurance system to give universal protection from disaster, unemployment, and old age.
9. The extension of national, state, and local parks to provide convenient recreation areas for all people.
10. The perfection of community, city, and regional planning to give to all surroundings increasingly beautiful and favorable to the good life.
11. The shorter working week and day, so extended that there will be work for all.

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We Americans have yet to realize all of the ambitious possibilities listed above. Nonetheless, with the benefit of 72 years of historical perspective one could argue that we are making substantive progress towards most. With this in mind, the authors of this paper wish to revisit predictions 11 and 14, especially as these may be related to efforts made in the last ten years to improve economic self-sufficiency and literacy development of families consisting of low-income/low-literate parents and their young children.

First, through a review of the literature, the impact of current welfare and educational reform legislations on the educational performance of children of low-income families will be discussed. Then, keeping in mind the importance of federal programs designed to give children an “even start”, the most beneficial instructional and programmatic “ingredients” of family literacy programs, as revealed through current research studies conducted by the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State, will be discussed. Finally, implications and points of interest raised by the audience during the ARF 2003 Panel will be summarized.

The Impacts of Welfare and Educational Reform

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that demands created by these policies often clash with potential consequences for low-income parents and their children.

We have known for some time that parents play a critical role in both their children's academic achievement and their children's socio-emotional development. Most contemporary educators are aware of the various influences as well as the many barriers to parent involvement in their children's schooling (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Whereas finding time to realize the potentials of this role is a challenge for most parents, recent welfare reform programs have added to the challenge faced by America's working poor. In 1998, 5.3 million low-income children between the ages of 6 and 12 had either two parents or a single parent working after school (Halpern, 1999). There is an estimated 20 - 25 hour per week gap between parents' work schedules and students' school schedules (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998).

Inadequate income, irregular shifts, overcrowded schools, and uneven quality in after-school care burden many low-income families, many of whom are working increased hours. These same parents, many of whom are themselves poorly educated and low in literacy skills, are expected to help meet the greater accountability goals of the education reform movement by monitoring homework, helping children organize time, and assisting student learning by reinforcing basic skills taught during the school day. Thus some argue that the increasing number of hours that poor parents, particularly single mothers, spend in the workplace is having a negative impact on parental capacity to help their children over the increasingly challenging hurdles of elementary school. (Newman and Chin, 2003)

Although there is considerable discussion in the literature on how schooling affects students as well as about the role families may play in the success of schooling (Gamoran, 1996), scientific studies of how school and welfare reform is affecting children in these families are first coming to the fore. In their comprehensive examination of findings from six separate evaluations of recent welfare and employment programs, Morris, Huston, Duncan, Crosby and Bos (2001) report:

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5. Even the programs “with the most benefits to children left many families in poverty and many children at risk of school failure and behavior problems. These programs do not eliminate the need for child-focused interventions and reforms that promote school achievement and reduce behavior problems.” (p. ES-5)

In summary, requiring parents to work without increasing their income above welfare payments seemed to affect their children’s achievement negatively. This finding makes sense in that the parents are now absent from the home without additional means of providing alternative childcare. The most positive effects were obtained when parents were able to earn more income through work. However, child-focused intervention programs, like family literacy, were still necessary.

Two of the studies examined in the Morris et al. (2001) monograph considered the effect of welfare program reform on adolescents in low-income families. Both indicated that parents’ transition from welfare to work may decrease adolescents’ school achievement. In a subsequent study of four major welfare programs Gennetian et al. (2002) concluded:

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The average impacts in these programs on “grade repetition and receipt of special educational services for emotional, physical or mental conditions” were also unfavorable. Adolescents with younger siblings experienced the “most troubling effects on school performance and were most likely to be suspended or to drop out.” They were more likely to have substantial responsibilities to care for their younger siblings, while those who did not have younger siblings were more likely to either work to help support the family, or to participate in “unstructured out-of school activities.” (Gennetian et al., 2002, p. 45-49)

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Family Literacy Programs

Family literacy programs operate under the assumption that the parent can and should be the child's first teacher and with an inherent "value added" dimension not associated with other early childhood education programs. Through their participation, low-income, low-literate parent/teachers receive both valuable adult education and the tools and training necessary to play a critical role in their children's future academic achievements. (Philliber, Spillman, & King, 1996; Wasik, Dobbins, & Herrmann, 2001) Family literacy, as defined by the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy programs (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I as reauthorized by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001), typically includes four instructional components: Adult basic and literacy education, parenting education, structured interactive literacy time between parent and child, and early childhood education.

The National Even Start Association or NESA (2002) reports that the population served under the Even Start Act includes 80% of the families having an income below \$15,000, more than 40% of whom have incomes below \$6000. NESA also reports that participants have low levels of education (86% have not completed high school, as compared to 27% of Head Start parents). What is more, dependence upon public assistance, which supports families of unemployed adults, has now become time-limited, as was described in the previous section.

Family literacy programs are typically conducted during the day. With the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act or PRWORA (US Congress, 1996), the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)(2002) became concerned because the large numbers of parents attending these programs who are welfare recipients. Therefore it was deemed important to incorporate work-related activities as part of the adult education component of family literacy programs. In fact, NCFL reported in *Momentum* (November 2000) that the number of parents expressing employment-related goals at the time of entry into family literacy programs dramatically increased with the passage of PRWORA (1996) from 1% in 1991 to 37% in 1999. NCFL (2002) also reported that the percentage of families receiving public assistance at entry ranged from 81% in 1991 to 45% in 1999, showing that parents have moved into the workforce during that time period.

Thus, adults coming to family literacy programs now have two needs: To improve their literacy and employability skills and to foster their young (birth – age 8) children's literacy skills for academic success in school. How effectively can this be done? How valid is the assumption that participation in adult/family literacy education will improve the ability of the parent to serve as the child's first teacher? And in light of this, is it fair to assume that as adults improve their own literacy and language skills they will, in turn, foster the development of children in various developmental domains?

The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State decided to test these assumptions using an existing database. The database was derived from the Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation of Family literacy conducted by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (ISAL) at Penn State, which is affiliated with the Goodling Institute. Since 1998, the ISAL has been conducting the statewide evaluation to track the performance of adults and their

children in all of the family literacy programs in Pennsylvania. The research question was: What are the effects of parental participation in a family literacy program on children's developmental skills as measured by early childhood assessments?

A quasi-experimental design was used to test the research question. Data were collected from families who participated in Pennsylvania's family literacy programs between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 (2001-2002 program year). It had been established in prior research (Kassab, Askov, Weirauch, Grinder, & Van Horn, 2004) that greater participation in adult education was associated with significantly greater outcomes on adult education tests. The next question that is addressed here is whether or not increased participation in adult education would be associated with significant gains in early childhood developmental measures.

To assess children's growth and development, the family literacy programs chose from among three criterion-referenced assessment instruments to assess children who ranged in age from birth to 5 years of age. The instruments for children age three to five (inclusive) included the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile-Revised (LAP-R). For children who ranged from birth to 3 years of age programs were able to use the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP). Not all children were administered each domain of the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. Across the different analyses for the COR, sample sizes ranged from 194 to 198. For the LAP-R, sample sizes ranged from 431 to 444, while for the ELAP, sample sizes ranged from 450 to 498.

Each of these instruments measures essentially the same developmental skills using a slightly different definition for each depending upon the methodology of the instrument. The developmental skills the COR measures include initiative, social relations, creative representation, music and movement, language and literacy, logic and mathematics, and the average across these domains. The LAP-R and ELAP both measure the following domains: gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, and self-help. Slight differences exist with these two instruments where the LAP-R measures personal/social and pre-writing while ELAP measures social/emotional and no writing domain.

In order to test the research question, a series of models were estimated that included variables indicating whether hours of parental participation in a particular component of the family literacy program influenced the children's developmental skills, as measured by the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. The following variables were controlled in all analyses: Age of the child at the time of the assessment, whether the child had participated in an educational program prior to his/her enrollment in the family literacy program, and whether special services needs was identified for the child since the child enrolled in the family literacy program (Grinder, Kassab, Askov, & Abler, 2004).

Results

Results indicate that intensity of participation in adult education, that is the number of hours of parental participation in adult education, had a significant effect on most of the developmental skills measured by the ELAP, which is administered to children less than three years of age. Specifically, greater parental participation in adult education was associated with

children's higher fine motor ($p<0.06$), cognitive ($p<0.06$), self-help ($p<0.01$), and social/emotional ($p<0.001$) posttest scores on the ELAP. Furthermore, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher ELAP language posttest scores ($p<0.05$) as would be predicted in the family literacy model.

For the LAP-R, preschool children in families with more interactive literacy between parents and children hours had higher posttest scores on the cognitive domain ($p<0.001$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy did not seem to result in higher posttest scores for the other domains on the LAP-R. In addition, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher COR creative representation posttest scores ($p<0.05$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy was not related higher posttest scores for the other domains on the COR.

The finding that adult education and parenting education (in the case of language skills) were associated with ELAP posttest scores has important implications. Parents' participation in family literacy appears to have the greatest impact on the very youngest children's developmental skills which do relate to later literacy acquisition. This result may have occurred because these components (adult and parenting education) led to increased self-esteem or self-confidence among adult participants, and this in turn may lead to more positive interaction with their very young children. Darling and Lee (2003) speculate that adult education provides two functions to parents by attending family literacy programs. First, by increasing their education, parents are able to provide a more economically stable environment for their children. Second, through family literacy programs, parents may "change their perspective on literacy, recognizing and capitalizing on their role as their child's first and most important teacher" (p. 383).

This research, furthermore, supports the efficacy of the family literacy model. As parents develop their own literacy skills, they are better equipped to foster the literacy and language growth in their very young children. This relationship is most clearly evident in very young children (ages birth to 3 years old) where the parents are not only the primary teachers but also the greatest developmental influence. This study demonstrates the important linkage that exists between the parents' education and children's literacy and language development. It reaffirms the assumption of family literacy programs that parents can and should be the child's first and most important early teacher.

Implications Brought Forth During Panel Discussion

Reaction to, and subsequent discussion of, the information presented by the panel included, but was not limited to comments/concerns about the 72 year-old goals, the crushing demands placed on welfare families, the need for more research to guide the use of limited funding, the current climate demanding "scientific research," and the "value-added" of family literacy programs.

How optimistic we educators must have been in 1931! We believed, with passion, that in but twenty years we could and would accomplish incredible goals, thus truly make a difference. Now, some 72 years later such sanguine confidence is seen mostly in the eyes of students entering the field. Is it that we family literacy veterans have been sobered by the crushing

realities of the low-income, low-literate families with whom we work? Or is it that we are frustrated by the implementations of a decade of education and welfare reform policy shifts, many of which have served to further devastate the lives of low-income parents and their children? Or is it that we have come to realize that the goals of family literacy programs are intergenerational and therefore need be measured longitudinally over generations? Would longitudinal research meet the current demand for “scientific research” and if it did, how could we possibly construct control groups?

Whether veterans or newcomers, participants agreed that we need research to help us focus our resources on those programs that do “make a difference.” Herein, the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State provides us with data affirming that parents can and should be the child’s first teacher and that family literacy programs do provide an inherent “value added” dimension not associated with other early childhood education programs by providing low-income, low-literate parent/teachers both valuable adult education and the tools and training necessary to play a critical role in their children’s future academic achievements. Referring to the study of four major welfare programs by Gennetian et al. (2002), and noting the harmful effect of current welfare policies on the academic achievement of adolescents, one participant asked, “Is there not yet another ‘valued-added’?” He added, “I can’t help but wonder how many of the low-income, low-literate adolescents who are currently dropping out of high school are future mothers/participants in family literacy programs?” The participant was told that participation in teen family literacy programs has, indeed, been on the rise. Interventions that break the intergenerational cycle of low literacy and poverty are very much needed, especially in the context of welfare reform where everyone is expected to work regardless of their family commitments.

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What shall we be like in 1950. (1931, January 10). *The Literary Digest*, 43-44

Family Literacy in the Context of Welfare Reform

Ray Wolpow

Eunice N. Askov

Let us start our discussion of family literacy with a look back to January 1931, at which time the National Education Association provided American business leaders with “carefully thought-out predictions of material and social changes in this country” that would be “probabilities” by the year 1950 (“*What shall we be like in 1950?*” 1931, p. 43-44). On the material side, probable achievements included:

1. A system of health and safety that will practically wipe out preventable accidents and contagious diseases.
2. A system of housing that will provide for the masses homes surrounded by beauty, privacy, quiet, sun, fresh air, and play space.
3. A flat telephone rate for the entire country at moderate cost.
4. Universal air transportation at low cost.
5. A system of paved, beautiful highways will connect every part of the nation.
6. The further development of school buildings and playfields until they will exceed in nobility the architectural achievements of any other age.
7. The organization of industry, business and agriculture to minimize uncertainty and depression.
8. The perfection of the insurance system to give universal protection from disaster, unemployment, and old age.
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The Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State decided to test these assumptions using an existing database. The database was derived from the Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation of Family literacy conducted by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy (ISAL) at Penn State, which is affiliated with the Goodling Institute. Since 1998, the ISAL has been conducting the statewide evaluation to track the performance of adults and their

children in all of the family literacy programs in Pennsylvania. The research question was: What are the effects of parental participation in a family literacy program on children's developmental skills as measured by early childhood assessments?

A quasi-experimental design was used to test the research question. Data were collected from families who participated in Pennsylvania's family literacy programs between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 (2001-2002 program year). It had been established in prior research (Kassab, Askov, Weirauch, Grinder, & Van Horn, 2004) that greater participation in adult education was associated with significantly greater outcomes on adult education tests. The next question that is addressed here is whether or not increased participation in adult education would be associated with significant gains in early childhood developmental measures.

To assess children's growth and development, the family literacy programs chose from among three criterion-referenced assessment instruments to assess children who ranged in age from birth to 5 years of age. The instruments for children age three to five (inclusive) included the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile-Revised (LAP-R). For children who ranged from birth to 3 years of age programs were able to use the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP). Not all children were administered each domain of the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. Across the different analyses for the COR, sample sizes ranged from 194 to 198. For the LAP-R, sample sizes ranged from 431 to 444, while for the ELAP, sample sizes ranged from 450 to 498.

Each of these instruments measures essentially the same developmental skills using a slightly different definition for each depending upon the methodology of the instrument. The developmental skills the COR measures include initiative, social relations, creative representation, music and movement, language and literacy, logic and mathematics, and the average across these domains. The LAP-R and ELAP both measure the following domains: gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, and self-help. Slight differences exist with these two instruments where the LAP-R measures personal/social and pre-writing while ELAP measures social/emotional and no writing domain.

In order to test the research question, a series of models were estimated that included variables indicating whether hours of parental participation in a particular component of the family literacy program influenced the children's developmental skills, as measured by the COR, LAP-R, and ELAP. The following variables were controlled in all analyses: Age of the child at the time of the assessment, whether the child had participated in an educational program prior to his/her enrollment in the family literacy program, and whether special services needs was identified for the child since the child enrolled in the family literacy program (Grinder, Kassab, Askov, & Abler, 2004).

Results

Results indicate that intensity of participation in adult education, that is the number of hours of parental participation in adult education, had a significant effect on most of the developmental skills measured by the ELAP, which is administered to children less than three years of age. Specifically, greater parental participation in adult education was associated with

children's higher fine motor ($p<0.06$), cognitive ($p<0.06$), self-help ($p<0.01$), and social/emotional ($p<0.001$) posttest scores on the ELAP. Furthermore, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher ELAP language posttest scores ($p<0.05$) as would be predicted in the family literacy model.

For the LAP-R, preschool children in families with more interactive literacy between parents and children hours had higher posttest scores on the cognitive domain ($p<0.001$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy did not seem to result in higher posttest scores for the other domains on the LAP-R. In addition, greater participation in parenting education was associated with higher COR creative representation posttest scores ($p<0.05$). Participation in adult education, parenting education, or interactive literacy was not related higher posttest scores for the other domains on the COR.

The finding that adult education and parenting education (in the case of language skills) were associated with ELAP posttest scores has important implications. Parents' participation in family literacy appears to have the greatest impact on the very youngest children's developmental skills which do relate to later literacy acquisition. This result may have occurred because these components (adult and parenting education) led to increased self-esteem or self-confidence among adult participants, and this in turn may lead to more positive interaction with their very young children. Darling and Lee (2003) speculate that adult education provides two functions to parents by attending family literacy programs. First, by increasing their education, parents are able to provide a more economically stable environment for their children. Second, through family literacy programs, parents may "change their perspective on literacy, recognizing and capitalizing on their role as their child's first and most important teacher" (p. 383).

This research, furthermore, supports the efficacy of the family literacy model. As parents develop their own literacy skills, they are better equipped to foster the literacy and language growth in their very young children. This relationship is most clearly evident in very young children (ages birth to 3 years old) where the parents are not only the primary teachers but also the greatest developmental influence. This study demonstrates the important linkage that exists between the parents' education and children's literacy and language development. It reaffirms the assumption of family literacy programs that parents can and should be the child's first and most important early teacher.

Implications Brought Forth During Panel Discussion

Reaction to, and subsequent discussion of, the information presented by the panel included, but was not limited to comments/concerns about the 72 year-old goals, the crushing demands placed on welfare families, the need for more research to guide the use of limited funding, the current climate demanding "scientific research," and the "value-added" of family literacy programs.

How optimistic we educators must have been in 1931! We believed, with passion, that in but twenty years we could and would accomplish incredible goals, thus truly make a difference. Now, some 72 years later such sanguine confidence is seen mostly in the eyes of students entering the field. Is it that we family literacy veterans have been sobered by the crushing

realities of the low-income, low-literate families with whom we work? Or is it that we are frustrated by the implementations of a decade of education and welfare reform policy shifts, many of which have served to further devastate the lives of low-income parents and their children? Or is it that we have come to realize that the goals of family literacy programs are intergenerational and therefore need be measured longitudinally over generations? Would longitudinal research meet the current demand for “scientific research” and if it did, how could we possibly construct control groups?

Whether veterans or newcomers, participants agreed that we need research to help us focus our resources on those programs that do “make a difference.” Herein, the Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy at Penn State provides us with data affirming that parents can and should be the child’s first teacher and that family literacy programs do provide an inherent “value added” dimension not associated with other early childhood education programs by providing low-income, low-literate parent/teachers both valuable adult education and the tools and training necessary to play a critical role in their children’s future academic achievements. Referring to the study of four major welfare programs by Gennetian et al. (2002), and noting the harmful effect of current welfare policies on the academic achievement of adolescents, one participant asked, “Is there not yet another ‘valued-added’?” He added, “I can’t help but wonder how many of the low-income, low-literate adolescents who are currently dropping out of high school are future mothers/participants in family literacy programs?” The participant was told that participation in teen family literacy programs has, indeed, been on the rise. Interventions that break the intergenerational cycle of low literacy and poverty are very much needed, especially in the context of welfare reform where everyone is expected to work regardless of their family commitments.

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Exploring Relationships between Spelling and Word Identification Using an Informal Word Inventory

Jerry Zutell, Ohio State University

Objectives

This study explored relationships between reading and spelling by examining the spelling and word identification behaviors of elementary students when the same words were used in both spelling and word identification tasks. It expands on the author's earlier work by including different grade levels and a school with a more typical urban student population. In addition, a closer examination of word difficulty for spelling and identification was included.

Perspective

For most of the last century researchers and practitioners tended to focus on the differences between spelling skill and reading ability. More recently, many have recognized that spelling accuracy and word reading (both in and out of context) are closely related manifestations of underlying word knowledge. (e.g., Bear, 1992; Morris & Perney, 1984; Templeton & Morris, 2000; Zutell & Rasinski, 1989). Perfetti (1992) has hypothesized that spelling accuracy is a good measure of complete underlying knowledge of a word's form, and so should be directly related to its easy, accurate, and automatic recognition. While several studies have discovered high correlations between these variables, few have provided in-depth analysis using the same set of words for both reading and word identification so as to fully examine this relationship. (See, however, Zutell & Fresch, 1991 for an exception.)

Methods

Sixty-one students in grades two through four in an urban elementary school were the subjects of the study. They provided 80 instances at which data was collected for both reading and spelling. The McGuffey Qualitative Spelling Inventory (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2000) was used as the source of words for both spelling and word identification tasks. This inventory provides eight lists of words gradually decreasing in word frequency and increasing in word complexity with each successive list.

For Spelling, lists were administered in traditional classroom format over a series of days. Testing was discontinued if a student spelled less than 50% of the words correctly on any given list. Instructional Level for Spelling was operationally defined as the highest (most difficult) list on which a student scored 50% or above.

For Word Identification, students were tested individually. Each list was typed in a single column on a single sheet of paper. The tester used index cards to cover all but the word in question. The tester moved down the list of words in a fluid motion as the student attempted to identify each word, leaving each visually available for approximately one second. If the student identified the word accurately and fluidly with this exposure, the tester moved on. If not, the

cards were opened to provide the student with an opportunity to attack the word. Percent Correct scores were generated for flashed or Immediate Accuracy and un-timed or Total Accuracy.

Testing was discontinued when students scored less than 50% correct for the Immediate score and less than 50% for the Total. In all but two cases students were last tested on a Word Identification list equal to or of greater difficulty than their instructional spelling list.

Instructional Level for Immediate Word Identification Accuracy level was defined as the highest list on which a student scored 50% or better. Instructional Level for Total Word Identification Accuracy was scored in two ways: Following many informal reading inventories, it was defined as the highest list on which the student scored 70% or better. To be consistent with the scoring for the other two word variables, a second Instructional Level was determined using 50% as the criterion. In order to gain more precision in measuring performance on all three measures, the percent of words correct was added as a decimal to the instructional level. This helped differentiate between students with varying percentages of words correct within an Instructional Level.

Data Analysis

The resulting data set was analyzed in several ways. Means and standard deviations for word identification and spelling variables were calculated, as were correlations between these variables. One-way ANOVAs were used to compare pairs of variables for the whole sample and the individual grade levels

At a more detailed level, subjects were regrouped by spelling instructional level. For that list and one list beyond, performance on each word was categorized according to six possible combinations of spelling and word identification accuracy in order to examine the hypothesis that accurate word identification consistently precedes spelling accuracy, as developmental theory predicts. Those combinations are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Possible Combinations of Spelling and Word Identification Accuracy

Category	Spelling Accuracy	Immediate Accuracy	Total Accuracy
One	0	0	0
Two	0	0	1
Three	0	1	1
Four	1	0	0
Five	1	0	1
Six	1	1	1

In addition, for individual words accuracy scores across subjects were calculated for spelling, immediate identification and total identification. Then correlations were generated between spelling and the word identification scores to explore whether words were similarly easy or difficult for spelling and word identification. Correlations for the three tests that had a sufficient number of students at spelling instructional and/or frustration levels were calculated. For each word on these lists accuracy scores for each measure were then transformed to generate relative distances from the mean by subtracting individual scores from the mean and dividing by the standard deviation for each set.

Results

For the whole sample there were significant differences in means for Spelling and the three Word Identification variables. However, only one difference between means at the individual grade levels was significant (Spelling vs. Total 50%, Grade Three, $p < .05$). This lack of significance, even when the differences in means seem reasonably large, is due most probably to a combination of reduced sample sizes and large standard deviations.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Spelling and Word Identification Variables Across Grades

Grade	Spelling Level	Immediate Level	Total Level (70%)	Total Level (50%)
ALL N=80	2.44 (1.89)	4.15 (2.45)	4.29 (2.43)	4.78 (2.62)
TWO N=27	1.45 (1.47)	2.20 (2.02)	2.42 (1.77)	2.68 (1.89)
THREE N=37	2.74 (1.78)	4.76 (1.91)	4.98 (2.09)	5.68 (2.37)
FOUR N=16	3.39 (2.12)	6.01 (2.10)	5.86 (2.28)	6.26 (2.08)

Correlations among Spelling and the Word Identification variables were all significant ($p < .05$) and high, from .74 to .86, indicating a strong relationship between spelling and word identification variables, as found in other studies.

Table 3. Correlations Between Spelling and Word Identification Variables Across Grades

Grade	Spelling by Immediate	Spelling by Total (70%)	Spelling by Total (50%)
ALL N=80	0.79	0.81	0.80
TWO N=27	0.81	0.86	0.81
THREE N=37	0.74	0.74	0.75
FOUR N=16	0.74	0.77	0.78

An examination of the frequency counts for the possible combinations of accurate identification and spelling shows that across specific word lists and for the sample as a whole, only a very small percentage of words were spelled correctly but not identified correctly, the condition that would be counter to developmental expectations. These percentages remain low even when the extreme cases of either no accuracy in any case or accuracy in all three conditions are removed from the counts and percentages.

Table 4. Frequency Counts of Spelling (S), Immediate Identification (I) and Total Identification (T) Combinations Across Subjects (N=128)

S I T	Number	Percent of Total	Percent Eliminating 000 and 111
0 0 0	417	13%	
0 0 1	222	7%	13%
0 1 1	1225	38%	77%
1 0 0	59	2%	4%
1 0 1	100	3%	6%
1 1 1	1185	37%	

Correlations for relative word ease/difficulty across measures on selected lists are also significant ($p < .05$) high, and positive. This suggests that, over all, the same words that are easy/difficult to identify are the same words that are easy/difficult to spell.

Table 5. Word Difficulty Correlations For Spelling, Immediate Identification, And Total Identification

Instructional Level:	None	Two	Two
List:	1	2	3
N:	26	23	23
Spelling by Immediate:	0.813	0.765	0.622
Spelling by Total:	0.852	0.692	0.663

Conclusions

Findings from this study support earlier work that established high correlations between spelling and word identification variables when the same lists are used for both. Frequency counts of possible spelling and word identification combinations confirm the direction of relationships predicted by developmental theory. Word ease/difficulty correlations and comparisons indicate close relationships, not only overall, but also at the word level.

Further, these connections were found using a sample of students with different demographic profiles and somewhat different performance patterns on these measures than those used in earlier studies, thus strengthening the case for viewing spelling and word identification as closely related manifestations of underlying word knowledge.

Differences among spelling instructional level and word identification levels increased as grade level increased (Table 2). This makes sense because as words become less frequent, they also tend to become longer. This makes them easier to identify using partial cues, but harder to spell because there are more letters to get right, at least one of which may represent an unaccented vowel or silent consonant. (e.g., is it *seperate* or *separate*?). Thus readers without full word representations gain more quickly in identification than they do in spelling. But at the same time, correlations between spelling and word identification remained quite high (Table 3), an indication that these aspects of word knowledge are still closely related, that is, better word readers are better spellers.

These results have significant implications for instruction. Traditionally phonics/word identification and spelling instruction are treated as separate, unrelated parts of the literacy curriculum. They are often taught at different parts of the day with different materials and/or programs. Furthermore, phonics instruction may be organized according to reading groups, providing some differentiated instruction, but spelling is very often taught as a whole-class activity, with all students studying the same lists regardless of their reading levels. These results support a more comprehensive approach to word study in which words are compared and examined for patterns and regularities that connect pronunciation and spelling. And, since very few words were spelled correctly if they were not identified accurately (especially identified quickly and easily), it also stands to reason that spelling lists and patterns should be governed by the nature and extent of a student's sight vocabulary - it is unreasonable to expect students to spell a large number of words that they still struggle to pronounce. Word study instruction should be developmentally based and organized for both reading and spelling.

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Comparing Performance on Two Word Identification Inventories: The *Qualitative Inventory of Word Knowledge* and the *Analytical Reading Inventory*

Jerry Zutell, Ohio State University

Perspective/Background

Informal Reading Inventories typically include a series of word lists to test word identification in isolation. These lists are usually organized according to word frequency, with an attempt to correlate strongly with the difficulty of the reading passages also included in the inventory. Performance on word lists is then often used to determine initial placement for testing in inventory reading selections. In a further use, students are assigned instructional levels for word identification in isolation, word identification in context, and comprehension, using criteria similar to those suggested by Betts (See Gillet & Temple, 2000, pp. 107-108). Discrepancies in instructional levels across tasks are sometimes used to suggest strengths and/or weaknesses in particular areas, so that plans for individualized instruction are informed by such results. Spelling inventories may or may not be included, and even if included, rarely contain the same words as those on the word identification inventories.

One limitation to most word identification inventories is that the words are typically selected based on word frequency, with minimal attention to word patterns and little interest in the information that performance on such inventories might provide about students' underlying word knowledge. In contrast, several recent spelling inventories have been constructed from a developmental perspective with the dual purpose of determining student instructional level and/or developmental stage, and of providing information about student control over specific word features (e.g., Ganske, 2000; Schlagal, 1989).

A significant advantage to using the same developmentally constructed set of lists for both word identification and spelling assessment is that performance on word identification and spelling inventories can then be compared to provide a more detailed understanding of student word knowledge. (The results of the author's assessment activities in reading clinic at a large mid-western university have supported this advantage.) However, if such a set of lists is not comparable in difficulty to the one constructed to match the difficulty of the reading passages being used for informal assessment, then the primary purposes of the word identification inventory (placement, determining relative strengths and weaknesses) are no longer served.

Objectives

Thus the purpose of this study was to compare the performance of students on the word identification lists of a well-respected and widely-used informal reading inventory, the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) (Woods & Moe, 2002) with their performance when the word lists from a developmental spelling inventory, the Qualitative Inventory of Word Knowledge (QI) (Schlagal, 1989) were used for word identification.

Methods

The subjects in this study were 25 students participating in a summer reading clinic, ranging in age (7-13) and grade level (2-8). They also ranged considerably in their reading ability and source of reading difficulties. Each was tested using the two word identification inventories during the last two weeks of clinic activities. (Order of administration was counter-balanced across the sample).

Each list was typed in a single column on a single sheet of paper. The tester used index cards to cover all but the word in question. The tester moved down the list of words in a fluid motion as the student attempted to identify each word, leaving each visually available for approximately one-half second. If the student identified the word accurately and fluidly with this exposure, the tester moved on. If not, the cards were opened to provide the student with an opportunity to attack the word. Percent Correct scores were generated for flashed or Immediate Accuracy and untimed or Total Accuracy for each list on each inventory. Testing ceased when students scored less than 50% for Immediate Accuracy and less than 70% for Total accuracy.

Data Analysis

Students were assigned instructional levels for each inventory using a 50% correct criterion for Immediate Accuracy. Then, in order to check for a better fit between inventories, scores were readjusted using a 60% criterion. Following the directions in the ARI, a 70% correct criterion for Total Accuracy was used for both inventories. Statistical measures included: means and standard deviations for each inventory and scoring procedure, correlations between inventories, and t-tests to test for differences in performance. In addition, differences between scores on the two inventories were computed and frequency counts made of these differences. A more conservative analysis was done by running the same statistics, but by removing the scores of those students who scored at the top level on all measures. This was done to control for ceiling effects.

Results

Results are reported in the two tables below. For the Immediate scores, for both the full sample and when controlling for ceiling effects, correlations are all very high, above .9 ($p < .05$). Further, Student T tests indicate no significant differences between means. This strongly supports the idea that the inventories are measuring the same ability at similar levels, and can be seen as comparable in this regard. Frequency counts (even controlling for ceiling effects) show that 90% of comparisons are within one grade level (half of these are at the same level).

The results for the Total scores are somewhat different. Although correlations are high, differences in means are significant ($p < .05$). Frequency counts show a wider distribution, with higher instructional levels clearly favoring the QI. This would suggest that the words on the QI are more easily attacked and solved than those on the ARI. A closer examination indicates that these discrepancies are focused at the higher levels of the inventories.

Table 1. Comparisons of Performance on the Qualitative Inventory and the Analytical Reading Inventory

<i>Inventory</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Means*</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Corr.</i>	<i>Student T</i>
ARI Imm. 50%	25	4.60	2.42	0.924	0.207
QI Imm. 50%	25	4.84	2.32		
ARI Imm. 60%	25	4.32	2.50	0.945	0.233
QI Imm. 60%	25	4.52	2.35		
ARI Total	25	4.68	2.41	0.853	0.009
QI Total	25	5.40	2.25		
<i>Controlling for Ceiling Effects:</i>					
ARI Imm. 50%	20	4.00	2.34	0.901	0.209
QI Imm. 50%	20	4.30	2.30		
ARI Imm. 60%	20	3.65	2.35	0.922	0.234
QI Imm. 60%	20	3.90	2.22		
ARI Total	20	4.10	2.36	0.831	0.009
QI Total	20	5.00	2.36		

* Scores reflect a plus one adjustment to account for Primer lists

Table 2. Frequency Counts of Differences in Levels Between QI and ARI

Differences in Levels*	Immediate, 50%	Immediate, 60%	Total (70%)
Four	0	0	1
Three	1	0	1
Two	1	2	5
One	5	5	3
Zero	14	14	14

Minus One	4	4	0
Minus Two	0	0	1
Minus Three	0	0	0

Controlling for Ceiling Effects:

	Immediate, 50%	Immmmediate, 60%	Total
Four	0	0	1
Three	1	0	1
Two	1	2	5
One	5	5	3
Zero	9	9	9
Minus One	4	4	0
Minus Two	0	0	1
Minus Three	0	0	0

***Positive Scores = Higher on QI; Negative Scores = Higher on ARI**

Conclusions

Results suggest that using the QI as a word identification inventory is a reasonable alternative to using the ARI lists, especially as a measure of immediate identification, although one must recognize that the two inventories will not always yield exactly the same grade placements. (On the other hand, alternate form and/or retest results within the ARI are also likely to yield less than a perfect match.)

Teachers and clinicians should consider the trade-offs and their purposes in deciding which approach to use, and should consider that using the developmentally-based inventories like the QI for both spelling and word identification provides the advantage of being able to compare identification and spelling performance to get a more complete picture of student word knowledge. This information can be used to plan for appropriate word study, a crucial element in the individualized instruction needed by struggling readers.

When planning the revision of current IRIs and creating new ones, developers would do well to consider the advantages of selecting words based on pattern and conceptual difficulty as well as frequency. The results of this study suggest that it is possible to create lists whose words both fall within appropriate frequency ranges for estimating level of word identification **and** can be organized to provide more detailed understanding of student word knowledge.

Teachers, clinicians, and teacher trainers might also consider the value of measuring immediate identification as well as untimed identification in assessing student abilities. Using the flashed

presentation method has become less popular in recent years. In fact, few informal reading inventories, including the ARI, currently recommend or provide directions for this procedure. Yet the results of this study indicate more consistent relationships (i.e. higher correlations) between inventories for the flashed condition. And immediate identification scores are particularly useful because they serve as measures of automatic word recognition ability, which clearly contributes to reading speed and fluency, important factors in determining instructional level.

One limitation of this study was that direct comparisons between performance on the word identification inventories was not compared to performance on ARI reading passages or other placement approaches. This would clearly be a worthwhile topic for further study.

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Jerry Zutell, Ohio State University

Perspective/Background

Informal Reading Inventories typically include a series of word lists to test word identification in isolation. These lists are usually organized according to word frequency, with an attempt to correlate strongly with the difficulty of the reading passages also included in the inventory. Performance on word lists is then often used to determine initial placement for testing in inventory reading selections. In a further use, students are assigned instructional levels for word identification in isolation, word identification in context, and comprehension, using criteria similar to those suggested by Betts (See Gillet & Temple, 2000, pp. 107-108). Discrepancies in instructional levels across tasks are sometimes used to suggest strengths and/or weaknesses in particular areas, so that plans for individualized instruction are informed by such results. Spelling inventories may or may not be included, and even if included, rarely contain the same words as those on the word identification inventories.

One limitation to most word identification inventories is that the words are typically selected based on word frequency, with minimal attention to word patterns and little interest in the information that performance on such inventories might provide about students' underlying word knowledge. In contrast, several recent spelling inventories have been constructed from a developmental perspective with the dual purpose of determining student instructional level and/or developmental stage, and of providing information about student control over specific word features (e.g., Ganske, 2000; Schlagal, 1989).

A significant advantage to using the same developmentally constructed set of lists for both word identification and spelling assessment is that performance on word identification and spelling inventories can then be compared to provide a more detailed understanding of student word knowledge. (The results of the author's assessment activities in reading clinic at a large mid-western university have supported this advantage.) However, if such a set of lists is not comparable in difficulty to the one constructed to match the difficulty of the reading passages being used for informal assessment, then the primary purposes of the word identification inventory (placement, determining relative strengths and weaknesses) are no longer served.

Objectives

Thus the purpose of this study was to compare the performance of students on the word identification lists of a well-respected and widely-used informal reading inventory, the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) (Woods & Moe, 2002) with their performance when the word lists from a developmental spelling inventory, the Qualitative Inventory of Word Knowledge (QI) (Schlagal, 1989) were used for word identification.

Methods

The subjects in this study were 25 students participating in a summer reading clinic, ranging in age (7-13) and grade level (2-8). They also ranged considerably in their reading ability and source of reading difficulties. Each was tested using the two word identification inventories during the last two weeks of clinic activities. (Order of administration was counter-balanced across the sample).

Each list was typed in a single column on a single sheet of paper. The tester used index cards to cover all but the word in question. The tester moved down the list of words in a fluid motion as the student attempted to identify each word, leaving each visually available for approximately one-half second. If the student identified the word accurately and fluidly with this exposure, the tester moved on. If not, the cards were opened to provide the student with an opportunity to attack the word. Percent Correct scores were generated for flashed or Immediate Accuracy and untimed or Total Accuracy for each list on each inventory. Testing ceased when students scored less than 50% for Immediate Accuracy and less than 70% for Total accuracy.

Data Analysis

Students were assigned instructional levels for each inventory using a 50% correct criterion for Immediate Accuracy. Then, in order to check for a better fit between inventories, scores were readjusted using a 60% criterion. Following the directions in the ARI, a 70% correct criterion for Total Accuracy was used for both inventories. Statistical measures included: means and standard deviations for each inventory and scoring procedure, correlations between inventories, and t-tests to test for differences in performance. In addition, differences between scores on the two inventories were computed and frequency counts made of these differences. A more conservative analysis was done by running the same statistics, but by removing the scores of those students who scored at the top level on all measures. This was done to control for ceiling effects.

Results

Results are reported in the two tables below. For the Immediate scores, for both the full sample and when controlling for ceiling effects, correlations are all very high, above .9 ($p < .05$). Further, Student T tests indicate no significant differences between means. This strongly supports the idea that the inventories are measuring the same ability at similar levels, and can be seen as comparable in this regard. Frequency counts (even controlling for ceiling effects) show that 90% of comparisons are within one grade level (half of these are at the same level).

The results for the Total scores are somewhat different. Although correlations are high, differences in means are significant ($p < .05$). Frequency counts show a wider distribution, with higher instructional levels clearly favoring the QI. This would suggest that the words on the QI are more easily attacked and solved than those on the ARI. A closer examination indicates that these discrepancies are focused at the higher levels of the inventories.

Table 1. Comparisons of Performance on the Qualitative Inventory and the Analytical Reading Inventory

<i>Inventory</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Means*</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Corr.</i>	<i>Student T</i>
ARI Imm. 50%	25	4.60	2.42	0.924	0.207
QI Imm. 50%	25	4.84	2.32		
ARI Imm. 60%	25	4.32	2.50	0.945	0.233
QI Imm. 60%	25	4.52	2.35		
ARI Total	25	4.68	2.41	0.853	0.009
QI Total	25	5.40	2.25		
<i>Controlling for Ceiling Effects:</i>					
ARI Imm. 50%	20	4.00	2.34	0.901	0.209
QI Imm. 50%	20	4.30	2.30		
ARI Imm. 60%	20	3.65	2.35	0.922	0.234
QI Imm. 60%	20	3.90	2.22		
ARI Total	20	4.10	2.36	0.831	0.009
QI Total	20	5.00	2.36		

* Scores reflect a plus one adjustment to account for Primer lists

Table 2. Frequency Counts of Differences in Levels Between QI and ARI

Differences in Levels*	Immediate, 50%	Immediate, 60%	Total (70%)
Four	0	0	1
Three	1	0	1
Two	1	2	5
One	5	5	3
Zero	14	14	14

Minus One	4	4	0
Minus Two	0	0	1
Minus Three	0	0	0

Controlling for Ceiling Effects:

	Immediate, 50%	Immmmediate, 60%	Total
Four	0	0	1
Three	1	0	1
Two	1	2	5
One	5	5	3
Zero	9	9	9
Minus One	4	4	0
Minus Two	0	0	1
Minus Three	0	0	0

***Positive Scores = Higher on QI; Negative Scores = Higher on ARI**

Conclusions

Results suggest that using the QI as a word identification inventory is a reasonable alternative to using the ARI lists, especially as a measure of immediate identification, although one must recognize that the two inventories will not always yield exactly the same grade placements. (On the other hand, alternate form and/or retest results within the ARI are also likely to yield less than a perfect match.)

Teachers and clinicians should consider the trade-offs and their purposes in deciding which approach to use, and should consider that using the developmentally-based inventories like the QI for both spelling and word identification provides the advantage of being able to compare identification and spelling performance to get a more complete picture of student word knowledge. This information can be used to plan for appropriate word study, a crucial element in the individualized instruction needed by struggling readers.

When planning the revision of current IRIs and creating new ones, developers would do well to consider the advantages of selecting words based on pattern and conceptual difficulty as well as frequency. The results of this study suggest that it is possible to create lists whose words both fall within appropriate frequency ranges for estimating level of word identification **and** can be organized to provide more detailed understanding of student word knowledge.

Teachers, clinicians, and teacher trainers might also consider the value of measuring immediate identification as well as untimed identification in assessing student abilities. Using the flashed

presentation method has become less popular in recent years. In fact, few informal reading inventories, including the ARI, currently recommend or provide directions for this procedure. Yet the results of this study indicate more consistent relationships (i.e. higher correlations) between inventories for the flashed condition. And immediate identification scores are particularly useful because they serve as measures of automatic word recognition ability, which clearly contributes to reading speed and fluency, important factors in determining instructional level.

One limitation of this study was that direct comparisons between performance on the word identification inventories was not compared to performance on ARI reading passages or other placement approaches. This would clearly be a worthwhile topic for further study.

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Most Recent (2002) Contenders for and Winners of Children's Book Awards in Five English Speaking Countries

Ira E. Aaron and Sylvia M. Hutchinson

This report focuses on the 2002 winners of and contenders for selected book awards from five mainly English speaking countries: Australia, Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the United States. The two presenters actually began the larger study of which this report is a part in 1986, 17 years ago; however, they initially collected winners of the past five years, from 1981-1985. In 1992, 11 years back, they expanded the study to include contenders (finalists) as well as winners. This change enlarged the annual number of books added from 11 or 12 to as many as 70+ titles. Through 2002, the total collection numbers 811 titles.

This presentation is the sixth that these researchers have presented at annual meetings of the American Reading Forum. Summaries of the previous five reports contained in annual yearbooks of ARF are the following:

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (2002). 2001 contenders/winners: Children's book awards in five English speaking countries. In W. Trathen (Ed.) *A Literacy Odyssey: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XXII, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/02_yearbook/html/01_Hutchinson_revised.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (2001). Three years (1998-2000) of children's book award winners/contenders from five English-speaking countries. In G. Moorman, & W. Trathen (Eds.) *Multiple perspectives in the millennium: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XXI, Available: http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/01_yearbook/html/06_Aaron.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1998). 1997 contenders/winners: children's book awards in five English speaking countries. In R. Telfer (Ed.) *Finding our literacy roots: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XVIII, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/98_yearbook/html/04_aaron_98.htm

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1996). Children's book awards and 1995 shortlists from five English speaking countries. In K. Camperel, & B. Hayes (Eds.) *Literacy: The information superhighway to success: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XVI, Available:
http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/96_yearbook/pdf/18_Aaron.pdf

Aaron, I. E., & Hutchinson, S. M. (1991). Literacy through literature: International award winning children's books. In K. Camperel, & B. Hayes (Eds.) *Literacy: International, national, state, and local: Yearbook of the American Reading Forum*, XI, Available:

http://www.fd.appstate.edu/arfonline/91_yearbook/pdf/06_Aaron.pdf

The 2002 collection of winners and contenders includes 73 titles. Considerable time and effort have been spent in collecting and studying the books; however, reading them has been enjoyable for the reviewers.

Information about the nature of the study will be presented, followed by a discussion of a few findings across the 73 titles. A brief review of each of the 73 titles will then be presented.

The Awards, Announcement Dates, and Sources of Books

The twelve awards from the five countries and the names of the organizations administering the awards are listed below.

Awards

- A1. AUSTRALIA: PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A2. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - EARLY CHILDHOOD (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A3. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - YOUNGER READERS (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- A4. AUSTRALIA: BOOK OF THE YEAR - OLDER READERS (Children's Book Council of Australia)
- C1. CANADA: AMELIA FRANCES HOWARD-GIBBON AWARD (Canadian Library Association)
- C2. CANADA: BOOK OF THE YEAR FOR CHILDREN (Canadian Library Association)
- G1. GREAT BRITAIN: KATE GREENAWAY MEDAL (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals)
- G2. GREAT BRITAIN: CARNEGIE MEDAL (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals)
- N1. NEW ZEALAND: RUSSELL CLARK AWARD (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa)
- N2. NEW ZEALAND: ESTHER GLEN AWARD (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa)
- U1. UNITED STATES: CALDECOTT MEDAL (American Library Association)
- U2. UNITED STATES: NEWBERY MEDAL (American Library Association)

The awards selected from the four non-U.S. countries are those considered to be most similar to the Caldecott and Newbery Medals of the American Library Association. Each country has awards for both illustration and quality of literature. Australia, however, has two categories

for each (A1 and A2 - Illustration; A3 and A4 - Quality of Literature).

Library Associations in Canada and the United States administer the awards. The Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA), which includes librarians, and the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) give the awards in those two countries. Earlier this year, the Library Association - British merged with an organization of information professionals, forming the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP).

Announcement Dates

Announcement dates for shortlists and winners vary from year to year. The 2002 dates are listed below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. 2002 Announcement Dates for Shortlists and Winners.

	<u>Shortlists</u>	<u>Winners</u>
Australia	March 26	August 16
Canada	April 29	June 20
Great Britain	April 6	July 12
New Zealand	September 6	November 18
United States	----	January 21

Four countries announce shortlists weeks or months in advance of the selection of winners from those lists. Shortlists (finalists) run from four to ten titles for each award. The United States announces winners and Honor Books simultaneously each year at the winter meeting of the American Library Association.

Sources of Books

Sources of books are listed below in Figure 2. In each non-U.S. country, one book store is used. Local bookstores are utilized for U.S. books and non-U.S. books published or distributed in the United States.

Figure 2. Sources of books.

- Australia - Angus & Robertson Bookworld, Melbourne
- Canada - Mabel's Fables, Toronto
- Great Britain - Harrods, London
- New Zealand - Children's Bookshop, Auckland (Ponsonby)
- United States - Local bookstores

Availability of non-U.S. Books in the United States

Many more non-U.S. winning or contending titles are available today in the

United States than were published or distributed here a few years ago. Table I below shows that a large majority of the Canadian (85%) and of the British books (86%) are available in the United States.

Fewer of the Australian (23%) and none of the New Zealand titles are distributed or published in the United States. However, both countries have writers and illustrators who are well known in the United States; soon after publication in Australia or New Zealand, their books become available in this country. Margaret Mahy, from New Zealand, is a good example of this.

Table I. Available (Published or Distributed) in the United States

	Illustration	Qual. of Literature	Total
Australia	2 of 10 (20%)	3 of 12 (25%)	5 of 22 (23%)
Canada	10 of 10 (100%)	7 of 10 (70%)	17 of 20 (85%)
Great Britain	6 of 8 (75%)	8 of 8 (100%)	14 of 16 (86%)
New Zealand	0 of 4 —	0 of 4 —	0 of 8 —

Literary Types

As can be seen in Table IIA below, 13 of the 36 illustrated books (36%) are fantasies, followed by Realistic Fiction and Verse, each with 9, or 25%, of the 36 titles. Information from Table IIB reveals that 18 of 37 quality of literature books (49%) are Realistic Fiction and 9 of the 37 (24%) are classified as Historical Fiction. Fewer titles fall under the remaining literary types.

Table IIA. Genre (Illustration)

	Aust.	Can.	GB	NZ	US	Total
Fantasy	4	3	3	2	1	13 (36%)
Realistic Fiction	1	4	2	1	1	9 (25%)
Historical Fiction	1	0	0	0	0	1 (3%)
Verse	3	3	2	1	0	9 (25%)
Info./Biog.	<u>1</u>	0	1	0	2	<u>4 (11%)</u>
	10	10	8	4	4	36

Table IIB. Genre (Quality of Literature)

	Aust.	Can.	GB	NZ	US	Total
Fantasy	2	0	2	0	0	4 (11%)
Realistic Fiction	6	5	2	4	1	18 (49%)
Historical Fiction	2	4	2	0	1	9 (24%)
Verse	1	1	2	0	1	5 (14%)
Info./Biog.	0	0	0	0	0	0 --
Epic	<u>1</u>	0	0	0	0	<u>1 (3%)</u>

Brief Reviews of the Winning/Contending Titles

Short reviews of the 73 winning and contending titles are presented below. The winner of each award category is indicated by an asterisk (*). In parentheses following each review, the genre of the book is cited. Also in parentheses, U.S. publishers or distributors are presented. Interest levels of books in terms of grades are included when that information could be found. Main sources of this information were Books in Print and summary issues of Publishers Weekly.

Al. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Picture Book of the Year (CBCA)

*Libby Gleeson/Armin Greder (ill.) An Ordinary Day. Scholastic Australia.

Jack, on his way to school, is having a dull "ordinary day" - until his imagination takes over. Charcoal and pastel illustrations reveal the dullness of Jack's day. (Fantasy)

John Heffernan/Andrew McLean (ill.) My Dog. Margaret Hamilton Books.

This chilling story, told in text and powerful illustrations, focuses on the sad life of a small boy and his "adopted" dog, in the 1990s when "ethnic cleansing" was being imposed on certain elements of the population. McLean's expressive pictures in pencil and watercolors, with refugees' concerned and unsmiling faces, reflect the seriousness of the story. (Also finalist for CBCA's Book of the Year - Younger Readers) (Historical Fiction)

Nette Hilton/Anne Spudvilas (ill.) In My Backyard. Lothian. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

Three youngsters explore a big city, which is described in the text as the children imagine it. (Yellow taxis are dinosaurs.) Pleasant oil illustrations show the realities of the hustle and bustle of big city life. (Verse)

Leigh Hobbs. Horrible Harriet. Allen & Unwin.

Horrible Harriet, who lives in a "nest" in the attic of the school, rules the school. Her teacher with poor vision thinks she is great, but her classmates - and the two teachers she has imprisoned in the basement to do her homework - know just how horrible she is. Childlike illustrations add to the humor. (Fantasy)

Papunya School Publishing Committee. Papunya School Book of Country and History. Allen & Unwin.

This informative book "of country and history," told in text and aboriginal art, covers from 1850, when whites first moved into the Australian outback, to the present. It documents the attempt to merge five different Aborigine groups into the Papunya community, the problems of the white and Aborigine culture clashes, and the eventual development of the Papunya Scbaol, where elements of both Aborigine and white cultures were brought together in the development of the school's curriculum. (Information/History)

Shaun Tan. The Red Tree. Lothian. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

Brief text and colorful illustrations, ranging from realistic to surreal, tell of a young girl's depressing day, lightened at day's end by a bright red tree, just as she had imagined. (Fantasy)

A2. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Book of the Year: Early Childhood (CBCA)

Janeen Brian/Stephen Michael King (ill.) Where Does Thursday Go? Margaret Hamilton Books. (US: Clarion, 2002)

In simple language and fanciful illustrations steeped in blue, an animal story is told. Inquisitive Bruno, after his enjoyable birthday on Thursday, joins friend Bert on a mission to find where Thursday goes after it is over. (Fantasy)

Mike Dunbleton/Terry Denton (ill.) Passing On. Random House.

Grandma, no longer here, was a loving and supportive companion to her young grandson. He remembers and now is passing on the love and support to his little brother, in this story told in verse and exquisite pictures. (Verse)

*Bob Graham. "Let's Get a Pup!" Walker. (US: "Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate. Candlewick, 2001)

Kate, Mom, and Dad, at the dog pound, select young and lively Dave, but they are also fascinated by a friendly, very old dog. Puppy Dave cries all night in his new home. Early next morning, the family returns to the pound to find a companion for Dave (and the family). Can you guess which dog they selected? Pen and ink and watercolor pictures add comedy to the story. (Also finalist for Great Britain's 2001 Kate Greenaway Medal.) (Realistic Fiction)

Narelle Oliver. Baby Bilby, Where Do You Sleep? Lothian Books. (US: Star Bright Books, 2002)

In repetitive rhyme and in colored pencil illustrations, the question about where various Australian wildlife rest and sleep is answered. Small circular holes in some pages focus on the resting animals. On the final page, a key is given to the location of animals hidden in the pictures on three pages. (Verse)

A3. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders -Book of the Year: Younger Readers (CBCA)

Anna Fienberg/Kim Gamble (ill.) Joseph. Allen & Unwin. The story of Joseph from the Bible is retold in text and in oil paintings. (Epic) (US: Allen & Unwin, 2002)

Janine M. Fraser/Kim Gamble (ill.) Sarindi and the Lucky Bird. Angus & Robertson.

Sarindi's father believes strongly in luck, whereas his more practical mother knows that it takes work to accomplish goals. Gamble's black and white drawings add considerably to the story. (Fantasy)

Kerry Greenwood. A Different Sort of Read: The Diary of Charlotte McKenzie. Melbourne 1918-1919. Scholastic Australia.

Young teenage Charlotte, in diary form, relates the stressful problems faced by some World War I veterans and the horrors of the devastating and deadly influenza pandemic of 1919. Her "shell shocked" father, withdrawn and grumpy, recovers when family members become ill with influenza. Charlotte vividly describes some of the illnesses and deaths she encountered as she assisted a doctor in making house calls. (Historical Fiction)

Christine Harris. Jamil's Shadow. Penguin Books Australia.

After his parents died, Jamil spends his time in looking after his grazing cattle and tries not to become emotionally attached to anyone or anything - until a homeless dog follows him home. (Realistic Fiction)

*John Heffernan/Andrew McLean (ill.) My Dog. Margaret Hamilton Books.

This chilling story, told in text and powerful illustrations, focuses on the sad life of a small boy and his "adopted" dog, in the 1990s when "ethnic cleansing" was being imposed on certain elements of the population in Bosnia. McLean's expressive pictures in pencil and watercolors, with refugees' concerned and unsmiling faces, reflect the seriousness of the story. (Also finalist for CBCA's Picture Book of the Year) (Historical Fiction)

Odo Hirsch. Have Courage, Hazel Green! Allen & Unwin.

Hazel Green, avenger of evil, hears a tenant of her apartment building shout and threaten the hardworking gardener. She felt it her duty to make the culprit pay for his misdeed. In typical Hazel fashion, things do not go as she planned in this humorous story. (Third in series of Hazel Green books) (Realistic Fiction)

A4. AUSTRALIA: 2002 Winner/Contenders -Book of the Year: Older Readers (CBCA)

Alyssa Brugman. Finding Grace.

Allen & Unwin. Rachel (18), after graduating from high school, cares for a brain damaged woman to earn money to help with University expenses. Like a detective, she tries to unravel the mystery of the person beyond the silence. Though humorous in spots, the humor occasionally appears to be flippant, and overdevelopment of minor points detracts from the story. (Realistic Fiction)

* Sonya Hartnett. Forest. Penguin Books Australia.

Readers travel into the cat world in this tale of a domesticated, urban cat Kian and kittens Jem and Cally, dumped by a relative of their owner into a forest. They meet and are helped by a band of feral cats as Kian tries to lead the kittens back to "his territory." They face obstacles created by nature and by man. (Fantasy)

Odo Hirsch. Yoss. Allen & Unwin.

Fourteen-year-old Yoss, living in a village hundreds of years ago, leaves the village as a rite of manhood, but instead of returning as expected in a day or two, he continues walking, until he meets a pair of robbers. Yoss gets caught up in robbery, murder, incarceration, and enslavement. Hirsch's description of Yoss will cause readers to empathize with the innocent boy. (Realistic Fiction)

Joanne Horniman. Mahalia. Allen & Unwin.

A 17-year-old father spends full time in parenting his infant daughter after the immature mother leaves them, in this story set in New South Wales, Australia. Readers may wonder why grandparents did not insist on helping the young and loving father to a greater extent, since father and child were in a near state of poverty. (Realistic Fiction)

Margaret Wild. Jinx. Allen & Unwin. (US: Walker, 2002)

This engrossing but often sad story of how Jem came to change her name to Jinx unfolds in blank verse. Readers meet Jem, her friends and family in the 190 short poems, many packed with emotion and few treating mature themes. (Verse)

Marcus Zusak. When Dogs Cry. Pan Macmillan Australia.

In this sequel to Fighting Ruben Wolfe, Cameron (Cam) narrates the continued story of the Wolfe family and how he, an introspective and shy teenager, gradually gains confidence and

wins the admiration of his mother, father, older sister Sarah, and his two older brothers (Rube and Steve). Zusak, in masterful style, makes the reader feel as if he/she is inside Cam's feelings. Reader beware! Some of growing Cam's expressed thoughts and his interchanges with brother Rube are mature! (Realistic Fiction) (US: Scholastic, 2003)

Cl. CANADA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Amelia Frances Howard-Gibbon Medal (CLA)

*Francis Wolfe. Where I Live. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001)

Sparse text, one sentence every four pages accompanied by expressive pictures, tells of a young girl's love for the place where she lives. The first letter of each two-line verse spells SEASHORE (where she lives). (Verse)

David Bouchard/Zhong-Yang Huang (ill.) Buddha in the Garden. Raincoast. (US: Raincoast, 2001) (1-up)

Inspired by a blind monk, the garden boy learns "the true nature of enlightenment" in the garden, while some monks travel great distances in search of enlightenment. Pictures in subdued colors support the story. (Fantasy)

Sharee Fitch/Janet Wilson (ill.) No Two Snowflakes. Orca. (US: Orca, 2001) (1-4)

On a snowy Christmas afternoon, a young Canadian boy writes a letter to his penpal in a far-away tropical country, in which he describes snow and the many activities children enjoy in the snow. The story, told in free verse, is accompanied by pastel illustrations. (Verse)

Sharon Jennings/Linda Hendry (ill.) Priscilla and Rosy. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001)

In this story about interpersonal relationships of rats, Priscilla learns that it's better to keep a promise to friend Rosy than to break it for something potentially more enjoyable - a boatride with Rudolph. Colorful illustrations add humor to the tale. (Fantasy)

Alison Lohans/Marilyn Mets & Peter Ledwon (ill.) Waiting for the Sun. Red Deer Press. (US: Red Deer Press, 2002) (PS-2)

Mollie, living on a farm with Mom and Dad, enjoys waiting each summer morning for the sun, and she also waits in anticipation for the arrival of a new baby brother or sister. Then Benjamin is born! Appealing pictures, often dominated by orange coloring, enhance the text. (Realistic Fiction)

Jonathan London/Paul Morin (ill.) What the Animals Were Waiting For. Scholastic. (US: Scholastic,

2002) (1-4)

Animals on an African savanna are waiting - and then the rains come, bringing action for animals, man, and nature. (Verse)

Margriet Ruurs/Andrew Kiss (ill.) When We Go Camping. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001) (All ages)

Let's go camping with a family (boy, girl, mom, dad) and enjoy the great outdoors (shown in beautiful photolike illustrations) and learn about the animals they see (in pictures and in concluding legend). (Realistic Fiction/Information),

Gail Sproule/Sheena Lott (ill.) Singing the Dark. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001) (PS-2)

A young girl and her loving mother go through their nighttime ritual of "singing the dark." Watercolor paintings show the bond between mother and daughter. (Realistic Fiction)

Annette LeBox/Harvey Chan (ill.) Wild Bog Tea. Groundwood. (US: Groundwood, 2001) (K-3)

A man remembers the trips he made as a boy with his grandfather to the bog and the animals they saw there; then he makes the trip alone since grandfather no longer can go. Dreamlike illustrations, in muted yellows and brown, set an emotional tone for the story. An Author's Note presents information about the British Columbia setting and about bogs. (Realistic Fiction/Information)

Ludmila Zeman. Sinbad in the Land of Giants. Tundra. (US: Tundra, 2001) (1-up)

In precise language and enchanting pictures, Zeman retells one story from The Thousand and One Nights. Sinbad the Sailor encounters a wide variety of life-threatening giants - and lives to tell about them. Each page is framed by a delicately decorated border. (Fantasy)

C2. CANADA: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Book of the Year for Children (CLA)

*Jean Little. Orphan at My Door. Scholastic.

The diary of 11-year-old Victoria, living in a small Ontario town in the late 1800s, covers an eventful year (1897) in the life of her family. Two elderly, and strange, aunts come for a "short visit"; orphan Marianna (12), a Home Girl from London, comes to live with and work for the family; Marianna's brother Jasper (8), indentured to a brutal farmer nearby, escapes and has to be rescued; Victoria's mother has a difficult pregnancy. Little lightens the seriousness with well-placed humor. She also offers at the end historical information, including pictures, about the practice of indenturing British orphans to Canadian families. (Historical Fiction)

Kristin Butcher. The Gramma War. Orca. (US: Orca, 2001)

When her ill and bossy grandmother moves in with Annie's family, Annie resents her because of the many changes necessary to accommodate her. Her hate for Gramma disappears when Gramma becomes an information source for her on a project tracing the family tree. The author does an excellent job of dealing with feelings of family members, including guilt feelings. (Realistic Fiction)

Susan Currie. Basket of Beethoven. Fitzhenry & Whiteside. (US: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2001) (K-3)

Eleven-year-old Sam, from a poor one-parent home, swaps protection from class bullies for piano lessons from classmate Helen, a talented musician whose life seems anchored to Beethoven's music. Shy Sam and haughty Helen gradually improve their relations with each other. A two-page biography of Beethoven follows the story. (Realistic Fiction)

Sarah Ellis. A Prairie as Wide as the Sea. Scholastic.

In diary form, Ivy, from a tightknit and loving family, tells of the family's emigration from London in 1926 to rural Saskatchewan. Touches of humor are interwoven with realistic descriptions of characters and events, often depicting trials faced by citizens new to a country. A concluding Historical Note and reproductions of actual photographs of Canada in the 1920s reflect the care given by Ellis in writing this book of fiction. (Historical Fiction)

Ann Goldring. Spitfire. Raincoast. (US: Raincoast, 2002) (3-7)

Two girls, from different economic and social levels, enter the usually all-boys soapbox derby. Kathryn, whose brother is in the race, joins with April, who is derided by classmates because she lives in the poor section of town, and they give the boys stiff competition. The setting is 1943, and each chapter begins with a quote related to World War II. (Realistic Fiction)

Constance Home. The Tenth Pupil. Ronsdale. (US: Ronsdale Press, 2001) (5-up)

Living in an isolated Vancouver Island logging camp in 1934, 11-year-old Trudy learns about the harmfulness and emotional cost of racial prejudice after Japanese Canadian Shigi (the tenth pupil) enters the community's one-teacher school. Trudy becomes Shigi's friend even though classmates, reflecting community attitudes, taunt her. The story is a skillful treatment of racial prejudice and its emotional toll. (Realistic Fiction)

Polly Horvath Everything on a Waffle. Groundwood. (US: FSG, 2001) (5-up)

In a masterful interweaving of seriousness and humor, the author tells of the challenges faced by 11-year-old Primrose, the narrator, who after her parents are lost in a storm off the west coast of Canada, must adjust to a variety of "helpful" adults. The owner of a local restaurant becomes one of her best friends and supporters - which might explain why each of the 15 chapters ends with a recipe! (Also 2002 United States: Newbery Honor Book) (Realistic Fiction)

Kathy Kacer. Clara's War. Second Story. (US: Second Story Press, 2001)

In this chilling story, based solidly on fact, the horrors of life in a concentration camp for Jews, from 1943 to the end of World War II, are replayed. Terezin, a walled Czechoslovakian town, was a way station for Auschwitz and held more than 40,000 inmates at a time. Clara (13) and her family, along with all others, suffered from extreme overcrowding, limited food, oppressive guards, and no medical supplies. Highly talented inmates furnished the only bright spot by organizing instruction for children and musical entertainment for all. (Historical Fiction)

Dennis Lee/Gillian Johnson (ill.) The Cat and the Wizard. Key Porter.

In delightful rhyme and humorous pictures, Lee and Johnson tell of the friendship and activities of an unwelcomed and unhappy wizard and a black cat in "a spiffy hat." (Verse)

Connie Colker Steiner/Denis Rodier (ill.) Shoes for Amelie. Lobster Press. (US: Lobster Press, 2001) (3-5)

A young Protestant boy, living on a farm in the mountainous area of France during World War II, wonders about the mysterious guests his family shelters periodically. He gets his chance to help when a Jewish girl, Amelie, becomes a guest; he teaches her to perform farm chores and also helps his grandfather to make shoes to replace the worn ones she wore. A brief afternote furnishes historical background for the story. (Historical Fiction)

G1. GREAT BRITAIN: 2001 Winner/Contenders - Kate Greenaway Medal (CILIP)

*Richard Platt/Chris Riddell (ill.) Pirate Diary: The Journal of Jake Carpenter. Walker. (US: Candlewick, 2001)

Nine-year-old Jake Carpenter, in 1716, set sail from Charleston, SC, as a member of a ship's crew, and his adventures, including becoming a pirate, are reported in journal form. This interesting account is fictional, but much information about 18th century ships and sailing is presented in the text and in the ink and watercolor illustrations. On the last six pages, historical information on "Jake's world" and on Piracy is given. (Information/Historical Fiction)

Jez Alborough. Fix-it Duck. Picture Lions. (US: HarperCollins, 2002)

Fix-it Duck creates more problems than he solves, in this humorous story in verse and comical pictures. (Verse)

Ursula Jones/Russell Ayto (ill.) The Witch's Children. Orchard. (X-3)

On a trip to the park, the witch's children use magic to perform spells. But alas, they can't undo them. Witch Mom has to come to the rescue in this enjoyable story accompanied by lavish pictures. (Fantasy)

Caroline Binch. Silver Shoes. Dorling Kindersley.

Molly, enrolled in a dancing class, wants silver shoes just like grandmother's, but she has to make do with a pair of ordinary shoes - until her birthday arrives. Lively watercolor illustrations reveal a happy and energetic interracial family. (Realistic Fiction)

Helen Cooper. Tatty Ratty. Doubleday. (US: FSG, 2002) (PS-3)

After Molly loses her toy rabbit, she and her parents fantasize about what Tatty Ratty is doing, in this tale told in text and colorful illustrations filled with action. (Fantasy)

Vicki Churchill/Charles Fuge (ill.) Sometimes I Like to Curl Up in a Ball. Gullane. (US: Sterling, 2001)

Wombat likes to do many fun things, but most of all, he likes to "curl up in a ball" in a special place - next to his mother. Brightly colored pictures depict a lot of energy and happiness. (Verse)

Bob Graham. Let's Get a Pup! Walker. (US: "Let's Get a Pup!" Said Kate. Candlewick, 2001)

Kate, Mom, and Dad, at the dog pound, select young and lively Dave, but they are fascinated also by a friendly, very old dog. Puppy Dave cries all night in his new home. Early the next morning, the family returns to the pound to find a companion for Dave (and the family). Can you guess which dog they selected? Pen and ink and watercolor illustrations add comedy to the story. (Also contender for Australia's 2002 Book of the Year: Early Childhood) (Realistic Fiction)

Gretchen Woelfle/Nicola Bayley (ill.) Katje the Windmill Cat. Walker. (US: Candlewick, 2001) (PS-up)

Katje, feeling replaced by Miller Nico's new and picky wife, moves into the windmill. Much later, the miller and his wife have a baby, and baby's mother tries to keep Katje away from the baby. Katje becomes a hero by saving the baby when its cradle is swept out into the canal after the dike breaks. The story is based on a 1421 incident that occurred in Holland. Pictures are

done in watercolor pencils. (Fantasy/Historical Fiction)

G2. GREAT BRITAIN: 2001 Winner/Contenders - Carnegie Medal (CILIP)

*Terry Pratchett. Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents. Doubleday. (US: HarperCollins, 2001)

A brilliant talking cat (Maurice), intelligent talking rats, and a dumblooking boy who plays a flute reenact the Pied Piper of Hamelin, with a few very different twists, in this humorous tale. (Fantasy)

Sharon Creech. Love That Dog. Bloomsbury. (US: HarperCollins, 2001) (3-7)

In this interesting verse novel, Jack, the narrator, under the guidance of his teacher, moves from thinking that poetry is just for girls to one who enjoys poetry and can write poems of his own. Some of the poems the teacher reads with Jack and his classmates are reproduced in the book. (Verse)

Peter Dickinson. The Ropemaker. Macmillan. (US: Delacorte, 2001)

A girl and her grandmother and a boy and his blind grandfather brave an enchanted forest to seek a mastermagician who can save their valley from evil. In this engaging fantasy, the four travelers face great challenges, most involving magic - some supportive, some destructive. (Fantasy)

Eva Ibbotson/Kevin Hawkes (ill.) Journey to the River Sea. Macmillan. (US: Dutton, 2001) (5-up)

Orphan Maia, living in London in 1910, is sent with a governess, to live in rural Brazil with the family of a distant cousin. Living with the family is unpleasant for Maia, mainly because of the jealousy of the cousin's twin daughters and their mistreatment of Maia. She becomes friends with a young part-Indian boy, becomes involved in a mystery, and explores the Amazon. (Realistic Fiction)

Elizabeth Laird. Jake's Tower. Macmillan. (US: Barron, 2002)

Jake, whose father left him the day he was born, dreams of living in a perfect tower with a perfect dad, protected from outside threats, including a physically abusive stepfather. Eventually, his imaginary tower is replaced by reality in which his longing for love and support is satisfied. The characterization of Jake is handled superbly. (Realistic Fiction)

Geraldine McCaughrean. The Kite Rider. Oxford. (US: HarperCollins, 2002) (7-up)

Living in 13th century China, 12-year-old Haoyou sees his father "sacrificed" by the ship's First Mate in testing the wind, and then Haoyou thwarts the murderer's plan to marry the widow, his mother. Haoyou becomes a daring kite rider in a traveling circus and experiences life and conflicts of Cathay (China) leading up to 1281 - and he meets the famous Mongol leader Kublai Khan. (Historical Fiction)

Geraldine McCaughrean. Stop the Train. Oxford. (US: Oxford, 2001)

Cissy and her parents, with others, are residents in a new community developed beside a railroad in Oklahoma prairie in 1893. Their survival depends upon access to the train, but the railroad owner, reacting to the people's refusal to sell him their government land claims, vows never to let the train stop in their new town. A vicious battle develops as residents vow to "stop the train." (Historical Fiction)

Virginia Euwer Wolff. True Believer. Faber. (US: Atheneum, 2001)

In 85 blank verse poems, this novel tells of 15-year-old LaVaughan's life in a sometimes dangerous innercity, her new and old friends and the strength of their relationships, and her special work in preparing for college. In an interesting manner, information about grammar and science is given in several scenes set in two college preparatory courses in which LaVaughn is enrolled. (Verse)

NI. NEW ZEALAND: 2002 Winner/Contenders - Russell Clark Award (LIANZA)

Theo Baynton. Looking for Larry. Scholastic.

In a mixture of fantasy and information about dinosaurs, Troy, a tuatara (a reptile as old as the dinosaurs and found only on islands off New Zealand's coast), travels for 145 million years looking for an uncle who wandered off. In searching for Uncle Larry, he meets all types of dinosaurs, which are shown in somewhat whimsical illustrations. Suggestions to find hidden tuatara among the dinosaurs in the illustrations give readers a change of pace. At the end, an extensive glossary and pronunciation guide, with pictures, includes 113 different types of dinosaurs. (Fantasy/Information)

Dot Meharry/Jennifer Cooper (ill.) The Pipi and the Mussels. Reed Publishing.

In the early days of Aotearoa (New Zealand), life was tranquil - and then the whales came. To escape the powerful splashing of the whales, the pipi rushed ashore and buried themselves in the sand, whereas the slower mussels attached themselves to the rocks. According to this fantasy, pipi hide in the sand and mussels latch on to rocks until this day. Illustrations add a touch of humor to the story. (Fantasy)

*Tessa Duder (ed.)/Anton Petrov (ill.) A Book of Pacific Lullabies. HarperCollins.

This collection of 26 delightful poems, supported by beautiful illustrations, contains works by 16 New Zealanders, three Australians, and one Samoan. (Verse)

Rende Hapimarika van de Weert/Anton Petrov (ill.) The Last Whale. Reed Publishing.

In a 1920s one-room school by the sea, children and their teacher are disrupted by the sound of a whale. They - like most of the small fishing settlement - rush out to watch as fishermen begin to battle the whale, which puts out to sea. Five days later, the fishermen return from sea with the now-dead whale, which was pregnant. At the story's end, young, reflective, and sad Riwia stands by the shore; two shadows - one large, one small - move out into the ocean toward the setting sun. Almost all of the characters depicted in the attractive illustrations are Maori. Several Maori words are used in the story. (Realistic Fiction with a touch of Fantasy)

N2. NEW ZEALAND: 2002 Winner/Contenders:- Esther Glen Award (LIANZA)

Fleur Beale. Ambushed. Scholastic.

Twelve-year-old Richard reluctantly leaves friends and a small community he loves when his family moves to the city. In a new setting, he becomes the victim of three bullies. With two other classmates who had been victimized by the bullies, his twin sister Kat, an assortment of schoolmates, and two grownups who had been victimized, Richard leads the charge to ambush the bullies as they attempt to "initiate" a new victim. (Realistic Fiction)

*Alison Robertson. Knocked for Six. Scholastic.

Young Tony's desire to play cricket on the school team is beset by obstacles: Dad doesn't care for cricket; Coach "Dingo" doesn't like Tony; someone steals Tony's cricket equipment; Gran's funeral is scheduled during the tournament; Cherie (a classmate and newly-crippled cricket player) tries to get Tony kicked off the team. The story revolves around cricket, and for some readers, more knowledge of cricket may be necessary for full appreciation of the story. (Realistic Fiction)

David Hill. The Sleeper Wakes. Penguin.

Residents of a small New Zealand town, located near a mountain that had erupted years earlier, refuse to consider that the mountain might erupt again. Cory and his father, a conservationist, refer to the mountain as "the sleeper." When the unexpected happens, Cory and his Dad are the first to feel the tremor. (Realistic Fiction)

Tim Tipene/Henry Campbell (ill.) Taming the Taniwha. Huia.

At school, Tama is bullied by James (called a "taniwha" - monster - by Tama's Mum). Following his grandfather's advice on how to "tame a taniwha," Tama tamed the bully with kindness. Primitive-type, colorful illustrations, with a touch of mystery, support the text. Characters, as shown in the illustrations, are Maori. (Realistic Fiction)

U1. UNITED STATES: 2002 Winner/Honor Books - Caldecott Medal (ALA)

*David Wiesner. The Three Pigs. Clarion, 2001. (K-up)

In Wiesner's version of a familiar tale, the not-so-smart wolf blows so powerfully that the three pigs, one by one, are blown almost off the pages; later, they wander through other well-known children's stories. Eye-catching watercolor illustrations, with bits of humor, carry much of the story line. (Fantasy)

Barbara Kerley/Brian Selznick (ill.) The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins. Scholastic, 2001. (1-up)

In text and detailed illustrations, the life and work of Benjamin Waterhouse Hawkins, an early (1800s) modeler of dinosaurs, is presented. Though his models, displayed in England and America, later were found to be inaccurate in some aspects, they can be credited with focusing attention on dinosaurs. (Biography)

Doreen Rappaport/Bryan Collier (ill.) Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King. Hyperion, 2001. (K-4)

In brief to the point text and descriptive watercolor and collage illustrations, highlights of the life (and death) of Dr. King, one of America's leading historical figures, are sketched. Most of the text is anchored to ten short quotes from Dr. King. Illustration and text together not only offer important information but also will likely have an emotional impact on young readers. (Biography)

Marc Simont. The Stray Dog. Harper, 2001. (P-3)

A family (parents and two children), out on a Saturday picnic, enjoy playing with a stray dog they name Willy; out on a picnic at the same spot the next Saturday, they see Willy being chased by a dog catcher. They immediately "adopt" Willy and take him home, where he becomes an accepted and happy member of the community. Watercolor illustrations complement the text. (Based on true story of Reiko Sassa) (Realistic Fiction)

U2. UNITED STATES: 2002 Winner/Honor Books - Newbery Medal (ALA)

*Linda Sue Park. A Single Shard. Clarion, 2001. (5-9)

Tree-ear, a 13-year-old orphan, living most of the year under a bridge with friend Crane-man, uses curiosity, determination, and courage to accomplish his dream of becoming a potter, in this award winning book set in 12th century Korea. The Korean American author, who also is a teacher of English as a Second Language, unfolds an interesting plot in picturesque language. (Historical Fiction)

Polly Horvath. Everything on a Waffle. FSG, 2001. (5-up)

In a masterful interweaving of seriousness and humor, the author tells of the challenges faced by 11-year-old Primrose, the narrator, who after her parents are lost in a storm off the west coast of Canada, must adjust to a variety of "helpful" adults. The owner of a local restaurant becomes one of her best friends and supporters - which might explain why each of the 15 chapters ends with a recipe! (Also shortlisted for 2002 Canada: Book of the Year for Children) (Realistic Fiction)

Marilyn Nelson. Carver: A Life in Poems. Front Street, 2001.

The life of George Washington Carver, a young slave who developed into a notable scientist, is reviewed in 59 poems and supporting photographs. (Verse/Biography)

Summary Comment

Winners of and contenders for prestigious children's book awards, on the whole, are among the very best books published for young readers. Those books published in English in countries other than the United States can be used in the classroom - or in the home - in the same ways as books originating in the United States. Such books can also help to enlarge pupil - and teacher - knowledge about other people, other places, and sometimes other times, as in historical fiction. Perhaps the greatest value, though, is that they lead young readers to develop an understanding that people from other places, other races, other creeds have many more similarities than differences.

Summation of Ongoing Research on Applying Distance Education in Adult Literacy Program

Eunice N. Askov

Distance education is growing rapidly as a means of delivering instruction primarily in higher education, with most institutions using the Internet ([US Department of Education, 1999](#)). Distance education offers access to students who may be fully employed during the day or who are home-bound with small children or disabilities, or otherwise unable to attend traditional classes. Can the distance education opportunities that institutions of higher education are using also be undertaken by adult literacy programs? Is distance education viable for learners who are functioning below a high school level?

The growing popularity of distance education raises the issue of what learning is. Burge ([1988](#)) asserts that most distance education courses are built on the transmission model since distance education has its origins in correspondence study. With the advent of two-way technologies, such as audio- and video-conferencing, a constructivist learning environment became possible. Internet technology now makes possible learning in a social environment since learners can be linked in a “virtual” classroom with an instructor. The World Wide Web has opened up opportunities for social learning leading to the development of higher order thinking and learning.

In the constructivist view learning is socially constructed and situated in a specific context ([Bruner, 1990](#)). Learners construct new knowledge and skills through interacting with others and the environment and reflecting upon these experiences. Learning that closely resembles the real world of the participants occurs as a social process involving others in solving real-world problems (problem-based learning).

The paper reports on a segment of a larger research project. The investigator was funded by the US Department of Education to explore applications of online distance education in adult literacy programs. She conducted extensive web searches and email correspondence primarily in the US and Australia to identify literacy programs using distance education. She also visited Australia for three months in 2001 to conduct site visits of programs that are using distance education for instruction. This article reports on the Australian part of the research. A monograph ([Askov, Johnston, Petty, & Young, 2003](#)) summarizes the entire study in the US and, by contrast, in Australia.

Methods

Data were gathered from Australian adult literacy programs that are using online instruction for distance education. The investigator used surveys, interviews, and email correspondence as well as analysis of instructional web sites in data collection. Australia, through its federal and state planning for flexible learning and targeted funding, has

strategically set out to be the international leader in this arena. Although flexible learning does not necessarily mean online delivery, use of the Internet has certainly been part of the instructional effort. Federal dollars have also been used for professional development, encouraging teachers to experiment and develop their capacity to help others with flexible learning. Although the government's evaluation efforts have focused primarily on policy strategies rather than on learner outcomes, and although many of the instructional efforts are experimental and supplemental to the traditional classroom, the descriptions of practice can provide insights for the United States about implementing online distance education. Like the United States, Australia has both federal and state efforts in adult literacy. All have taken different approaches to online distance education for adult literacy programs. We will draw some lessons learned from these case studies to inform the efforts in the United States.

Data were gathered on federal efforts as well as state initiatives in four states. The federal efforts were gleaned primarily from interviews with key informants and policy review. The four states became case studies of implementation of online distance education in adult literacy programs. Further descriptive analyses and discussion are provided elsewhere ([Askov, et al., 2003](#)). One state case study is presented after a description of the federal efforts in online distance education in adult basic education.

Results

Federal Efforts in Australia

Australia is striving to become a global leader in applying new technologies to vocational and adult education and training through the Australian Flexible Learning Framework for the National VET (Vocational Education and Training) System 2000–2004. (For more information see *Strategy 2002*: flexiblelearning.net.au.) Federally funded activities, most funded by the Australian National Training Authority, fall under each goal of the framework. To encourage independent access of services, learners are provided a national gateway to various educational and training programs on a Web site (www.edna.edu.au/index.html).

The first goal of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework calls for “creative, capable people.” The main strategy in attaining that goal is professional development. As part of this strategy, several programs have been established with federal funds: LearnScope, which supports practitioners in developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to apply new learning technologies for flexible learning and delivery; Virtual Learning Community, which encourages the continued development and integration of online learning communities across the VET sector for professional development for flexible learning; Flexible Learning Leaders, which provides professional development for the high-skill end of the flexible learning continuum of practitioners; and Flexways, which provides a Web-based resource to assist practitioners in identifying their professional development needs in learning technologies and flexible learning, developing a professional development plan, and accessing nationally developed resources.

These federal programs provide professional development not only for practitioners new to distance education, but also for experienced educators so that they can become Flexible Learning Leaders and mentors of others who are inexperienced. Teachers are urged to share what they have learned through the Virtual Learning Community program. Career development is encouraged through support for Flexways.

The federal funds are also used to encourage innovation in the LearnScope grants (learnscope.anta.gov.au) as a safe way to learn how to apply distance education to the literacy programs. LearnScope now has a strong presence throughout Australia and is enhancing the professional skills of both individual practitioners and their organizations. In 2000, 293 projects were established with more than 2,700 participants across all states/territories. In 2001, 337 projects were established with more than 3,000 participants across Australia. The authors are unaware of any similar programs for professional development at the federal or state level in the United States.

Other goals related to distance education for literacy programs concern the creation of a supportive technological infrastructure and world-class online content development and support services. Strategies include online national product development, evaluation, and further implementation, as well as access to and equity in online learning especially for targeted populations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, learners with disabilities, and learners with low literacy levels).

The development of toolboxes has also occurred with federal support. A toolbox is a collection of online training materials comprising learning activities, resources, and user guides to support delivery of competencies (including literacy) from endorsed training packages. By sponsoring the development of 41 toolboxes, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework has supported the implementation of 24 training packages and the development of 566 industry competencies. In addition, six online product projects for equity groups have been developed. More information is available at the toolbox Web site (www.flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/).

The Australian government has also funded research to increase the understanding of pedagogical, technical, and managerial aspects of flexible learning, including online learning. Use of a quality assurance framework including national protocols for nationally funded projects is supported at the federal level to develop and implement online programs. Research on distance education for literacy programs has received limited federal support in the United States. The issues of quality assurance and comparability to face-to-face programs have not been considered.

The Flexible Learning Web site (the.flexiblelearning.net.au/accessequity/content/research.asp) provides links to research concerning access to and equity of literacy services. Research papers have been developed to provide the theoretical background as well as report on a study conducted with targeted online learners. The extensive report prepared as part of Strategy 2000 suggests that online learning alone would be inappropriate for the special needs groups; these groups need human contact and support in their learning. These learners also will learn best if instruction is tailored

to their learning styles and cultures rather than “one size fits all” online instruction. Guidelines for managers and practitioners, for Web accessibility, and for course development are also provided.

Perhaps most remarkable is not the amount of federal money devoted to these efforts but the process of continually updating annual strategic plans after evaluating and revising fundable activities. Australia has been very systematic in establishing goals and strategies, revised annually, to become a world leader in flexible learning, including online learning. The deliberate federal efforts moving Australia into a position of global leadership in flexible online learning includes adult education as well as vocational education and training programs. These targeted efforts appear to be unmatched in the United States.

State Efforts in Australia

As in the United States, states in Australia have been very active in providing funding to design online instruction for literacy instruction. Although the monograph ([Askov, et al., 2003](#)) considers four different models that various Australian states have pursued, this paper focuses only on one state as an example. Most of the states use the TAFE (Technical and Further Education) institutes to develop and deliver online instruction in adult and vocational education.

The government of Western Australia (WA) established WestOne Services (www.westone.wa.gov.au) with the mission of enhancing adult and vocational education and training in this very large state. WestOne occupies a large office building in Perth with impressive television and videoconferencing studios in addition to Web authoring and printing capabilities. It also is responsible for business development, product development and distribution, and other services. The state’s fiscal resources for course development are centralized at WestOne. WestOne offers no instruction directly. All instruction is offered through the state’s TAFE institutes.

WestOne Online designs and delivers courses to the TAFE institutes throughout the state. Its centralized approach to development allows local input, as a TAFE institute can propose a course to be developed to WestOne. Often, a local college instructor develops the content in partnership with WestOne’s technical experts, and a quality assurance process follows. The course then can be used—but not modified—by any TAFE institute in the state. WestOne holds the copyright on the materials. Although WebCT is frequently used, CD-ROMs and workbooks often supplement the online components.

One course entitled “Flying through the Web” is currently available under the General Curriculum Options 3 (part of the Certificates of General Education for Adults) that roughly corresponds to mid-level literacy skills. This course was developed first as part of a series of online literacy courses orienting mid-level literacy learners to Internet use. The home page pictures an Australian barbecue; learners click on various objects at the barbecue to take them into bulletin boards, e-mail, chat, and so forth. The “guide” is a

talking parrot who provides navigational assistance. The next course, "Reading and Writing for Level 3," has been developed, as will a course in numeracy and mathematics at the same level. All are written in the WebCT learning management system.

The Western Australian experience suggests that course development occurs best in teams of practitioners and instructional designers/computer specialists. Practitioners offer the content expertise, and technology specialists have the expertise to design Web pages that are easy to read and appealing to the target audience. Selecting instruction in the use of the Web as the first course in a package makes sense to enable learners to engage in literacy content instruction.

Conclusions from the Study of Australia

Because of Australia's commitment to flexible learning that includes online learning, federal and state resources have been directed toward making the country a world leader in this arena. The purpose is to offer options to people who need additional training, thereby expanding access to services. Literacy is considered a part of a more global effort to enhance vocational education and training because literacy is recognized as a prerequisite to and part of most training programs.

Most Australian states use the WebCT learning management system for course development and delivery. Although a site license for WebCT is expensive, it offers consistency to both teachers and learners. Its communication tools (i.e., e-mail, threaded discussions on bulletin boards, chat rooms) provide opportunities for students to construct their own knowledge from the instructional materials presented on the Web and to learn by interacting with others. Additional materials, such as workbooks and CD-ROMs, can be easily integrated into the learning management system. Although the instructional portions of the courses may follow a transmission model of learning, the communication tools generally encourage teachers to follow constructivist and social learning philosophical models.

Especially interesting are WebQuests, instructional activities that teachers construct using existing Web sites. As part of the WebCT learning management system, teachers usually create WebQuests for face-to-face instruction and then may incorporate them in online courses. These WebQuests are usually based on constructivist theory and problem-based learning. Their purpose is to encourage students to use language and literacy skills to solve real-world problems. As they do not require sophisticated programming skills, WebQuests offer teachers opportunities to develop learner-centered and relevant materials for their students. A similar tool would be very useful in the United States as professional development, to encourage teachers to create and use online instructional materials. By developing and using WebQuests, teachers can become comfortable with online instruction as well as problem-based learning.

Teachers rather than literacy experts have taken the lead in developing Web-based instruction in Australia. Although most of this development supplements classroom instruction, it provides the opportunity for teachers to experiment with online instruction.

Many of these “experiments” eventually are offered to distance education students. The support for teachers has come from federal and state funding. Federally funded LearnScope projects have been a primary vehicle for supporting teacher experimentation and professional development.

This paper has tried to capture what is happening currently in Australia to guide the institutionalization of online literacy programs for distance education in the United States. State policymakers and practitioners in the United States need to think about a model, or hybrid of models, that might fit their states. Reflecting on the efforts of another country may help us think about what is happening in the United States. Development and delivery of online literacy instruction in the United States have been primarily through large multimedia products that are distributed nationally. Less emphasis has been placed on the professional development of teachers. Development in Australia, on the other hand, has been on a state-by-state basis primarily by teachers. Although this approach may lead to “reinventing the wheel,” it brings the development and delivery process closer to those who will use the online products. It also permits customization of the products to the unique needs of the state, perhaps making them more learner-centered.

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Preparing Teachers for Culture Shock: The Risky Business Of Addressing Diversity in 21st Century Classrooms

Lisa Bauer

While discussing the teacher narrative, *Educating Esme*, Cloer ([2001](#)) asked the questions, “Why is it that so many educators argue and complain that the wrong children were sent to their school? When will the clientele be accepted without question, respected, and invited to join in the progress of civilization?” The concepts of culture shock and Frierean violence directly address these questions. Often, we do not comprehend the enormity of what we’re asking teachers serving diverse students to do. At the same time, it is also true that these teachers do not comprehend how unprepared they are to implement what we’ve asked.

Current student and teacher demographics have serious implications for the quality of education offered children in US public schools. Nieto ([2002](#)) reported that the vast majority of United States (US) teacher candidates, both current and projected, are white females. These white, female teachers will enter school districts in which populations of diverse students are increasing (Berube, 2000). However, far from being prepared to serve this new demographic, these teachers will tend to be trained by “white, mostly male, fiftyish professors” with minimal experience of diverse cultures or basic understandings of inequalities ([Zeichner & Melnick, 1995](#) [in Merryfield, 2000](#)) and mentored by white, practicing teachers who received their training in the 1960s, when white, suburban schools were the norm on the US educational scene (Berube, 2000). In fact, Taylor and Sobel (2001) reported that Zeichner (1993) projected that today’s preservice teachers face a strong possibility of being placed in settings where they will serve students culturally different from themselves. Tatum ([2000](#)) as well as Seidl and Friend (2002) asserted that the process of preparing white teachers to appropriately handle their place in the power culture requires a significant amount of time and reflection before they can be effective in serving multicultural students. This dichotomy of backgrounds between teachers and students, which Nieto ([2002](#)) noted is usually either not addressed or addressed by a one-semester course in teacher education programs, results in teachers ill-prepared to address the needs they encounter in their classrooms ([Rushton, 2001](#)) and K-12 and teacher education students being inappropriately served ([Ball, 2000](#)).

Perspectives

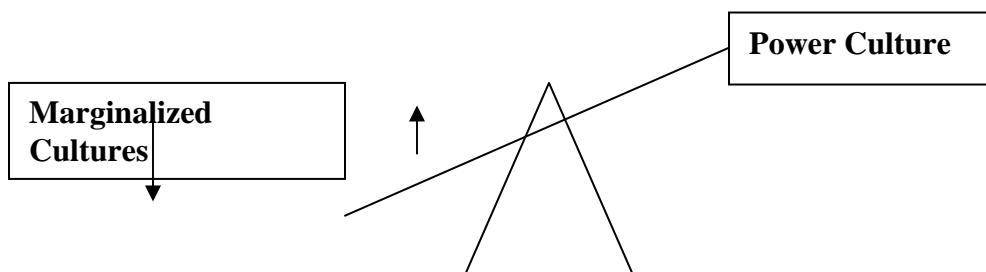
When examining the experiences of white teachers being thrust into classrooms serving students for which they are not prepared, the issue of cultural competence becomes crucial. This is particularly true in light of the fact that many white US teachers say they do not realize they are culture-bearers at all but simply see themselves as “just American” ([Ladson-Billings 1995](#); [Nieto, 2002](#)). Along with this, these teachers often are ignorant or skeptical of values carried by marginalized cultures and have a hard time even hearing input from diverse adults on how their culture’s children should be educated ([Delpit, 1996](#)). This lack of understanding often places white teachers in the position of learning to negotiate entirely new cultures with no knowledge of values, needs, and linguistic behaviors of the students they are trying to serve. This experience can be even more traumatic if the individuals in question are also first-year teachers and

developing their professional identities along with developing their identities as “the other” in a new culture ([Rushton, 2001](#)). This state of being is a perfect incubator for culture shock.

Brown (1991, p. 170), discussing second language students attempting to live in the cultures of the languages they were learning, defined culture shock as “phenomena ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological panic and crisis.” He cited Clarke (p., 172), who compared culture shock at its worst to schizophrenia in that “social encounters become inherently threatening, and defense mechanisms are employed to reduce the trauma.” Brown (p. 171) went on to place culture shock in the context of four developmental stages second language students experience as they learn to adapt to their new life circumstances. In Stage One, they experience a period of excitement and euphoria about their new surroundings. In Stage Two, they experience culture shock, in which life in the new culture begins to have negative impacts on their self-esteem and their sense of safety. In this stage, they begin to develop negative affects for the new culture. In Stage Three, they experience culture stress, in which some problems of adopting the new culture are solved, and others continue. In Stage Four, they experience a near or full recovery, viewing themselves as members of both their original and their adopted cultures. Brown noted that teachers could arrest the development of students at any point on the scale if they failed to nurture students through each stage, a process Brown describes as “affective inoculations.”

Of course, white teachers can successfully navigate the process of becoming bicultural, or culturally relevant, and move on to become effective teachers of diverse students ([Ladson-Billings, 1995](#)). However, even if they do develop what Ladson-Billings terms their own culturally relevant pedagogies, serving diverse populations is still a risky business. Empowering diverse students to seek justice in society can bring on consequences Friere raised in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000). Friere charged teachers of diverse students to address societal power inequities. He specified they should facilitate their students in discovering injustices perpetrated against them; require them to reflect on what they see; help them express what they learn; and encourage them to devise and implement strategies to bring about equity. These strategies, Friere stipulated, must of necessity contain elements of violence, which he defined as any action that takes away another’s humanity, because violence was used by the oppressor class to obtain power in the first place and must be used by oppressed classes to achieve societal equilibrium ([Figure 1](#)). When teachers representing the power culture accept the charge to take their students through the process of addressing injustices, Friere maintained, they must be prepared not only to accept results with which they may not be comfortable, but also to risk violence directed against them.

Figure 1. Friere’s Vision of Social Activism



Violence initiated by oppressed

Figure 1. In Friere's view, the power culture has attained its status in society through inflicting violence on others. In order to change their status, marginalized populations must initiate the application of their own violent force against their oppressors to balance the power structure. Members of the power culture who support societal equality may support efforts, but they should not initiate them.

In essence, Friere charged teachers to endanger their own positions as representatives of the power culture in the name of serving their students appropriately. It is in this backdrop of a diverse society that US K-12 teachers must negotiate ways to serve changing populations. They often begin hampered by trauma and always face the possibility of their positions as instructional leaders being toppled because to be culturally relevant, they must address issues of societal injustices in their classrooms.

In short, teacher education continues to struggle to find experiences sufficiently powerful to support students in deconstructing the messy tangle of racism, classism, poverty, sexism, and opportunity and is much less successful in helping students reconstruct maintainable positions within a commitment to social justice. ([Seidl & Friend, 2002, p. 422](#))

Methods

Data Source

The data for this study were largely autobiographical and were analyzed to draw conclusions. Data included: narratives of my own experiences as a beginning teacher, published autobiographical narratives of teachers serving marginalized populations, and autobiographical data I collected by e-mail ([see Appendix A](#)) from a teacher who experienced Frierean violence turned on her by her marginalized students. The data from the participant were collected by sending three sets of questions and asking her to respond to each before sending the next set ([see Appendix A](#)).

From Culture Shock to Culture Stress

The impetus for this study came out of my own practice. I spent my first years of teaching in the inner city after being graduated from a teacher training program in which all cultures but my own culture, the power culture, were essentially invisible. My mission as a new teacher was to teach language arts, reading and later English and journalism to students representing cultural groups with which I had had no prior experience. Armed only with the standard cannon of educational theory, methodology, psychology and one course in which I'd learned that different cultural groups spoke different dialects of English, I faced my educational charges. It wasn't nearly enough.

A collage of images still explodes into my brain as I think back on those years of teaching: undistinguishable faces of all shapes, sizes and hues; nails sticking out of ancient

blackboards that would occasionally tear my clothes; 30 books for 180 students; the mouse that danced across my room any time I showed filmstrips; the smell of old wood and mimeograph fluid; the sound of the school's one, overworked, copy machine; and intense and chronic emotions of shame and inadequacy. I couldn't understand the raw edge of anger that permeated everyone from students to staff, and I went home and literally twitched as I tried to figure out how to mold what I had to work with into the models of excellence that I had seen and espoused in my teacher training program.

The teacher I communicated with reported coming to her first classroom far better prepared than I. She was culturally competent, having had both previous professional experience in another area and volunteer experience with diverse populations. She reported she earned her teaching credentials in order to work with inner city youth.

I was good with poor people, Black people. They would talk to me, open up to me, where they wouldn't talk to most white, middle-class people...I never experienced myself as 'called' to work with middle class youth. I figured that was for other people.

In addition to her practical experience, my this teacher stated that she came to her first English/language arts classroom with knowledge of both African American literature and the implications of language diversity. Her preparation for what she would encounter serving diverse students left her far better able to articulate the marginalization she experienced as a white teacher serving diverse populations than I am even today. The list she provided me with in our email exchange resonated with my own experience, and the experiences Codell ([1999](#)), Michie ([1999](#)), and Kozol ([1990](#)) related in their teacher narratives. The teacher noted that in her experience: (a) her discipline referrals often would not be addressed, while the referrals of black teachers, and white teachers who had been at the school in question for a while, were; (b) she was expected to buy her own supplies; (c) custodians "spied" on her classrooms to make sure she taught what they thought was appropriate; (d) instructional assistants were sometimes used by African American administrators to monitor her to be sure she chose appropriate curriculum and methods; (e) colleagues assumed she was racist because she was a white liberal and wasn't shy about saying so; (f) students often stole from her and viewed their actions as stealing from "the Man;" (g) students considered it okay to verbally and physically assault her because they could get away with it; (h) African-American adults seemed to think she wouldn't have been verbally and physically assaulted if she weren't racist; and (i) she became afraid to report assaults and threats because when she did, she was considered a poor classroom manager. The teacher reported that she taught at several schools during her time as a classroom teacher of diverse students. In most of her schools, she said she was often identified as a good teacher by parents, support personnel and administrators, and her instructional leadership was supported by them when her students challenged her ability to teach them. "Administrators make an enormous difference," she noted.

Towards the middle of my second school year, I began to move out of culture shock and into culture stress. I was ready to start taking more control of my surroundings. I took an approach similar to Michie's ([1999](#)), trying to take in as much information as I could as quickly as I could. I signed up for every workshop I could find, I took graduate courses at local colleges and I began asking many questions of my more experienced colleagues. I made friends with the school

librarian and spent many planning periods and after-school hours in the school library, frantically searching out and reading titles that I thought would inspire my students. I discovered Richard Wright, Virginia Hamilton and Julius Lester in those years. The teacher noted that she too spent time with the school librarian and learned from her how to put together effective black history programs. The support I was offered allowed me to perceive I was solving problems, but I realized I had many more problems to solve before I could become a comfortable part of the school community. Going the rest of the distance seemed overwhelming and I wasn't sure I could make it.

As my early experiences became increasingly retrospective, I became increasingly angry. Teaching in the inner city is never a picnic, but I could have wasted so much less time had I received any kind of preparation for what I had experienced pedagogically. I was placed in a situation where I had almost nothing to entice my diverse students into literacy that was relevant to their lives as they experienced them. I also had diminished capacity to process information about how to function in the culture due to the stress I was experiencing. After completing my third school year, I left for more emotionally safe surroundings. It was too painful for me to fully develop a culturally relevant pedagogy.

Mutual Socialization

Once she was accepted as a good teacher, she reported that members of the school community did indeed help her to accommodate to the marginalized culture. She resisted the terminology of my question, however. She asserted that she was socialized. She also raised the question of whether members of a marginalized culture could truly be called marginalized in a community of learners where they were in the majority. The teacher also reported "doing what she was required to do" to socialize her students to the institutional expectations of public schools. Looking at her data, my own experience and the related experiences of other teachers of diverse students, I concluded that it was a process of mutual socialization. Table 1 contains examples of how members of marginalized cultures socialized white teachers to the school culture.

Table 1. Teacher Socialization by Established Members of School Culture

Type of Activity	Example
Self-selected members of marginalized groups let teacher know what is appropriate for culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lets teacher know community doesn't always appreciate "book learning."• Help teacher recruit students for activities
More seasoned white teachers share their experience and suggest ways for new teacher to cope	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised teacher to have students leave bus passes as collateral for borrowed school supplies
Administrators support teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students circulated a petition about teacher declaring she was a racist. In

front of the students, African American principal put a hand on the teacher's shoulder and complimented her on teaching them about petitions. "Maybe someday you'll write a petition when it make [sic] sense to write one," he said. "You have a good English teacher."

Table 2 gives examples of how teachers socialize their diverse students to standards of the power culture.

Table 2. Student Socialization by Teachers

Type of Activity	Example
Enforced school rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Participated in getting students to line up.Wouldn't let students go to the bathroom without a hall pass
Taught Standard English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Taught and enforced rules in formal speech, writing
Promoted love of books	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asked students to handle books carefullyLeft books around in hopes students would steal them. (They never did.)Created a "time machine" out of an old refrigerator
Asked students to "be kind" to each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Would not allow "capping" in class
Asked students to respect teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discouraged stealing from teacherDiscouraged throwing objects out windowsDiscouraged hitting teacher

Cultural Violence

The teacher reported that approaching her students from where they were caused them to begin to question the system.

At every Black school I taught in, the kids reached a point where they got really comfortable with me. Then, they sort of did a double take, remembered I was white, and thought I might be racist. Then, they decided that because I was white I possibly MUST be racist. Sometimes they would go around looking for evidence to prove what I was. What happened next depended on the Black adults.

The teacher pointed out that throughout most of her career, Black adults supported her with the students. She reported that parents who came to observe her classes would reprimand their children for claiming she was a poor teacher; support personnel would tell students to listen to her because she was trying to help them; and administrators trusted her to have the interests of Black kids at heart.

However, she said circumstances changed for her when she began teaching in a building with African-American administrators who perceived white teachers in a different way.

By the time I arrived, I figured things like this (students accusing white teachers of racism) happened all the time. I fully expected the support of the administration. But the administration (at this school) promoted the nascent racism of the kids...I think they have a twisted way of viewing things and I think they believed it was okay to mistreat me because I am white. And I think they were teaching the kids to do the same...Some people say minorities can't be racist because they don't have the institutionalized power. I beg to differ. At that particular school, the African Americans had plenty of power.

...I was written up and removed from my position because I supposedly was an incompetent teacher who used racial epithets against my students. No one came forward to defend me. Not the kids, who knew they were lying, not my colleagues, who knew what kind of person I am, not my union. It took a long time for the case to be settled. The resolution was a compromise. It said I am competent, but that since so many witnesses said I used racial epithets, I had. I got a reprimand in my file. It said I would be terminated if I continued using racial slurs against my students. At first, I was devastated. Only now am I angry. The anger I feel is not principally toward the kids, but towards administrators like the ones at my last school. They are fostering prejudice in the next generation.

The participant said the incident at her last school made it unsafe for her to continue teaching there. Following the reprimand, she left K-12 teaching.

When I asked her if she would ever consider teaching in another urban setting, she responded, "In a heartbeat...when you mention the possibility, something inside me quickens." She also reminded me that not every inner city school is like her last one, and that she had few problems working with professionals who were honest and "genuinely wanted kids to learn and sought a better world." She said the key was to find an urban school that supported its teachers.

Results, Conclusions, Point of View

Not preparing white teachers to serve diverse cultures can result in several possible outcomes. One outcome can be that, like me, new teachers enter a diverse school culture and

become overwhelmed with the task of becoming part of it. Because they do not understand the process to attaining culturally relevant pedagogy, they cannot see progress they may be making. Another possible outcome is that the system spits out good teachers because they threaten it, as it did with the teacher I describe in this paper and with Kozol. A third possibility is that teachers remain in the system, arrested at either the stage of culture shock or culture stress and provide angry, inappropriate instruction to children who deserve better. Kozol (1990), Codell (1999), and Michie (1999) describe several such teachers in their narratives, and I encountered them in my practice.

When discussing ways to address culture shock in second language students, Brown (1994) recommended that teachers provide students with “affective vaccinations,” in which teachers support and guide students through the stages of culture shock to “gradually emerge from those depths to a very powerful and personal form of learning.” These “affective inoculations,” so crucial to developing the ability to negotiate new cultures, are being withheld from our teachers, the very people who need to be immune from the sort of disease that is bred from oppression. Without adequate preparation and scaffolding, these teachers will not have the personal resources they need to contribute to the production of healthy members of United States society.

In an e-mail she wrote me after completing the first set of questions, the teacher made the following observation.

I think there are many people in the Black community who do not trust white teachers...I hope we can reach such people, so they will not make the mistake of trying to get rid of conscientious white teachers who are being targeted by Black kids beginning to experience their power—the sort of teacher I was once.

We need to find ways to prepare white teachers to relate to populations that have not experienced US culture in the way they have. Once they’re in the classroom, we need to develop forums for them to explore their own identity as cultural beings and to become rooted and grow in their school cultures. If we want our teachers to move beyond the stage of arguing and complaining that they have “the wrong people” in their classrooms, we will need to find ways to nurture their abilities to move beyond arguments and complaints into a place where they can actually see the issues behind the students. We will need to think about rewriting Cloer’s questions (2001) to read, “Why is it that US society argues and complains that the wrong teachers were sent to serve marginalized students? When will the teachers find acceptance, support, respect, compassion, and be given the tools they need to join in the life of the community?”

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

E-mail 1

1. How did you decide to make serving diverse populations a major theme in your teaching career?
2. What were your hopes and dreams for yourself and your students when you started teaching in the inner city?
3. How did those hopes and dreams change over the course of your career?

E-mail 2

4. What was your experience of being “the other” like when you taught in schools where members of marginalized cultures represented the majority of the students and the staff in the building?
5. How did members of the marginalized cultures you served help you to accommodate to their learning communities? How did you as a member of the power culture demand they accommodate to the institutional expectations of public schools in the United States? Please include in your discussion your view of the appropriateness of the cultural expectations on both sides.
6. How did your understanding of marginalized students and their abilities change over the course of your career?

E-mail 3

7. Describe experiences of having your marginalized students turn on you and accuse you of being racist. Please discuss your own feelings and perceptions as you processed their perceptions and accusations.
8. Would you ever be able to teach in another urban setting? Why or why not?

Literature Discussions, Participant Stance, and the Discussion Filter

Lynne A. Bercaw

Susan J. Wegmann

For many years, scholars have argued that discussions are a viable response to literature (Beach, 1993; Moffett, 1983). The reader's understanding of and connection to the literature is strengthened, informed, and challenged through one's sharing his/her perspective and one's listening to the perspectives of others (Parsons, 1990; Peterson & Eeds, 1990; Rosenblatt, 1995). This paper is a theoretical piece that explores two studies that consider the phenomenon of literature discussions amongst elementary students (Wegmann, 2001) and amongst prospective teachers (Bercaw, 2000). The intersection of these two studies reveals the support and hindrances of "genuine discussions" (Dillon, 1994) where each student voice is valued and encouraged through examining different perspectives of issues raised in the literature.

Wegmann's study (2001) investigated teacher/student discourse in the elementary classroom during language arts. The findings suggest a set of *teacher moves* that support/hinder students' voice and literary growth. Wegmann defines *Participation Stance* as the position or role in which students participate in class discussions specifically related to literature where language is used in a personally meaningful way (such as exploring a possibility or investigating a personal inquiry). Bercaw's study (2000) investigated the development of student voice in the teacher education classroom through literature discussion groups in a children's literature course. The findings of this study suggest the role of a *Discussion Filter*, which Bercaw defines as the dynamic through which prospective teachers alter what is shared publicly based on what each deems acceptable in the given social context. The intersections of the findings from these two studies offer strong implications for both the elementary classroom and the teacher education classroom. This article explores the notion of student voice through literature discussions and how teachers encourage genuine discussions through class discussions of children's literature. Three areas of intersection are highlighted: (1) students' awareness of discussion dynamics, (2) students' ability to share and hear multiple perspectives through sharing/hearing of voice, and (3) teachers' use of class discussions to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Literature Discussions and Classroom Interactions

Numerous researchers have indicated that students of all ages benefit from discussions after reading. Literature Circles (Short, Harste, & Burke, 1996), Book Clubs (Raphael & McMahon, 1994), and Literature Discussion Groups (Routman, 1994) are examples of strategies within literature-based instruction that encourage students' *genuine* discussion of text. According to Dillon (1994) genuine discussion is a

particular form of group interaction where members join together in addressing a question of common concern, exchanging and examining different views to inform their answer, enhancing their knowledge or understanding, their appreciation or judgment, their decision, resolution, or action over the matter at issue. . . People do not discuss experiences whose meaning is plain to them, nor their indisputable feelings or incontestable values. When they do discuss these things, they have some question about them and they join with others to form an answer. (p. 8)

Hickman (1981) and Many and Wiseman (1992) found increases in positive student attitudes toward reading as a result of meaningful student responses to literature which included discussions. However, even though researchers have documented a positive impact due to genuine discussions, most experts agree that genuine discussions (e.g. Dillon, 1994) do not occur regularly in American classrooms. Instead, researchers have found that classroom interactions are typically teacher-oriented as well as difficult to measure.

Teaching and learning revolve around language: knowing about, using, and studying words in order to communicate and learn. Through language, classroom teachers set the tone for classroom interactions (Aulls, 1998; Wilkinson & Silliman, 2000). This tone can either support or constrain students' voices (Bakhtin, 1986; Bruner, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978). However, in our current age of standardized test pressure, increasing classroom sizes, and stringent accountability, how do teachers value classroom talk, which may or may not serve to teach a list of standards? How can teachers influence language in the classroom to value inquiry and critical thinking? To begin to answer these questions it is helpful to explore the voices of classroom interactions of the past.

The notion of voice in classroom interactions has evolved in meaning and understanding for several decades. In the mid 1960's, Bellack, Kliebard, Hyman, and Smith (1966) found that the most predominate type of teacher/student interaction was characterized by teachers asking factual questions, students answering questions, and teachers evaluating students' answers. A few years later, Hoetker and Ahlbrand (1969) clarified the "rules" and labeled the most common form of student/teacher interaction "recitation," or teacher-centered interaction. During recitation, students frequently answered their teachers' questions but had few other reasons or opportunities for speaking.

Flanders (1970) developed the Classroom Interaction Analysis (CIA) coding system (1970). This was one of the first instruments that targeted teacher/student interactions in classrooms. Each utterance, or group of words spoken for a particular purpose, was coded during a classroom observation to determine a particular function for speaking. At the end of a given observation period, researchers tallied the results and, using the tallies, could describe the most frequent use of language in that particular lesson. While this offered a systematic way of analyzing oral language, critics maintained that CIA coding limited possible categories of student expression, ignored both nonverbal and written communication, and often disregarded rich contextual cues (Gee, 1991; Mehan, Hertweck, Combs, & Flynn, 1982).

Following an ethnographic perspective, more contemporary scholars found similar aspects of oral classroom interactions (Cazden, 1988). Mehan (1979) characterized the Initiate, Reply, Evaluate (IRE) pattern of discourse in which teachers initiated discussions and evaluated students' answers. He found that students mostly replied to teacher-generated questions. Similarly, Nystrand (1997) characterized classrooms as places in which "the plodding transmission of information through classroom recitation" (p. 3) was of utmost importance.

Most literacy experts agree that teachers who effectively support literacy learning must provide other, more complex patterns of interaction. Based on the works of Bakhtin and Vygotsky, Nystrand (1997) suggested that oral classroom discourse should be a dialogue or

conversation, rather than a recitation. He recognized that learning is a sociocognitive event, supported by “tension, even conflict, between the conversants, between self and other, as one voice ‘refracts’ another” (p. 8). Thus, to Nystrand, supportive oral classroom discourse necessarily makes room for conversations. Eeds and Wells (1989) also suggested that literacy lessons be crafted around “grand conversations” instead of predetermined, factual questions.

Brown (1991) reported that recitation is so pervasive in schools that teachers and students think of recitation as a natural way to speak during classroom interactions. He described the frustration of teachers who tried to facilitate genuine discussions as an alternative to an IRE pattern (Mehan, 1979). Instead of enabling discussions, the teacher he studied apparently confused students who were trying to follow the rules of the school language game (Bellack, et al., 1969). In other words, the students were waiting for the teacher to ask factual questions, to which they could answer with few words, without much thought. He maintained that language in most schools describes the process of teaching something, rather than expressing or reflecting on something. In his “literacy of thoughtfulness” (p. xiii) Brown concurred with Halliday (1975) and Mehan (1979), and advocated encouraging a discourse that included uncertainty, disagreement, important questions, ambiguity, and curiosity in order to prompt students to synthesize and evaluate various texts and to give students opportunities to use a full range of functions for speaking about, and engaging with, texts.

Despite the work of experts like Nystrand, Eeds, Wells, Dewey, Bakhtin, and Vygotsky, who advocated student inquiry and open-ended discussion, the question remains, why do most classroom interactions revolve around recitation (Hoetker & Ahlbrand, 1969), while following the rules of the language game? How do some teachers manage to resist the status quo and enact classroom interactions that support multiple perspectives and genuine discussion? In part, the answers to these questions can be found by examining the *stance* of both teachers and students, and the discussion *filters* students employ during discussions about issues in the literature.

Study #1: The Participant Stance

Wegmann observed four fourth-grade teachers in two schools as they enacted literacy lessons. The corpus of data includes transcribed audio taped oral classroom discourse in the four teachers’ rooms and three interviews with each teacher and interviews with four students from each teacher’s classroom to conduct a member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In all, she analyzed 247 literacy events: those classroom interactions by two or more people that had logical beginnings and endings. Typically, these events contained multiple speakers and occurred over time, most lasting five to 25 minutes.

Building on Rosenblatt's Reader Response Theory (1994) and Mehan's (1979) understanding of oral discourse patterns, Wegmann analyzed oral literature responses by focusing on stances during discussions. She found that teachers and students assumed either a Spectator Stance, in which they used language as outside observers of a text, or a Participant Stance, in which they used language as active participants and engaged more deeply with the text. While her study verified numerous other studies of the limited nature of most oral classroom discourse, it also illuminated ways to support meaningful chains of utterances (Bakhtin, 1986) within classrooms by describing effective classroom practice. Of the four

teachers Wegmann studied, one stood out from the rest. Ms. Price (pseudonym) was categorized as an “exemplary” teacher by her principal. After spending time in her room, during two school years and two complete cycles of literacy lessons, Wegmann noted valuable episodes in which both Ms. Price and her students were talking to think deeply about texts. That is, they used classroom discussions to critically examine the world. Both teacher and students assumed a *participant stance* (Britton, 1993) that encouraged various opinions to emerge and students’ voices to dominate. Ms. Price’s stance toward classroom discourse created space for students’ voices and their attempts to understand their respective worlds. What Ms. Price and her students said and did during class discussions revealed, in part, the nature of their stances. And their stances were the key to understanding why some of Ms. Price’s classroom discussions were different from traditional classrooms. Through observation and analysis of the discourse in Ms. Price’s and in other classrooms, Wegmann concluded that it is possible, and even probable that students’ voices, together with an open stance toward language can facilitate students’ learning and provide opportunities for literacy growth.

Wegmann identified two types of stances: *Participant Stance* and *Spectator Stance*. Similar to spectators in a sporting event, at times Ms. Price and her students talked *about* the text. The following excerpt illustrates a *Spectator Stance* and took place while the fourth-graders read *James and the Giant Peach* orally (numbers identify turns):

1. Ms. Price: How do you think James feels right now, as he’s looking out and thinking about the other kids? Taylor?
2. Taylor: Lonely.
3. Ms. Price: Lonely, yeah. How else? June?
4. June: Homesick.
5. Ms. Price: Very homesick, probably.

As this excerpt shows, both teacher and students are taking part in what most would call a traditional classroom “discussion,” one in which the teacher directs each interaction (turn numbers 1, 3, and 5) and students focus their answers directly on the written text (turn numbers 2 and 4). The teacher and students talked *about* texts, rather than constructed meaning *from* them. Thus, the spectator stance is characterized by: (a) teachers initiating questions that have limited numbers of responses (as in turn 1); (b) students responding only to teachers’ questions (as in turns 2 and 4); and (c) teachers evaluating students’ responses according to explicit information in the written text (as in turns 3 and 5).

Though most of the interactions in Ms. Price’s classroom were spectator in nature, Wegmann identified interactions that took place where Ms. Price and her students actively tried to understand the text, by exploring possibilities or building connections between their personal lives and the texts they studied. When Ms. Price and her students did these things with their language, Wegmann identified these interactions as “participant” stances. The Participant Stance is characterized in the following ways: (a) language is used in a personally meaningful way (such

as exploring a possibility or investigating a personal inquiry); (b) teachers and students are open to various topics for discussion (raised by a text, a peer, or a teacher); and (3) teachers and students accept multiple perspectives on topics at hand. Wegmann characterized *moves* in the discussion—what participants were doing with their language in order capture the complexity of spoken language during discussions. The moves within the Participant Stance stood out because they were vastly different from the spectator stance. These moves include:

1. Tries to wonder (common to both teachers and students)
2. Tries to connect a new topic with a personal experience (common to both teachers and students)
3. Tries to express an opinion (common to both teachers and students)
4. Teacher tries to encourage students to express an opinion (teachers only)
5. Students try to clarify own ideas (students only).

It is these moves that characterize the Participant Stance. Assuming a Participant Stance during literary discussions seemed to deepen participation and to encourage students to more fully connect with whatever text they were discussing. Ms. Price engaged her students in genuine discussions (Dillon, 1994) and grand conversations about texts (Eeds & Wells, 1989). The teacher frequently asked students to consider multiple perspectives and to share their opinions about what they read. Verified in students' interviews, Ms. Price's students seemed to enjoy the activities she planned and seemed to connect deeply with the novels they read together.

Educational Importance of the Participant Stance

Lindfors (1991) suggests that teachers may play many roles in classrooms including: provider, demonstrator, learner, observer, and responder. Teachers provide purposeful experiences in which to use language, demonstrate their own struggles with literacy, learn about concepts along with students, observe students' attempts at language growth, and respond to students' language development by supporting and encouraging them. These roles are quite different from traditional roles of teachers that can be characterized by dispensing prepackaged information and transmitting knowledge.

In the realm of classroom discourse, teachers may support or constrain students' language growth by encouraging a Participant Stance. Experts maintain that language is purposeful and can be used for various functions: (a) to aesthetically respond to a text (Rosenblatt, 1994); (b) to engage with a subject matter while reading (Routman, 1994); (c) to enrich an understanding of a complex idea (Goodman, 1986); or (d) to communicate an idea with another person (Berthoff, 1981). These functions are supported by a Participant Stance, which includes genuine class discussions (Dillon, 1994), or interactions that are characterized by student-to-student interchanges, multiple perspectives, and an attention to students' interests. In classrooms, the conversation is meaningfully sustained when teachers and students work together to create

communication events (Gallas et al., 1996), such as those found when teachers and students assume a Participant Stance.

Students who assume a Participant Stance typically make choices in determining texts or topics to read, write, or talk about, which is similar to a meaning-oriented focus found in whole language instruction (Goodman, 1986). Advocates of both integrated language arts and literature-based instruction, two approaches to teaching in which teachers may encourage and assume a Participant Stance, maintain that teachers have opportunities to create healthy learning environments (Karolides, 1997; Routman, 1994). These environments are sustained when students are given opportunities to interpret texts, ask critical questions about what they read and write, and adeptly understand language – three important results of enacting a Participant Stance and encouraging classroom teachers to set a participant tone in classroom interactions.

Study #2: The Discussion Filter

Bercaw (2000) explored prospective teachers' understanding of cultures (their own and others') through discussions of culturally relevant children's literature. This ethnographic study of a required course for prospective teachers focused on small group literature discussions. The study led to the finding of the notion of the Discussion Filter, which will be discussed at length shortly. In brief, the essence of the Discussion Filter is that one alters or filters what one shares in a given social context based on what the individual believes is acceptable in the given group norms.

This study was conducted in an undergraduate children's literature course in which emphasis was placed on discussions of culturally relevant literature (literature that represents and reflects various cultures). These discussions provided the basis for Teacher Education Students' (TESs) understanding of children, literature, and culture. Bercaw describes culture as a construct encompassing race, assumptions, biases, and privilege as well as daily habits of living. One reason this course was chosen as a research site was that a large part of the class sessions was devoted to whole-class and small-group discussions where TESs had the opportunity to engage in sharing their voices and listening to others' voices (Dillard 1997; Gollnick, 1992; Klassen-Endrizzi & Ruiz, 1995; Pinsent, 1997; Taxel, 1989).

The corpus of data includes: field notes taken during each class session, some of which were videotaped; audio-tapes of 12 small group literature discussions; paper copies of web-based literature discussion correspondence between TESs and elementary students; listserv discussions; and individual semi-structured interviews of class members (three interviews each, in the beginning, middle and end of the course). Data were analyzed through the constant comparative method where the theoretical perspective is grounded in and informed by the data (Erlandson, et al., 1993). Analysis involved the implementation of the funneling structure of inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) where the inquiry became increasingly focused on what motivated individuals toward social transformation. Patterns and themes emerged from analysis of reading, analyzing and synthesizing the various data sources (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Data were coded to identify salient categories.

The concept of the Filter emerged in one of the early class discussions when Deborah (pseudonym) was conveying a story about her visit to a predominantly African-American school. As she spoke, she seemed uncomfortable with word choices such as “low socioeconomic” and “African-American.” Each time she said African-American her voice became noticeably softer. Her body language also showed some element of discomfort as she wiped her forehead and shook her head, as she appeared to search for the words to use. She even articulated how she was feeling “tense” about sharing. Although Deborah’s discomfort in sharing could be attributed to many other factors such as discomfort sharing in a large group, struggling with remembering the details of the conversation, or her general style of speaking, subsequent interviews confirmed that the hesitations and voice intonation had to do with the perceived delicate subject matter and her uncertainty about how her comments might be perceived by her classmates and the instructor.

The concept of a Discussion Filter emerged from the analysis of whole class discussions, literature discussion groups, and individual interviews. The concept was informed by two tenets of critical theory: 1) the critical examination of self and 2) the development of voice through conversation (Delpit, 1995; Freire, 1973/1990; Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Within the concept of voice development, there lies an assumption that one will share truthfully and genuinely one’s thoughts and beliefs with others. Truthful and “genuine” (Dillon, 1994) conversations, however, do not always occur, particularly when the issue is a difficult one about culture, race, race relations, and other topics related to culture. The hindrance to truthful and genuine conversations can be attributed to many causes including one’s lack of clarity on his or her position on certain issues or one’s choice to not share what one believes. Expanding on the example from Deborah, the individual may not be sure if, in a scholarly setting, she should share that she does not know if it is acceptable to say “Black” or “African-American.” She may be more accustomed to saying “Black.” However, given the academic environment, she shares what she believes to be more acceptable by the scholarly group, “African-American.”

Individual Filters

As the semester progressed, Bercaw noted where the Filter appeared. In individual interviews, she probed into what constituted each individual’s filter. TESs were asked for their insights into the idea of a filter. Many of the interviews evolved into discussions about voice and whether the TESs had the opportunity to share their voices in class discussions, literature discussions groups, and web-based discussions. Although the literature discussion groups allowed for opportunities to explore issues of cultural identity and race, race relationships and related topics, TESs agreed the discussions did not reach the depth they would have liked. The interviews further informed the developing concept of a Filter in that the reasons for filtering differed slightly for each person. While each TES acknowledged a Filter, each also stated reasons as to why each filtered what she did in the discussions. While there were differences, there were also commonalities between them: the desire to be “right” and the desire to share socially accepted ideas (e.g., politically correct ideas).

One reason that was common to all TESs was a desire to be “right” and to contribute fully articulated thoughts. In other words, class discussions were not viewed as places to *work through* one’s beliefs and assumptions, but as arenas to share established, polished thoughts. For

example, Deborah commented that she perceived others as being more knowledgeable about children's literature and stated in an interview, "I feel like I have to have something mastered before I can really discuss it...Maybe it's a lack of self-esteem, but it didn't feel like others were interested in what I had to say." Further, she felt intimidated by the "good students" in the class. Sarah gives another perspective on the importance of being right. She commented that when addressing controversial or difficult subject matters, one needs to "be careful and make sure you say things right." By "right" she means one says what one intended to say.

A second reason that was the hesitation to share beliefs they felt were not "PC" [politically correct]. Class discussions were not viewed as places to be necessarily genuine with beliefs they thought would not be accepted; discussions were perceived as arenas to share ideas that were socially acceptable. Several TESs stated in individual interviews that they filter what they share because of their respective religious faiths. They perceived that their views were not "PC." One TES acknowledged that few people shared her perspectives, but that she deemed it important to express her thoughts. Her filter was motivated by making sure her perspective was shared cautiously, especially since her views were not popular in given settings; she therefore "carefully selected" what she shared. She also admitted to guarding what she said in her classes because she feels most professors are liberal and often will dismiss her faith-informed views. Another TES shared that she hesitated to share because her ideas, informed by her Christian faith, were not "PC." She stated:

As I shared my response, I thought, 'It's not cool to be Christian.' It's not PC because of it being so narrow-minded and conservative and all these other things. So my first instinct was to not even mention that I believed the stories of the Bible that he was talking about. And then I thought, 'That's kind of crazy. Is this not who I am?' It was scary to put on the list serve because somebody could shoot me down when you leave yourself vulnerable like that. When it's something so important to you, you're leery of someone damaging it somehow or attacking you...I do feel like I had voice. But I was really listening to myself think before I'd say things in discussions.

The words with which she spoke of the consequences are powerful: shot down, vulnerable, damage, and attack. One must ask, then, what conditions allowed her to take the risks involved, and share her genuine reactions to the article, and in so doing, exposing herself to potential attack? Madeline identified two factors that influenced her decision to share: (1) she was true to the assignment of responding with one's "initial reactions," and (2) she acknowledged she needs to be true to her beliefs (not compartmentalizing school from personal life).

Educational Importance of the Discussion Filter

Initially the Filter was identified as a negative construct that hindered genuine conversations. Evidence of this negative aspect of the Filter was found in Deborah's struggle when speaking about cultural issues and Madeline's conscious decision to not filter her statements. If members of the class were sharing "acceptable" words and ideas, then the discussions would fail to reach a level where participants grappled with tough issues of culture and in doing so develop their own voice. The Filter would take whatever assumptions or questions one had and alter them to meet group expectations of what is "right." In this sense, the

Filter hinders one from bringing to the discussion ideas or questions that contradict what is socially or academically acceptable. The Filter hinders communication and grappling with issues by preventing dissenting opinions from what is deemed acceptable from being shared.

Although the Filter was initially seen as having negative implications, Bercaw began to explore its possible positive implications. Kate Lee's captured the essence of positive implications of the Filter when she stated in the final interview:

I feel like we have to listen even more carefully to what other people want to be called, to what other think is their right, because we are contributing still to the oppression of that group. I think that even my issue is how do my African-American friends feel about being called African-Americans?

This statement was profound in light of that the Filter could serve a positive role in heightening awareness of issues of race, culture, ethnicity, and power. For example, how certain groups of people are labeled might demonstrate this notion of heightened awareness. In choosing any label, one might reflect on the various implications of using a label and be sensitive to these various implications. The choice of label, however, is secondary to the heightened sensitivity to implications of the labels we use. There is power in descriptors, and each term is packed with meaning and assumptions.

This course in children's literature was designed to provide opportunities to explore culture and refine voice. Yet these opportunities generally resulted in superficial conversations. Interviews with the TESs revealed various reasons why they filtered their contributions to the discussions. When one implements discussions as part of the classroom practice, one must have a clear goal for the discussions. If, as in the children's literature course, the instructor's goal is for voice development, one must acknowledge the existence of a Filter. By explicitly stating that class discussions are a place where beliefs and assumptions are explored, the expectations would allow the TESs the freedom to delve deeply into what they believe and the implications of those beliefs upon their pedagogy. Indeed, raising consciousness about the Filter is a discussion in itself where we can note where and why we filter what we share publicly. Beyond acknowledging the existence of the Filter and making it explicit, instructors need to slow the pace of discussions to allow participants opportunity to formulate and articulate their beliefs and assumptions. Further, instructors need to emphasize in words and actions that in such discussions there are no "right answers" and all contributions will be treated with respect, including ideas that may seem in opposition to the instructor's.

The Intersection of the Participant Stance and the Discussion Filter

The exploration of literature discussions in light of both one's stance and one's filter offers insights for both teachers and students to deepening the level of genuine discussions. The authors explored the phenomenon of discussions where teachers foster and encourage students' genuine voice and diverse perspectives in response to literature. The authors contend that the discussions can only be as genuine as what the participants bring to the discussion. While Wegmann explored how teachers manage to facilitate interactions that support multiple perspectives and genuine discussions, Bercaw explored how students manage to subtly resist

genuine discussions through filtering their comments in what they perceive is correct in the given social context. In other words, while teachers may encourage genuine responses to literature, students bring to the conversations filters, which hinder genuine conversations. We therefore explore what other sociocultural norms are active in discussion and inquiry and how teachers can help students negotiate their individual filters, clarify their respective voices, and value other's perspectives.

Intersecting Themes

Upon analysis of the Wegmann and Bercaw studies, several themes emerged from their respective findings. These include: (1) Awareness—students' awareness of discussion dynamics; (2) Voice—students' ability to share genuinely and critically one's perspective and ability to hear others' perspectives; and (3) Diversity—teachers' use of class discussions in light of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Awareness. Findings from both studies have implications for teachers and teacher educators. Though the two studies were conducted in different levels of classrooms (elementary and university), implications from each can and do inform the other. A teacher's awareness of the Participant Stance is important for both classroom teachers and teacher educators. The teacher needs to make his/her students aware of what stance entails, model the different types of stances (e.g., spectator versus participant) and begin to unpack what each looks and sounds like. By making the stance explicit, teachers and students can negotiate what norms are expected in classroom discussions. For example, what looks and sounds like a spectator stance to the teacher and other students may well be a quiet, reflective *participation* by the student. A student may explain that his/her participation is more explicit in one's written work. The teacher (and other students) may then engage in discussing how more quiet, reserved students show their participating stance.

Likewise when the Filter is made explicit to students it can be negotiated. Given the positive consequences of the Filter, it is important for the teacher to highlight that certain filters are important for maintaining a safe environment, especially while rapport between all classroom participants is building. An awareness of the Filter can make students conscious of when, why and how they filter what they share. Some things may *need* to be filtered (e.g., a student recognizes that referring to a certain group by a term which one is *accustomed* to saying may be harmful because of its derogatory nature). An awareness of one's filter (when, why and how) can then lead toward one negotiating one's way around it. One might ask, "Why am I uncomfortable talking about this?" and begin to critically examine underlying beliefs and attitudes.

Certainly a student's awareness of his/her stance and how one filters his/her comments is not enough; an awareness of one's stance and filter necessitates action. When one is aware of the dynamics at work in a literature discussion, one can be more deliberate in how one participates. Awareness leads to the student's ability to *choose* how and what one contributes to the discussion.

Voice. The notion of *voice* is one that is discussed in various fields of study (e.g., critical theory, multicultural education, teacher education). Voice entails one's ability to represent one's

thoughts (beliefs, perceptions, assumptions, etc.) publicly, either in writing or dialogue. Bercaw (2000) claims that one important activity for developing voice is engagement in critical discussions and the connections made between people through these discussions. It is through connections with others of diverse cultures that individual voices are shared, heard, and refined. The greater the connections to others, the less “otherness” individuals will have (Delpit, 1995; Dillard, 1997; Gollnick, 1992; Hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995). For elementary students, voice means the ability to synthesize thoughts and share them; it also means the ability to listen to others’ voices and to begin to see things from others’ perspectives. For teacher education students, voice entails the critical examination of self (via reflection), critical examination of one’s world and larger social context, and three taking action on social injustices ascertained through one’s critical examination of self and society.

Literature discussions can provide opportunities for both elementary students and prospective teachers to critically examine their beliefs and the justices and injustices of their society (through reading and responding to literature) (Bercaw, 2000; Moller, 2002). In the earlier transcript of the Participant Stance, Wegmann demonstrated this through a class discussion of the book James and the Giant Peach the students dealt with the injustices shown to the main character James. Because students were accustomed to sharing their feelings about texts, they knew that the classroom discussion time was an appropriate platform to negotiate how they felt about James’ situation and how they could deal with situations in their own lives. Evidence of exploring voice in Bercaw’s study involves the discussion of Morning Girl, by Michael Dorris, where one student challenged how the author highlights one culture over another in the discussion of Morning Girl:

What kind of research did he [Michael Dorris] do? He’s making some assumptions about human nature and their culture that I think I would probably question...I think he assumed that while Western culture is open to criticism, this culture [the native Bahamian culture], is not open [to criticism].

In this example, Jane was sharing her belief that the author may have glorified one culture only to put down another.

The opportunities available to students in literature discussions, however, are only as good as the discussions themselves. Voice is directly affected by the Participant Stance and the Filter. Numerous researchers have verified that some discussions do not portray the characteristics of genuine classroom discussions (Cazden, 1988; Dillon, 1994; Mehan, 1979). In fact, most teachers do not encourage students to express their voice and assume a Participant Stance. Other classrooms do not encourage students to explore which filters they may possess.

Diversity. Along with teachers and students being aware of the stance they assume and the filters they possess, both studies also suggest that culturally diverse learners may deal with classroom discussions in vastly different ways. For example, a mainstream teacher who is encouraging a Participant Stance may find a non-mainstream student resisting [the urge] to join in the discussion, if the student feels that he/she should not participate in this kind of activity with an authority figure. In other words, cultural norms about teacher/student relationships might shut down an English as a Second Language student’s participation in a literature discussion.

Bercaw suggests that various Filters shape and define what participants share, based on what they perceive their group members will deem acceptable.

Along with diversity among students, Bercaw's study suggested that one benefit of literature discussions about non-mainstream cultures is for teacher education students to be exposed to cultures other than their own. In fact, the use of children's literature as a means for teacher education students to hear multiple voices is supported by various scholars including Taxel (1989), Gollnick (1992), Klassen-Endrizzi and Ruiz (1995), Dillard (1997), Pinsent (1997), and Moller (2002). There are two purposes in implementing culturally relevant children's literature. First, this type of literature provides opportunities for the readers (in this case, teacher education students) to hear other voices. Literature allows teacher education students to "vicariously experience their own culture as well as that of others" (Desai, 1997, p. 166). Second, culturally relevant literature provides an impetus for conversation about issues raised through the story (Desai, 1997; Klassen-Endrizzi & Ruiz, 1995; Pinsent, 1997). The literature is the impetus for students to see themselves and others represented in the stories.

Conclusion

Both Wegmann's and Bercaw's studies explored the nature of classroom interactions during literature discussions. By understanding different stances and by understanding how one filters what one shares, classroom teachers can better support or facilitate genuine literature discussion environments. Considering the studies together highlights the dynamics of discussions and how prospective teachers' awareness of their stance and their respective filters affect the depth of the literature discussions. Further, this piece explores methods of discourse analysis and suggests that oral classroom discourse is a complicated phenomenon, worthy of complex ways of measurement. As such, discourse analysis can more accurately portray what actually occurs in classrooms by investigating stances of participants as well as attending to discussion Filters which may influence public speech. This piece explored three areas within classroom discussions: awareness, voice, and diversity. Given that literature discussions are a viable means of responding to, connecting to and comprehending the written word, analysis of the dynamics of literature discussions is imperative to ascertain how students participate. Though this paper is a conceptual piece synthesizing two studies, future inquiry involves how the awareness and action upon the Participant Stance and the Discussion Filter affects students' connection to and comprehension of the literature.

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wwwdotphonicsdotcom

Cynthia D. Bertelsen

Susan Kauffman

Krista Howard

Lessie L. Cochran

PHONICS! This word often conjures up images of enjoyable, interactive activities or repetitive, passive worksheets. Depending on the instructors' knowledge and access to resources, one of these images will be more prevalent. According to Stahl & Stahl (1998), teachers should incorporate principles of "good phonics instruction" into their classroom by (a) developing the alphabetic principle and phonological awareness skills and (b) providing sufficient practice in reading words, since the purpose of phonics is to help children learn to recognize and read the words they encounter in print. Good phonics instruction should not teach rules, use worksheets, dominate instruction, and does not have to be boring.

One way to encourage and invite active student participation in good phonics instruction would be to incorporate technology. Since today's students are often more comfortable using computers, they might find learning more engaging by using web sites, rather than traditional paper and pencil activities. The authors sought to catalog web sites that might help teachers provide good phonics instruction.

Developing the Rubrics for Evaluating Web Sites

The authors looked at several different websites to find rubrics that could be used to evaluate web sites. Many rubrics contained similar elements, such as ease of navigation, appearance of site, number of links, and presence of phonics content. We explored the wording, the layouts and the evaluation scales. Next, we looked at the rubric designs. We highlighted items from the various rubrics; these items were then discussed and narrowed down to ten items. We made a final rubric to evaluate the different phonics web sites using these standard criteria. The newly created rubric had 10 items organized into 3 categories. The first three items related to content, content accuracy, and spelling/grammar. The second set included site layout, graphics and colors, and links. The last set consisted of four items that supplemented the web sites with additional contact information, last updates, reference to national or state standards, and extension to other environments.

We scored promising phonics web sites according to the items we created. The scoring followed a three-tier system, with three being the highest and one being the lowest. (See [Table 1](#) for a listing of the items and scoring criteria.) A score of three on each of these items would indicate a web site included: a wealth of phonic information that was *accurate* and without errors, was *attractive* and usable with many *graphics and colors*, had *three or more* additional live *links*, was *recently updated* with *contact information*, included *connections to standards*, and had *extensions to home/parents*.

After speaking with others who were teaching phonic courses, we came to the conclusion that the rubric related well to teachers needs but it did not seem to transfer in the same manner to the students. Thus we made modifications to the existing teacher rubric and developed a separate student rubric ([Table 2](#)).

Table 1: Web Site Evaluation - Teacher

Name of web site: _____ Date Visited: _____

URL: _____

Intended Audience:	Primary	Both	Intermediate
Item	3	2	1
Content	Offers a wealth of information about specific phonics skills	Offers limited information about specific phonics skills	Lacks information about specific phonics skills
Content Accuracy	All information is accurate	Some information is accurate	Site not accurate
Spelling/Grammar	No errors in spelling and grammar	1 -5error in spelling and grammar	More than 5 errors in spelling and grammar
Layout	Attractive and usable layout-easy to find information	Useable layout, but somewhat difficult to find information	Cluttered or confusing layout, unable to locate information
Links	Three or more additional, working links included	1-2 additional, working links included	Additional links included, with at least one working
Contact Information	Contact person or information included	Contact person included but lacks information	No contact person or information included
Graphics and Color	Very interesting, does not distract reader	Somewhat interesting, does not distract reader	Not interesting or available, distracts reader
Last Updated	1 day to 6 months since last update	7 months to 1 year since last update	Over a year since last update or no date on site
Standards	Standards posted on site	Standards linked to site	Standards not available
Extension to Other Environments	Many activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school	Few activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school	No activities and ideas provided to extend learning at home/school

Total Column Points: _____

Total Points _____ /30

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Table 2: Web Site Evaluation - Students

Name of web site: _____ Date Visited: _____

URL: _____

Intended Audience:	Primary	Both	Intermediate
	Item	3	2
Content	Has more than 3 phonics activities	Has 2 or 3 phonics activities	Has 1 or 0 phonics activities
Content Accuracy	All information is accurate	Has 1 inaccurate piece of information	Has 2 or more inaccurate pieces of information
Spelling/Grammar	There are no errors in spelling and grammar	There is 1 error in spelling or grammar	There are 2 or more errors in spelling or grammar
Graphics and Color	Interesting, adds to site content	Interesting but does not add to content and is not distracting	Uninteresting, none are on the site, or they are distracting
Layout	Easy to find desired phonics game or activity	Somewhat difficult to find desired phonics game or activity	Difficult to find desired phonics game or activity
Directions	Directions are clear and easy to follow	Directions are somewhat confusing but can be figured out easily once game begins	Directions are confusing and difficult to figure out even after game has begun
Speed of Presentation	Speed of presentation controlled by user's input	Speed of presentation a little too fast or too slow	Speed of presentation is much too fast or too slow
Feedback	Errors are treated neutrally & consequences do not reinforce incorrect responses	Errors are not treated in a negative manner	Errors are treated in a negative manner or are reinforced
Activity Completion	End of activity is apparent or can escape easily	End of activity is apparent but cannot escape easily	End of activity is not apparent and cannot escape easily
Parent or Teacher Information	Goals of activities are listed and there are 3 or more extension activities suggested	Purpose of activity is listed and there are 1 or 2 extension activities suggested	No goals or purposes are stated and there are no extension activities

Total Column Points: _____

Total Points _____ /30

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When creating the student rubric, we kept the same three-tiered ranking system, but made modifications to five of the ten items. The five unchanged items included *content*, *content accuracy*, *spelling/grammar*, *layout*, and *graphics/colors*. The other five items were modified to represent areas directly related to student learning. We wanted to find out whether or not the *directions* were clear and easy to follow. We looked at *speed of presentation* especially since children with special needs may have shorter attention spans. We also wanted to find out if the program gave *feedback* to the students for correct/incorrect responses. Another consideration was *activity completion* (i.e., something clearly saying that this activity was over). If students had gone through the activity a couple of times and wanted to quit, could they simply stop, or go on to some other links? Our final category was the presence of *parent or teacher links* to further student activities.

Using the Rubrics

We paired up to locate and evaluate the web sites. Each pair searched for sites via the Internet (various search engines as well as colleagues' recommendations). We used key words such as phonics, language arts, phonemic awareness, early reading, and early childhood special education to search for sites. The pairs independently evaluated the list of sites and determined their top ten. Then we came together to discuss our rankings. Each of us examined the sites from our own perspective—one coming from the general education perspective, a second from the special education perspective, a third from the primary (1-3) grades perspective, and a final from the middle (4-6) grades perspective. During this shared meeting, the two public school teachers focused on sites that their students enjoyed interacting with and/or that they could use to supplement the K-6 curriculum, whereas, the teacher educators focused on sites with accurate content, clear connections to standards, and links of theory to practice. The teacher educators eliminated sites with a large percentage of ads and retained sites with suggested lesson plans.

Interestingly, we found that pairs had identified at least five of the same web sites (starred in list) and ranked them within the combined list of twenty sites. Each of the twenty sites was re-evaluated to determine the top ten. These ten are listed alphabetically in [Table 3](#), without regard to rankings.

Using Websites for Instructional Purposes

One use for web sites is to help teachers better meet their curriculum and standards. Teachers have an opportunity to modify information on the web site to match their individual curricular needs. For example, one author changed the words in a game on the website (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonic>) so that the words she selected matched the word wall words she introduced that week. The words were also used as a review for last week's words. Students also could use this approach, independently, at computer and ABC centers. Some sites were directly linked to state standards (<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities>) while other sites referenced grade-level standards (http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html).

Another use is to assist teachers as they address early reading development. All grade levels need to emphasize reading, but the lower grades should focus on early reading foundations such as alphabet recognition, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and word recognition

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonics>). Some states have placed a greater emphasis on incorporating phonics into their reading programs. Teachers are expected to identify students who are having trouble with basic reading skills. If they are not identified as young children, the likelihood of developing difficulties increases as the children mature. Preschool and

Table 3: List of Web Sites for Good Phonics Instruction**Websites for Phonics: Children**

1. Between the Lions: Get Wild About Reading developed by the Public Broadcasting System (2002) * <http://pbskids.org/lions/>
2. Chateau Meddybemps/Fun and Games created in 1995 by Jerry Jindrich (2003) <http://www.meddybemps.com/letterary/index.html>
3. Game Goo: Learning that Sticks created by Cognitive Concepts, Inc. (2001) <http://www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/gooeyhome.html>
<http://www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/gooey.html>
4. Words and Pictures developed by British Broadcasting Company (2000) * <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/wordsandpictures/phonics>

Websites for Phonics: Teachers

5. A-Z Teachers Stuff Network created by a classroom teacher (1997; 2002) * <http://atozteacherstuff.com/themes/alphabet.shtml>
6. Can Teach developed by Iram Khan and James Horner (nd) <http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/beginning.html>
7. Phonics Link created by the California Department of Education (2002) * http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html
8. READ*WRITE*NOW Activities for Reading and Writing Fun was a Joint Project of the United States Department of Education, the American Library Association, Pizza Hut, Inc., Scholastic, Inc., Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (1996) <http://www.ed.gov/Family/RWN/Activ97/begin.html>
9. Scholastic developed by Scholastic Book Club (2003) * <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities>

10. Wisconsin Literacy Education and Reading Network Source <http://www.wilearns.com/apps/>

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middle-grade teachers are held accountable for teaching early reading skills, which left unaddressed, could lead to deficiencies in the older children.

Web sites can be used as resources for parents. Teachers encourage parents to get involved in the schools. Through newsletters, parents are informed about web sites that are applicable to reading strategies generally and phonic skills in specifically. Parents and children can make use of specific sites identified in the newsletter, such as games they might play together. This opportunity enables children to play on the web without interruption and interact with their parents at the same time (<http://pbskids.org/lions/>). Some students we have worked with have reported that they enjoyed this option because they had more time to play at home than at school. Older students and their parents might use the web sites to support school instruction (<http://www.meddybemps.com/letterary/index.html>). This is a good way to review material without completing worksheets. The parents of children, who have problems with a particular sound, can log on and get ideas to further the home/school connection. If there was a particular sound the class is working on in spelling, this too can be placed in the newsletter so parents could encourage their children at home.

Web sites might be used to gather assessment information on students. Teachers could use phonics web sites for two different forms of assessment. First, websites can be used for informal assessment purposes. For example, teachers can format many activities found on each site to assess students' knowledge of phonics. Second, websites may contain copies of formal assessments available for teacher use. For example, the University of Oregon developed the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Assessment for K-3 teachers. "This assessment instrument is a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. They are designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills" (<http://dibels.uoregon.edu/>). Both assessment options can be used to help identify students who are having trouble with these basic skills. According to one of the authors, who used the DIBELS assessment in her class, this assessment tool helped her identify the specific phonic skills needed by her students.

Web sites provide valuable resources for teachers. Several of the web sites include copies of lesson plans (i.e., <http://atozteacherstuff.com/themes/alphabet.shtml>, http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/Phonics_Link/classroom.html) for teachers, and some also allow teachers to submit ideas of their own. Teachers can informally share web sites through grade level or team meetings and regular teacher meetings. The curriculum directors or principals for a more formal presentation can also provide lists of web sites.

Recently, technology has enhanced educational opportunities for teachers, parents and students. The Internet has enabled teachers and parents to work collaboratively in providing extensions to academic learning. Web sites should be colorful, engaging and interactive to

sustain student attention and interest. While doing so, the web sites can also be informative, educational, and beneficial for all stakeholders: teachers, parents, and children. For teachers, web sites can assist in planning and teaching while helping to organize and deliver instruction to individuals and small groups of children. For parents, web sites can increase communication between home and school by assisting the parent with homework and informing them about curricular developments. Finally, the children can use websites to supplement their classroom instruction providing multi-modality learning.

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Finding Contact Zones in English Language Arts: Reaction to the Call to Forum

“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys”

Tom Cloer

It seems those fellow prisoners of Chicano poet Jimmy Santiago Bacca, featured in Bill Moyers’ Language of Life ([1995](#)) PBS series, were wrong. They told Bacca that “Books are stupid. Sissies read books. You couldn’t do nothing with a book. You couldn’t fix a 57 Chevy with a book.” Thus we have the title of Smith and Wilhelm’s ([2002](#)) wonderful work, “*Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*.

We know, however, that about the only things in literacy activities that boys tend to do better than girls are information retrieval and work-related literacy tasks ([Smith and Wilhelm, 2002](#)). So, in fact, one could indeed use, and most probably would need a book to subsequently repair a 57 Chevy. Furthermore, a boy would most likely read such a book better than other texts. So why the title?

Themes of Bacca’s story permeate every nook and cranny of Smith and Wilhelm’s book. Bacca was in jail at seventeen and couldn’t read. He was, as they say in our literacy business, “at risk.” Neither he nor his friends could see any immediate practical results that literacy could provide. However, the real clincher is that Bacca’s life offers us a picture of the potential power of literacy and literature to change lives, as seen in his beautiful poetry. Bacca became interested after having stolen an anthology of the Romantic poets from a female jail clerk, a college girl. Bacca helps us to fight stereotypes. He reminds us of the reality of how untapped potential in boys is the norm of many schools in America, rather than the exception.

I also have encountered the same problem in reporting my research on gender differences that Smith and Wilhelm address so eloquently. They declare that their work “Is not a critique of the impact of feminism. Neither is it an argument that girls are receiving too much attention at the expense of boys” (p. xvii).

I have a feminist daughter whom I have incessantly encouraged, nurtured, and reinforced. My daughter’s world has improved somewhat in her life space. For that, I am ecstatic! It is nonsense, however, to suggest that we male literacy researchers of gender differences are afraid that men are losing the advantage in this society. Smith and Wilhelm ([2002](#)) do a thorough job summarizing why we better be concerned about boys.

While statistics differ somewhat, available databases suggest that boys are four to six times more likely to commit suicide than girls; more than twice as likely to get into fights; three times more likely to be suspended from school; four times as likely to be diagnosed as emotionally disturbed,

depressed, emotionally isolated, or suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder; up to fifteen times more likely to be perpetrators of violent crime (pp. 7-8).

Method: Separating Flow From Blow

I liked the way Smith and Wilhelm gave the transcripts of the students that allow the reader to scrutinize the data firsthand. These researchers, I thought, did a very fine job separating the meaningful talk from the boys' blow.

Smith and Wilhelm worked with 49 males from four different types of middle and high schools. They worked with an urban high school, a diverse comprehensive, regional suburban high school, a rural middle and high school, and a private, all male middle and high school. The achievement levels represented were high achievers, average achievers, and low achievers. There were African Americans, European Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans in their group.

They collected four different kinds of data from these kids. First, they ranked activities from most enjoyed to least enjoyed. These included: listening to music, playing sports, working on a hobby, hanging out with friends, surfing the net, reading a good book, learning something new about a topic of interest, etc. Secondly, they read vignettes or profiles of other males embracing or resisting various kinds of literate activities. The boys in the study read and stated how they were alike or unlike the profiled males in the vignettes, and what they admired and did not admire about them. Thirdly, they were asked to keep track of everything they listened to, watched, read, and wrote in school and at home for a duration of three months. Lastly, they responded to four stories using think-alouds of thinking, feeling, and doing with two action-oriented stories and two reflective stories. In the action-oriented stories, one had a female and the other had a male protagonist/narrator. The same was true with the reflective stories.

Going With the Flow

What mattered with these boys? Flow. Say what? Smith and Wilhelm define flow as losing one's self and becoming so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. For flow to happen, there must be a sense of some control and at least a little competence, a challenge, clear goals and feedback, and a focus on the immediate experience. Boys spending hours, days, and weeks trying to accomplish moves with a skateboard is an example of flow. The boys in this important study did not encounter flow in the literacy activities of school.

I sang "Hal le loo yer" when I encountered Smith and Wilhelm's suggestion after seeing clearly that these boys muddled through school with no sense of control, competence, goals, feedback, or immediacy in the school tasks. The authors stated unapologetically that "Teachers need to provide students with a repertoire of expert strategies for approaching and completing particular tasks" (p. 37). The researchers are putting themselves at risk by saying "Teaching then, should precede development,

leading the learner into uncharted and challenging waters that can be navigated with assistance” (p. 40). Hal le loo yer! Smith and Wilhelm have bought the farm. They will meet with resistance from this brave stand. The boys in this important study did not report receiving any such help.

The boys studied read in an efferent manner ([Rosenblatt, 1978](#)). This is reading for information. An example is Appalachian youngsters reading to find out about the habits of wild turkey because the season would soon open. Aesthetic reading is much more difficult for boys. It is, ironically, the type of reading we teachers relish because of the sheer pleasure we have with reading. Smith and Wilhelm never allude to process versus product, but it is clear that efferent reading puts product first. The process of reading is only important as to how it relates to the product, the information. For example, in Appalachia the product would be the needed information about deer hunting, deer habits, types of hunting allowed, seasons, etc.

One of the most baffling findings was how much importance these males placed on reading. However, school and its reading were to be helpful far off in the future. The authors felt this ensures procrastination, and it allows teachers to avoid a focus on students. We don't have to know the interests and attitudes of students if we are not going to value their interests, use their interests, and make those interests useful. I remember showing a teacher at an inservice session on literacy how to use multiple-response slates and retrieve cognitive and affective feedback data from the children as we taught. The teacher asked, “Why would I need such information? It would not change anything I do.” I sadly replied, “You are correct. Under those constraints, you really don't need the feedback.”

This study's reverberating finding was that boys must see genuine purpose in what they do. After 39 years in the literacy business, I see this as the sine qua non. This leads us directly to the Buddha. It is not as simple, furthermore, as saying that students' interests must be used. One can use the students' interests, and still strike out if the student does not see purpose in the task. The authors said it well, “Purposefulness seemed to be a part of competence” (p. 104).

The authors really stepped up when they said that teaching must change in fundamental ways if we are ever going to seriously deal with a gargantuan problem. (Here it is again!) Do we teach English/Language Arts, or do we teach students? I think these fellows got it right. We must do both. But the students must seek answers to genuine questions that they would actually ask. The ideas and questions must matter to the boys. They must solve real problems and answer real questions. Reading the canon can sometimes involve a form of meaningful inquiry; it ‘ain’t’ always easy. Inquiry is the best way to get flow.

When the Appalachian boys in one of our studies ([Cloer & McMahan, 1994](#)) read to find out what gauge shotgun to use for turkeys, what size shot to chamber, what type of turkey caller works best for beginners, what type of shotgun to use (semi-automatic, pump, over-and-under, single barrel, double barrel, etc.), and students were given the best

periodicals, books, and multimedia resources to answer such questions, it was amazing to see. But, every time a mountaintop experience encourages, gives me a sense of optimism, and causes celebration, someone jolts me back to reality. One unnamed individual made the following statement that best epitomizes the ancient dilemma about students' interests and what we must cover in the curriculum: "Dr. Cloer, I know that adolescent boys would be genuinely interested in reading about —say—bestiality. But I, for one, would stand as firmly against it as I do about hunting." After I gingerly explained about southern community values, and how deeply embedded these traditions were, I pointed out the importance of being able to recognize when we're completely out of the contact zone.

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Gender and Grade Differences in Self-Perceptions as Writers

Thomas Cloer, Jr.
Mary V. Ellithorp

The IRA/NCTE Joint Task Force on Assessment ([1994](#)) did not know that instruments were in the pipeline, as they developed their standards, that might just be able to measure whether or not students showed adverse effects of other types of assessment. In 1994, the task force boldly declared “Regardless of the source or motivation for any particular assessment, states, school districts, schools and teachers must demonstrate how these assessment practices benefit and do not harm individual students”(p.14). This task force declared that the consequences of assessment must be foremost in the mind of literacy educators at all levels. “The consequences of an assessment procedure are the first, and most important consideration in establishing the validity of the assessment”(p.25). The task force started a new era in assessment whereby cognitive gains, the high-stakes testing by states notwithstanding, would not be the only criteria scrutinized. What about the emotional correlates of the schooling? It is obvious by now that we can get children to achieve about anything we literacy educators want them to achieve, as has been demonstrated time and again by data-collecting evangelists with a certain rigid program for lock-step reading ([Allington, 2001](#)). But, there is another question to be asked. Do students savor the flavor of the content and the process after the methodology has brought higher test scores? Do they become lifelong readers and writers? Do they perceive themselves as readers and writers? How do males and females differ on these emotional dimensions?

This study will attempt to address some of these issues by measuring children’s self perceptions as writers at varying grade levels, and analyze gender and grade differences to see if perceptions become more positive or more negative as children advance through the grades.

Review of Literature

There have been several important developments since the Joint Task Force on Assessment presented standards relating to the consequences of assessment. In 1995, The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) was published to measure children’s self-perceptions about their achievement in reading ([Henk & Melnick, 1995](#)). The test measured children’s perceptions about the feedback they were receiving, the progress they felt they were making, how their reading compared with others in their perceptions, and how they perceived themselves as feeling in the act of reading.

In 1996, the Motivation to Read Profile ([Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996](#)) presented both a reading Self-Concept Scale and Value Scale. These scales sought students’ perceived competence in reading and information about the value students placed on different reading activities.

The RSPS and the Motivation to Read Profile both measured self-esteem as a reader and did so with firm research foundations. Literacy educators then had two more excellent affective instruments to use if they wanted to simultaneously measure cognitive and affective effects of a certain literacy project. Two more reading instruments were now available to measure whether or not cognitive training had positive or negative effects on students' emotions. Until the development of these two scales, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (1990) had been the only norm-based affective instrument for elementary and middle grades. It was well researched and had a sound empirical base, but, like the RSPS and the Motivation to Read Profile, did nothing in relation to writing.

The Writer Self-Perception Scale (WSPS) alleviated that problem by systematically measuring how students perceive their performance, both in relation to the task and in relation to peers ([Bottomley, Henk, & Melnick, 1997/1998](#)). The WSPS also measures how children are perceiving the Social Feedback they are receiving from teachers, classmates, and family members. The Physiological States scale measures the child's perception of the internal feelings that are experienced during the act of writing.

Cloer and Pearman ([1993](#)) analyzed gender differences and found that middle-grade girls' attitudes toward recreational reading did not differ significantly from primary girls. Such was not true for boys. Boys' attitudes toward recreational and academic reading deteriorated significantly by the fourth grade. Girls saw academic reading and recreational reading differently in the fourth grade by viewing academic reading negatively. They saw recreational reading as a different and positive endeavor. Fourth grade boys were negative about each.

Cloer and Ross ([1996](#)) demonstrated a high correlation between students' standardized reading test scores and six different measures of students' self-perceptions as measured by Henk and Melnick's (1995) Reader Self-Perception Scale. They raised the question of why a primary child's standardized reading score, from a task that does not resemble an authentic literary endeavor predicts self-esteem as a reader in the fourth grade. Standardized reading tests do not have colorful, predictive, language from exciting, funny, and interesting characters appearing in fanciful and beautiful illustrations that assist with the reading of the engaging literature.

Cloer and Dalton ([2001](#)) showed that six grade boys and girls differed significantly in their self-perceptions as readers on the RSPS when their standardized test scores were not significantly different. They showed also that a group of girls with significantly low standardized reading achievement scores had higher self-esteem as readers than boys who had significantly high standardized reading achievement on the same test. Therefore, for even those in or outside of literacy education who believe significantly poor readers should have lower self-esteem as readers and vice versa, Cloer and Dalton's study causes cognitive dissonance. These subjects' self-esteem as readers in no way coincided with reality as measured by standardized reading tests.

Cloer and Dalton (1999) showed that gender differences appeared as early as second grade on all three scales of the Motivation to Read Profile. They also found that fourth grade girls placed significantly higher value on reading than fourth grade boys, and that fourth graders were significantly lower on all these scales than the second graders in their study.

The specific question that our current study addresses is whether gender and grade differences are evident in students' self-perceptions as writers. Do the students in higher grades score lower as in the studies reviewed? Do boys always score lower than girls? Are there any exceptions on any of the scales? Are males genetically inferior to females in terms of language arts achievement? Are there any data points that would lend hope to males in this regard?

Method

The current study attempted to determine if there were significant gender and grade differences in self-perceptions as writers, as measured by the Writer Self-Perception Scale, for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders. The means of boys versus girls on all five scales and a pupil total or composite score were analyzed using t-tests for independent means. The five scales were General Progress (GENPROG), Specific Progress (SPECPROG), Observational Comparison (OBSCOMP), Social Feedback (SOCFEED), Physiological States (PHYSSTA), and the composite or pupil total (PUPLTOT) score. There were also comparisons made for all fourth graders (boys and girls) versus all fifth graders, and fourth graders versus sixth graders. Finally, the mean scale scores and composite score for all boys in the study were compared to all scores of the girls.

Subjects

The current study included 703 students and 27 teachers from 31 different classrooms in 12 different schools. The schools included urban, suburban, and rural elementary settings. There were 292 fourth graders from 8 different schools, 14 different classrooms, and 13 different teachers. There were 331 fifth graders from seven different schools, 14 different classrooms, and 13 different teachers. There were 80 sixth graders from two different schools, five different classrooms, and two different teachers. One sixth grade teacher also doubled as a fifth grade teacher.

Procedure

The teachers included in the study administered the Writer Self-Perception Scale to the 703 students in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Each of the 38 items is followed by five possible responses from Strongly Agree (5 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point). Children were instructed to read each item and to rate how much they agree or disagree with the statement. The scores on the scales could range from 6 to 45 points. The total score or pupil total could range from 38 to 190 points.

The teachers and students in the study were guaranteed anonymity by selecting a number that only they knew and by submitting student data with the correct corresponding number. Teachers were given written instructions to identify the gender of each child in the study by writing “B” (boy) or “G” (girl) on each WSPS. Teachers were told that the investigators would compute all the data. The teachers were instructed in writing to bind all students’ WSPS scales together and to make sure that the same number appeared on every child’s WSPS.

Results

Table 1 gives the means, standard deviations, and number of cases for all the scales and total pupil scores for fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Note the decrease in means as students advance in grade level. Further analyses will determine if these means are significantly different.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations on WSPS for Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades

Variable	Mean Fourth Grade (N=392)	S.D.	Mean Fifth Grade (N=410)	S.D.	Mean Sixth Grade (N=80)	S.D.
GENPROG	34.61	4.597	33.65	5.195	32.630	6.001
SPECPROG	29.09	4.559	28.76	5.030	27.090	6.271
OBSCOMP	28.24	6.753	28.65	6.871	26.24	6.310
SOCFEED	26.52	5.164	25.98	5.280	24.410	5.780
PHYSSTA	22.38	5.759	21.78	5.609	19.550	6.800
PUPLTOT	140.89	20.105	138.82	22.439	130.040	26.800

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Table 2 gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for the fourth grade. There was one significant difference on the Physiological States scale favoring the girls. The girls perceived themselves as having more positive internal feelings during writing than boys. The good news is that this sample of male and female fourth graders from 14 different classrooms in varied school settings did not show significant differences that have shown up much earlier in another study in motivation to read, self-concept as a reader, and value placed on the act of reading (Cloer and Dalton, 1999).

Table 2

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Four

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	34.625	34.714	-0.167	289
SPECPROG	29.342	29.100	0.471	287
OBSCOMP	28.539	28.100	0.559	290
SOCFEED	27.210	26.550	1.144	280
PHYSSTA	23.132	21.500	2.395*	283
PUPLTOT	142.980	139.964	1.295	288

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N = 152 girls, 140 boys

*p = .017

[Table 3](#) gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for fifth graders. Five of the six variables yielded significant differences in the means for males versus females. In all instances, mean differences favored the girls.

Table 3

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Five

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	33.919	32.772	1.939*	326
SPECPROG	29.344	28.082	2.268**	326
OBSCOMP	29.113	27.854	1.639	329
SOCFEED	26.863	24.807	3.524***	328
PHYSSTA	23.356	20.836	4.267***	320

PUPLTOT	142.594	134.351	3.300***	325
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N = 160 girls, 171 boys

* p = .05

** p = .02

*** p < .001

Table 4 gives t-test results for gender differences on all the variables for sixth graders. Five of the six variables involving the WSPS yielded significant differences in the means for the males versus the females. In all instances, mean differences favored the girls.

Table 4

t-Test Results for Gender Differences, Grade Six

Variable	Mean Girls	Mean Boys	t	df
GENPROG	34.174	30.529	2.526*	43
SPECPROG	29.196	24.235	3.441**	45
OBSCOMP	27.283	24.235	1.659	56
SOCFEED	25.804	22.529	2.463*	56
PHYSSTA	21.870	16.412	3.790***	67
PUPLTOT	138.326	118.529	3.214****	48

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N = 46 girls, 34 boys

* p = .015

**p = .001

***p < .001

****p = .002

When the investigators analyzed the mean differences between all fourth graders (N=392) and all fifth graders (N=410), the means for the General Progress Scale was the

only significant difference ($t=2.79$, 795 df, $p=.005$). However, when mean differences between all the fifth graders and all the sixth graders were analyzed, a very different result was obtained.

[Table 5](#) gives t-test results for differences between the means for all the scores on the WSPS of all fifth graders versus all sixth graders. Five of the six variables yielded significant differences in the means for fifth graders versus sixth graders. In all instances, mean differences favored the younger fifth graders.

Table 5

t-Test Results Between All Fifth and Sixth Graders

Variable	Mean Fifth Grade	Mean Sixth Grade	t	Df
GENPROG	33.649	32.625	1.423	103
SPECPROG	28.763	27.088	2.252*	100
OBSCOMP	28.651	26.238	3.084**	119
SOCFEED	25.983	24.413	2.254*	106
PHYSSTA	21.778	19.550	2.753**	101
PUPLTOT	138.824	129.913	2.788**	102

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N = 410 fifth graders, 80 sixth graders

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

[Table 6](#) gives t-test results for differences in all fourth graders versus all sixth graders. All six variables yielded significant differences in the means for fourth graders versus sixth graders. In all instances, mean differences favored the younger fourth graders over the sixth graders.

Table 6

t-Test Results Between All Fourth and Sixth Graders

Variable	Mean Fourth Grade	Mean Sixth Grade	t	Df
GENPROG	34.615	32.625	2.798*	99
SPECPROG	29.087	27.088	2.708*	97
OBSCOMP	28.291	26.238	2.621*	119
SOCFEED	26.518	24.413	3.021*	106
PHYSSTA	22.378	19.550	3.472**	103
PUPLTOT	140.888	129.913	3.467**	98

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N = 392 Fourth Graders, 80 Sixth Graders

* p < .01

** p < .001

When the investigators analyzed the differences in means for all boys in the study (N=358) versus all girls in the study (N=345), the analysis again yielded significant differences on all six variables in the study. In each instance, mean differences significantly favored the girls.

Discussion

These results agree with the findings obtained from four other studies involving affective measurements of boys' and girls' attitudes and self-perceptions relating to literacy (Cloer & Pearman, 1993; Cloer & Ross, 1996; Cloer & Dalton, 1999, 2001). In each of these studies involving all affective instruments published in the nineties, gender differences occurred before middle school, and in all instances these gender differences favored girls. In each of these studies involving the affective instruments published in the nineties, the higher the grade level, the more likely the score would be lower. This occurred by the end of the primary grades in two of the studies (Cloer & Pearman, 1993; Cloer & Dalton, 1999).

Some might argue that these data tinkering with the affective dimension are simply reflecting what is going on in the cognitive dimension. Girls are superior to boys in literacy endeavors, and boys will "just have to get over it" and blunder forward with their ineptitude. Furthermore, the longer one stays in school, the smarter and more insightful one becomes. It is a clear logical extension that children begin to see

themselves as the wimps they are in literacy, and they just need to get over it already. God help us! Has it come to this?

Many of us in literacy education take exactly the opposite view. First, girls may not be genetically superior to boys, and the differences seen in literacy development may be cultural differences. Furthermore, children are not predestined to be wimps in relation to literacy. Many of us believe, like Purkey and Novack ([1996](#)), that potential is always there, just under the surface, waiting to be invited forth by a caring and competent teacher. Cloer and Pearman ([1993](#)) also found in their study that the amount of time teachers spent reading weekly for their own pleasure predicted children's attitudes in their classes. Those findings from the Cloer and Pearman study suggest that if a child's teacher had a genuine love for reading real literature for real reasons, that teacher was more apt to develop such an attitude in children.

These differences that show girls superior to boys do beg the question "Are there things we can do to change?" The writers believe there are things we can do. Henk and Melnick ([1995](#)), Bottomley, Henk, and Melnick ([1997/1998](#)), and McKenna and Kear ([1990](#)) would have us first measuring and dealing with assessment data that mattered. After using their instruments, these researchers would have us modify classroom practices, revise grouping techniques, and assign reading and writing activities that are enjoyable. They would have us as literary educators use the data from the instruments to monitor individuals throughout the year and from year to year. By doing so, we could help children whose motivation, attitudes, and self-perceptions were below the norm.

Teachers might, if they use these instruments cited, model how to give more frequent and concrete illustrations of progress. They might model how to give opportunities to write in situations that are nonthreatening such as: transformations of songs, poems, chants, etc.; they might model how to use children's literature for writing. Surely we all in the literary business should model the enjoyment, appreciation, relaxation, and gratification that can be gained from writing. Things can change! We remain in the business because of our incurable romanticism, eternal optimism, and our vision of greatness that we have for every child. Come and help.

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Finding Contact Zones in English Language Arts: Reaction to the Call to Forum

“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys”

Tom Cloer

It seems those fellow prisoners of Chicano poet Jimmy Santiago Bacca, featured in Bill Moyers’ Language of Life ([1995](#)) PBS series, were wrong. They told Bacca that “Books are stupid. Sissies read books. You couldn’t do nothing with a book. You couldn’t fix a 57 Chevy with a book.” Thus we have the title of Smith and Wilhelm’s ([2002](#)) wonderful work, *“Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys:” Literacy in the Lives of Young Men.*

We know, however, that about the only things in literacy activities that boys tend to do better than girls are information retrieval and work-related literacy tasks (Smith and Wilhelm, 2002). So, in fact, one could indeed use, and most probably would need a book to subsequently repair a 57 Chevy. Furthermore, a boy would most likely read such a book better than other texts. So why the title?

Themes of Bacca’s story permeate every nook and cranny of Smith and Wilhelm’s book. Bacca was in jail at seventeen and couldn’t read. He was, as they say in our literacy business, “at risk.” Neither he nor his friends could see any immediate practical results that literacy could provide. However, the real clincher is that Bacca’s life offers us a picture of the potential power of literacy and literature to change lives, as seen in his beautiful poetry. Bacca became interested after having stolen an anthology of the Romantic poets from a female jail clerk, a college girl. Bacca helps us to fight stereotypes. He reminds us of the reality of how untapped potential in boys is the norm of many schools in America, rather than the exception.

I also have encountered the same problem in reporting my research on gender differences that Smith and Wilhelm address so eloquently. They declare that their work “Is not a critique of the impact of feminism. Neither is it an argument that girls are receiving too much attention at the expense of boys” (p. xvii).

I have a feminist daughter whom I have incessantly encouraged, nurtured, and reinforced. My daughter’s world has improved somewhat in her life space. For that, I am ecstatic! It is nonsense, however, to suggest that we male literacy researchers of gender differences are afraid that men are losing the advantage in this society. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) do a thorough job summarizing why we better be concerned about boys.

While statistics differ somewhat, available databases suggest that boys are four to six times more likely to commit suicide than girls; more than twice as likely to get into fights; three times more likely to be suspended from school; four times as likely to be diagnosed as emotionally disturbed,

depressed, emotionally isolated, or suffering from Attention Deficit Disorder; up to fifteen times more likely to be perpetrators of violent crime (pp. 7-8).

Method: Separating Flow From Blow

I liked the way Smith and Wilhelm gave the transcripts of the students that allow the reader to scrutinize the data firsthand. These researchers, I thought, did a very fine job separating the meaningful talk from the boys' blow.

Smith and Wilhelm worked with 49 males from four different types of middle and high schools. They worked with an urban high school, a diverse comprehensive, regional suburban high school, a rural middle and high school, and a private, all male middle and high school. The achievement levels represented were high achievers, average achievers, and low achievers. There were African Americans, European Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans in their group.

They collected four different kinds of data from these kids. First, they ranked activities from most enjoyed to least enjoyed. These included: listening to music, playing sports, working on a hobby, hanging out with friends, surfing the net, reading a good book, learning something new about a topic of interest, etc. Secondly, they read vignettes or profiles of other males embracing or resisting various kinds of literate activities. The boys in the study read and stated how they were alike or unlike the profiled males in the vignettes, and what they admired and did not admire about them. Thirdly, they were asked to keep track of everything they listened to, watched, read, and wrote in school and at home for a duration of three months. Lastly, they responded to four stories using think-alouds of thinking, feeling, and doing with two action-oriented stories and two reflective stories. In the action-oriented stories, one had a female and the other had a male protagonist/narrator. The same was true with the reflective stories.

Going With the Flow

What mattered with these boys? Flow. Say what? Smith and Wilhelm define flow as losing one's self and becoming so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter. For flow to happen, there must be a sense of some control and at least a little competence, a challenge, clear goals and feedback, and a focus on the immediate experience. Boys spending hours, days, and weeks trying to accomplish moves with a skateboard is an example of flow. The boys in this important study did not encounter flow in the literacy activities of school.

I sang "Hal le loo yer" when I encountered Smith and Wilhelm's suggestion after seeing clearly that these boys muddled through school with no sense of control, competence, goals, feedback, or immediacy in the school tasks. The authors stated unapologetically that "Teachers need to provide students with a repertoire of expert strategies for approaching and completing particular tasks" (p. 37). The researchers are putting themselves at risk by saying "Teaching then, should precede development,

leading the learner into uncharted and challenging waters that can be navigated with assistance” (p. 40). Hal le loo yer! Smith and Wilhelm have bought the farm. They will meet with resistance from this brave stand. The boys in this important study did not report receiving any such help.

The boys studied read in an efferent manner ([Rosenblatt, 1978](#)). This is reading for information. An example is Appalachian youngsters reading to find out about the habits of wild turkey because the season would soon open. Aesthetic reading is much more difficult for boys. It is, ironically, the type of reading we teachers relish because of the sheer pleasure we have with reading. Smith and Wilhelm never allude to process versus product, but it is clear that efferent reading puts product first. The process of reading is only important as to how it relates to the product, the information. For example, in Appalachia the product would be the needed information about deer hunting, deer habits, types of hunting allowed, seasons, etc.

One of the most baffling findings was how much importance these males placed on reading. However, school and its reading were to be helpful far off in the future. The authors felt this ensures procrastination, and it allows teachers to avoid a focus on students. We don't have to know the interests and attitudes of students if we are not going to value their interests, use their interests, and make those interests useful. I remember showing a teacher at an inservice session on literacy how to use multiple-response slates and retrieve cognitive and affective feedback data from the children as we taught. The teacher asked, “Why would I need such information? It would not change anything I do.” I sadly replied, “You are correct. Under those constraints, you really don't need the feedback.”

This study's reverberating finding was that boys must see genuine purpose in what they do. After 39 years in the literacy business, I see this as the sine qua non. This leads us directly to the Buddha. It is not as simple, furthermore, as saying that students' interests must be used. One can use the students' interests, and still strike out if the student does not see purpose in the task. The authors said it well, “Purposefulness seemed to be a part of competence” (p. 104).

The authors really stepped up when they said that teaching must change in fundamental ways if we are ever going to seriously deal with a gargantuan problem. (Here it is again!) Do we teach English/Language Arts, or do we teach students? I think these fellows got it right. We must do both. But the students must seek answers to genuine questions that they would actually ask. The ideas and questions must matter to the boys. They must solve real problems and answer real questions. Reading the canon can sometimes involve a form of meaningful inquiry; it ‘ain’t’ always easy. Inquiry is the best way to get flow.

When the Appalachian boys in one of our studies ([Cloer & McMahan, 1994](#)) read to find out what gauge shotgun to use for turkeys, what size shot to chamber, what type of turkey caller works best for beginners, what type of shotgun to use (semi-automatic, pump, over-and-under, single barrel, double barrel, etc.), and students were given the best

periodicals, books, and multimedia resources to answer such questions, it was amazing to see. But, every time a mountaintop experience encourages, gives me a sense of optimism, and causes celebration, someone jolts me back to reality. One unnamed individual made the following statement that best epitomizes the ancient dilemma about students' interests and what we must cover in the curriculum: "Dr. Cloer, I know that adolescent boys would be genuinely interested in reading about —say—bestiality. But I, for one, would stand as firmly against it as I do about hunting." After I gingerly explained about southern community values, and how deeply embedded these traditions were, I pointed out the importance of being able to recognize when we're completely out of the contact zone.

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Listening, Speaking, and Writing in a Content Area

Carol Crumbaugh
Pam Schram

"When you write out the [math] problems, you're figuring out how to do it and realizing how the problem works and why it does." (Thomas)

"Writing sentences [about mathematics] is just wasting your lead." (Taylor)

"It doesn't take long to like tell people what you're trying to talk about." (Haley)

What causes children to have such different perspectives about how talking and writing can be helpful to learning mathematics? In this Problems Court paper we explore the question, what can be learned about ways to help children successfully participate in the literacy processes of listening speaking, and writing? Specifically, our aim is to launch an inquiry about what is required from students to successfully participate in listening, speaking, and writing¹ in a content area. We use analysis and excerpts from interviews with 15 third graders to bring students' voices and perceptions about the role of listening, speaking, and writing in their learning of mathematics.

Review of Literature

From various perspectives we know that listening, speaking, and writing are important facets of subject area learning. For example, the sociocultural learning theory of Vygotsky (1978) provides a framework for this Problems Court paper on listening, speaking, and writing. There are at least two ways in which sociocultural learning theory informs the ideas presented here. First, one's use of language to negotiate meaning is central. For Vygotsky, language was the most important psychological tool or sign. As a sign, language mediates learning. Second, Vygotsky emphasized the importance of language on human thought. In his view, meaning originates between individuals. "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level: first *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*)" (p. 57). That is, through speech in the social or external domain, the child transforms and internalizes what is learned. What the child knew previously is internally reconstructed. If so, it seems that talking—and its companion, listening—are strategic to learning.

¹ We acknowledge the importance of reading in a content area. However, in this paper,

we focus on the literacy processes of listening, speaking, and writing.

In addition, the studies by Douglas Barnes and Courtney Cazden (among others) support the primacy of classroom talk in learning. For example, Barnes (1992) described the ways in which children use exploratory talk to tentatively work at “rearranging their thoughts during improvised talk” (p. 108). To Barnes, children used exploratory talk on the way to final draft language, “which amounts to a formal completed presentation for a teacher’s approval” (p. 108). Cazden (1986) stated that spoken language “is the medium by which much teaching takes place and in which students demonstrate to teachers much of what they know” (p. 432). Considered in this way, classroom discourse merits thoughtful consideration when exploring student learning in content areas.

Burbules (1993) expanded the role of talk, or speaking, to that of something more dynamic. Burbules used the term “dialogical relation” to describe a relation between people in the context of discussion, a relation “to ‘carry away’ its participants, to ‘catch them up’ in an interaction that takes on a force and direction of its own, often leading them beyond any intended goal to new and unexpected insights” (p. 20). In this view, talk appears to be suspended from traditional classroom conversations; conversations are dependent on participants and their interaction.

To summarize, language may be seen to support learning by the way in which it is used to negotiate meaning, to explore thought, to teach and to learn, and to enter into a dialogical relation with another. When consideration of literacy development is extended, it is logical that teachers of all content areas would appreciate the language demands of their particular fields. And what of listening, speaking, and writing in mathematics?

The ideas above, regarding the roles of talk and language in learning, can be applied to a content area such as mathematics. Clearly, the leading organization in mathematics education, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), places value in mathematical discourse, viewing discourse as “ways of representing, thinking, talking, and agreeing and disagreeing” (NCTM, 1991, p.20). In subject area learning, as students become literate, they learn to communicate their understandings. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2000) assert the following regarding communication:

Communication is an essential part of mathematics and mathematics education. It is a way of sharing ideas and clarifying understanding. Through communication, ideas become objects of reflection, refinement, discussion, and amendment. The communication process also helps build meaning and permanence for ideas and makes them public. When students are challenged to think and reason about mathematics and to communicate the results of their thinking to others orally or in writing, they learn to be clear and convincing. Listening to others’ explanations gives students opportunities to develop their own understandings. (p. 60)

Implied but not specified in these dynamics are norms of participation in teaching and learning that differ from traditional mathematics teaching. Also implied but not specified is the idea that teachers and students are able to navigate mathematical discourse through the use of listening and speaking. However, little guidance is given teachers (and students) regarding the new roles and responsibilities that participation in such discourse carries. In addition, NCTM

advocates that mathematics teaching and learning include such dynamic processes as reasoning and problem solving, again without specific assistance to teachers as to how they might go about choreographing these processes.

Others (e.g., NCTM, 1991, 2000; [Countryman, 1992](#)) advocate that writing in mathematics classes can help students make sense of mathematics by, clarifying their thinking, constructing arguments, posing questions, reflecting about their work, and developing new approaches for solving problems. Burns ([1995](#)) stated, “Writing encourages students to examine their ideas and reflect on what they have learned” (p. 13). Underscoring Barnes’s ([1992](#)) notion of exploratory talk, one could deduce the value through writing of students’ increasing ability to clarify understandings. In addition, there is a uniquely reflective component to writing. McCallum and Whitlow ([1994](#)) argue that understanding patterns in mathematics shares many commonalities to the way in which children come to understand the patterns in language use.

To summarize, when applied to the content area of mathematics, the literacy process of listening, speaking, and writing are vital to the growth of students’ mathematical thinking. The nation’s leading professional organization in mathematics education purported benefits to students engaged in these literacy processes when they wrote, “Students who have opportunities, encouragement, and support for speaking, writing, reading, and listening in mathematics classes reap dual benefits: they communicate to learn mathematics, and they learn to communicate mathematically” (NCTM, 2000, p. 60). The key is to provide students with the opportunities to engage in such literacy processes.

Setting

To provide context for our discussion in this Problems Court, we describe a specific third grade classroom and our experiences in this class during mathematics instruction. The setting is a third grade classroom in an elementary school in northwestern North Carolina. One of the authors co-teaches mathematics in this classroom. In this third grade classroom, students sat at desks clustered in groups of four and five. In these clusters, students regularly worked in pairs or small groups to discuss and work on tasks. The teachers fostered norms of participation where students were provided with rich, hands-on tasks and expected to communicate their emerging mathematical ideas while listening to one another. The teachers planned for discussion and disagreement, listening carefully to student responses in order for mathematical thinking to build through discourse. Teacher questions were open-ended, with follow-up questions that probed students’ reasoning (Tell us more about... What do others think? Do you agree/disagree?). Student responses typically included “I think....because....” statements. They regularly recorded numerical sentences (where applicable) and drawings to explain their thinking or how they arrived at a solution. Frequently, students were asked to write sentences with words to explain solution strategies.

During the interviews students described their math class as follows: "It's an adventure." "Kind of hard, kind of easy." "Challenging." "Frustrating." "Interesting, fun." "It's an adventure." "Lots of ideas to talk about."

Student Interviews

Many of the questions that the authors asked the third graders were related to their perceptions of speaking, listening, and writing to learn math. Below we summarize their responses and provide some excerpts to illustrate their voices. As you read, consider the many complex issues raised by the students about using speaking, listening, and writing to learn mathematics.

Speaking

Speaking was the preferred mode for most of the students when asked how they could best demonstrate their understanding about mathematics. For most children talking is natural and learned early in life but they still have to think about how and when to use talking to help them think about learning math. Some examples of how they thought about speaking in their math class were to give answers, to give opinions, to prove answers, to debate, to tell Dr. Crumbaugh what they had been doing while she was gone. Additional examples included to share things out loud, to explain problems (so that students at their table can correct you if you're wrong), to figure out problems, to give a different idea, to help everyone, and to help them.

When asked if she liked to explain her ideas during math, one student responded: "I try to but sometimes I explain things that like sometimes I can't explain what I'm thinking, you know when that happens? Sometimes I have something that is the answer to the question and I can't explain it with words, I can only explain it in my mind and on paper." Another student was asked, "Why do you talk [during mathematics discussions]?" The child responded, "When it's interesting, ideas build onto stuff, new stuff. It helps everyone, give you an idea or a different idea."

Listening

Most students preferred listening as the way they learned math best. They talked about using listening to know what to do, to hear others' opinions, to help them understand, to hear others' ideas, to help them "catch on," to learn how to do stuff, to get to know the problem better, to help you figure out the question, and to give them a different idea.

A student who preferred listening as the way he learns best during math explained: "We listen to the teachers and we listen to the other children's ideas and we learn what they know from what we hear and when you're talking, you can't really learn anything from that and when you're writing, you're writing what you already know."

Writing

Children talked about writing for different purposes including writing math problems, writing sentences to explain their thinking, drawing pictures, and writing problems on the board. For most children, writing presented more of a challenge. It was the least favorite form of communication when learning math. From their perspective writing was hard, their hands got tired, it was hard to explain in writing, writing was too much work. Children also responded by

saying if you did something wrong you have to write all over again, sentences take too long, and writing is just "wasting your lead."

Discussion

To initiate discussion during our Problems Court session, we posed the following questions:

- What is required for students to successfully participate in small and whole group discussions in content areas?
- In what ways can teachers help students learn the skills required to successfully participate in small and whole group discussions in content areas?
- What do teachers need to know to support students' successful participation in discussions and writing in content area classes?
- In what ways are issues of successful participation in the literacy processes of listening, speaking, and writing the same and different for various content areas in elementary classes?
- How can teachers help students learn to communicate their ideas n writing about content area topics?
- What is the role of teacher educators?

A lively discussion ensued with the primary focus on writing. Participants talked about the complexity of writing and the many challenges to supporting children in their writing and seeing writing as a tool for learning. They also discussed the importance of audience when writing and perhaps children did not like to write because they felt that they were communicating with an expert, the teacher, who already knew what they were trying to write about. Another suggested that we call it something besides "writing". Questions were also posed about how the writing was evaluated and the messages students received about the value of writing during math class. The discussion concluded in agreement that more interactions were needed between the field of reading and language arts and mathematics to help teachers and students learn more about how to successfully use speaking, listening, and writing to learn mathematics.

In this setting where the teachers planned for the third graders to communicate their mathematical ideas, listening, speaking, and writing were commonplace. And from the students' perspectives, these literacy processes appeared to be influential as they learned third grade mathematics. The authors were intrigued by students' perceptions of the role of listening and speaking in their learning, noting they were preferred by the children. In addition, the fact that writing presented more of a challenge was expected, as writing is more complex than listening or speaking. Somewhere between talking and writing sentences in this third grade mathematics class was picture drawing to communicate understanding. Might picture drawing in third grade mathematics reveal emergent mathematical understandings, perhaps parallel to emergent readers who draw pictures to tell stories? Rather than provide children with content comprehension strategies, the teachers operated on the assumption that language use would foster mathematical understanding. That is, to successfully communicate mathematical ideas, children needed opportunities to communicate their ideas, to listen, talk, and write during mathematics.

As discussed earlier, language use plays a strategic role in learning, and communication is prioritized by the national organization for mathematics educators. However, because these literacy processes are not typical in mathematics classrooms, students' perceptions inform further investigation. There is much to be learned about these new roles and responsibilities for teachers and for students, and the authors intend for the ideas presented in this Problems Court paper to prompt further discussion.

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Who Owns Literacy: Shalom Chaverem or Katie Bar the Door?

**Richard Culatta, Appalachian State University
Jill Lewis, New Jersey City University**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the implications of professions outside of Reading and Language Arts assuming responsibility for the provision of services to children and adolescents with literacy problems. Specifically, the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association is now emphasizing literacy assessment and intervention as an integral part of the scope of practice for Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs). This paper will discuss and react to this scope of practice statement and present illustrative examples of ongoing interactions between service providing professionals not usually considered traditional reading educators. The New Jersey Literacy Initiative Mission Statement (2002) will be highlighted as a result of cooperative efforts bridging multiple specialties. The first section of this paper will focus on presenting a clear understanding of the intervention practices and institutional goals that a field outside of Reading and Language Arts is sanctioning for its members. The final section of the paper will describe how New Jersey is approaching the challenge of monitoring two professions interest in reading disabilities.

The title of this paper (Who owns literacy?: Shalom Chaverem or Katie Bar the Door) implies that professionals who consider Literacy, in all forms, their domain may have new partners like it or not. The bottom line is that there are laws in practically every state that make it illegal to practice Speech-Language Pathology without the proper credentials but none that the authors are aware of that monitor the practice of Reading Instruction. The authors are suggesting that the provision of quality literacy intervention services to children and adults should be a concern of traditional Reading Professionals.

ASHA and Literacy

The American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) is the professional association for approximately 112,000 Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs). It is a relatively aggressive, proactive, Association that speaks for SLPs on all aspects of professional life. Illustrations of its influence include that ASHA has: (a) successfully sponsored minimal entry into the field of Speech-Language Pathology at the masters level; (b) initiated and monitored a universally accepted (and often required) national level certification at the completion of a mandated post-masters clinical fellowship year and achievement of passing scores on a standardized test for employment; and (c) sponsored licensure laws that require, in most states, professionals providing speech-language pathology services to be licensed or face criminal code penalties for practicing without a license. An ASHA Ethical Practices Board establishes codes for ethical conduct within the profession and has the power, with cause, to suspend and or revoke the national level of certification, the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC), a decision that parallels disbarment in the legal profession.

It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association that SLPs play a critical and direct role in the development of literacy for children and adolescents with communication disorders. The Association also unequivocally states that: SLPs can make a contribution to the literacy efforts of a school district or community on behalf of other children and adolescents. ([ASHA 2001b](#)) The roles and responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists are clearly defined by the ASHA Scope of Practice in Speech Language Pathology Guidelines ([ASHA 2001 a](#)). Within the Scope of Practice document it is clearly stated that along with many other roles, appropriate roles and responsibilities for Speech Language Pathologists include but are not limited to: (a) preventing written language problems by fostering language acquisition and emergent literacy;(b) identifying children at risk for reading and writing problems;(c) assessing reading and writing; (d) providing intervention and documenting outcomes for reading and writing; (e) assuming other roles such as providing assistance to general education teachers, parents, and students; advocating for effective literacy practices; and advancing the knowledge base (ASHA 2001b). Four official documents of ASHA: A Position Statement with an executive summary (ASHA 2001b), Guidelines ([ASHA 2001c](#)), a Technical Report ([ASHA 2001d](#)) and a listing of the knowledge and skills needed with respect to reading and writing ([ASHA, 2002](#)) specifically describe the Roles and Responsibilities of Speech-Language Pathologists With Respect to Reading and Writing in Children and Adolescents. As is typical with ASHA, the global statements about assuming responsibility for providing service to those with literacy disabilities are backed up by specific delineations of suggested practices. For example: Strategies for supporting emergent literacy and preventing literacy problems include practices such as (a) joint book reading, (b) environmental print awareness, (c) conventions and concepts of print, (d) phonology and phonological processing, (e) alphabetic/letter knowledge, (f) sense of story, (g) adult modeling of literacy experiences, and (h) experiences with writing materials. The specific implementation strategies for each of these practices are detailed in the Guidelines (ASHA 2001 c). Please refer to the documents listed in your bibliography to get a greater sense of the detailed involvement being advocated.

It is not the intention of ASHA to limit literacy intervention to only those with communication disorders. ASHA's position and guidelines are designed to support the notion that SLPs can collaborate with school administrators, teachers, parents, and other professionals to develop programs for promoting emergent literacy and literacy skills among general education students as well as those with identified spoken language and literacy problems (ASHA 2001b pg21) However, the ASHA Guideline (ASHA 2001c pg22) document does distinguish between the therapeutic roles that are felt to be the responsibility of the SLP and the instructional roles that are the responsibilities of the general education teacher. For example, according to the Guidelines, SLPs might provide direct instruction to individual students who need explicit and intensive instruction in phonological awareness or alphabetic principles. However, it is not recommended that SLPs routinely conduct "phonological awareness training" in all kindergarten classrooms.

Now that we have shared a brief description of the scope of recommended involvement it might be appropriate to ask why ASHA feels that it is appropriate to provide these services.

ASHA, on behalf of its membership, believes that SLP's knowledge of normal and disordered language acquisition, and their clinical experience in developing individualized programs for children prepares them to assume a variety of roles related to the development of reading and writing. The unique knowledge that SLPs bring to the process is their ability to assess the subsystems of language as they relate to spoken and written language. SLPs can contribute information about the degree to which a student has basic knowledge at the level of sounds, words, sentences and discourse. They can answer questions about whether students are using basic language knowledge and metalinguistic and metacognitive skills for reading processes involved in decoding, comprehending, and paraphrasing what they read and for writing processes involved in spelling words, organizing discourse texts, formulating and punctuating sentences and revising, editing and presenting their work. (ASHA 2001 b pg 20)

In addition, the Association has published a document that summarizes knowledge and skills needed by SLPs who work with reading and writing in children and adolescents (ASHA, 2002). It is based on the assumption that no one discipline "owns" either the knowledge or skills needed to meet the literacy learning needs of infants, toddlers, children and adolescents with and without disabilities. ASHA outlines 5 five separate areas of knowledge and skills divided into 79 specific sub-areas. These areas and sub-areas and the documents that delineate them can be studied on the web sites listed in references provided with this paper.

Implementation of Interest

Speech-Language Pathologists are implementing their interest in literacy in areas other than direct service provision. U.S. Department of Education Assistant Secretaries, Dr. Susan Neuman of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and Dr. Russ Whitehurst of the Office of Educational Research Institute (OERI) were keynote speakers at the November 2002 ASHA Convention in Atlanta. Their special sessions were entitled "Federal Reading Initiatives: Potential Roles for SLPs" and "The Federal Reading Initiative: What is Our Role in Reading Anyhow?" The notice for the presentations alerted ASHA members that Speech-Language Pathologists can play a number of key roles in the research and development of early literacy programs. ASHA members were encouraged to learn more about these programs and take advantage of the potential grant and professional opportunities. The bi-monthly ASHA Leader newsletter (which goes to all 112,000 SLPs) of March 19, 20002 reports that these government agencies believe strongly that SLPs play an important role in language development in reading and literacy. Specifically, ASHA members were invited to collaborate with the federal agencies on the Early Reading First initiative, a \$ 75 million dollar per year competitive grant initiative designed to enhance reading readiness for preschool children in high poverty areas and where there are high numbers of students who are not reading at grade level . They were also invited be a part of the Reading First Program which will be funded at \$900 million. Both programs are administered under the No Child Left Behind Act. SLPs will function as critical members of the team that implements the grant funded aspect of these programs.

In May 28 2002 , the ASHA Leader newsletter reported that OESE, the agency administering the Early Reading First program contacted ASHA for preschool reading/literacy

programs to serve as models for Early Reading First and other programs at the state or local levels. ASHA's Literacy Research Coordinating Committee selected six programs as potential model programs and forwarded their names to OESE. The authors feel it may be of interest to traditional reading specialists to see the following list of programs and affiliations of the recommended programs. The programs selected were: (a) Language-Learning Early Advantage Program (LEAP) which is housed at the University of Maryland's Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. LEAP is directed by Fromma Roth; (b) Language Acquisition Preschool (LAP) program directed by Betty Bunce under the auspices of the Department of Speech-Language-Hearing and Schiefelbusch Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at the University of Kansas; (c) Emerging Language and Literacy (ELL) program staffed at the Children's Therapeutic Learning Center in Kansas City , MO; (d) Cabrini-Green Preschool Language and Pre-Literacy Curriculum a cooperative program with Head Start Teachers in consultation with Ruth Watkins of the University of Illinois; (e) Early Childhood Speech and Language Programs that are programs at the Miller Speech and Hearing Clinic at Texas Christian University; (f) Animated Literacy which is a reading and language program published by J. Stone Creations. It would not seem unrealistic to guess that these programs, strongly affiliated with the field of Speech-Language Pathology, might have an inside track at potential funding of the Early Reading First initiative.

Interests also extend into the areas of clinical research and training. For example basic research articles such as "Designing and Implementing an Early Literacy Screening Protocol: Suggestions for the Speech-Language Pathologists" was the featured article in the April 2002 issue of *Language Speech and Hearing Services in the Schools* a major ASHA Journal. This particular article provides a rationale for incorporating early literacy screening into speech-language pathology service delivery. It also makes recommendations for determining which children and what areas of literacy should be targeted in screening activities. The authors (Justice, Invernizzi and Meier) assert that SLPs must use a protocol for identifying those children who should be targeted by advanced preparation and intervention efforts in order to prevent literacy problems and ensure children's timely achievement of key literacy skills . They argue that using an early literacy screening protocol holds promise as a proactive means for enhancing literacy related service delivery activities.

Articles such as : *New or Expanded Literacy Roles for Speech-language Pathologists: Making It happen in the Schools* ([Ehren & Ehren, 2001](#)), *The ABCs of spelling: Development, assessment and intervention* ([Butler, Apel, & Masterson, 2000](#)), and *Written language disabilities and educational strategies* ([Butler, & Graham, 2000](#)) are appearing more frequently in the Speech-Language Pathology literature. Anecdotal first person accounts are now routinely featured in the ASHA LEADER with titles such as: "Serving Students with Spoken and Written Language Challenges: It's in the Cards" ([Apel, 2002](#)); "Getting Into the Adolescent Literacy Game" ([Ehren, 2002](#)) and " Literacy in the Public Schools: One SLP's Personal Odyssey and Ongoing Adventure" ([Yess, 2002](#)).

Training initiatives are exemplified by recent training grant received by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro titled: Language Literacy Impairment and Juvenile Delinquency.

The stated goal of the program is to prepare Master's level speech-language pathologists to be specialists in reading and written language disorders. ([Cimorelli, 2003](#))

This section of the paper has described how a field outside of traditional Reading and Language Arts might co-opt some roles usually delineated to Reading and Language Arts. It has also presented the rational and some examples of professional functioning within the area. The next section of the paper will discuss how Reading professionals in New Jersey have responded to the ASHA position and how they have worked to develop a positive relationship with Speech-Language Pathologists that encourages providing quality services to those requiring them without changing the widely understood roles of two groups of professionals.

The New Jersey Experience

Position papers do not become significant unless they result in a course of action and advocacy for the views they express. Such is the case with the ASHA position paper, as experienced by the professional literacy community in New Jersey.

Starting the Conversation

It has been rare for New Jersey Reading Specialists and SLPs to communicate with each other on professional matters, primarily due to lack of contact with each other. In most New Jersey public schools, Reading Specialists are not part of the Intervention and Referral Services Team. Thus, I (Lewis) found it somewhat surprising when a representative from NJ's ASHA community asked that I meet with him. The request was made through a member of the Advisory Board to the Legislation/ Professional Standards Committee of our state reading association (NJRA). This Board member is a school psychologist, and she viewed this request for a meeting as presenting great possibility for collaboration.

Although, I have chaired the state reading association's Legislation/Professional Standards Committee which reviews literacy issues, writes position papers, and develops advocacy strategies for high quality literacy programs and literacy teachers. It was not until the December 2001 American Reading Forum (ARF) meeting during a discussion with ARF members Rich Culatta and Stan Goldberg that I became aware of the ASHA Position Statement and its implications for reading professionals. Now I understood the SLP's interest in meeting with me. Certainly the anticipated meeting required that I do some careful planning.

As part of my preparation, I reviewed requirements for SLP licensure in New Jersey and found that not a single course is required in reading theory or best reading practices. Investigation into requirements in other states yielded similar results, as did conversations with colleagues across the nation. I also reviewed the ASHA position statement and, to be certain that my own reaction was not untoward, I discussed the Statement with other reading professionals. Their responses were similar to mine. They were alarmed by ASHA's statement and questioned how individuals with no training in teaching reading could declare themselves qualified to assume this role. In New Jersey, Reading Specialists go through a rigorous Master's Level

program. Additionally, they are required, to have two years of classroom teaching experience prior to receiving the reading specialist certification. ASHA's statement seemed brazen, at best.

Identifying Core Beliefs

Meeting day with the New Jersey SLP arrived in early December 2001. The school psychologist also attended. During our initial discussion, I asked the SLP about ASHA's Statement and sought his opinion regarding what his professional association had deemed its members could do. His response was surprising. He said he was unaware that the statement claimed these things. He then indicated he did not know how to do many of the things listed and that, clearly, they fell within the purview of the Reading Specialist. For the next two hours we discussed respective roles, what contributions each profession made to children's development and concerns we had about Special Education programs in New Jersey. We agreed on many points, including the need for each school to have a Reading Specialist and for reading specialists to be included on the Intervention and Referral Services Team. The school psychologist agreed on every point and added additional ones. The result was our decision to collaborate on writing a mission statement that would address our concerns and make recommendations for action. Our audience would be policymakers, and we would seek support from professional associations.

Developing An Evidence-Based Mission Statement & Obtaining Endorsements

Over the course of the next two months we refined our document, Mission Statement ([Appendix I](#)) and found evidence to support each point made. NJRA's Legislation/Professional Standards Committee participated in developing the statement which was then reviewed by our Executive Board and adopted by our Board of Directors. The SLP and school psychologist worked with and obtained endorsements from their respective organizations. Then we sought endorsements from other groups.

The statement calls for 13 initiatives, each of which we believe will contribute significantly toward the goal of literacy for all children in our state ([Appendix I](#)). There is an emphasis on promoting high quality teacher preparation and professional development. We call for effective reading programs and assessments that address needs of individual students. We also ask for employment of Reading Specialists and SLPs in every school building, and clearly delineate the role of each. Other initiatives include increased access to technology and appropriate physical space for reading instruction, as well as the inclusion of special needs students in this initiative.

We were fortunate that some of what we asked for is now part of the No Child Left Behind regulations and requirements for New Jersey's Reading First grant awards. This alignment made it somewhat easier to obtain endorsements since some of the issues were, therefore, already familiar to members of professional education associations.

Most organizations that were approached readily agreed to the content of our Mission Statement. I met with the Chair of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association's Education Committee who quickly endorsed the Statement and, in fact, invited me to serve on her committee. The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the teachers' union in New Jersey, has a long adoption process, however. It involves presenting requests such as ours to affected committees and for those committees to then decide the course of action it would take; we have to date been invited to meet with only one of these committees. However at an NJEA Delegate's Assembly two years earlier, some of our points in the Mission Statement had already been endorsed and this is indicated on the Statement (Appendix I).

Identifying Advocacy Outcomes

The Statement, with logos of endorsing organizations, was then sent to the New Jersey Governor's office, state legislators, and members of the State Board of Education. Meetings have been held with several legislators to discuss particular aspects of the Statement. One was most interested in Special Education and wanted to know what model programs other states could offer and what preparation resource room teachers had for teaching literacy. To find out I conducted a national survey and have shared the findings with this legislator. While this might not lead to specific legislation supporting our Mission Statement, it has forged a new relationship and I believe NJRA will be called upon should any literacy legislation cross this Assemblyman's desk.

While we cannot claim a direct outcome, a few months after our Mission Statement was sent to the Governor, he held an Education Summit. "Better Teaching" was the first goal the Governor identified and he suggested a way to achieve this goal was to "strengthen state requirements to ensure that all elementary school teachers know how to teach reading." New Jersey's Teacher Licensure and Certification Code, nearly 20 years old, is currently being revised.

Continuing The Conversation

The New Jersey SLP with whom I worked provided a workshop at NJRAs Literacy Institute entitled, "The Speech-Language Specialist's Role on the School Literacy Team." A short time later, he suggested that the leadership of NJRA and the two NJ speech associations meet to discuss other possibilities for collaboration. Here is where the reading professionals may bar the door. There is understandable reluctance to become 'paired' with the speech associations. In the past, NJRA has coordinated conferences with other associations and partnered on publishing position papers. However, in every instance our professional roles were clear and were not threatened. Linking ourselves any more closely with the speech pathology associations might give the appearance of legitimatizing SLPs as reading professionals or implying that we agree with ASHAs statement of the roles and responsibilities of its members. We could, in a sense, be causing our own demise.

Final Thoughts

It is valuable for professional organizations to collaborate on initiatives of mutual interest. Frequently, the result is increased talent and perspectives that make the outcome richer and also more appealing to a wider audience. This was certainly the case in developing the NJLIMS Statement and in working with the speech pathology associations and others to develop the statement and garner endorsements. But how far should such joint efforts go?

If funding for literacy programs continues to increase, providing more opportunity for professional development providers, it will be important for Reading Specialists to monitor our own professional entry points. We must be careful not to weaken our professional standards in an effort to seem “collegial”. We must understand that our expertise, knowing how to help children with complex reading difficulties and knowing how to help teachers provide the most effective literacy instruction, is not synonymous with knowing how to help children with complex speech needs, no matter what ASHA’s leadership or its members think. We each must recognize our respective areas of proficiency and use them, collaboratively, to bring about the best results for children and schools. To ignore our differences and to treat each other as though we were equally qualified to do whatever our leadership says we are qualified to do, would lead us down a directionless, albeit primrose, path to confusion. And in the end, the achievements of our children and our schools would be compromised.

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Appendix I

NEW JERSEY'S LITERACY INITIATIVE MISSION STATEMENT

Endorsed by:

New Jersey Association of School Psychologists
New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association
New Jersey Association of Learning Consultants
New Jersey Association of Speech-Language Specialists
New Jersey Reading Association
New Jersey Business & Industry Association

Supported by:

New Jersey Educational Association
(NJEA supports the general concept of the NJLIMS while the appropriate committees continue to review the specifics for endorsement.)

In order to achieve the goal of literacy for all New Jersey's school children, we believe there must be the following initiatives:

1. Development of language arts literacy benchmarks for all grades from pre-K through 12, with particular attention to kindergarten through grade three.
2. A requirement of coursework in teaching of language arts literacy skills for all teacher certifications, including alternate route, in the state Administrative Code. These should include the NJEA Delegate Assembly's (November 1998) recommendation that there be required 12 credits in this core area for elementary certifications; 6 credits for secondary certification. Twelve credits should also be required for early childhood certifications. Further, it is the view of the undersigned that 6 credits in language arts literacy should be required for all other certifications, including special education. Alternate route teachers should have the equivalent in instructional time in learning how to teach language arts literacy.
3. Professional development training that is ongoing, sequential, comprehensive, coordinated, and required as inservice for all teachers and that is directed toward developing students' language arts literacy skills. It should include but not be limited to: reading curriculum, language development as it relates to literacy, informal classroom assessment, teaching diverse

learners, research based reading practices, critical thinking and comprehension across disciplines.

4. Use of multiple, varied, comprehensive, research based reading programs and assessments, tailored to meet the individual needs of students, including meaningful use of students' first language skills. *
5. Employment of a full-time reading specialist on the staff in each school building who will provide intensive direct services to students and consultation with teachers and school staff. *
6. Use of speech-language specialists in each school building to foster oral language development and language acquisition skills, and to identify students at risk for reading and/or writing problems due to speech/language disabilities.
7. Programs for parents and other caregivers to build awareness and skills so they can participate in the early literacy development of their children.
8. An Intervention and Referral Services system in each school building (NJAC Chapter 16, 6A:16-7.1-7.3) that includes the parent, classroom teacher, reading specialist, speech language specialist, school psychologist, learning consultant, and other educational support staff to develop reading intervention plans for students.
9. Access to technology used for the improvement of reading instruction and a Library Media Center in each school staffed by a certified education media specialist. *
10. Use of classroom assistants to supplement, not replace, certified teachers for reading instruction. *
11. Implementation of a process for identifying children with potential reading difficulties; such identification should take place in pre-K and be part of continuous K-12 evaluation. *
12. Creation of appropriate physical space in each school to focus on individual or small group reading instruction based on developmental needs of at risk children. *
13. Inclusion of students who are eligible for special education and related services in this literacy initiative.

*Supported by NJEA Delegate Assembly's November 1998 recommendation.

For further information and/or Evidence Supporting the NJLIMS, contact:

Jill Lewis (NJRA), jlewisprof1@yahoo.com

Les Aungst (NJSWA & NJASLS), Laungst@aol.com
Avivah Dahbany (NJASP), Adahbany@aol.com

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Literacy Instruction and Governance Differences at State-Designated High and Low Performing Schools

Deborah L. Earley and Jane Brady Matanzo
Florida Atlantic University

The contemporary accountability trend can be marked by the release of an influential report on the negative state of American schools, “A Nation At Risk” ([Atkinson, 2002](#)). The report, conducted by the National Commission of Excellence in Education (1983), initiated two waves of policy. The first policy initiative raised academic standards and the second focused on expanding assessments and school restructuring efforts ([Valencia & Wixson, 2000](#)). Legislatively, throughout the 1980s, federal involvement in K – 12 public education was decentralized through block grants to the states ([McGill-Franzen, 2000](#)). Decentralization led to state policies for standards and accountability for schools to meet these standards.

State-led education reform gained momentum during the 1990s. Standards for state performance in education were defined in the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994. This legislation mandated that all states and districts receiving Title I funds must issue annual school, district, and state report cards. By 2001, all 50 states had some form of reporting system in place. Forty of the 50 states were preparing formal school report cards, which included student performance on state assessments ([Goertz, Duffy, & LeFloch, 2001](#)). Thus, states are aligning accountability programs with the objectives set forth in the Improving America’s Schools Act of 1994.

Goertz et al. (2001) performed a 50-state survey of state assessment and accountability systems in place during the 1999-2000 school year. They found that, overall, 48 states used a state assessment as the main indicator of school performance. Some states collected additional measures of non-cognitive performance such as attendance and drop-out rates. Two states, Iowa and Nebraska, required the local districts to test students with an assessment of the districts’ choice. These 48 states test reading as part of the state assessment, with eighth grade as the most popular grade level assessed. By 2008, 28 states will require high school students to pass a state assessment for graduation.

By the beginning of 2001, the U.S. Department of Education had approved the performance standards established in 28 states. While preparing annual report cards for schools, low performing schools are identified by state accountability systems. Most states provide support for low-performing schools in the form of corrective action planning, financial assistance, expert assistance, or professional development (Goertz et al., 2001).

State accountability systems can be categorized into three types: public reporting, locally-defined accountability, and state-defined accountability. The public reporting system, used by 13

states in 2001, requires districts to report the results of the statewide assessment. With this system, schools are not ranked or rated. The locally-defined system emphasizes local standards and planning, utilizing school improvement plans as a vehicle for documenting accountability. The state-defined system sets the performance goals for schools. The state provides rewards for meeting or exceeding the state goals or sanctions for not meeting the goals. The performance goals vary; and, the states measure school progress by either setting an absolute target, measuring schools' relative growth based on past performance, or measuring the achievement gap. Thirty-three states used a state-defined system of accountability by the 1999-2000 school year. All 33 states identified low-performing schools (Goertz et al., 2001).

Often, state accountability programs focus on student performance on a standardized assessment. The International Reading Association ([2002](#)) defines high-stakes assessment as using one test to make important decisions about students, teachers, and schools. Policy decisions are based on test performance, creating an atmosphere for high-stakes assessment.

A high-stakes assessment program also can impact literacy instructional practices. Most of these assessment programs focus on reading and, therefore, have an effect on literacy instruction. Three studies describe the effects of high-stakes assessments on literacy instruction. First, Guthrie, Schafer, & Von Secker ([2000](#)) found that reading programs with a high impact on standardized assessments used an abundance of books and resources and placed little emphasis on basal reading programs. Intermediate level teachers placed more emphasis on integration, books and resources, collaboration, and writing. Second, Jones, Jones, & Hardin ([1999](#)) found that in North Carolina, teachers spent a majority of the day teaching reading, writing, and math. Eighty percent of the teachers claimed that students spent at least a fifth of total instructional time practicing for the end-of-grade test. Two-thirds of the teachers reported that they changed their teaching practices since the inception of the state policy, with 76% reporting to feel more stress. A third study by Almasi, Afflerback, Guthrie, & Schafer ([1995](#)) focused on Maryland schools with at-risk populations that were initiating instructional changes. The researchers found that overall the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program "did have a direct influence on the types of instructional changes taking place in all five [participating] schools" (p. 12). These changes included more opportunities for students to write and more choices in reading and writing.

Standards and high-stakes assessment are factors in Florida's state accountability system. The Florida State Legislature enacted the Bush/Brogan A+ Plan for Education (A+ Plan) in 1999. The new legislation provided an increase in funding and accountability for K-12 public schools in Florida ([MyFlorida.com, 2002](#)). The A+ Plan consists of three main parts: 1) addressing accountability and improving student learning; 2) raising standards and improving training for educators; and 3) improving school safety and reducing truancy (Florida Department of Education, 2001a).

Regarding accountability and student learning, the law requires that students in grades 3 through 10 take the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) for Reading and Math. FCAT Writing is administered in grades 4, 8, and 10. The content of the assessments are based on Florida state academic standards, the Sunshine State Standards. The results of student

performance on the FCAT are shared with parents through written reports (Florida Department of Education, 2001c).

School grades based primarily on student achievement data from FCAT scores are assigned by the Florida Department of Education ([Florida Department of Education, 2001b](#)). Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, a point system was implemented, with schools earning “one point for each percentage of students who score high on the FCAT and/or make annual learning gains” ([Grading Florida Public Schools 2001-2002, 2002](#)). The student sample from which school grades were based consisted of general education, speech impaired, and gifted students who were enrolled in the same school in October and February of the current school year. Students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) with more than two years in an English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) program also were considered in the school grade. Once the points were tallied for each school, a formula was applied to determine the school grade. The formula required adding the points earned in the six areas, three of which involved reading scores, and determining the percentage of eligible students tested. School grades range from A (highest) to F (lowest) ([Grading Florida Public Schools 2001-2002, 2002](#)).

Statement of the Problem and its Significance

The Florida Department of Education grades public school performance based primarily on student achievement, as measured by FCAT scores. If a school is graded F for two years in a four-year period, the parents may opt for an Opportunity Scholarship, or voucher, to attend a private school or choose another public school graded a C or better. In the first year of implementation, 1999-2000, two schools in Florida had students eligible for Opportunity Scholarships. Seventy-eight parents removed their children from these schools, with 58 choosing private schools. Since the grading system began, several other schools were graded F for only one year, thus escaping the eligibility status for Opportunity Scholarships. Across Florida in 1999, 76 schools were graded F. In 2000, four schools were graded F, and no schools were graded F in 2001. In 2002, the number of F schools increased to 68, 10 of these having students eligible for Opportunity Scholarships ([Florida Office of School Improvement, 2002](#)).

The volatile fluctuation of the number of F schools between 1999 and 2002 poses two possibilities. One possibility is that the schools improved student performance on FCAT, thus improving the school grade. In this case, what literacy instructional practices were being implemented and did they differ from A schools? Another possibility is that the Florida Department of Education school grading policy changed, thus affecting the school grades. The problem presented is to investigate variables related to these two possibilities.

Schools graded F submitted reports to the Florida Department of Education outlining intervention strategies to improve student achievement. These strategies focus on a variety of general areas, including instructional practices, curriculum, school safety, district interventions, and community involvement ([Florida Office of School Improvement, 2002](#)). However, many of these reports did not provide details of teaching behaviors, personnel, or governance procedures employed by these schools. Additionally, current published research does not focus on literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance at these Florida schools. This study provides information concerning literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance procedures at

Florida schools graded F as well as those graded A, and it determines if there is any difference in these variables between the two samples.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the school grading policy of the Florida A+ Plan for Education on literacy instructional practices, personnel, and governance procedures in Florida public schools. The research questions of this study were:

1. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on literacy instructional practices and materials in Florida Public Schools?
2. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on personnel in Florida Public Schools?
3. What, if any, is the impact of the school grading policy of the A+ Plan on governance procedures in Florida Public Schools?
4. What, if any, changes have occurred in the Florida Department of Education public school grading policy since its inception in 1999?

The following null hypotheses were tested:

Null Hypothesis One: There is no difference in literacy instruction and materials at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no difference in personnel at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Three: There is no difference in governance procedures at schools designated a grade of A and schools graded F.

Null Hypothesis Four: There has been no change in the Florida Department of Education public school grading policy since its inception in 1999.

Methods

Random sampling was used to select Florida public schools graded A and F in 2002. Possible participants for the study were determined after the schools were randomly selected. The three participant groups were associated with either an A or F school: 1) grade 3-10 teachers who taught reading, writing, and/or language arts during the 2001-02 school year ($n = 107$); 2) principals ($n = 17$); and 3) District Directors of Curriculum or equivalent positions for the district in which the randomly selected school was located ($n = 12$).

Three surveys were used to collect data ([Appendices A-C](#)). The researcher originally designed all three surveys for this study. The contents for each were based on published research and established best practices for literacy instruction and school governance. Additionally, all three surveys were piloted using Cronbach Alpha reliability analyses before distribution to the study sample. Teacher participants completed the Literacy Instructional Practices Survey. Principal participants completed the School Governance Survey. District participants completed the District Governance Survey. In order to provide participant anonymity and track a response rate, a school contact distributed the surveys to eligible participants. Follow-up phone calls and

mailings were used in an attempt to increase participant response rates and decrease non-response bias.

Results

Descriptive analyses of frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency were conducted on data from all three surveys. An independent t-test was conducted on composite mean scores from the Literacy Instructional Practices Survey. A document analysis was conducted to determine if any changes had occurred to the school grading policy since 1999.

The Literacy Instructional Practices Survey collected data from classroom teachers (35% response rate). The six composite scores tested were: Instructional Groupings, Materials, Classroom Activities, Decoding Teaching Practices, Comprehension Teaching Practices, and Writing Teaching Practices. Six independent t-tests ($\alpha = .05$) were conducted to test a null hypothesis. In each case, the null was unable to be rejected (95% confidence interval). Thus, inferential analyses found no significant difference between the types and frequency of literacy teaching practices at A and F schools.

The School Governance and District Governance Surveys collected data concerning personnel (65% response rate for principals and 75% response rate for district participants). Due to a small sample size, only descriptive analyses were conducted on personnel data. All principal participants and 97% of district-level participants reported the use of full-time classroom teachers for literacy instruction. In addition, 50% of F schools employed Title I teachers separate from the classroom compared to 8% of A schools. One hundred percent of principal participants, at both A and F schools, reported using informal classroom observation and student achievement on the FCAT as methods to evaluate literacy personnel performance.

The School Governance and District Governance Surveys also collected data regarding school governance procedures. Fifty-nine percent of all principal participants reported weekly visitations to literacy classrooms. Ninety-five percent also reported collaboration among district staff, principals, and teachers concerning the management of individual school budgets. In general, participant responses indicated collaboration between district and school staffs regarding governance decisions for literacy curriculum and instruction. Only 16% of principal participants indicated complete autonomy over personnel decisions while 40% of district-level participants reported complete principal autonomy for personnel decisions.

The document analysis revealed changes by the Florida Department of Education to the school grading policy since its inception in 1999. Modifications from 1999 to 2000 included the deletion of subgroup minimum performance criteria for A and B schools. Maintaining or improving FCAT Reading scores of the lowest 25% of students was added to the criteria for A and B schools. Another addition for schools graded A, B, C, and D was criteria for meeting “other school data” such as absenteeism and high school drop out rates. School grades from 1999-2001 were based on meeting performance criteria defined as percentages of students achieving Level 2 or higher on FCAT Reading, Writing, and Math.

In subsequent years, other changes to the school grading policy occurred. In 2001, most of the school grading criteria remained unchanged. Only “other school data” was deleted from the school grading criteria for all grades. In 2002, the method for determining the school’s grade changed from a straight percentage of students performing at targeted performance levels to a formula that also accounted for individual student learning gains from one school year to the next.

The score ranges for FCAT Reading Achievement Levels remained unchanged from 1999-2002. This means that the minimum and higher performance criteria, which are the foundation for determining school grades, remained the same. These Achievement Levels, ranging from 1 (*lowest*) to 5 (*highest*), were the only constant component of the school grading policy from 1999-2002.

Conclusions

There was no significant difference in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices regarding instructional groupings, materials, classroom activities, decoding instruction, comprehension instruction, or writing instruction between schools graded A and schools graded F. Hence, regardless of the state-designated school grade of A or F, teachers were implementing the same literacy instructional practices at similar frequency rates. This conclusion was drawn after conducting an independent t-test on each of these six composite scores.

Measures were taken to increase the power of this study, especially in regards to making any generalizations from the independent t-tests. First, an independent t-test is the most efficient statistical method to test for differences between two group means. Second, using research-based content for the surveys and piloting the surveys addressed content validity. Instrumentation reliability was addressed through a pilot study and the application of Cronbach Alpha Reliability tests. All three basic assumptions for a t-test were met in this study (Glass & Hopkins, 1996); thereby, power was increased to make generalizations when the nulls were unable to be rejected within a 95% confidence interval. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that there were no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools.

A second conclusion drawn is that A schools and F schools use similar literacy instructional personnel and methods to evaluate their performance. Full-time classroom teachers were the most commonly employed literacy instructional personnel at A and F schools. All principals used informal classroom observation and student achievement on the FCAT to evaluate literacy instructional personnel.

Due to a small sample size ($n < 30$), conclusions for this research question are based solely on descriptive analyses. Chi-square analyses were planned for responses on survey items regarding personnel but were not conducted because the A school sample size was 13 and the F school sample was 4. As a result, no conclusions were drawn regarding significant differences between A and F school personnel.

A third conclusion is that both A and F school governance practices can be characterized as collaborative between the district and school levels. Overwhelmingly, participants reported that principals and teachers were involved in governance practices regarding the school vision and mission statements, management of the school's individual budget, and decisions concerning personnel. Chi-square analyses on survey items regarding governance practices and a t-test for the Decision-Making Composite were not conducted due to small sample size ($n < 30$). Thus, no conclusions were drawn regarding significant differences between A and F school governance.

The fourth conclusion drawn is that the school grading policy has been changed by the Florida Department of Education since its inception in 1999. Document analysis revealed changes to criteria for all school grades (A – F) from 1999-2002. While peripheries to the grading criteria were changed, the minimum and higher performing criteria for the school grades remained unchanged.

The number of F schools declined from 76 in 1999 to 4 in 2000 and the criteria for the F grade was changed from 1999 to 2000. In 1999, FCAT data for reading, writing, and math had to be at or above the minimum criteria. In 2000, the criteria were based on FCAT data for reading, writing, and math at or above the minimum criteria *for students enrolled in both the October and February FTE at the same school*. As mentioned previously, the minimum criteria did not change during this time period. This modification of the F grade criteria may have contributed to the decline in the number of F schools from 76 in 1999 to 4 in 2000. It was not until the school grading criteria changed in 2002 that the number of F schools increased.

Implications

Findings from this study present implications for practices and research. One implication is that factors other than the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices are affecting a school's grade. This researcher found that teachers at A and F schools are using the same literacy instructional practices on a similar frequency range. Two-thirds of the school grade is determined by student performance on FCAT Reading and Writing. Student performance on FCAT Reading and Writing is influenced by literacy instructional practices. Thus, the question remains, "Why are these schools earning different designations or grades by the state?" It appears that factors other than the types and frequency of instruction implemented must be affecting outcome differences in terms of the state grading criteria.

Second, findings from this study highlight the impact of high-stakes assessment on curriculum and instruction. All of the A and F school principal participants relied on student achievement on FCAT as a method to evaluate teacher performance. Such a practice is sure to impact curriculum and instruction because a teacher will adjust teaching practices if he or she is being evaluated by student performance on a high-stakes assessment. Results from this study imply that the curriculum is narrowing focus solely on reading, writing, and math and FCAT preparation is stressed.

A third implication of this study is that school grades should be viewed in concert with not only the criteria of the grading policy, but also the range of raw scores for the FCAT Achievement Levels (1-5). School grades are based on this FCAT Achievement Level student

performance data. It is important to keep these FCAT Achievement Levels in mind when considering an individual school's grade over a period of years because the score range for each Achievement Level could change. A question to consider is whether the school grade changed because of an increase or decrease in student performance on FCAT or because of a change to the FCAT Achievement Level score ranges.

Limitations

A limitation to this study was the low response rate (27%) from teachers at F schools. Sample selection bias errors were addressed in the formation of the research design by randomly drawing a 9% sample of all schools graded A and F in 2002. However, not all districts and schools in the sample agreed to participate in the study. Of the 27 districts randomly selected, five denied the researcher access to their schools. Four of these districts cited the protection of the principals and teachers at the schools graded F as these principals and teachers had been through much scrutiny by the Florida State Department of Education and school community. Media attention on these schools also heightened the situation. Even in districts where permission was granted to access schools, 14 principals at schools graded F declined to participate in the study due to various reasons, including an overwhelming amount of state-required paperwork and time restraints due to professional development for new reading curricula. Whatever the reasons, sampling bias error is a possible limitation to this study because those participants who did agree to complete the surveys could be typically different from those participants who refused (Alreck & Settle, 1985).

A second possible limitation to this study is the sample size. The sample of teachers was large enough ($n = 107$) to conduct inferential analyses to test the null hypotheses. But the study could have been even stronger if the teacher participant sample was large enough to analyze literacy instructional similarities and differences among A and F elementary school teachers and A and F secondary school teachers. It is possible that a significant difference in the frequency of literacy instructional practices would emerge if the participants were not analyzed as a whole group.

A third limitation stems from the use of surveys. The researcher assumed that participants responded honestly and accurately to survey items. Also, some eligible participants chose not to participate, creating non-response bias. Follow-up mailings were implemented to limit the effects of non-response bias and increase the response rate. Another step taken to address limitations was piloting the original surveys to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study investigated literacy instruction, personnel, and governance differences at A and F schools in Florida. The findings for frequency of literacy instructional practices were significant. Findings also were reported concerning types of personnel and school governance practices implemented at these schools. The findings and implications of this study lead to possibilities for other studies. Recommendations for future research are as follows:

- A replication study with a larger sample size should be conducted in order to verify the results of this study.
- Future research should investigate any similarities and differences in the quality of instruction occurring between A and F schools. This study analyzed the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices, not the quality of instruction. The quantitative data from such a study should be combined with classroom observations to moderate the bias of self-reporting.
- Future research should investigate the relationship between school and/or student demographic variables and the school grade. If there are no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools, then what variables are affecting the schools' grades? For example, is the socioeconomic status of the student population associated with the school grade? Does the degree of parental involvement differ between A and F schools? Since this study concluded that there was no significant difference in the frequency of literacy instructional practices between A and F schools, other possible variables affecting school grades should be investigated.

Though the findings concerning literacy instruction were significant, this study presents an insight for research possibilities. Findings established that there were no significant differences in the types and frequency of literacy instruction between A and F schools. Yet, the schools were still designated by the state as two extremes of school performance by a grading policy that primarily focused on student achievement based on reading and writing high-stakes assessments. Certainly, these findings must be verified through replication studies. Furthermore, other variables affecting student achievement at A and F schools must be investigated.

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Appendix A

Literacy Instructional Practices Survey

©

Deborah L. Earley, 2002

This survey is intended for grade three through ten teachers who are responsible for reading or writing instruction. Please answer each item by choosing the response that best reflects your practices in the classroom over the **last school year (2001-02)**.

INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPINGS: Items #1-5 are designed to measure the frequency of instructional groupings utilized when teaching reading and writing in your classroom. Select the response that most closely describes frequencies during the last school year.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
1. Used whole group instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Teacher-led small group instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. One-to-One instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Cooperative Groups.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Peer tutoring.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MATERIALS: Items #6-16 are designed to measure how often you used the following materials when teaching reading and writing in your classroom. Responses should reflect frequencies during the last school year.

	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
6. Computers to deliver instruction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Children's or adolescents' literature.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Poetry.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Creative dramatics.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Newspapers and/or magazines.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Basal readers and/or texts.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MATERIALS CONTINUED

	CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW			
	0 Never	1 Daily	2 Weekly	3 Monthly
12. Expository (non-fiction) books.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Graphic organizers.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Workbooks and/or skill sheets.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. State FCAT prep materials.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Teacher-made tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TEACHING PRACTICES: Items #17-25 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction for the following decoding skills. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
17. High-frequency words.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Word attack skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Phonics as a separate subject.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Phonics in the context of reading or writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Root words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Prefixes/suffixes.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Practicing words out of context (ex: flashcards).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Practicing words in context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Systematic instruction in vocabulary development, including word meanings.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comprehension Instruction: Items #26-36 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction for the following comprehension skills. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
26. Prediction.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Inferencing.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Summarizing.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Main idea.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Details.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Solving problem-situations creatively.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Sequence of events.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Drawing conclusions.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Structure of different genres of text.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Text-to-text and/or text-to-self connections.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Story elements (<i>i.e.</i> character, setting, problems, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Writing Instruction: Items #37-46 are designed to measure how often you provided systematic instruction in **writing**. Responses should reflect frequencies **during last school year**.

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW				
	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
37. Taught spelling from lists of words.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Taught grammar or word structures separately.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Provided writing assignments as an isolated exercise.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Required students to spend time with sustained writing (ex: journals).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Modeled the writing process (plan, draft, revise, etc).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Taught prewriting strategies (<i>i.e.</i> outlining, webbing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WRITING CONTINUED

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
43. Provided timed writing performance assessments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Taught writing mechanics (ex: punctuation, capitalization).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Provided writing assignments in response to class readings or discussions.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Used the 6-point FCAT Writing scoring rubric on student writing assignments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: Items #47-71 are designed to measure how often the following **reading and writing activities** occurred in your classroom. Responses should reflect frequencies during the last school year.

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
47. Student discussions about texts they have read.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. Independent reading time.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. Literature study.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. Question-generating by students.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. Teacher demonstration of reading strategies.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. Reading in the content areas.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. Author's Chair.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. Partner or Buddy reading.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. One-on-one teacher-student conferences.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. Reading aloud by students.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. Choral reading.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. Reading of student-selected text.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. Authentic purposes for reading and writing activities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTIVITIES CONTINUES

CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW

	0	1	2	3
	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
60. Opportunities to write original material.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61. Note-taking.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
62. Graffiti Boards.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63. Peer writing conferences.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64. Grammar tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65. Writer's notebook.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66. Spelling tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
67. Opportunities to write personal responses to literature.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68. Essay tests.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
69. Students wrote to a narrative prompt (FCAT practice)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70. Students wrote to a persuasive prompt (FCAT practice).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
71. Students wrote to an expository prompt (FCAT practice).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: Please respond openly to Items #72-78. The survey is anonymous and all answers will be kept confidential. In addition, answers from all participants in the study will be analyzed for patterns, statistically tabulated, and summarized.

72. If you have taught at least five years in Florida, has your curriculum changed since the inception of FCAT? If yes, how has it changed?

73. Personally, what was the MOST helpful professional development training?

74. Personally, what was the LEAST helpful professional development training?

75. How often did you attend professional training for literacy instruction last year?

76. What percentage of instructional time per week did you spend in one-to-one instruction?

77. What did your principal expect you to do to prepare for FCAT Reading?

78. What did your principal expect you to do to prepare for FCAT Writing?

DEMOGRAPHICS: CIRCLE OR WRITE the response that best reflects your situation during the 2001-02 school year.

79. Gender: male female

80. Years teaching experience: _____

81. Highest degree held: bachelors masters specialist doctorate post-doctorate

82. Teaching responsibility: Grade level(s) taught: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(83) Subject area(s): reading writing language arts

84. Total number of students to whom I taught reading: _____

85. Total number of students to whom I taught writing: _____

86. School in which you taught: rural suburban urban

Appendix B

School Governance Survey

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This survey is intended for principals of elementary and secondary schools in Florida. Please answer each item by choosing the response which best reflects your experiences over the **last school year (2001-02)**.

PERSONNEL: Items #1-2 are designed to gather information regarding personnel responsible for teaching reading and writing at your school. Responses should reflect personnel employed during the last school year.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

1) Select methods you employed to evaluate the performance of teachers of reading and writing.

- Informal classroom observation
- Evaluation by students
- Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS)
- Parent surveys
- Student achievement on FCAT
- Peer review
- Examine teachers' lesson plans or other instructional materials
- Teacher portfolio of Educator Accomplished Practices (EAP)

2) Select the types of teachers who taught reading and writing at your school.

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

GOVERNANCE: Items #3-13 are designed to gather information regarding governance procedures at your school. Responses should reflect procedures during the last school year.

- 3) Select the **one** response that best describes the people who developed the school vision and mission statements.
 - School-based staff
 - Principal and staff
 - Principal
 - District-level staff

- 4) Select the **one** response that best describes how often professional development training for reading and writing instruction was offered during the last school year.
 - Never
 - Weekly
 - Bi-weekly
 - Monthly
 - Once a semester
 - Once a year

- 5) Select the **one** response that best describes how often you visited classrooms during reading or writing activities during the last school year.
 - Never
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Yearly

- 6) For planning teams, teachers were grouped by: (select the **one** response that best reflects groupings for last school year)
 - Grade level
 - Vertical families (*i.e.* grades K-5, or 6-8, or 9-12)
 - Content area

For Items #7-13, **check all** responses that apply. Responses should reflect the last school year (2001-02).

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

7) Individual school budgets were managed by

- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and teachers in collaboration

8) Purchasing decisions about reading curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

9) Purchasing decisions about writing curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

10) Decisions about school personnel were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal collaborated
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and Staff collaborated

11) Decisions regarding reading curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

12) Decisions regarding writing curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

13) Professional development training for literacy instruction was selected by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS: Please respond openly to Items #14-17. The survey is anonymous and all answers will be kept confidential. In addition, answers from all participants in the study will be analyzed for patterns and then summarized.

14) How did you encourage communication and reflective dialogue regarding literacy instruction amongst the staff?

15) How did you offer formal recognition to successful teachers of reading and writing?

- 16) Was merit pay provided for Grade 3-10 teachers based on FCAT scores?
- 17) How often did the School Accountability Committee meet? Please describe its major involvement with budget, curriculum and instruction, and personnel.

DEMOGRAPHICS: For Items #18-25, **CIRCLE OR WRITE** the response that best reflects your situation during the 2001-02 school year.

- 18) Gender: male female
- 19) Years experience as a principal: _____
- 20) Highest degree held: bachelors masters specialist doctorate post-doctorate
- 21) School can be categorized as: rural suburban urban
- 22) School-level: elementary (K-5) middle (6-8) high (9-12)
- 23) Days in the required school year for teachers, including planning and professional development: _____
- 24) Hours in the school day for teachers (to the nearest half hour): _____
- 25) The majority of full-time reading or writing teachers were: in-field out-of-field

Appendix C

School Governance Survey

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This survey is intended for Associate Superintendent of Curriculum, Director of Curriculum, or the district representative for curriculum in Florida public school districts. Please answer each item by choosing the response which **best** reflects your district's policies over **the last school year (2001-02)**. Please reflect policies for traditional K-12 public schools only (exclude charter schools, private schools, and home schoolers).

PERSONNEL: Items #1-4 are designed to gather information regarding personnel responsible for teaching reading and writing in your district. Responses should reflect personnel employed during the **last school year**.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

1) Select methods employed in your district to evaluate the performance of teachers of reading and writing.

- Informal classroom observation
- Evaluation by students
- Florida Performance Measurement System (FPMS)
- Parent surveys
- Student achievement on FCAT
- Peer review
- Examine teachers' lesson plans or other instructional materials
- Teacher portfolio of Educator Accomplished Practices (EAP)

Select the types of teachers who teach reading and writing in your district at the: (check **all that apply**)

2) elementary level

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

PERSONNEL CONTINUED

3) middle school level:

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

4) high school level:

- Full-time classroom teacher
- Title I reading teacher, separate from classroom
- Remedial reading teacher, separate from Title I
- Full-time writing specialist
- Full-time reading specialist

GOVERNANCE: Items #5-13 are designed to gather information regarding governance procedures in your district. Responses should reflect procedures during the last school year.

5) Select the one response that best describes the people who developed school vision and mission statements.

- School-based staff
- Principal and staff
- Principal
- District-level staff

GOVERNANCE CONTINUED

- 6) Select the **one** response that best describes how often your district provided professional development training for reading and writing instruction during the **last school year**.

- Never
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Once a semester
- Once a year

For Items #7-13, **check all** responses that apply. Responses should reflect the **last school year (2001-02)**.

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- 7) Individual school budgets were managed by

- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and teachers in collaboration

- 8) Purchasing decisions about reading curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

9) Purchasing decisions about writing curriculum and/or materials were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

10) Decisions about school personnel were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal collaborated
- Principal only (complete autonomy)
- Principal and Staff collaborated

11) Decisions regarding reading curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

12) Decisions regarding writing curriculum and instruction were made by

- District staff only
- District staff and Principal in collaboration
- Principal only
- Principal and teachers in collaboration
- Teachers only

Networking and Negotiating for Adolescent Literacy

Joyce C. Fine

Cathy Toll ([2002](#)) in her chapter “Can Teachers and Policy Makers Learn to Talk to One Another?” explains why policy makers appear to want to change schools in ways that are incongruent with the views of educators. She claims that the discourses ([Gee, 1996](#)) of the two communities are so different that they are not able to communicate clearly and effectively. She suggests that teachers make decisions based on engagement with students, concern for children’s affect, and control of teacher decision making. Policy makers, on the other hand, see teachers as passive and unwilling to change. Policy makers insist on acquiring objective data that will guide reform, which usually has little to do with children and a lot to do with curriculum standards. The conflicting discourses, she suggests, reflect different perspectives and represent differences in power status.

Meanwhile, children’s needs are often forsaken while these two camps are competing for control. These discourse communities need to listen to one another. The dialog must help the two sides understand each other’s perspectives rather than perpetuate differences. How can this be done? It can be started by talking and working with the many layers of public, private, and governmental agencies in our communities. It involves a flexibility to share goals and talk, networking and negotiating along the way. One project that is an example of this type of networking and negotiation is described below.

In 2000 the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) in Miami received a grant for \$3 million dollars as part of a National Demonstration Project, Cops 2000, from the U.S. Department of Justice. The goal was to reduce the rate of recidivism through a post-arrest diversion (PAD) program. Many researchers from the field of social science were called in to participate. The grant was to create a model in which social services were offered to prevent large numbers of first time offenders (FTOs) from becoming repeat offenders. These services included family and career counseling, employment, financial assistance and other social services as needed.

The Assistant Director of the JAC, who became the grant director, was aware of the need to support adolescents academically, as well as with other social services. He contacted a reading professor for assistance. Was she interested in trying to establish some tutoring for this population? Would she set up an appointment between her Dean and the Juvenile Assessment Center’s Commander to discuss the possibility of doing this? Even though tutoring was not a part of the original grant proposal, they realized the importance of getting the students back on track in school. So began the networking and negotiating process that set the tenor of the next few years of this project. It has become an example of the type of socio-cultural negotiation that is required when large community systems begin to work together as well as with marginalized adolescents. This type of discourse across systems and societal levels is what is unique about this project.

The Model: CIPP

The best way of describing what took place under this grant is to use the CIPP model created by Daniel Stufflebeam ([1966, 2000](#)) which developed over the years. It is the framework

for guiding evaluation that is aimed at effecting long-term, sustainable improvements. It provides a means for the assessment and continuous improvement of programs, institutions, and systems. The CIPP Model includes knowing the Context, getting Input, beginning a Process, and producing a Product in a repeated cycle. As the context changes, continuously changing the input and adjusting the process makes the product or outcome evolve. It is a constant, ongoing interplay of people and situations that influence the outcomes of the project.

Context

The context of the program is Miami-Dade County, a large, diverse city. The Miami-Dade County Public School System is the fourth largest in the nation where almost 60 percent of the student population is on free and reduced lunch. Growing numbers of adolescents have been arrested, many from immigrant populations. There are over a 100 different languages spoken by students in the Miami schools. The Police Department, under the Department of Juvenile Justice, had set up the JAC so that any minors who had been arrested anywhere in the county would be treated uniformly, following guidelines for the protection of youth.

Input

Since the JAC had to continue its role in processing all arrested juveniles, it had to first establish separate groups or agencies for handling the research and the financial aspects of the grant. These subcontractors had to be approved by a vote of the Miami City Council. Once this was done, the newly hired representatives had to approve the plans for the tutoring project, redirecting some funds from the budget, which had been approved at the federal level.

On the university side, the grant had to be approved by the newly established Urban Center for Education and Innovation. While the newly hired director of research from another university wanted to make a private, contractual agreement with the professor, the professor wanted to provide tutoring under the mission of the Urban Center and as part of a practicum in reading. She knew that most of the teachers in the K-12 Literacy Masters in Reading Program were elementary teachers who needed to gain experience working with marginalized adolescent learners if they were ever going to be willing to teach them. If they never worked with marginalized adolescents in their training to become reading specialists, they might never want to work with this population. They needed to talk to the students and see them as individuals in order to understand their needs, issues, and situations.

Product

The goal of Project LIFT: Literacy Intervention for Teens was established to provide this experience and to work with the JAC as a part of the PAD program. The Urban Center gave a \$5,000 seed grant to work out the arrangements and get started.

The negotiation with the research team entailed the professor designing a program and presenting it to the team of researchers and grant directors. The grant personnel suggested that the professor “dream up what she wanted to do.” In consultation with others who had run programs for marginalized youth, the plan was submitted. It was originally for 12-14 year olds

and included snacks and incentives for completing the tutoring. The professor felt the teachers would have the greatest opportunity to help students who were at these ages. The snacks were to help if students came to tutoring hungry and to give them an incentive and a “good taste” for literacy.

The original proposal was modified considerably with such changes as expanding to include any age juvenile who had been arrested and not having any food or incentives for those coming to the JAC for tutoring. The JAC representatives felt that the opportunity to have the FTO’s criminal record expunged was incentive enough to get them to participate in the tutoring. They wanted to support the adolescents without glorifying their situation. Understanding the officials’ perspectives led to a compromise.

The PAD program gave just under \$30,000 for purchasing materials and books and to establish a tutoring project in which ninety FTO’s would be assessed and receive instruction in literacy. Consideration was given to the fact that the adolescents previously had made the decision to break the law. The JAC officers limited the number of students who would be allowed to participate at any given time to fifteen. The tutoring would take place on the second floor of the JAC center, over the processing and holding areas for the offenders. If there were any breakouts of fighting or any other problems, the police officers would be just below and would be able to intervene.

Product

With these details in place, the professor began recruiting graduate students for the fall 2001 term. To participate, graduate teachers would read articles on adolescent literacy and prepare an action research project from their experience. Twenty-four teachers attended the first session, were given a tour of the facilities and were told basic safety precautions that would be needed for working in that environment. They were prepared to participate by offering tutoring on multiple evenings and on Saturdays each week. The teachers came and waited, but the students did not appear.

Finally, the students began to come on Saturdays. They have continued to come each term, but only on Saturdays and only small numbers of those who qualified for the service. The teachers who were able to tutor these students overcame their initial fears of working with these kinds of students. They were no longer put off by the appearance or gestures that showed resistance in the beginning. Each term, by the end of the first session, the students had new attitudes about why they were coming and about literacy in general. There were never any difficulties that erupted, but, we were not reaching enough students.

Context

Where were the large numbers of academically low-performing students? They were supposed to be recommended for tutoring after the social workers interviewed them with their parents. The social workers were supposed to be screening the FTO’s, determining if the FTO’s had been arrested for a misdemeanor, and evaluating them as psychologically safe enough to be released. If needy in the area of academics, based on a snapshot report from the school system,

the social workers were to recommend them for tutoring. Yet, the students were not coming for tutoring. Although some had begun to come on Saturdays, none came on the weekdays after school hours.

This meant that the graduate teachers who were supposed to be working with marginalized youth on the weekdays had to tutor another student situation. Through negotiation with the school system, they were able to tutor in an alternative school that was in session until 6:00 pm. This school had FTO's as well as other students with major adjustment problems. The professor made these arrangements and attended those sessions, also.

Input

The question of why the FTO's were not attending was still unanswered. The arrangement with the JAC was that the tutoring was part of the sanctions. This was a situation that had to be investigated. Several reasons were considered: it could be the location of the program or it could be that communication about tutoring as a sanction for completing the PAD program was a problem. The JAC then informed the professor that they had to seek the approval of the state's attorney for tutoring to be officially added to the sanctions. This led to more negotiation. After one state's attorney quit, tutoring as a sanction was finally arranged with the new state's attorney.

Process

The program was able to continue, but the numbers of FTO's who participated were still low. The professor was told that the Miami Teen Court was interested in sending students to the tutoring. The Miami Teen Court, which operates under the auspices of the Metro-Miami Action Corps, has FTO's and other students, as well, participate in mock court proceedings. The FTO's who go to trial, must follow through with their peers' sanctions in order to have their criminal records expunged.

Product

The Teen Court began to send student's families to Project LIFT. These students were already participating in the programs that had been stipulated for them in order to have their criminal records expunged. They complied to achieve their goal. Perhaps these student's families were more supportive. The Teen Court students were able to make good progress with the tutoring. These students were more motivated to change. Although they had been performing poorly in school, they were functioning at less severely low literacy levels. With the mentor-tutor, they completed the tutoring sanctions. These higher functioning students were the most successful in making gains.

Context

The COPS grant ended. The tutoring continued through the last month of funding. Recently the Teen Court organization has indicated that it wants to continue funding the program but wants to move it to their building, which is closer to where many FTO's have been arrested.

The building also is shared by an alternative education school for middle school students. This organization believes it will always have plenty of students who will participate.

Input and Process

The JAC is waiting until they get more funding to be able to continue tutoring. However, in the meantime, they have been recognized for the model they created. The JAC has been instituted as a separate arm of the Metro government, not part of the Police Department any longer. They will be able to continue their total-child support approach. They have offered their facilities for tutoring to continue and also are willing to send students to the Teen Court building if that turns out to be a better location to draw students.

Product

The teachers have all benefited from the experience and have made wonderful comments such as the following:

The information I have gathered and been exposed to by reading about adolescent literacy has given me the opportunity to compare that many of the strategies that are used at the elementary level can be used to assist marginalized struggling adolescent readers.
HB

When you can reach one of these children who has ‘gone astray’ and helped guide them back into regular productive society that is something that touches your heart and doesn’t easily go away...it gave me the desire to work with children who may not be where they need to be educationally or socially. JR

I have made a difference in the life of one student. And it feels exhilarating! Even if I have to do it one student at a time, I will achieve. JG

The FTOs involved made varying degrees of progress depending on the number of times they came and the degree to which they connected with the teachers. Some found the mentoring aspect very meaningful. One parent commented to the Teen Court that since her son participated in the program he has improved two grade levels. This comment suggests that the students need to be followed in a longitudinal study to measure the impact. Both the JAC and the Teen Court are supportive of this type of study.

Conclusion

This article documented how the negotiations involved in Project Lift: Literacy Intervention for Teens required the commitment and understanding of those involved to achieve the intended goal of supporting marginalized adolescents. There were many meetings in which the perspectives of the different governmental agencies, educators, and students were shared. Patience, persistence, and openness to honestly present what was needed, yet allow for the other’s discourse needs to be met, contributed to the success of this project and hold promise for further dialogue for literacy instruction, particularly in the area of adolescent literacy. Perhaps, this model of exchange could lead educators to more successful networking and negotiations with other government agencies. From this experience, it seems important to begin on a local

level to dialogue with governmental agencies if we hope to help more youth. Perhaps, getting policy makers and educators to talk on this level will build the trust and discourses of understanding needed for exchanges at the state and national levels.

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On the Nature of the Interactive Reading: A Culinary Metaphor

Michael P. French

Interactive reading has been described by Lipson and Wixson ([1997](#)) as a view that entails a variety of factors in which attributes of the reader, the text, and context intersect. Reader factors include general prior knowledge, knowledge of the reading process, and for reading. Texts factors include the discourse to be constructed whether narrative, informative, or poetic. Context factors include the how and where reading takes place—the purpose for reading, the author stance of the text, and the physical space in which the actual act of reading takes place.

In teaching the interactive view of reading to students in various university classes at Bowling Green State University (Fundamentals of Reading, Phonics, Content Reading) I have used an analogy such as driving a car to illustrate the interactive nature of personal knowledge (one's ability to drive), the text (the vehicle being driven), and the context (how and where the vehicle is driven). Students come to see how the process (in this case driving) can be impacted by elements of experience (Who has driven in Boston?), expertise (Who can drive a manual transmission), and attitude (Who has experienced road rage?). Reading works the same way.

I have been attending the ARF conference since 1999. In reflecting on these several trips to Florida, I have come to realize that cooking shrimp can also stand as an apt metaphor for reading. Cooking requires knowledge of ingredients and tools as well as procedural knowledge of planning the various types of food (shrimp, chicken, rice). Cooking requires knowing differences and similarities between recipes, e.g., knowing what base to use for what sauce. It also requires knowing how to adapt to different stoves, different pans, and different sizes of shrimp.

Cooking shrimp, like reading, requires successful prior experiences: Prior experiences in which others of significance have communicated satisfaction and respect, as well as constructive criticism, back to the chef. Each successful prior experience leads to new understandings and constructive risk-taking (such as don't undercook the shrimp). Commenting on this point Murnen ([2002, personal communication](#)) adds that there is a social construction of knowledge—"We know we have done something correctly within a particular social context because we receive validation from that discourse community of mentors and peers." For example, the second year I helped in the kitchen I rolled shrimp in Old Bay spice to create a different variety of shrimp. It seemed that people liked it. This allowed me to take a risk and try to present the shrimp in new ways—as in the third year when I presented a New Orleans Bar-B-Q dish. ([Appendix A](#)). I received lots of positive comments about this style of shrimp—to the point that in the fourth year, I brought my own oversized frying pan to be able to prepare more shrimp more efficiently. I also tried another style – Garlic/Butter/Chardonnay Shrimp ([Appendix B](#)).

Again, many complements were received. These positive acclamations make one want to cook again to relive the positive feelings, to take calculated risks, while staying grounded in the basics (bring the water to a boil—add shrimp—set the time for 12 minutes, drain and serve over ice.)

How often do we praise readers like we praise cooks? And, when do we pay the ultimate compliment and call the cook a chef? When does a learner become a reader or a writer an author? Reading requires constructive problem solving, as does cooking. This last year was the first time I have ever cooked on a solid-top range. I wasn't sure how to work the electronic oven, and the microwave was a devil to program; Books can be like that too. But I had help. Tim set the clock, and thanks to Marty, the over-boils got cleaned up quickly. As teachers, we sometimes need to help readers get started when the clock needs setting, and we need to clean up the mess when the words boil over the top of the page.

Cooking for sixty people is a rush. But I must share, in the last few years, I have prepared for the ARF shrimp extravaganza by practicing – I help out at Church dinners and functions. I have learned a great deal from the dedicated women who serve funeral lunches. I also practice recipes before I try them out on “real people.” The two chicken dishes this year were the result of trial and error at cooking wings. (The garlic chicken recipe ([Appendix C](#)) came from Lori Williams, one of the BGSU grad students, and the other Cajun style in [Appendix D](#) was my own.) We need different recipes because some will like shrimp while others will prefer chicken. As with cooking, we have to understand that not all readers have the same tastes. Both recipes (texts) will nourish the body and soul—and provide for a memorable feast.

As teachers we too need to help our young and old students become comfortable “performing” for groups. Whether reading aloud in a fifth grade classroom, or giving one’s first national presentation, we need to prepare our young readers for these large group experiences. And we need to help readers use what others know and to adapt it. This point, based on Bakhtin’s notion of dialogic semantics, was emphasized in Murnen’s presentation (2002). Growth and learning occurs, in part, only when another’s words (or in this case, recipe) becomes one’s own—for the learner to use to explore new understandings of the old concept by the application and construction of new semantic understandings. As teachers of reading, we can assess this growth only in metacognitive dialogue with the reader (or the chef) asking, “What did you intend for this to be?” And the response of the learner (or the cook) will help to define the personal representation or translinguistic meaning of reader or chef. Bahktin further reflects on this translinguistic quality by stating that the word interacts with the metalinguistic environment both as utterance and variable in dialogue, leading to the total accumulation of meaning—the heteroglossia ([2000/1981](#)).

Thus, for me to use and to own the word, I must come to think of myself, and I have, as ARF’s executive chef. At least, in my own mind, I see myself as very able to fulfill this role to the organization, to fulfill a service to those who value the fellowship of the feast, and to accept and take responsibility for the entertainment and nourishment of

others. As teachers, when we help readers to become poets, published authors, dramatists, singers, or even new teachers of reading, we help them to assume these same roles in identities they will define for themselves. Murnen adds, “children stake out identities—or I would say they experience ideological becoming...that is, they stake out some kind of personal intellectual space from which they can lay claim to authorship, readership, “chefship” etc.” (personal communication). Therefore, a child becomes a reader when he or she says, “I am a reader.” When a child proclaims this to the world, we must accept it and celebrate in the accomplishment with the child.

Teachers create lessons like I plan new dishes. They search the libraries and book clubs for new titles that will entertain and nourish the minds of their students. I have become a food channel addict; I seek out new recipes, and already I have begun to think of what the menu in 2003 will include.

Finally, without positive attitudes, our students will not become readers. As cited in Lipson and Wixson (p. 45), Adelman and Taylor ([1977](#)) assert that whether children perform or learn in a particular situation depends on whether they can do what needs to be done and whether they choose to do it. This makes a lot of sense to me now. Going to Florida next year will mean meeting new friends again, learning and discussing new concepts, and reacting to new ideas. It will also mean cooking shrimp for more than sixty of my closest friends and making the choice to do it to the best of my ability, just like reading.

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Note: The personal conversations with Tim Murnen came from his interlinear notes on the draft of this paper.

Appendix A: Shrimp BBQ – New Orleans Style (as prepared at ARF)
(Insert name)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
½ cup Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce (I have found the higher the quality the sauce, the better the taste and thickness of the sauce.)
Merlot wine (use any brand—not too inexpensive or the sauce will have a bitter aftertaste)
Cajon spices (any brand will do)
River Road Barbequed Shrimp Seasoning (purchased at the French Market in New Orleans)
Shrimp (1 to 1.5 #)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add Worcestershire sauce and slowly blend
3. If the sauce gets too thick, add a little wine but not too much
4. Before adding the shrimp, add spices to make a small mound in the middle of the pan (I don't measure, but there should be enough spice as to keep the sauce away.) The more Cajun you use, the hotter the sauce will be.
5. Slowly swirl the pan until the mound separates and is blended. DO NOT STIR THE SPICES ROUGHLY.
6. Add the shrimp and bring to medium heat. Turn shrimp a few times until all the skins are pink. At ARF, this took about 20 minutes.
7. Remove from heat and place shrimp in a deep bowl or dish.
8. Serve with the sauce. (Sauce can be used as gravy for rice, or it can be used with French bread.)

We made two servings this year.

For my family, I use one stick of butter, about ¼ cup of Lea and Perrins, and a bit of wine, and a whole lot more Cajun spice; that is, I like it hot!

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Appendix B: Garlic-Butter Shrimp in Chardonnay (Insert name)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
Olive oil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ jar of minced garlic
Chardonnay wine (use any brand—not too inexpensive or the sauce will have a bitter aftertaste)
Two whole lemons
Shrimp (3/4 to 1# shrimp)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan that has a cover. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add minced garlic and slowly stir to blend. Do not let butter burn. If it starts to get brown, thin with a little bit of olive oil.
3. Add about a glass-full of wine. Cover for about a minute and let the garlic permeate the sauce.
4. Add the shrimp and cover.
5. Let the shrimp steam in the butter/wine mixture until all the skins are pink. At ARF, this took about 15 minutes.
6. Remove from heat and place shrimp in a deep bowl or dish. Squeeze juice of lemon over the bowl and drizzle a little sauce. (Or serve over ice—at ARF we did both.)

We made two servings this year, but smaller than the BBQ style.

(As of this writing, I have only made this recipe at ARF.)

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Appendix C: Garlic-Butter Chicken in Chardonnay (Insert name – from Lori Williams)

Ingredients

Two sticks salted butter
Olive oil
1 jar of minced garlic
Chardonnay wine (just a splash for taste)
Italian bread crumbs
Chicken wings (3-4 packages)

Directions

1. Melt two sticks of butter in a large fry pan. Melt slowly over low heat.
2. Add minced garlic and slowly stir to blend. Do not let butter burn. If it starts to get brown, thin with a little bit of olive oil or wine.
3. Add about a splash of wine.
4. Add the chicken and slowly stir fry until all the chicken begins to brown. Add more wine if the sauce gets too dry.
6. After the chicken is lightly browned, place in a cooking dish and place in preheated oven at 350 degrees. Turn chicken as it bakes. Remove in about 30 minutes to drain off fat. Continue to bake until meat begins to pull from the bone. At ARF this took another 20 minutes.
7. Turn up the oven to about 450-475 and place chicken back in oven to crisp the skin.
8. With about three-five minutes left, sprinkle with bread crumbs.
9. Serve hot (or cover for later service as we did at ARF)

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Appendix D: Cajun chicken marinade (Insert name)

Ingredients

Marinade:

One jar sauce of choice: At ARF, I used Ragin Cajun Fixin's "All Meat Marinade" (see www.purecajun.com/marinade.htm).

About two cups of Merlot wine

Extra Cajun spice as desired

Olive oil

Chicken wings (3-4 packages)

Merlot wine (as needed)

Hot sauce (if you dare)

More Cajun spice (

Directions

1. About five hours before you will cook the chicken, mix up all the marinade ingredients and cover over chicken. Keep about a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of Ragin Cajun for later.
2. Seal in dish with cover or zip-lock bag and place in fridge. Turn every hour or so (this is why I missed Monday's sessions...)
2. When ready to cook, place in fry pan with a bit of olive oil. You won't need much since the chicken will be coated with marinade.
3. Add more hot sauce and spice if you want (I do when I make this for me!)
4. Add the chicken and slowly stir fry until all the chicken begins to brown. Add a little wine if the sauce starts to burn.
6. After the chicken is lightly browned, place in a cooking dish and place in preheated oven at 350 degrees. Turn chicken as it bakes. Remove in about 30 minutes to drain off fat. Continue to bake until meat begins to pull from the bone. At ARF this took another 20 minutes.
7. Turn up the oven to about 450-475 and place chicken back in oven to crisp the skin.
8. Drizzle some Ragin Cajun over the chicken so it won't get too dry.
9. Serve hot (or cover for later service as we did at ARF)

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Let's All Read in Muggle County: Learning to Write Educational Grants Through a Class Simulation

Michael P. French, Bowling Green State University

Nicole Petersen, Bowling Green State University

Lori Williams, Bowling Green State University

Since 1999, the OhioReads ([n.d.](#)) program has existed in the state of Ohio to provide monies to schools for the advancement of literacy initiatives in the primary grades. OhioReads is Governor Bob Taft's major education initiative and is part of the Ohio Literacy Initiative of the Ohio Department of Education; it exists as a partnership of schools, community organizations, businesses, libraries, parents, and students. The OhioReads initiative is consistent with the list of strategies states have used to improve student reading given by the Education Commission of the States ([2004](#)): (a) providing grants for or requiring districts to provide intervention and remedial services, especially to at-risk students; (b) requiring intensive reading instruction and interventions for students who do not meet reading standards, including summer school, extended-day or tutoring programs; (c) requiring or encouraging districts to place a greater emphasis on improving reading skills for K-3 students; (d) requiring districts and schools to develop individual reading plans for students who fail to meet grade-level standards; (e) creating grant programs for districts (some target low-income districts) to improve reading performance through intensive reading instruction, reading academies or other related initiatives such as extended-day programs, small-group reading instruction, teacher professional development or hiring reading specialists; (f) providing grants that use volunteers to improve student reading; (g) establishing reading centers at universities to assist districts in identifying, assessing and providing instructional intervention programs to students with reading difficulties; (h) increasing parental involvement and providing better information to improve their child's reading skills (including the importance of early brain development); and (i) requiring education and human service agencies to develop plans for early education services to ensure that all children will read by the end of 3rd grade.

Teacher Education

How does this relate to teacher education in general and to the preparation of reading specialists in specific? First, newly graduated teachers need to know that these programs exist. Second, graduating teachers (especially reading specialists) need to have the technical skills to participate in these programs—especially as grant writers. Finally, avenues to deliver this technical information need to be developed by teacher educators. Accordingly, this paper presents a review of a grant writing simulation included in a graduate level content reading course at a mid-western university.

Purposes of the Simulation

The first purpose was to introduce the complexities of grant writing to students who had little previous experience in this type of writing. The second purpose was to provide opportunities for students to participate in writing teams. Finally, through their participation, students would learn the technical aspects of grant proposal writing (especially the development of the grant budget).

Simulation Components

The simulation included seven core elements, which are summarized below:

1. Creation of a fictional county “Muggle County” ([See Figure 1](#)). In order to provide a common understanding of demographics and planning, a fictional county was created. Loosely based on the northwest part of Ohio, the county consisted of both urban and rural districts, wealthy and poor districts, and those growing, as well those in decline. The name was taken from the popular Harry Potter series.
2. Creation of DOE “Report Cards” ([See Figure 2](#)). The state of Ohio posts district report cards on the Internet. These report cards include information regarding district demographics and student achievement. A set of report cards was created to enable participants to review the “state-provided” information. For example, the report card contained information on what percent of teachers have advanced degrees, what percent of students have passed state tests and what the daily attendance rates were.
3. Creation of district demographics and salary schedules ([See Figure 3](#)). In addition to the state report cards, a booklet of district demographics and salary schedules was developed. The district demographic booklet provided information regarding individual school districts that might help frame a proposal as well as tables of values (salaries, benefit rates, substitute teacher pay, tuition rates, etc.). The information in this booklet was used in the development of budgets and project rationales.
4. Creation of the RFP (Request for Proposals) based on the OhioReads RFP, in which content literacy and staff development components were included. With the permission of the state department of education, the actual online RFP was adapted for this exercise. By using the actual state RFP, we were able to ensure that students would be exposed to actual technical vocabulary. Further, the state RFP requires the use of mentors in providing one-on-one instruction. This practice is not necessarily related to content literacy practices. Therefore, in place of the section on mentoring, staff development was added. In this way, students were required to consider the steps necessary to implement their proposed programs. (Selected pages from the RFP are shown in [Figure 4](#) and [Figure 5](#).)
5. Direct instruction in grant writing techniques ([See Figure 6](#)). Specific instruction was provided to illustrate the process of writing a grant from a stated proposal. Attention was especially given to the development of the grant budget.

6. Evaluation by multiple blind readings. To mirror actual practice, the simulation included an evaluation process in which the class would read each other's grants. This provided an opportunity for the students to appreciate the efforts of others.

7. Creation of a set of rewards for teams and individuals. To provide concrete motivation for the exercise, a set of awards was created. In this way, students felt the excitement of writing for a reward.

Relating the RFP to the Curriculum of the Class

As specified in the rules of the simulation, the projects created had to be based on content literacy foundations. The relationship of grant RFP content to the course curriculum is illustrated in the [Table 1](#). During the simulation, the first hour of class time was given to grant writing instruction, group meetings, and consultation with the professor. The second part of the class (approximately 90 minutes) was spent on content reading topics and activities.

Table 1

Relating the Grant RFP to the Course Text

Selected section of Grant RFP	Related sections from McKenna & Robinson
Defining needs and trends	Ch 1: Implications of content literacy
Model to be adapted	Ch 2: Literacy processes Ch 14: Teaching for diversity
Research basis	Continuous throughout the text
Strategies to be implemented	Section 3: Strategies for guided reading Section 4: Postreading strategies Section 5: More ways to facilitate learning through text
Staff development	Ch 1: Teacher resistance to content literacy
Assessment of students & predictors of improvement	Ch 3: Getting to know your students, materials and teaching Ch 4: Global lesson planning Ch 5: Prior knowledge

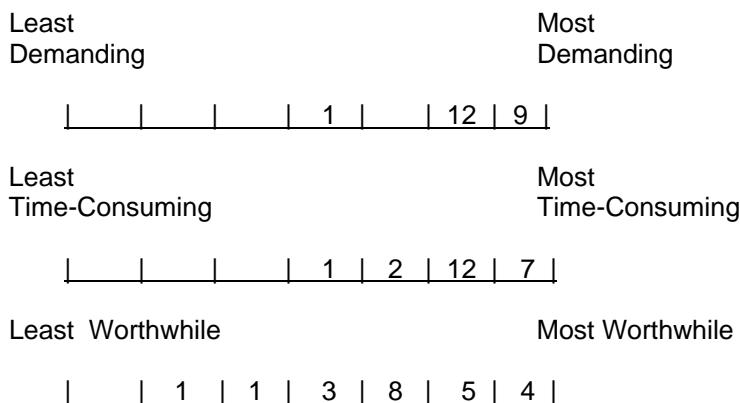
Results of the Simulation

In all 23 students participated in the simulation and 22 completed grant proposals. Of these, only three students had previously participated in any grant writing activities. Selected project titles are shown in [Figure 7](#). As illustrated, many of the projects did have a content literacy emphasis in the title. Some, however, clearly did not. This proved to be one of the limitations of the project for some students. They were not able to see how topics such as “reading styles” could be related to content reading development. Still, at the end of the exercise the grants were evaluated and prizes were awarded. In order to assess students’ perceptions of the exercise as a whole, a simple questionnaire was completed at the end of the simulation. The first set of questions dealt with issues of demands, time, and worthiness. For these items a seven-point semantic differential was used. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Semantic Differential Results (n=22)

Compared to other class assignments in your program, the grant exercise was:



Note: $n = 22$

As illustrated in Table 2, most of the students ($n = 21$) clearly believed the simulation was demanding. This was reflected further in their feelings that the simulation was time-consuming. Still, at least 17 individuals indicated the exercise was worthwhile.

The second set of questions dealt with Bowling Green State University’s core values. These core values were used as a rationale for the exercise in the beginning of the simulation. The core values include the following: (a) creative imagining; (b) spiritual and intellectual growth; (c) cooperation; (d) respect for one another; and (e) pride in a job well done. The questionnaire required the students to respond to the extent the core values were addressed and met in the simulation. The results of this assessment are illustrated in Figure 8:

From left to right:

- C: Creative Imagining
- S: Spiritual and Intellectual Growth
- C: Cooperation
- R: Respect for One Another
- P: Pride in a Job Well Done

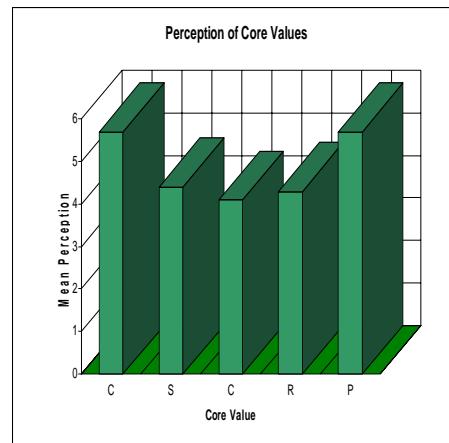


Figure 8. Perception of the core values for the 22 students who completed the simulation.

As seen in the figure, the students clearly believed the simulation enhanced their understanding of creative imagining and pride in a job well done. These sentiments were seen in comments students made on their evaluations:

Even though I lacked the creativity to actually write a grant, I truly enjoyed and have learned from this experience and will in the future try the grant writing process to help my teaching in the classroom. Thank you for this experience.
(Student 6)

This should be its own class. (Student 12 and Student 6)

Spend more time on content reading. (Student 3 and Student 11)

Provide direct instruction – especially on the budget. (Student 20)

A valuable experience. (Student 1, Student 7, Student 13, Student 18)

Great project. (Student 4)

Further evaluations were elicited from two participants (Author #2 and Author #3). They provided the following analyses of the pros and cons of the project. Author #3, indicated she loved the experience and will use it in the future. She has included the experience on her resume. She noted she preferred to work individually but appreciated the reward system. She noted that reading other's work was beneficial.

On the negative side, she disliked the requirement to work in groups and would like to see a separate grant writing class. She felt the project was very overwhelming at first and that more structure might have been provided.

Author #2 indicated that her group provided good support and won the competition. She appreciated learning the whole process of grant writing. She too liked the peer evaluation and the significance of the experience. As did her fellow student, Author #2 felt the process was difficult to understand in some parts. She attributed this to not knowing what was needed in the proposal. She agreed the simulation could have been a class of its own.

Discussion

The purpose of the simulation was to provide an opportunity for graduate students to learn the rudiments of grant writing. The simulation includes many elements of actual grant writing. These included needs assessment, development of project ideas, working in writing teams, development of budgets, and participation in peer review. In many respects, the project was successful in meeting the objectives of the simulation.

The project might have been enhanced in several respects. First, the structure of the project may have been confusing to some. In the future, if this simulation were repeated in a content reading class, it may be beneficial to complete the project over a shorter period of time (two to three weeks) rather than spread over ten or more weeks. Second, more attention would be given to the overlap of the grant project and content literacy foundations. In this way, there might be a clearer understanding of how the grant writing enhances content literacy development. Third, a more careful evaluation of group-roles would be undertaken. In this way, some of the confusion relative to how the groups functioned might be limited. Finally, it was the case that the course evaluations were lower than when the instructor taught the class without the simulation. We speculate that although students generally appreciated learning about grant writing, they did not appreciate learning the process at the expense of the overall content reading course. We also recommend that inclusion of experimental projects such as that reported in this paper may be better provided by professors with tenure who can afford the variation in course evaluation.

Still, despite these concerns and issues, the simulation was successful in providing a foundation for these students. These sentiments are summarized by Author #2 and Author #3:

The grant-writing process overall was an excellent experience. It was difficult and confusing at times, but my group worked well together. We were able to bounce ideas off each other and proofread each other's grants to check for all the information needed and other little mistakes. I know this experience will be beneficial for my future teaching positions. Hopefully I will be able to help others learn with the experience I have and with what I have learned. (Author #2)

I believe this was exceptional to have had this experience before getting out into the field. It is my hope to continue to write grants

when I arrive in my first classroom– for my class, for the school, and for the entire district. Having had this opportunity I am much more willing and ready to write OhioReads and other grants in the future. (Author #3)

Author #1 offers this final comment:

Although we can debate the fairness of state DOE-sponsored grant programs, it would appear these programs have become a reality of schools. Therefore, whether included in core reading courses or provided in individual, unique experiences, the writing of basic grants is and will be a requisite skill for all reading specialists in the future. (Author #1)

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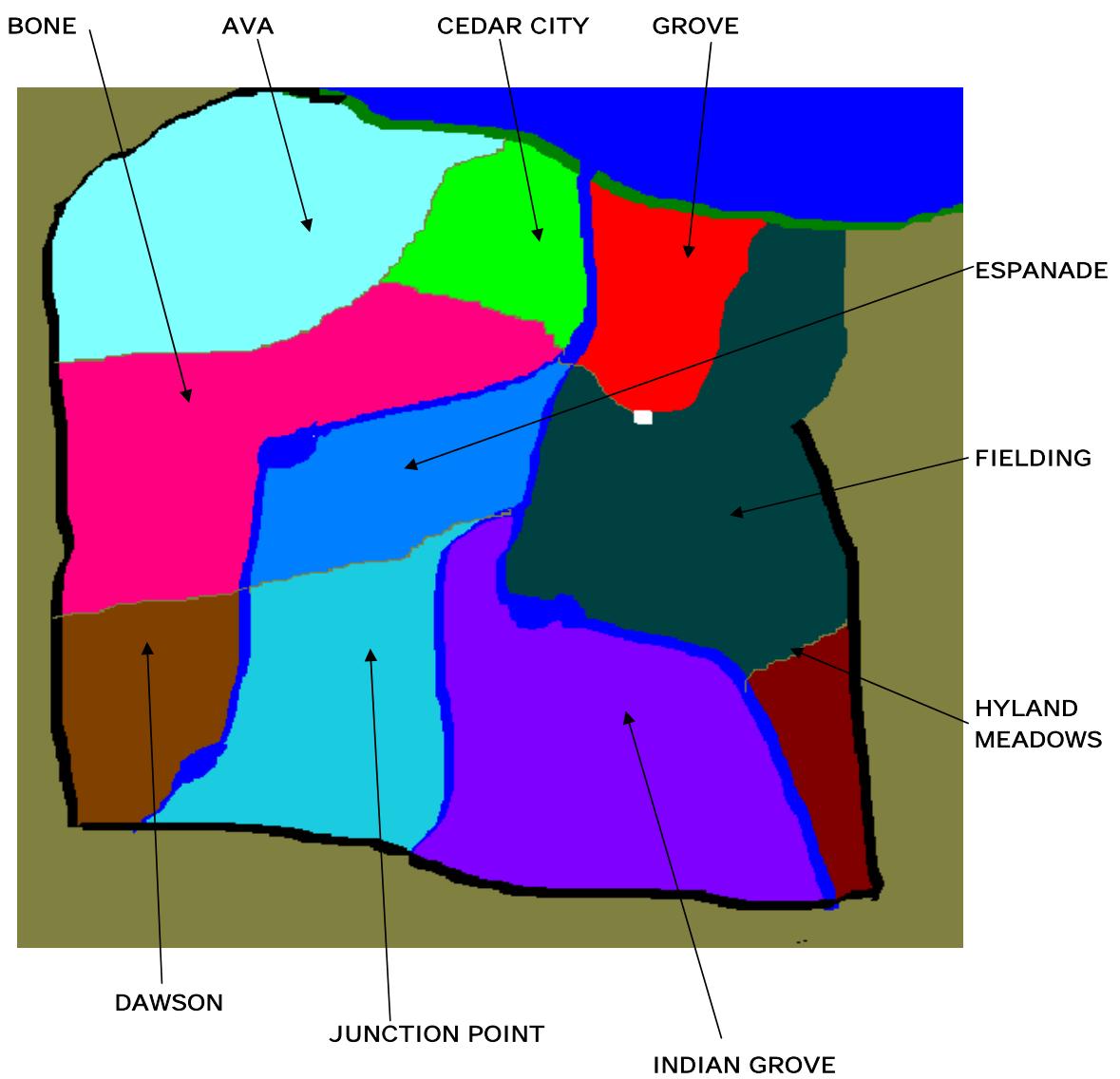


Figure. Muggle County

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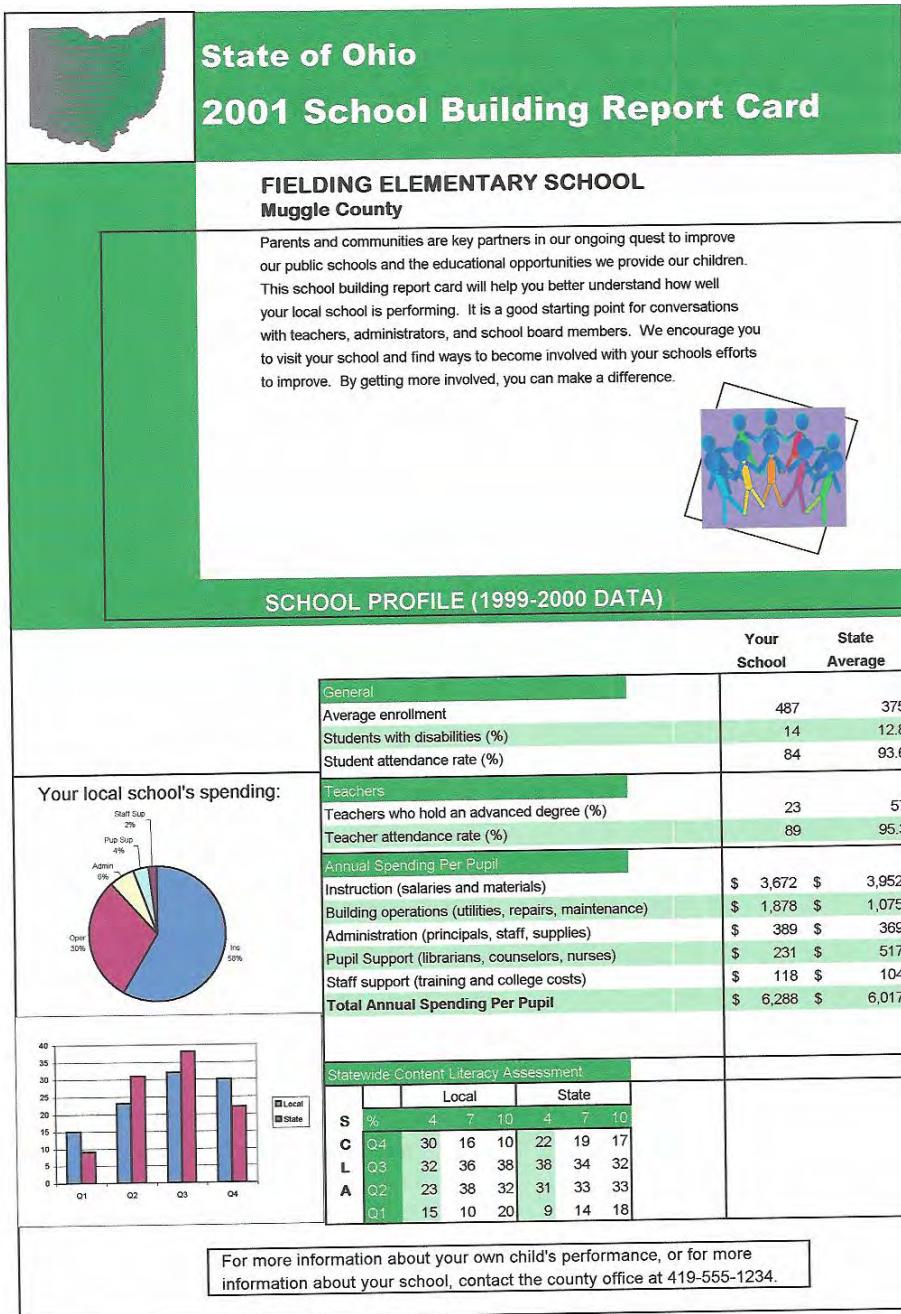


Figure 2. Sample report card provided in demographics package

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Fielding City Schools



Fielding is the largest city in the county and the Fielding City Schools serve two-thirds of the city area. (The Grove district includes the northern part of the city and the lakeside suburb of Grove.) Older buildings and antiquated technology is the norm. Recent concern has grown over principal retirements. Many children have split and blended parents. In spite of it all, a relatively young faculty has implemented many new ideas including Arts Unlimited, dance artists in residence, and PDS programs with BGSU and Findlay. There is interest in 4 Blocks and other aspects of reading

but administration has decided that monies need to be spent on core texts. Most faculty are below the BA 20 level and many talented teachers have left citing the lack of educational opportunity as the key reason for leaving.

Enrollment

Grade	Enrollment	Grade	Enrollment	Grade	Enrollment
K	84	5	84	9	87
1	83	6	85	10	84
2	86	7	89	11	81
3	79	8	76	12	72
4	76				

Fielding Salary Schedule

Years	BS/BA	10	20	MA/MEd	10	20	30
0	\$27,750	\$28,750	\$30,250	\$32,250	\$35,250	\$39,250	\$44,250
1	\$28,583	\$29,583	\$32,583	\$34,583	\$37,583	\$41,583	\$46,583
2	\$29,440	\$30,440	\$33,440	\$35,440	\$38,440	\$42,440	\$47,440
3	\$30,323	\$31,323	\$34,323	\$36,323	\$39,323	\$43,323	\$48,323
4	\$31,233	\$32,233	\$35,233	\$37,233	\$40,233	\$44,233	\$49,233
5	\$32,170	\$33,170	\$36,170	\$38,170	\$41,170	\$45,170	\$50,170
6	\$33,135	\$34,135	\$37,135	\$39,135	\$42,135	\$46,135	\$51,135
7	na	\$35,159	\$38,159	\$40,159	\$43,159	\$47,159	\$52,159
8	na	\$36,214	\$39,214	\$41,214	\$44,214	\$48,214	\$53,214
9	na	na	\$40,390	\$42,390	\$45,390	\$49,390	\$54,390
10	na	na	\$41,602	\$43,602	\$46,602	\$50,602	\$55,602
11	na	na	na	\$44,910	\$47,910	\$51,910	\$56,910
12	na	na	na	\$46,257	\$49,257	\$53,257	\$58,257
13	na	na	na	\$47,645	\$50,645	\$54,645	\$59,645
14	na	na	na	\$49,074	\$52,074	\$56,074	\$61,074

Figure 3. Sample demographic pages

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**Let's All Read
Graduate Reading Program
Spring 2002
Content Reading Grant Writing Competition**

All pages of the **narrative** should be numbered consecutively, starting with Section 1.1 as page 1.

Each application should be stapled together in the upper left corner. Do not bind or put in notebooks.

Your application should be submitted consisting of:

- ✓ One (1) original copy in print and on disk.
- ✓ A reference list of all materials consulted in preparing the application. This will include books, journals, web resources, curriculum guides, test manuals, etc.
- ✓ A list of individuals with whom you consulted in developing your proposal.
- ✓ Each application must be typed - **It is due as specified in the syllabus of EDCI 520.**
- ✓ Address questions about the application to your instructor.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Let's All Read Content Reading Grant exercise was established to introduce graduate students to the technical process of developing a literacy grant. It is based on the 2001 Ohio Reads Classroom Grant Application.

Your Let's All Read Content Reading Grant will be written based on your simulated affiliation with a Muggle County School District. The overall purpose of the grant is to support teachers in implementing reliable, replicable, research-based strategies in reading in content subjects to address the diverse needs of students as identified in the various descriptions. Your Grant funds may supplement, but not supplant existing state funded programs and services that would normally be provided to a school.

The strategies or models identified by the applicant for implementation must:

- Have a strong theoretical basis as previously learned in EDTL 621 and other courses.
- Be based on reliable, replicable research;
- Include a balance of instructional strategies that support the attainment of reading or writing skills in content areas;
- Include strategies, experiences, and skills that lead to success in reading and/or writing; and
- Include strategies for the staff development of existing teachers with whom the grant will be written.

In addition, the grant may include the development of positions, or hiring of personnel. A table of values (salaries, benefits, and other costs) will be provided. Other costs should be based on existing price lists as located in catalogs or on web sites.

FUNDING AVAILABLE AND AWARD AMOUNTS

A total of more than \$17.4 million in simulated funds is available for the Content Reading Grants over the two-year funding period. Up to 47% of the total available funds (approximately \$8.2 million) will be targeted for grants to school buildings in urban and rural type districts. The remaining 53% of the total available funds (approximately \$9.2 million) will be targeted for grants to school buildings in suburban type districts. These percentages roughly correspond to the number of all students failing the 4th grade content literacy test (within eligible buildings) and their corresponding percentages within the urban/rural and suburban subcategories.

State grant funds are limited to costs directly involved in implementing models and strategies that support the elements of the eight-point framework for a comprehensive literacy program and to support volunteer tutoring programs in reading.

The number of students to be served in relation to the amount of funds requested, and the justification for the project based on students' needs, will be used for determining the amount of each grant award. Therefore, the number of awards and award sizes will depend on the applications selected. However, the maximum award per school building over the two-year period will not exceed \$100,000.

SCORING OF THE APPLICATION

Each application will be scored on **the quality of application** criteria (100 points)

1. **The quality of application score** will be determined by the points awarded via both Peer Review and Faculty Review. A total of 100 points are available and a copy of the Rating Criteria to be used by the peer reviewers is attached. The review criteria and point values are provided in each section to assist the applicant in writing a successful narrative. (The sections total 90 points. 10 points will be awarded for overall impression.) A percentile score will be determined for each proposal. The final rank score will be calculated using the formula $\{(2 \times RS) + Percentile\}$.
2. **The writer of the highest grant (or ties) will receive the class award.**
3. **Prizes will be awarded to the top three teams as well.**

GRANT PROCESS

1. Your instructor must receive one (1) original, and four (4) copies of each proposal prior to the application deadline.
2. If all application requirements are not met, the application may lose points during the scoring process, or it may be returned without consideration.
3. Each completed application will be reviewed and scored by at least three peer reviewers from the class.
4. Each proposal's score will be analyzed to eliminate reader bias.
5. Scores from the quality of application criteria will be used to produce a ranking of the applications from highest to lowest within these categories.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS

During the week of April 7th, we will convene the 2002 Content Reading Grant Peer Review. At the peer review, students will be trained and grouped in teams of three to perform the application content review using the rating criteria provided. In addition, peer reviewers will be encouraged to record comments that will serve as feedback to the applicants.

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

The Let's All Read Content Reading Grant application primarily consists of a series of grant narratives, which describe the project objectives and methods of attainment. In addition, the budget narrative and budget grid should detail proposed expenditures of each fiscal year. The review criteria and point values are provided in each section to assist the applicant in writing a successful narrative.

You must follow the outline and numbering format that follows for each part. The narrative should not exceed 20 pages, text must be double-spaced (tables and charts may be single-spaced). Page size must be 8 ½" by 11", and 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Graphs and charts may be used, but must fit within the page limitations. Failure to follow these rules may disqualify the grant.

Peer Reviewers will be instructed to stop reading at the end of the 20th page of narrative. There is no limit to the number of pages allowed for letters of commitment or addendum; however, peer reviewers will have approximately thirty minutes to review each proposal, therefore concise narratives and addendum are encouraged.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Aspects of the grant process will be taught in class. For questions regarding any part of the application, including the project narrative, budget and fiscal guidelines, eligibility requirements, or any other general technical assistance, please contact Dr. French.

All technical assistance provided by the OhioReads office is considered general information and is not a guarantee of funding. Also, visit the OhioReads web site at www.ohioreads.org to review frequently asked questions related to the grants and application process. This information may help you in your writing process.

GRANT TIMELINE

The grant period for these funds will begin in July 1, 2002 and end on June 30, 2004.

QUESTIONS

Address questions about the application to Dr. French at 372-READ.

Figure 4. Project introduction from request for proposals

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Project Narrative

Follow the outline and numbering format that follows for each part. The narrative should not exceed 20 pages, double-spaced, tables may be single spaced, 8 ½" by 11", and 12-point font with 1-inch margins.

Part 1. METHOD FOR IDENTIFYING STUDENTS TO BE SERVED (24 points)

Content Outline:

- 1.1 Describe current method that the school uses for identification of reading problems (current grade level reading assessment).**
- 1.2 Describe the current needs and trends of students in the school related to content reading and literacy.**
Tip: Include analysis of instructional needs of students who read at low levels using state and local data and important demographics.
- 1.3 Describe the method that the school will use to identify students to be served by the grant.**
Tip: Include the process, evaluation tools and priorities for selecting participants.
- 1.4 Identify the approximate number of students to benefit in one school year (including any summer and before or after school programming).**
Tip: The number to participate may be either the same as the number of students reading at or below grade level, or it may be smaller (a targeted group of low readers). Be sure to clearly indicate if the target is a specific age/grade level in primary or all primary ages.

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Effectiveness of the process for identifying and assessing needs of students.
- Extent and level of need.
- Effectiveness of the process for identification of reading difficulties.

Reminder: Application must address services to students.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Cite sources of data and information on the reading skills of students in the primary program as well as the school's results on the content literacy tests.
- ✓ Demonstrate a thorough analysis of the reading needs of students at the school, particularly students reading at low levels, including an analysis of groups often found to be reading at low levels (e.g., from low income families, with limited English proficiency, with diverse learning styles, with little or no intervention experiences, other).
- ✓ Identify students for project inclusion based on multiple assessment components including but not limited to:
 - Teacher input (from observations, anecdotal records, reflection, student work, and parental input);
 - Valid, reliable norm-referenced or criterion-referenced instruments that measure emergent literacy or overall reading abilities; and
 - Informal diagnostic measures.
- ✓ Show that the building has a clear focus on the needs of students, specifically those reading at low levels.
- ✓ Demonstrate a strong, identified need for the grant.
- ✓ Demonstrate that a substantial number of students out of the total number of students assessed in need will be served by this project.

Part 2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH-BASED MODEL TO BE IMPLEMENTED (12 POINTS)

Your grant must be based on published content literacy research. If you include a research-based, packaged program in your proposal, you should provide a strong rationale as to why this is warranted.

The following format should be used for citations. Each study cited should be numbered with the number following the authors' names.

For example:

According to Rowe and Hendricks (1), family relationships can be studied in the illustrations of picture books.

Then, the citation should be noted on the reference list. You are allowed no more than two pages of references (not counted in the 20 page total). The references may be single-spaced, but must be 12 point in size. The list should be presented in the order of presentation in the narrative in this format:

- (1) Rowe, Erin & Hendricks, Cindy Gillespie (2002). An Analysis of Family Relationships in Caldecott Award-Winning Books. Yearbook of the American Reading Forum.

Content Outline:

- 2.1 Describe your model to be implemented, how it came to be created or adapted (if applicable), how it will be carried out in the identified school, and a summary of the research that supports it.**
- 2.2 Describe why and how the model selected will improve student content literacy performance for the students targeted in Part 1. Include appropriate cites that demonstrate the generalizability of your model.**

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Effectiveness of the model in meeting the identified needs.
Reminder: Application must implement a model that is based on reliable, replicable research. The model identified by the applicant may include one or more specific research-based approaches that, in combination, provide the balance of instructional strategies or enhances instructional strategies.
- Effectiveness of the model in providing intervention for problem learners.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Reference different authors, researchers and perspectives regarding the proposed model.
- ✓ Cite respected peer-reviewed publications (not marketing research or testimonials).
- ✓ Avoid overuse of web-based citations.
- ✓ Focus on coherent, theoretically driven reading strategies, rather than a collection of unrelated approaches.
- ✓ Demonstrate a strong fit between the proposed model and the identified need, with research used to document this linkage.

Part 3. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND TIMELINE (18 POINTS)

Content Outline:

- 3.1 Describe the instructional strategies that will be implemented and by whom (role of reading specialist, role of principals, reading coordinators etc).**
- 3.2 Describe the involvement from the school and community (teachers, administrators, businesses, volunteer organizations, parents, others) in planning the project and in the commitment to and capacity of the school community to implement the project.**

3.3 Describe the program timetable, including activities/milestones to be undertaken by the project. Be sure to list the action steps that will be used to attain successful program results. (This can be shown easily in a table form.)

The following provides information regarding the criteria for selection:

Review Criteria:

- Level of commitment.
- Capacity to implement the model.

Reminder: The application must address students and may include professional development or volunteer training.

Reviewer Scoring Guide:

A high quality application will:

- ✓ Demonstrate a thorough, well-designed plan for implementing the model, with necessary professional development and materials.
- ✓ Demonstrate quality of both staffing and training.
- ✓ Offer a realistic and sequential schedule of activities over the duration of the grant.
- ✓ Demonstrate strong involvement of school and community in planning and carrying out the project.

Figure 5. Selected pages from the request for proposals

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Planning a budget

- 1) Your budget items need to relate to grant activities.
- 2) Use dollar amounts only.
- 3) The budget should be layed out in a logical progression.
- 4) Provide calculations as appropriate.
- 5) Show details of supplies -- including shipping.
You may use the state of Ohio function/object format to summarize your budget.
- 6)

Functions are major categories of expenditure.

Objects are details within the category.

Ohio Functions include:

Instruction	Includes cost of teaching, tutoring, etc.
Support Services	Includes cost of aides, curriculum coordination, inservice (by school staff)
Administrative Services	Includes cost of administrators and supervision
Fiscal Business	Includes treasurer and bookkeeping (not allowed in current grant)
Transportation	Includes busses, vans, mileage, etc.
Other Services	Any other monies, including consultants and those outside the employ of the school.

Within each function, the following objects may be applied:

Salaries	Wages for service according to contract. (Must have fringes.)
Retirement and fringe	The negotiated rate applied to salaries.
Purchased services	Monies paid to those outside the employ of the school. May or may not have fringes.
Supplies	Those items needed to provide the grant activities, from A to Z. Items that become part of the structure, e.g.,computers, desks, shelves, etc.
Capital Outlay Capital Outlay *replacement*	Replacement of items in Cap Outlay above.
Other	Any other monies not detailed above.

The relationship between functions and objects is best shown within a matrix:

	Instruction	Support Services	Administrative Services	Fiscal Business	Transportation	Other Services	TOTAL
Salaries							
Retirement and fringe							
Purchased services							
Supplies							
Capital Outlay Capital Outlay *replacement*							
Other							
TOTALS							

Figure 6. Budget planning worksheet

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SMILE (*Science Manipulatives Inspire Learning Experiences*)

Content Area Four Blocks

Project ELMS (*Explorations in Literacy, Math, and Science*)

CIRCUIT (*Content Improvement in Reading Classrooms Using the Integration of Technology*)

Content Literacy and AmericaReads

Reading Styles Technology Intervention

Blocking in strength to plant seeds to the future

STARS (*Soaring Towards Achieving Reading Success*)

SMARTKIDS

LAUGH (*Literacy and Arts United for Growth and Happiness*) (Won award)

Arts Plus

Figure 7. Sample grant titles

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Lore in the LAB: Linguistic Accommodation between AAVE and WAVE Youngsters in an Urban Middle School

Rosalind Raymond Gann

In the urban Midwestern school district where I taught for eleven years, one persistent piece of teacher lore ([North, 1987](#)) was the belief that Urban Appalachian students adopted the speech characteristics of the African American majority. Some English teachers regarded this observation as obvious and hardly worth mentioning. Others decried this “intrusion of Black English” into classroom discourse feeling it inhibited acquisition of “correct” English by all students. Still others saw it as an interesting and perhaps inevitable consequence of ethnically diverse schools and neighborhoods. A few questioned whether the phenomenon existed at all and viewed the aspects they noticed as part of pandemic “bad grammar.” Yet others view the suggestion that there actually is a characteristic African Americans language as a sign of bigotry. Diverse ideologies, hailed by their proponents as revealed truth, are common to teacher lore and would be entirely expected in debates about language. Think back to the Ebonics controversy ([Smitherman, 2000](#)).

The phenomenon of one linguistic variety absorbing traits from another, termed *linguistic accommodation* by sociolinguistists ([Hudson 1996](#)) had never been documented with reference to these two particular dialects. If via contemporary linguistic research techniques, the Urban Appalachian students at our school could be shown to have acquired speech characteristics from African American classmates, our investigation would not only widen sociolinguistic literature, but it would show that so-called teacher “lore” was a serious and fertile source of research hypotheses. The contemporary sociolinguistic notion that people alter style, register, and variety of speech depending on situation and interlocutor, is founded on the premise that we render ourselves more attractive to others by reducing the differences between our styles of communication ([Giles & Powesland, 1975](#)). One may “accommodate” by changing or “code-switching” to the home language of a bilingual interlocutor, by copying a conversation partner’s non-verbal gestures, or by altering speech variety to resemble the sounds, syntax and lexical choices of an interlocutor.

Review of Literature

When they first appeared in the 1970’s, accommodation studies were restricted to investigations of alterations in interlocutor speech (Speech Accommodation Theory or SAT). Today, the field has expanded to encompass non-verbal communication as well ([C.A. Shepard et al., 2001](#)) and draws on diverse disciplines, primarily social psychology, communication and sociolinguistics (Communication Accommodation Theory or CAT). Coupland, & Jaworski, ([1997](#)) and Bilous and Krauss ([1988](#)) investigated how men and women at Columbia University converged or diverged from the speech of an opposite sex interlocutor with whom they completed a problem solving activity. Gallois and Callan’s quantitative study of variety preference among Australian speakers ([1988](#)) indicated that

people preferred those who communicated in ways resembling their own and suggested that one motive for altering speech styles was making friends. Genessee and Bourhis, (1988), in their succinct studies of evaluative reactions to language choice and the role of sociocultural factors examined reactions to Francophone and Anglophone usage in Quebec and elsewhere in Montreal. Usually, though by no means always, linguistic accommodation is studied quantitatively. Ahl-Khatib (1995), using data from a Jordanian radio call-in program, showed that accommodation can be limited by cultural factors such as gender. Using discourse analysis, Coupland and Jaworski (1997) showed that Welsh / English doctors, patients, and speech interpreters in a clinic for the hearing-impaired accommodated each other's speech to maximize mutual understanding. Ten years earlier, using similar discourse-analytic techniques, Aronsson (1987) had investigated speech accommodation between petty criminals and court personnel in Sweden. Prince (1988) attempted to study accent change using vocal recordings over the course of an artist's career, but this work was unconvincing. Similarly unconvincing was the work of Scotton (1988) where evidence of accommodation was taken from TV programs. Jones et. Al. (1999) developed an interesting, but awkward and complex, coding system for analyzing various types of communicative variables which, they hoped, would become standard in accommodation studies.

Genesee and Bourhis, (1988), demonstrated how code switching—changing from one language or dialect to another-- is multiply determined and influenced by community norms. They examined differential reactions to language choice by Anglophones and Francophones in Montreal and Quebec City. Believing that the validity of accommodation studies is often limited by the use of simulated contexts, Willemyns et el. (1997), designed a study where accent accommodation could be studied in a job interview at their university. But in reviewing the literature on accommodation studies, I found no studies dealing with accommodation between or Appalachian English, sometimes known Southern Mountain Dialect, and African American Vernacular English.

Methodology

In the Fall of 2000, there were approximately 450 students attending New Vista Middle School, a specialized middle school for students who had previously failed one or more grades. New Vista was located in a large city, outside the Appalachian Mountains, but close to them—often termed a “Port of Entry city” where new arrivals from Appalachia first settled when they left that region. The New Vista program was experimental, highly disciplined and required a great deal of academic work from students unused and disinclined to perform it. Twenty-two of these students were Euro-Americans and the remainder African American. Thus, approximately 5 % of the population was Euro-American when I undertook to do the study. But, by January 2001, when I received clearance to proceed, the census of Euro-Americans had fallen to eight Euro-American students, or 2%. By the end of the school year, an additional three Euro-American students had dropped out, and one had transferred in. The census of Euro-American students at the end of the school year was now only six, or 1%.

The extremely high dropout rate among Urban Appalachians had been well documented ([Southern Regional Council, Working Paper 8, 2000](#)). Along with the rest of the staff at the New Vista Middle School, I had presumed that all of our Euro-American (i.e., white) students were of Appalachian origin. As I proceeded with the research, I now learned this was incorrect. In the sample of five Euro-American students I eventually put together, three were Appalachian, two were not. I use the designation WAVE-speaker (White American Varieties of English) to describe the Euro-American speakers in the remainder of this report ([Mufwene,1996](#)).

Purpose of the study

This study aimed to determine whether WAVE-speaking students at New Vista School ever showed *linguistic markers* or distinguishing characteristics of African American Vernacular English in their relaxed speech with each other, and whether there was a difference in the presence and/or number of these markers when WAVE-speakers conversed with African Americans than when they spoke with each other.

The research questions were these:

1. Would one find linguistic markers of AAVE (African American Vernacular English) speech in the relaxed conversation of WAVE (White American Varieties of English) speakers at New Vista Middle School?
2. Would the speech production of WAVE-speaking students at New Vista show greater incidence of AAVE markers when they were conversing with AAVE speakers?

Subjects

To run a study utilizing chi-square, it was preferable for at least five New Vista WAVE speakers to take part. Issues of gender balance made it desirable that at least six WAVE subjects be included-- three males and three females.

However, it was not possible to persuade three WAVE-speaking males to participate. The experimental group consisted of five WAVE-speaking subjects. The study sample was a sample of convenience formed by discussing the project with the eight WAVE speakers still in attendance at New Vista Middle School in January of 2001. Six AAVE-speaking participants served to create a multi-lingual condition for the WAVE speakers. These were drawn on a volunteer basis from my own language arts classes. Because it was important to know if study participants had ties to Appalachia, a questionnaire was administered asking for participants' and parents' birthplace and parents' occupation. Field notes were also kept by the researcher.

Conduct of Interviews

In the interviews, I made every effort to create an atmosphere where participants would speak freely about what mattered to them, in what William Labov ([1972](#)) calls a

relaxed style of speech. Participants were informed this was a study of teenage speech, and that some boys, some girls, some Blacks, and some whites had been selected so there would be representation from major groups within the school. It was emphasized that though we were in the school building, we were engaged in research having nothing to do with school. Students were permitted to call me by my first name, which they could not normally do. Profanity during the ordinary flow of conversation was permitted. This astounded participants. I explained that because most teenagers “cussed,” it was impossible to study their speech unless they were free to use profanity.

Interviews were recorded on a Morantz cassette recorder on DR-II 90 high bias tape. To the recorder was attached a single microphone and the apparatus was set in the middle of our circular interview table. Passing the microphone to the person speaking was considered, but wanting no interference with the flow of conversation, it was decided not to. Undoubtedly, some clarity was sacrificed by making this choice.

Interviews were begun by the students asking students to identify themselves on tape and by asking a single question about school—e.g., “What do you like about this place? What don’t you like?” Sometimes, students talked for a full hour without my doing anything else, and the interviewer’s major activity was insuring that everyone spoke. A list of questions was ready, but these were only used when participants were not talking, or if they had gone off on an unproductive tangent.

Managing Data

The tapes were transcribed using a word processor coupled with a Panasonic Variable Speech Control machine. Transcripts were typed play script style with participant names listed in the left margin. Speech frames were numbered for reference. Care was taken to assure that critical sounds—such as the ‘s’ marker-- were transcribed accurately. This necessitated listening to particular sections of tape repeatedly. Once tapes were transcribed, there were still many gaps, because of inaudible and unintelligible sections. Every section of the tapes was reviewed again and many gaps were filled in, especially those sections involving critical sounds. A revised transcript—about 180 pages in all-- was produced, and this became the reference documents for the rest of the study. Using the word processor’s cut and paste function, a one-subject transcript was prepared for each study participant. These were examined for *linguistic markers*. A linguistic marker is a speech characteristic present in one linguistic variety but not in the one to which it is being compared. The transcript of each AAVE participant was scored for each of seven speech linguistic markers under consideration in the study: s-marker deletion, copula deletion, plural deletion, possessive deletion, multiple negation, invariant be, compleative done, remote time been, and future predictive ‘Ima.’ Employing discourse analysis, instances were designated where given markers could have occurred but did not. Actual and possible occurrences of the linguistic markers were then tabulated; tables were constructed, and ratios were calculated.

[Table 1](#), for example shows how Jeremiah, an AAVE-speaking teenager, deletes the ‘s’ in such sentences as ‘He study hard.’

Table 1
Jeremiah: s-marker deletion

Actual	Other poss.	Total poss.	Ratio
7	6	13	0.5385

Chart lists actual number of deletions, other possible occurrences, total possible frames, and their ratio.

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Data was charted and tabulated in this fashion for every AAVE speaker until there were figures on every linguistic marker under study for each AAVE speaker. In the case of WAVE speakers, there were two sets of data to compare—the incidence of linguistic markers in the mono-ethnic and in the multi-ethnic condition. The procedure for acquiring this data was identical to that used for the AAVE speakers' ratio of actual to possible linguistic marker use. For each condition, occurrences of linguistics markers were counted, using discourse analysis to obtain figures for possible use. A ratio was then calculated [Table 2](#), for example, compares Craig's use of 'invariant be' in the two conditions. 'Invariant be' is a salient AAVE marker. A nonconjugated form of 'to be' it is used in combination with the present participle, to express habitual action: "Students be studying for finals."

Table 2
Craig's Incidence of AAVE marker usage under two conditions.

Mono Eth			
Actual	Alt Form	Possible	Ratio
1	151	152	0.0066
Multi Eth			
Actual	Alt Form	Possible	
13	99	112	0.1161

Table shows the difference between a WAVE speaker's AAVE marker usage under two conditions.

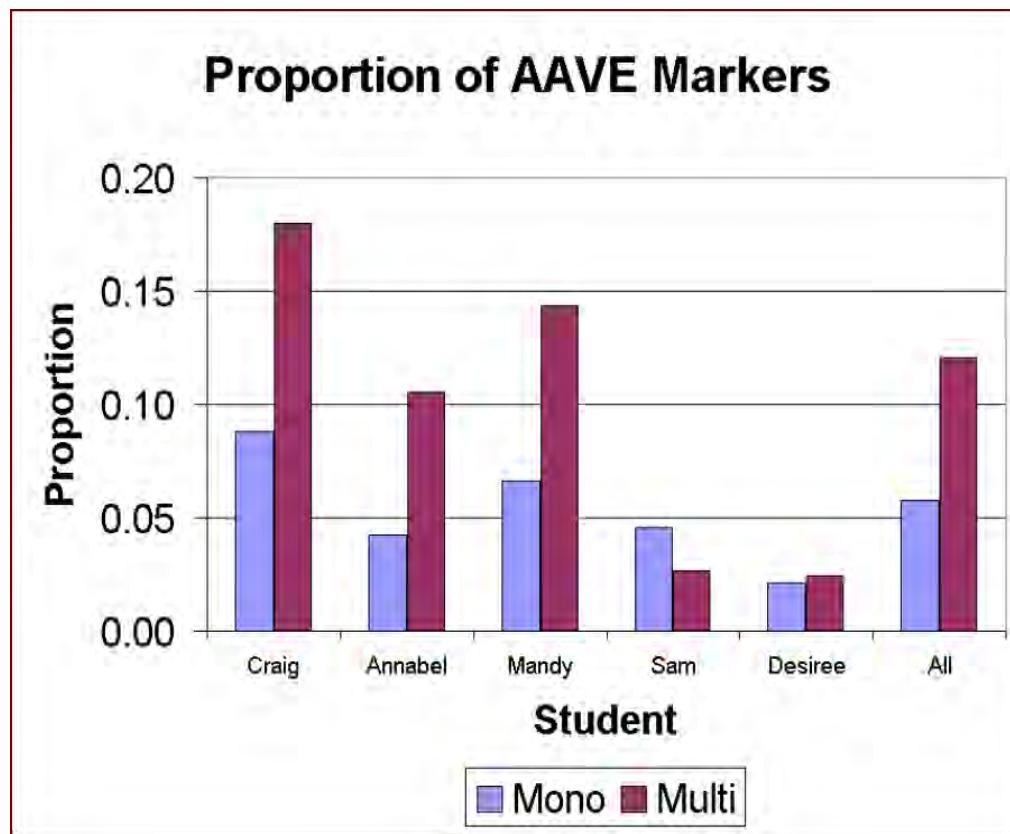
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[Table 3](#) summarizes the proportions of AAVE marker usage by WAVE subjects in the monoethnic in comparison with the multiethnic conditions. These are displayed in the accompanying graph. The chi square statistic was used to test the significance of differences between the multi-ethnic condition and the mono-ethnic condition. The difference between the AAVE speakers and their WAVE counterparts was also compared in this way. When the results for a male subject who had been used as a "gender place

holder" in interview were equivocal, the supplementary data thus acquired were used to provide additional information.

Table 3
Proportion of AAVE Marker Use: Mono- and Multi- Ethnic Conditions

Subject	Mono	Multi
Craig	0.0883	0.1797
Annabel	0.0422	0.1056
Mandy	0.0662	0.1433
Sam	0.0458	0.0268
Desiree	0.0211	0.0244



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Qualitative Data

The greatest part of this study was quantitative. However, observations were made and notes taken to supplement, contextualize and situate the accommodation data. English was the only language spoken at New Vista Middle School; however, the presence of several English varieties made it a multi-lingual learning community. The researcher noted there were three English varieties in use at New Vista Middle School during the study. Firstly, African American Vernacular English, the dominant linguistic variety, was spoken by all students to some extent. I had the impression that many non-African American teachers accommodated to AAVE and used it occasionally in instruction. A second variety, Midwest Standard, the prestige variety, was used over the P.A. System, in some instruction, in bureaucratic correspondence and in high-stakes testing. Teachers' attempts to make students speak Midwest Standard met with little success. A third variety, Southern Mountain English, or Appalachian English, was highly stigmatized. Spoken in an attenuated form by the Urban Appalachian students, it was sometimes designated 'Hillbilly Talk.'

Both AAVE and WAVE speakers disapproved of two language varieties—a hyper-correct style of English they associated with student teachers from a nearby university, and a stigmatized variety they connected with older Urban Appalachians. The former, they called "talking fake," which they associated it with people who could not be trusted. The latter—"Hillbilly Talk"—was thought to signal an absence of "street smarts" and *savior faire* necessary to negotiating urban culture. Students were generally intolerant of linguistic variation. When I asked participants if the student teachers might be talking as they did because they had grew up speaking this way, they vigorously denied the possibility. Similarly, two of the subjects, both WAVE-speakers, denied that one could "be smart" and "talk like a Hillbilly."

The AAVE speakers were proud of their linguistic variety, which they believed to be action-based and oriented toward practical solutions. They considered Black people "good at survival," and thought their language helped them endure. In discussing *The Titanic* disaster, their knowledge of which was based on a recent movie, an AAVE participant said, "The white people just sat there and let the boat sink." An African-American interlocutor agreed, saying Black people would have found a way to escape from the sinking ship. AAVE subjects seemed aware that white people tend to "pick up," i.e., accommodate to, Black speech. They believed white people did not use obscenity as forthrightly and effectively as Blacks, and said white people sounded funny when they attempted to "cuss." They considered "Black English" and "slang" to be synonymous.

Results

The results showed that AAVE markers occurred in the speech of every WAVE subject, even in the monoethnic condition where no AAVE speakers were present. Three of the five WAVE speakers showed a significant increase in AAVE marker usage in the presence of AAVE-speaking interlocutors. Hypothesis # 1 predicted one would find many AAVE linguistic markers in the verbal production of WAVE speakers at New Vista Middle School. The results supported this. Hypothesis #2 posited WAVE-speaking students would show greater use of AAVE markers when in company of African

Americans. This was also supported by the results. Thus New Vista teacher lore was completely on target about the linguistic patterns at the New Vista Middle School.

Discussion

To understand why WAVE speakers accommodated to AAVE, it is useful to consider three theoretical perspectives: Solidarity Theory, theories connecting language and culture, and Language and Power Theory, one important form of which is anti-language theory. Solidarity theory states that people often alter their linguistic variety to converge with an interlocutor's in order to be liked and accepted ([Hudson](#)). Languages, according to this perspective, foster particular ways of seeing the world, and implicitly invite others to share their world view Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, ([1985](#)). Language and Power theories relate linguistic choice to world view, ideology ([Fairclough,1989](#)) or what Halliday ([1978](#)) calls "reality bearing." A specific type of Language and Power theory is Anti-language theory. It is used to explain how special populations—prisoners for example—enact their resistance to those in power by creating anti-codes which" exclude those not in the anti-group and articulate an alternate view of the world. ([Halliday](#)). Theories that link language to culture and identity focus on the way individuals utilize linguistic variety to mark membership in an ethnic group. It seems likely that both the AAVE and WAVE youngsters in this study preferred using AAVE to Standard Midwestern English because the latter code was connected in their minds with styles of instruction that did not allow them to "be themselves." For both groups, AAVE functioned as an *anti-language*, a language of resistance.

There were only a handful of WAVE speakers at New Vista—nine at the time the study began, seven when it ended. There were never more than two WAVE speakers in any one class. In order to become part of the New Vista student community, it was necessary for WAVE speakers to form friendships with native speakers of AAVE. One possible explanation of their linguistic accommodation would be WAVE speakers' desire for acceptance and friendship in an environment that was linguistically foreign. According to Solidarity Theory, it would be natural for an outnumbered minority speech group to shift to the language of their interlocutors. Solidarity theory provides one plausible explanation of the study's results.

The accommodation seen in this study may also have been conducted to what Halliday has termed *anti-language*. An *anti-language* is an argot spoken by a subjugated population such as a group of prisoners used to articulate and enact a counter-reality as an act of resistance. At the New Vista School, where at-risk students were generally unhappy with a fast-paced academic program, both Black and White students utilized a form of African American English liberally laced with ghetto slang to articulate their distaste for the rigors of the school, which was set up to help them, but which they disliked.

Another possible reason for WAVE speakers' accommodation to AAVE may have been the weakening of ties to their home culture. While school personnel referred to all white students as "Appalachian," only three of the five WAVE subjects were

actually of Appalachian background, and two were *Urban Appalachians*, people two generations removed from life outside the city. They shunned Appalachian English which they called “Hillbilly Talk,” and considered old-fashioned at best. They connected this variety with ignorance, and lack of knowledge relevant to urban life. On the other hand, they viewed AAVE as practical, trendy, and powerful. They may have viewed African American students and their parents as more capable of negotiating with New Vista’s administration. Their wish to be users of the student “power code” affords another possible explanation of the WAVE speakers’ linguistic accommodation.

There may also be a connection between linguistic accommodation among the WAVE speakers at New Vista and the power structure of the school. AAVE, while not a prestige code in the world beyond school, was a power code within it. It bespoke the power of the Black community, in contradistinction to the bureaucratic jargon of the central office. It represented and enacted the power of the numerically larger and in one sense, more powerful student body, as opposed to the influence of staff. So, it is possible that WAVE speakers found it empowering to speak what was, in one frame of reference, the power code of the school.

Which Possibility is Correct?

From the study data alone, one cannot tell which of these theoretical explanations provides the best explanation of the linguistic accommodation that was noted-- Solidarity Theory, Language and Culture Theory, or Language and Power Theory (Anti-Language Theory). But when one recalls that during the 2000-2001 school year the census of WAVE speakers at the New Vista school plummeted from 22 to students to 5, it seems probable that WAVE students were uncomfortable at the school. Berlowitz and Durand ([2000](#)) cite a “pushout” phenomenon where Urban Appalachian youth feel so unwelcome in school that they leave. Linguistic accommodation may have been a byproduct of a situation where especially Appalachian WAVE speakers were stigmatized for speaking their home English variety and felt otherwise unwelcome at New Vista. Appropriation of the school’s linguistic power code appears to have been a strategy for coping with a situation where there was linguistic and cultural bias against those students who remained.

Conclusion

Members of a community need not speak mutually intelligible languages for a multilingual situation to exist. The New Vista School with its combination of Standard Midwestern English, African American English and attenuated Southern Mountain English was a multi-lingual learning community. Language is closely related to identity. It is also related to literacy and its acquisition. If students’ home variety of English is stigmatized within a school, this is a barrier to the acquisition of literacy.

When teachers notice that linguistic accommodation is occurring between ethnic minorities in a school, it is important to be certain it is really happening. Techniques such as those used in this study are useful. Beyond that, it is important to ascertain why it

is occurring. While linguistic accommodation occurs normally as part of the process of linguistic change ([Labov, 1972](#)) it is not always a benign phenomenon. Linguistic accommodation as it was manifest at New Vista may have been influenced by a the simple wish of the Euro-Americans to be liked, but it may also have been by inter-group tensions in the school and the community beyond. It is possible that linguistic accommodation to AAVE occurred at the New Vista School because WAVE-speaking students felt a need to need to join the school's culture of power. The Urban Appalachian students in the study had the added issue of speaking a stigmatized linguistic variety. If as educators we believe every student in a public school deserves respect, this should be troubling. Classrooms are properly places where students learn to control prestige varieties of language ([Delphit,1995](#)); however, everyone's home discourse should be welcome.

As teachers of literacy, we must go beyond making observations and disseminating them as lore. We must test them in the *lab* of formal research to make sure they are accurate. The observation tested in this study was highly accurately. But not only must such incites be scientifically tested, the issues to which they point should be explored and acted upon. This study raised the issue of linguistic equity in schools and the language classroom. It touched on concomitant issues of access and power in education. Do students from minority dialect communities feel welcome in our schools and classrooms? Do we even know?

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Five Trends in Literacy and Technology from Submissions from *Reading Online*

Dana L. Grisham, San Diego State University

Bridget Dalton, CAST

Editors, *Reading Online*

www.readingonline.org

As we write this, our term as journal editors of the International Reading Association's professional electronic journal, *Reading Online*, is coming to an end. June 2003 will see the final issue of the journal under our editorship, and we approach the end of our work with mixed feelings. On one hand, editing the journal has been a labor of love. We have had the privilege of working with our amazing department editors ([click to view slide](#)) and with authors who have brought us intellectual excitement and professional growth. We have worked closely with the outstanding professionals at IRA headquarters who assist with so many aspects of the journal. And we have come to be close colleagues and personal friends with each other over the almost four years of our association. On the other hand, as we disclose our final responsibilities, we do so with sadness, knowing that the journal we edited is changing in ways that we cannot yet envision. IRA's new plans for electronic services will see the establishment of a new portal called Reading Online, and the peer-reviewed content will remain. The rest of the journal will evolve as IRA places most of its electronic services onto the portal. We are privileged to be a part of the Electronic Services Committee charged with transforming the site. At this time, however, Reading Online as we know it, will cease to exist.

The electronic journal is the only one of the publications of IRA that has no paper existence. Its establishment in 1997 was the culmination of an extraordinary vision and the combined efforts of an incredibly visionary and talented team. For the first three years, ROL existed primarily as a publication website, under the editorship of Martha Dillner and her team. As we took on the editorship in June 2000, our charge was to expand on the very promising start made by the Dillner editorial team and cultivate the journal by increasing submissions, increasing the readership, adhering to a regular production schedule, and building the reputation of *Reading Online*. In collaboration with our editorial team, we were able to accomplish these goals. Of course, there are areas where we would have liked to realize greater progress, such as publishing more examples of innovative hypermedia composition. We are optimistic that will take place in future online publications.

Reading Online has a mission statement that has formed the foundation of our editorship:

Reading Online is a journal of classroom practice and research for K-12 educators. It is intended to help readers become more attuned to using technology effectively for classroom instruction, and to understanding new literacies and the

impact of these on teaching practice and student learning. The journal is designed to foster the exchange of ideas and the development of networks among readers and authors through discussion in the electronic environment. Peer-reviewed articles published in *Reading Online* will focus on a broad range of topics in literacy education, but should have practical applications and demonstrate sound pedagogical principles.

As of October 2002, we reported that

- 16% of all article-length content published since May 1997 is peer reviewed
- Under the current editors, 17% of content has been peer reviewed (10% in 2000-01, and 23% in 2001-02)
- 66% of all content published since May 1997 and 70% of peer-reviewed articles focus on K-12 instruction; the remaining content focuses outside the journal's mission on teacher education (with little or highly limited relevance to K-12 educators) or preschool
- 63% of content and 56% of peer-reviewed articles focus on technology and new literacies
- Under the current editors, 71% of all content and 62% of peer-reviewed articles focus on K-12 instruction
- Under the current editors, 65% of all content and 54% of peer-reviewed articles focus on technology and new literacies

With regard to an increase in readership, this has been one of the highlights of our editorship. Site traffic is strong and has increased significantly during the current editorial term. The large majority of site visitors come from the United States. Readership has increased dramatically. The most popular sections of the site in its current configuration are (in this order) Articles, Electronic Classroom, New Literacies, International Perspectives and From the Editors, From Years Past (archival material including discontinued Research, Critical Issues, and Reviews sections from the Dillner editorship), and Online Communities.

Because all content published on the Reading Online site remains available to the reader in archives (and is always free of charge), many past publications remain popular. However, each month, the most popular individual articles or features are consistently those from the current issue. These appear on the contents listing of the home page, as well on the individual listings of each section. As we track the readership we see page views that increase. For example, it is not uncommon for articles to have thousands of page views. See the following table (October 2002) for a breakdown of articles and features that have been viewed more than 1500 times in any single month.

Figure 1

Articles and Features Viewed More Than 1500 Times in Any Single Month, February 2001 to May 2002

1. Coles, G., "Literacy, Emotions, and the Brain" (posted in 1999 under the Dillner editorship in the now-discontinued Critical Issues section) (5820 views)
2. Wilkinson, L., & Silliman, E., "Classroom Language and Literacy Learning" (invited article in the series of chapter summaries from the *Handbook of Reading Research*) (3392)
3. Ash, G.E., "Teaching Readers Who Struggle: A Pragmatic Middle School Framework" (peer-reviewed article) (2897)
4. Gambrell, L.B., Morrow, L.M., & Pennington, C., "Early Childhood and Elementary Literature-Based Instruction" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2880 views)
5. Cammack, D., "Two Sites for Struggling or Reluctant Readers" (Electronic Classroom, invited Web Watch) (2698)
6. Burgess, S., "Shared Reading Correlates of Early Reading Skills" (peer-reviewed article) (2535)
7. Pressley, M., "Comprehension Instruction" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2516)
8. Guthrie, J., "Contexts for Engagement and Motivation in Reading" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (2475)
9. Curtis, M., & Longo, A.M., "Teaching Vocabulary to Adolescents to Improve Comprehension" (invited article for themed issue on struggling readers) (2091)
10. Johnson, D., "Internet Resources to Assist Teachers Working with Struggling Readers" (Electronic Classroom, invited Web Watch) (2064 views)
11. Dalton, B., & Grisham, D.L., "Introduction to a Themed Issue on Struggling Readers" (From the Editors feature) (2031)
12. Dalton, B., "Twenty Online Resources on Reading with Comprehension and Engagement" (From the Editors feature) (1940 views)
13. Balajthy, E., Reuber, K., & Robinson, C., "Teachers' Use of Technology in a Reading Clinic" (peer-reviewed article) (1939)
14. Witherell, N., "Book Review: *What Really Matters for Struggling Readers*" (invited review of Allington book posted in Articles section) (1865)
15. Turbill, J., "The Language Used to Teach Literacy: An Activity for Teachers" (International Perspectives department feature) (1670)
16. Casey, J., "Technology Empowers Reading and Writing of Young Children" (invited short feature, Electronic Classroom) (1665)
17. Galda, L., Ash, G.E., & Cullinan, B.E., "Research on Children's Literature" (invited article in the *Handbook* series) (1658)
18. Commeyras, M., "The Improvisational in Teaching Reading" (peer-reviewed article) (1650 views)
19. Tancock, Susan M., "Reading, Writing, and Technology: A Healthy Mix in the Social Studies Curriculum" (peer-reviewed article) (1584 views)
20. Johnson, D., "Picture Book Read-Alouds" (Electronic Classroom web watch) (1558)

21. Pisha, B., & Coyne, P., "Jumping off the Page: Content Area Curriculum for the Internet Age" (peer-reviewed article for themed issue on struggling readers) (1502)
-

In other words, the sheer volume of readership of the journal tends to assure the author that his or her work *will* be read by many people and that we, as editors, can provide specific figures. This is important since often RTP depends upon the impact of one's publications. Our records reflect that in June 2000, when our first issue went "live" ROL had 134,868 page views, with 36,999 sessions at 6.27 minutes each. By May 2002, that had increased to 278,236 page views, with 51,431 sessions at 7.12 minutes each. In a recent issue we topped 400,000 page views and the sessions and session times continue to increase. "Views" represents the number of pages accessed, including any graphics, etc., that might appear on those pages. "Sessions" refers to the number of distinct visits to the site.

Trends We Have Seen

As we began to look back over our time as editors we noted several trends in the submissions to the journal that we note below. These encouraging trends reassure us that what we are doing is important work and we offer these to you as evidence that the outlet for work embracing the intersection of literacy and technology is necessary and that the need should continue to increase over the next few years. As technology evolves, we see the role of a journal such as Reading Online increasing in value, both for contributors and for readers.

Increasing Sophistication in Submissions for Peer Review

In looking over the journal content for the past two and a half years, the first trend we have noted is an increasing sophistication in the submissions for peer-review. First, the form of the content has evolved technologically. Since July 2002, only three articles have been published that could have been published in print form only without the need for technology available in Reading Online. Two aspects distinguish the articles we have published

Technology in service of traditional literacies. Articles that make the point that technology can be used to teach traditional literacies include those where the author substitutes software for reading, writing, or presentation task. Some important examples include:

Denise Johnson's webwatches that provide online sources for teachers (poetry, struggling readers, literature, etc.) A particularly interesting excerpt is on poetry ([Johnson, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Martha Dillner's peer-reviewed article on using technology flexibly in composing ([Dillner, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Karen Bromley's "Vocabulary Learning Online" ([Bromley, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Another good example is Susan Tancock's article on using technology in the social studies ([Tancock, 2002, Online Document](#))

Technology in service of new literacies. Articles in this category use technology in ways that extend the definitions of literacy. An example of this is Susan Deysher's webwatches in the new 21st Century Literacies ([Deysher, 2003, Webpage](#)), and the publication of many articles in the new literacies department. For example, we like Maya Eagleton's roadmap of electronic literacy ([Eagleton, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Also check out Kevin Leander and Lois Duncan's piece on "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun: Literacy, Consumerism, and Paradoxes of Position on gURL.com" ([Duncan & Leander, 2000, Online Document](#)).

Expanding Definitions of Literacy

Expanding definitions of literacy are apparent throughout the journal, but especially in our New Literacy department. Examples include John McEaneaney's hypertext article "Ink to Link: A Hypertext History in 36 Nodes" ([McEaneaney, 2000, Online Document](#)). In this piece, you will learn the difference between hypertext and linear composition and reading! We also refer you Choi and Ho's, "Exploring New Literacies in Online Peer-Learning Environments" ([Choi & Ho, 2002, Online Document](#)). Ann Watts Pailletot's many contributions cannot be overstated on this topic ([Hammer & Kellner, 2001, Online Document](#)). Editor Dana Grisham's editorial on the need for teachers' increased attention to media literacy is also pertinent ([Grisham, 2001, Online Document](#)) as is Kahryn Au's "Culturally Responsive Instruction as a Dimension of New Literacies" ([Au, 2001, Online Document](#)). We also refer you to Jamie Myers and Rick Beach's piece on critical literacy ([Myers & Beach, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Teachers' Increasing Interest and Competence in Technology

Readership statistics bear out classroom teachers' increasing interest and competence in technology. What is going on in teachers' classrooms is far more sophisticated as evidenced by our Teachers' Voices feature in the articles section. Here is a short list of the wonderful diversity of topics covered in this section:

- Literacy, the American Revolution, and the Three R's of Our Fight for Freedom: An Interview with Judy McAllister and Erica Lussos
- An Interview with Roxie Ahlbrecht About Writing, Technology, and the "Apple Bytes" Project

- Collaborative Internet Projects: An Interview with Susan Silverman About Her Passion and Hobby
- An Interview with Mark Ahlness and Jean Carmody About the Earth Day Groceries Project
- An Interview with Cathy Fowler About Sharing a Love of Reading Through Book Raps
- Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad: Bringing a Second-Grade Social Studies Curriculum Online
- Using Technology to Help Adolescents Excel
- Education With Heart: An Interview With Teacher Carol Wilson

Technology as a Vehicle for Teacher Education

Technology as a vehicle for teacher education has appeared over and over again in the journal. Teacher educators are doing more with online resources. We suggest that if you have second language learners you might refer to Jill Kerper Mora's website ([Mora, 2000, Online Document](#)).

However, most of the articles on teacher education concern two strands:

Technology that connect preservice teachers with kids/teachers. Jerry Maring's three articles use technology for communications and learning between preservice teachers and students in K-12 schools. Check out his second article for cybermentoring techniques ([Maring, Levy, & Schmid, 2002, Online Document](#)). Some of the Teacher's Voices series are of great assistance to other teachers and teacher educators in providing exemplars of what teachers, acting for the most part on their own initiative can do to connect literacy and technology in their classrooms. We particularly like Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad: Bringing Social Studies to Life ([Strangman, 2002, Online Document](#)).

Simulated problem-solving experiences. A good example of this is Michael Kibby's work on the reading clinic with simulations for teachers who wish to become reading specialists ([Kibby & Scott, 2002, Online Document](#)) Several authors also explore the utility of online courses. Kara Tabor and Jane Slater Meyers, provide a new look at web-driven coursework in "RISE: The Online Professional Development Choice for Secondary Teachers" ([Tabor & Meyers, 2002, Online Document](#)).

A Continuing Interest in Struggling Readers

As editors, we surveyed our readers about their interests. The widespread interest and frustration with teaching struggling readers topped the list for the survey and led to a themed issue on the topic. In addition to the themed issue, we have published a number of articles and webwatches on this topic, including Editor Bridget Dalton's extremely popular "20 Websites for Struggling Readers" ([Dalton, 2001, Online Document](#)).

An Interest in Intermediate and Middle Level Education

Our readers are interested in intermediate and middle level education, especially functional/content area instruction, and we have published substantial content in this area. Maya Eagleton's work on e'zeens ([Eagleton, 2002, Online Document](#)), Spires and Cuper's "Literacy Junction: Cultivating Adolescents' Engagement in Literature Through Web Options," ([Spires & Cuper, 2002, Online Document](#)) and Gwynne Ellen Ashe's "Teaching Readers Who Struggle: A Pragmatic Middle School Framework," ([Ashe, 2002, Online Document](#)) are just a few of the selections. More recently, David O'Brien's work with adolescent learners highlights that young adolescents who may be disengaged from regular texts may remain engaged in digital and multimedia texts and makes an argument for using the new literacies ([O'Brien, 2003, Online Document](#)).

New Players!

Technology is bringing new players to the game, and they are making contributions that we can only begin to appreciate at the moment. Many important innovations are happening outside of the traditional literacy community of teachers and researchers. For three important examples, see "Multimedia Pedagogy and Multicultural Education for the New Millennium" by Rhonda Hammer and Douglas Kellner ([Hammer & Kellner, 2001, Online Document](#)) and Ron Silverblatt's "Media Literacy in an Interactive Age" ([Silverblatt, 2000, Online Document](#)) and "Visual Education" by Paul Messaris ([Messaris, 2001, Online Document](#)).

Final Thoughts

Reinking and colleagues characterized the current epoch in literacy as a "post-typographic" world, the implications of which we have yet to understand and appreciate. As we document the trends of a journal that we believe has been on the cutting edge of the intersection between literacy and technology, we are pleased to have been a part of it and we look forward to the next chapters of the story.

Acknowledgements

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Expanding Pre-service Teachers' Notions of Literacy and Diversity

Julie Horton
Linda Pacifici

In this paper, two teacher education researchers describe their inquiry to understand pre-service teachers' conceptions of difference related to student learning. The specific research question is: how do pre-service teachers respond to difference in students? According to the deficit model in education, student failure in school is attributed to explanations that include genetics, physiological, or cultural/racial reasons ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#); [Wiener & Cromer, 1967](#)). Additionally, teachers adhere to the deficit model by assuming that children from certain backgrounds are incompetent because they do not do well in school. Too often, the deficit model is the norm with many teachers as they interact with students from cultural groups different from their own. These teachers tend to equate cultural differences as "deficits or disadvantages" ([Bennett, 1986](#); [2003](#)), and they ignore the effects of social class, race, gender and culture ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#)).

An inclusive approach for learning is often used to counter the deficit model in education ([Pearl, 1997](#)). However, when asked about creating inclusive environments for learning many pre-service teachers will respond with "I'm colorblind" or "I will treat all kids the same in my classroom" ([Bennett, 2003](#); [Nieto, 2000](#)). By regarding students as all equal in the classroom, a teacher ignores the differences inherent in each person and instead expects each student to respond to instruction in the same way. When a student fails, teachers usually do not look at their own practices but blame the student ([Gomez, 1994](#); [Ryan, 1976](#)). Gay ([1993](#)) states that, "many teachers do not have frames of reference and points of view similar to their ethnically and culturally different students because they live in different existential worlds" (p. 288). This perspective prevails when teachers fail to challenge their own perceptions, attitudes and assumptions, accepting them as inevitable, justifying inequity ([King, 1991](#); [Ladson-Billings, 1994](#)).

It is a fact that the number of culturally diverse students continues to increase in American schools yet the number of white teachers remains the same, at around eighty percent, who are unfamiliar with the backgrounds of their students ([Irvine 2001](#)). Multicultural education for pre-service teachers has been identified as one way of increasing teachers' understanding of culturally diverse students. Multicultural education aims for teachers to understand the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds. Bennett writes that the "major goal of multicultural education is to change the total education environment so that it will develop competencies in multiple cultures and provide members of all cultural groups with equal education opportunity"([1986, pp. 52-53](#)).

In multicultural education literature a continuum exists on approaches towards implementing a multicultural curriculum in schools. These approaches span a conservative to more liberal and democratic approach. Additionally, not only does a continuum exist but varying interpretations among theorists create a multiplicity of frameworks for one to consider. [See Banks (1994) for his four phases; Sleeter & Grant, (1999) for their five approaches; and Baptiste and Archer (1994) for their three levels.] Some teachers view their role in the classroom as one of integrating students into the existing mainstream society while others promote learning about the existing cultures of students in the classroom in order to build equity and respect for everyone ([Sleeter & Grant, 1999](#)). These two approaches illustrate the contrasts in multicultural education pedagogy: one perspective places emphasis on making the student fit into an existing society while the other promotes a society accepting of all. When teachers ignore a student's background and expect them to "fit in" to their own personal belief system they are in fact illustrating deficit thinking.

One of the underlying beliefs of deficit thinking is that the student is unsatisfactory and must be brought up to teachers' or schools' standards. Because of conflicting internal and external messages pre-service teachers may have internalized, Gonzales argues that teacher educators should encourage pre-service teachers to ask these questions of themselves to ensure curriculum integration and move away from this deficit model:

1. Does my course assist students with knowing the multicultural context of this society?
2. Does this course assist students with knowing major perspective views and frames of reference contributed by diverse social groups to cultural thought and practice?
3. After taking my course will students know of the contributions by women, people of color and other groups to the institutional life of this nation?
4. After my course will students know more about the major controversies and issues shaping the experiences of ethnic groups? ([Gonzales, 1994, p. 13](#))

These questions can serve teacher education programs by assisting them to discover what practices are appropriate, uniting goals with reality. In doing so, educators are beginning to question themselves and their course requirements in order to find out if the needs of their students are being met. Therefore, teachers are taking responsibility for their influence in the educational system.

In this inquiry, the researchers discovered what teacher education practices were appropriate, uniting goals with reality. In doing so, these educators are beginning to question themselves and their course requirements in order to find out if the needs of their students are being met.

Methods

The researchers co-taught an undergraduate education course entitled *Literacy, Technology and Instruction* to pre-service teachers enrolled in K-12 teacher education programs across the university. This course was taught at a university located in the Appalachian mountain area. It would be fair to say that there was a lack of racial diversity among the students as the pre-service teachers in both classes self-classified themselves as White. The majority of the pre-service teachers were traditional in age, coming straight out of high school into residential university programs, and from a middle to upper class background. None of these pre-service teachers, at the point of entering this course, had participated in a course devoted entirely to diversity.

The goals of the course were to expand pre-service teachers' notions of literacy, media literacy, technology, and to relate these concepts to issues in education. To expand students' notions of literacy, the instructors incorporated the concepts of deficit thinking and literacy into course topics. For two semesters, Fall, 2001 and Fall, 2002, a pre-instruction survey was conducted with pre-service teachers in order to document perceptions and attitudes before class instruction. This survey was conducted to gain information about students' ideas surrounding "good" teachers and students, two concepts that can reveal levels of multicultural understandings. Students were also asked in the survey to relate diversity to teaching and learning. The open-ended questions on the survey were:

1. What does it mean to be a good teacher? Please describe.
2. What pictures do you have in your mind of a "good" student?" Please describe.
3. Are you familiar with the concept of deficit thinking? If so, what does that mean to you?
4. In our own words, define or explain the concept "diversity."
5. How does diversity relate to teaching and learning?

Following this survey, students were introduced to the concept of deficit thinking through an article ([Valencia & Solórzano, 1997](#)), a PowerPoint presentation and full class discussion linking back to Purcell Gates' *Other People's Words*. This five-week unit of instruction culminated in the students' writing a reflection paper relating deficit thinking to the Purcell Gates book. Comparisons between survey responses and reflective papers were conducted for final evidence of change in students' points of view. The researchers met regularly to discuss and analyze the data. Salient points were selected and coded to develop emergent themes and issues for further discussion ([Glasser & Strauss, 1967](#)).

Analysis

Analysis was conducted on the surveys and unit reflections, and comparisons between the two were made to examine evidence of change. The researchers examined the surveys and unit reflections separately. Responses were catalogued and examined for emerging themes. The researchers compared analysis of the same data and resolved differences in conference. Major themes in surveys and reflections are reported as well as comparisons between semesters and between surveys and unit reflections.

Results

Surveys

The first question on the survey asked students what it meant to be a good teacher. The 37 pre-service teachers in Fall 2001 semester tended to name characteristics such as “caring” people or a person that “included all students regardless of their culture backgrounds.” Only three pre-service teachers named content knowledge as important in terms of being a good teacher. So the most consistent response to this question is that teachers should care about students and reach out to them and support them in learning. One pre-service teacher from the Fall, 2001 semester indicated some sense of accountability resting on the teacher when she wrote on her survey: “... a good lesson is only as strong as the instructor and even a ‘good’ student can identify a poor lesson and easily lose interest. A good lesson can capture a ‘bad student.’”

Pre-service teachers from the Fall 2002 semester expressed more varied views of being a good teacher. While the majority of the pre-service teachers (31 out of 45) did describe a good teacher as possessing affective qualities such as: respecting students, being a friend to students, exhibiting passion and care, being a role model, enjoying teaching and students; 14 pre-service teachers wrote responses indicating other perspectives. Of these 14 responses, seven pre-service teachers indicated that good teachers possess knowledge and skill in their content as well as affective qualities. Responses include, “knowable about material, kind, considerate.” Another pre-service teacher wrote, “To be a good teacher is being able to ‘teach’ your content and follow the state’s competencies, however, at the same time your students should walk away with an understanding of your content.” These pre-service teachers appear to take responsibility for students’ learning as well as their content domain. Another seven pre-service teachers wrote responses that indicate a primary focus on content knowledge, but support this focus with teaching effectiveness. These responses include: “A good teacher is equipped with the knowledge and skill to teach at the level of his/her chosen profession. [Furthermore] A good teacher is made when he/she contains a compassion/love of herself, her career, and her students.” “A good teacher shares the knowledge he or she has with their students and gives them a framework for the process of learning.” And finally, “Being able to teach the subject that you assigned. Having the students understand and learn the subject matter. Being caring and warm to the students. Being understanding and willing to help the students in any way.”

So, while there were varied responses to the survey prompt, the responses support the conclusions made from the earlier semester: being able to reach out and support student learning is the most important aspect of teaching or just as important as being able to know one’s teaching content area.

The next survey question asked what picture do you have of a “good student?” Typical responses from the Fall 2001 semester included: “Attentive, Listens, Respectful.” However, if we look at how one pictures a good student, most respondents place the responsibility for “being good” on the students. Also, pre-service teachers saw

“goodness” in the traditional sense of the word. A “good” student was defined as one who “tries to understand,” “attention,” “effort,” “eager/excited,” “on time,” and “behaves well.”

The pre-service teachers responding to the survey question from the Fall 2002 semester presented a variety of views. Traditional, behavioral traits were identified by 29 of the 45 students. These traits include: disciplined, attentive, asks questions, non-disruptive, shows up, does best work, and asks questions. Two pre-service teachers indicated that the teacher has a role in a student being “good,” for example: “There are no bad students. There are just some who are easy for the teacher to reach and those who are more challenging to reach.”

While none of the pre-service teachers from either semester were familiar with the concept of deficit thinking from the outset of the study (survey question #3), many from the Fall 2001 semester reflected the concepts of “Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different” in their diversity responses (question #4). For example “diversity is the presence of different backgrounds...being different” ([see Table I](#)). One student went even further writing, “diversity is encompassing differences-it’s accepting who/what we are at face value and learning from it. It’s overall an attitude about accepting and collaborating.” This pre-service teacher understood the value of meeting individual students’ needs.

As the researchers read through the Fall 2001 surveys, pre-service teachers’ concepts or explanations of diversity illustrated that they have some idea of what diversity is but have absolutely no concept of how it relates to them as teachers (question #5). The majority of the pre-service teachers saw diversity as being different or having other cultures in the classrooms. One pre-service teacher saw diversity as a political tactic, six pre-service teachers related diversity as simply being open-minded towards difference. While several pre-service teachers named open-mindedness, when it came to what that meant this also was limited to learning styles, add-on methods or ability. When asked to define or explain the concept of diversity, the majority of students said it was “bringing in another culture.”

Table I
Pre-service Teachers' Ideas of Multicultural Education

Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different	Human Relations	Multicultural Education
“Diversity should be exposed to children sometime in their education in order to prepare them for them future.”	“There are many different backgrounds and upbringings of students that you are going to have to teach. You have to know these differences and be able to relate to them.”	“I want to not only teach diversity, I want my students to breathe and desire knowledge for information and concepts far beyond their experience-this is the best way to learn.”

Note: Taken from Sleeter & Grant, 1999.

[BACK](#)

Pre-service teachers responding during the Fall, 2002 semester had either no concept of deficit thinking (survey question #3) or attributed it to some sort of individual self-perception based on the lack of cognitive skills. However, three pre-service teachers did write that deficit thinking is (a) “thinking someone is less because of who they are or where they come from;” (b) “thinking poorly of others because of their class, gender, etc.;” and (c) “preconceived notion of how certain people will behave.” (The pre-service teacher writing the third response above additionally wrote that deficit thinking is “a politically correct term directed at disadvantaged socio-economic groups. Ignores individual strength and determination.”)

The pre-service teachers (Fall, 2002) writing in response to their understanding of diversity (survey question # 4) were clear that this refers to differences in individual students' race, ethnicity, religion, home cultures and even learning style. As in the Fall, 2001 survey responses, their writing for survey question #5, connecting diversity and teaching, reflected Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level in Sleeter & Grant's model ([Table I](#)). Their responses ranged from believing that simple “exposure” to difference cultures was a good thing in itself, to going beyond exposure to having students and the teacher knowing “where people are coming from” in order to avoid favoritism and to promote acceptance and tolerance. Additionally, these pre-service teachers responded that diversity relates to classroom teaching and learning since teachers need to have an understanding of each student in order to understand classroom interactions, and that teachers can nurture diversity and use it as a learning tool.

Survey Results Conclusion

As described earlier, there is a continuum for understanding and integrating multicultural education in the classroom. After reading through the responses to these

initial surveys that ask pre-service teachers to relate diversity to teaching and learning, the researchers discovered three levels of understanding that directly relate back to the Sleeter & Grant framework (1999). While pre-service teachers held traditional beliefs for the role of the teacher and the student, they did believe that they had a responsibility to expose their students to a variety of other cultures. In the Sleeter & Grant model these beliefs correspond to the Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level (Table I). At this level teachers work to adapt their instruction to the individual learner's needs reflecting the underlying belief that the curriculum and schooling process was good and beneficial for all—that the students will fit into the existing system. Additionally, the researchers saw pre-service teachers sporadically responding at one of the two other levels: the Humans Relations category which leads to acceptance, tolerance, and empathy, and the Multicultural Education category which incorporates diversity into teaching strategies and uses it as a learning tool.

Unit Reflections

The final assignment of the first unit on literacy was the Unit I Reflection. In this assignment, pre-service teachers were to write: (a) on their learning of literacy, (including readings from Gee (1989), Purcell-Gates (1995), and Hirsch (1988)); and (b) insights they gained from the Purcell-Gates book. Additionally, the pre-service teachers wrote about literacy, teaching and learning, diversity, and deficit thinking. Through examination of these artifacts, the researchers were able to obtain a tangible glimpse into attitudes, perceptions and understandings of concepts related to difference and learning. Three major themes emerged from the Fall 2001 semester: (a) the connection between diversity and teaching; (b) genetics, and (c) internalized deficit thinking. Comparison of Fall 2001 and Fall 2002 data indicates that these themes are consistent across both semesters.

Connecting diversity and teaching.

It appears that pre-service teachers in the first semester class were beginning to name acts of deficit thinking in Other People's Words. Utilizing the words of the pre-service teachers, teachers must not "blame the victim." In the case of the Purcell-Gates' book, one student wrote, "[The] teachers did not look at individual students difficulties, but viewed them as part of the collective disabilities urban Appalachians are stereotyped to possess" (Student 18). This student was able to see the negative impact of a label. Another pre-service teacher in Fall 2001 class was able to put this into the context of her own classroom:

As a teacher I must constantly be aware of literacy and diversity in my classroom...the least noticeable group, maybe even a group of people solely in the school that I teach, might be the most important ones for me to recognize and abolish stereotypes about. (Student 10)

Throughout this unit, pre-service teachers recognized that difference does not mean deficient and that they will be responsible for setting an accepting environment in

their future classrooms. "As a perspective teacher I am seeing more that you have to get to know your students [but] by putting a certain label [on a student] you are truly putting the child at a disadvantage" (Student 5). These pre-service teachers began to realize that:

there [are] going to be kids like Donny everywhere. They may not fit his description but they certainly [may] have his same problems. So we must all understand that these children are out there and they need our help. They cannot just be pushed to the side and forgotten. (Student 9A)

Another wrote:

...teachers have to teach to the diversity, not simply to ignore that it exists. This means that we must encourage differences and celebrate our diversity, as well as, foster an environment where they are able to learn regardless of their cultural backgrounds. These students deserve the same knowledge and opportunities, but perhaps not the same treatment of how they obtain that knowledge. (Student 2)

In the Fall, 2002 class, the pre-service teachers made connections between expanded notions of literacy, diversity/deficit thinking, and teaching. For example, one pre-service teacher wrote:

I realized through reading this book that stereotypes pervade and plague our culture, and people are easily convinced that their way of life is ideal. I will never forget Donny's teacher claiming Jenny's ignorance, but undoubtedly being unable to fix her car or remember a grocery list. Jenny and Donny were non-literate because they were unable to read, but they were also completely unaware of the significance of print in our society. But, they also had no reason to be able to read. They didn't use it in their every day life, until Donny began going to school. As Purcell-Gates states, "one learns a discourse by being enculturated into its social practices through scaffolding and social interaction with people who have already mastered the discourse" (p. 182). Donny had no reason to write on how to build a kite, because he could just as easily show the process, as he always had. People assume that diversity constitutes a person of a different race or religion, but Donny provided much more diversity in his classroom than an African-American face or a Jewish boy. He provided the school system with a boundary that it is not structured to deal with accepting different discourses within the classroom. Jenny and Donny are not language deficit because they are able to communicate with each other for all of their purposes outside Donny's schoolwork. People assume that people who are unable to express themselves with extensive vocabularies are perhaps mentally or verbally deficient with language, but the discourse and the particular language to that discourse is not being considered (Student 22).

Another pre-service teacher wrote that:

The first session has opened my eyes about many things. First it opened my mind to the fact that I truly did not know the meaning of literacy. I was forced to see

with my own eyes by looking, researching, listening, and discover all of the extra factors that play into someone being literate. During this I realized how many teachers do not play the role of a teacher and do not help their students learn. Students are stereotyped by their diversities. Then the teacher will decide if he or she is willing to take the extra time needed to help the students. (Student 9)

From these examples, the researchers found that in fact many pre-service teachers were establishing connections between diversity and teaching. First they were able to identify acts of deficit thinking and this led them to attribute negative outcomes to stereotyping and negative perceptions. When pre-service teachers learn about the negative impact of labeling and jumping to conclusions about students based on their own personal bias they negate the individual. It seems that these pre-service teachers are seeing the importance of recognizing diversity among their students, using diversity as a strength in the classroom as well as a learning tool. Yet, in terms of the Sleeter and Grant model (1999), the students did not question the institution of schooling in the broader societal sense and believed that the established curriculum was valid and useful for all students. While the majority of the students reflected the Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different level in the model, and a number then reflected the Human Relations level, only two or three from both semesters indicated through their responses an understanding and a desire to incorporate the multicultural education level in their teaching.

Deficit thinking and genetics.

According to Valencia (1997), deficit thinking has become a justified approach in education due to the differences in genetics between the races. In this manner of thought, different races have different genetic composition, which are thought to be deficient. This has been generalized further to also include accents or dialects that further mark negative attitudes. This has also been linked with poor socioeconomic status, another theme from *Other Peoples Words*. Pre-service teachers in the Fall 2001 class began to understand this type of deficit thinking. For example, as one pre-service teacher wrote:

Social class differences have predicted literacy skill achievement. Social status has predicted how one will be educated. If one is born into a family that is not middle class and educated they have a lower chance of achieving a good literacy level. Jenny and Donny were seen as poor whites-part of a minority class. They were foreigners and outsiders to the world of literacy. (Student 3)

Pre-service teachers in the Fall, 2002 class articulated understandings of the genetics argument and deficit thinking through their understanding of Donny and Jenny in the Purcell-Gates book as members of the “invisible minority” (Purcell-Gates). For example, one pre-service teacher wrote:

More troubling in Jenny and Donny’s case (main characters in the Purcell-Gates book), was the fact that they physically looked like everyone around them. Their key difference is background and culture. People in their community saw them,

not so much as being different, but as being helplessly ignorant. Purcell-Gates offers help because she realizes the futility of “deficit-ridden views”. While she may agree that Jenny and Donny are significantly different than others in the community; she is not willing to write them off as helpless. (Student 11)

Some pre-service teachers in the Fall 2002 semester were not able to see their own versions of the genetics and deficit thinking point and maintained a narrow view of difference by continuing to use the term illiterate in the final reflection. This usage implies the genetic disposition of certain groups of people. Another pre-service teacher stated that Jenny and Donny suffered from acute learning disabilities. This student states that the:

...alleged links between literacy and diversity are overstated in the extreme, being a politically correct society we attach identifying nametags to certain groups of people. These communal nametags are used to provide people with a reason for not being successful. The concept completely ignores the strength and determination of individual human beings. (Student 6)

While one does not deny the strength and determination of individuals, the main goals of the researchers’ unit on literacy and deficit thinking seem to be lost with this particular person.

This version of deficit thinking, as merely a variation in genetics, seemed to be the most accessible for the majority of the pre-service teachers. They were able to articulate its meaning and at the same time, students were extremely vocal in their outrage at the treatment by the educational community who were in this mindset. During class discussions pre-service teachers would ask, “what is the point of education if you already think someone is going to fail?” What an excellent question to pose for any educator who is already determining a child’s future based on the way they look or the way they talk.

Internalized deficit thinking.

Pre-service teachers in both classes were able to understand the concept of deficit thinking when groups of people or individuals attribute it to themselves and act on these beliefs. As a pre-service teacher from the Fall 2001 class wrote: “Sadly, many who are labeled as being deficient in thought, end up believing in the stereotypes themselves” (Student 6). Another pre-service teacher responded:

After being told time and time again that Urban Appalachian culture was the factor that restrained Donny and her from reading and writing, Jenny seemed to have engaged in deficit thinking herself...Jenny illustrated deficit thinking herself because she believed her hillbilly or countrified language hindered her from becoming a successful reader, while she felt Donny’s inability to learn to read and write was due to his laziness. (Student 1)

Some pre-service teachers wrote contradictory statements about difference, deficit thinking and teaching perhaps illustrating their confusion. One example is from a person who wrote:

She [Purcell-Gates] does, however, offer valuable insight through her experiences with Jenny and Donny into many factors that influence a student's ability to succeed at reading and writing. There is a great connection between a student's success in school and their background. Race and financial status are huge factors in predicting the success of a student. For Donny his race did not make him difference, but his whole background did. The diversity within a classroom should be a positive thing rather than a negative thing. A child of any background can be taught to read and write within their realm of understanding. A teacher such as Donny's really has a problem with deficit thinking because she could not relay information to Donny in a way that made it relevant to him, therefore his success at literacy was greatly hindered. (Student 3)

This student does understand and can write an example of internalized deficit thinking, believes that diversity in the classroom can be a positive feature and that a child of any background can be taught. Yet she also refers to the connection between one's racial and socioeconomic status and success in schooling and that students who come from "less desirable backgrounds" can only be taught "with limitations."

Conclusions

The two classes began at introductory levels of understanding multicultural education as illustrated in the Sleeter & Grant model of Teaching the Exceptional and Culturally Different. Students in the classes understood the value of exposing their students to diversity and of teaching to individual students' needs. Yet this could be a superficial level as exemplified perhaps in only studying Black Americans during Black History month. The Unit I Reflections written at the end of the five weeks indicate that the pre-service teachers understood and could apply bits and pieces of concepts that underlie multicultural education: connecting diversity with teaching; deficit thinking and genetics; and internalized deficit thinking. The researchers felt that while most pre-service teachers were well-intentioned, many still seemed to feel that students in public school will have different learning abilities due to their different backgrounds. One student wrote:

...not everyone can read and write and that by examining a persons background and the social class that they come from that has something to do with their capabilities in learning. (Student 5)

This pre-service teacher was not able to see the larger picture and was still blaming the student for not being able to learn (according to the teacher's standards). The pre-service teachers couldn't articulate how expanded notions of literacy and their own projection of deficit thinking would enter into the picture.

The researchers concluded from working with the data that pre-service teachers need a carefully constructed sequence of readings that introduce concepts aligning with and supporting notions of literacy and deficit thinking. These concepts would include among others: stereotyping, prejudice, dialect, devaluation of education, and human capital. During this one five week unit of instruction, the students read the material outside of class, and participated in multiple small group interactive activities to discuss, articulate and argue with these notions. The concepts are complex and require one to move away from their personal ideologies or beliefs. Recognizing how deficit thinking and narrow views of literacy influence our understandings of our students is a long process not completed in a five-week unit. Just as the most integrated level of Multicultural Education in the Sleeter & Grant model (1999) states that students will seek knowledge and experiences that contributes to deeper and deeper understandings of diversity, so too do the course instructors need to create and plan activities that will move the students beyond the first level of multicultural education into the more complex areas. Perhaps the underlying assumptions about societal and schooling goals should be learned as well as a comparison of the curriculum, and instructional practices implicit in each level (Sleeter & Grant, 1999).

While the teacher population is increasingly comprised of white female teachers with limited experience with minorities, the student population is becoming more and more diverse ([Colville-Hall, MacDonald & Smolen, 1995](#); [Fuller, 1994](#); [Tran, Young & Di Lella, 1994](#)). It is vital that all teachers are able to teach to all kinds of diverse populations because it is becoming apparent that most will be doing just that. Utilizing this aspect of deficit thinking contributes to expanded notions of literacy. This process continues to challenge pre-service teachers' expectations of children that will continue when they are in their own classroom.

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In Five Thousand Years of Teaching Reading, What Have We Learned?

Bob W. Jerrolds

In keeping with this year's theme; "Looking Forward, Looking Backward: Reading at the Crossroads," I'm looking backward. As you may have heard it said before, historians are the only people in the world who get paid for looking backward. Unfortunately, for this presentation, I'm not getting paid. I'm getting older now, so I am looking more backward. In fact, I can't believe how backward I look! I have been retired for six years. A couple of you are old enough to have talked with me about retiring, and I have given the same advice that was given to me. If you are in education, you will know when the time comes to retire. A former member of the Georgia State Department of Education said that an educator ought to retire when he sees the same innovation coming around for the third time. To look backward we need a good rear-view mirror, and we need to remember that objects coming up behind us may be larger than they appear.

I suppose that as we get older there is a greater tendency to look back. Aunt Ludie said - now you remember my Aunt Ludie - You knew full well when you invited me to make a presentation that you were going to hear about my Aunt Ludie! I remember Aunt Ludie saying she was so old that she could remember when people wore hats and told the truth. Hat or no hat, I'm going to tell you the truth. The truth is some of the ideas we have about the teaching of reading and some of the techniques we use are older than Adam's house cat, and that is not necessarily bad. I do, however, think that it is reprehensible that some of our colleagues have built their entire professorships on the process of putting old wine in new bottles.

I commend our program planners (Bob Schlagal and Woodrow Trathen) for providing for a look backward. It is a whole lot easier to get where you are going if you know where you have been. I also commend this organization for having as one of its reasons for existence, "To ensure that in the field of reading no idea is too bold or new to be given a hearing, and none too old to be given reconsideration." That is really quite well-stated, which is, of course, why I wrote it.

What was the purpose for the invention of writing in the first place? The purpose was to record what we had learned so that we and succeeding generations would not have to learn it by experience all over again. Would it not be supremely ironic if, of all groups, reading people did not know their own history? There is some evidence that such might be the case. If we did know the history of our own field, would we constantly be throwing out ideas and practices only to come back to them again and again under new names? Anticipating how the research for this paper would turn out, I considered entitling this paper, "Been there; done that; bought the t-shirt." What I did not anticipate is that my title would be in error because we have been teaching reading for more than 5,000 years.

Just how old is reading and writing anyway? For more than 100,000 years humans have been making marks on various surfaces, and archeologists are continuing to find more all the time. Some of these marks are lines, some dots, some are hatch marks, etc. Although some may have been random, and some were apparently just decorative, most clearly did convey meanings. Most of those that conveyed meaning represented some kind of counting. Ancients also drew pictures and made various geometric designs that also represented counting.

In Alberto Manguel's interesting book, *A History of Reading*, he writes,

In 1984, two small clay tablets of vaguely rectangular shape were found in Tell Brak, Syria, dating from the fourth millennium BC. I saw them, the year before the Gulf War, in a unostentatious display case in the Archeological Museum of Baghdad. . . . All our history begins with these two modest tablets. They are—if the war spared them—among the oldest examples of writing we know. ([Manguel, 1996](#))

History is usually defined as the *written* record of human kind. If history began with those two little tablets in Baghdad, let us hope that the days immediately ahead in Baghdad do not begin the closing of some giant, cosmic circle.

Of all the mnemonic marking that peoples used preceding real writing, knot records were the most common in early developing cultures around the world and were used to convey elaborate means of counting.

The Inca of ancient Peru used mnemonics almost exclusively to achieve what writing achieved in the same or similar contexts in other societies. The Inca had several different types of knots to record their empire's daily and long-term mercantile transactions and payment of tribute. Each knot held a specific decimal value (no knot in a certain place meant "zero"). For example, one overhand knot above two overhand knots above a group of seven knots recorded the number "127". Thus, there were specific cord places for the concepts "hundreds", "tens" and "ones". Bunches of strings of knots could be tied off with summation cords. ([Fischer, 2001](#)).

Less convenient than knots, other materials such as stone carvings, pictographs, notched sticks and bones, colored pebbles, etc. have been used to make records of whatever early cultures valued highly whether genealogy, lists of kings, possessions, captives taken in battle, seasonal cycles, or whatever. These were precursors of real writing, but they did not take on the subtleties of transcriptions of human speech. Instead they were only mnemonic devices, although they were frequently elaborate and complex. The earliest of these meaningful markings almost always involved counting of some kind.

Before we can talk about when reading and writing began we have to define real,

or complete, writing. Even though I don't approve of split infinitives, for purposes of this discussion let us accept Fischer's definition. "One might accept that it is indeed the sequencing of standardized symbols (characters, signs or sign components) in order to graphically reproduce human speech, thought and other things in part or whole" (Fischer, 2001).

From the time that writing began many, if not most, cultures have so valued it and been awed by it, especially those who could not read, that they have attributed its invention to a god or goddess, or to a human who, for the achievement, was transformed into demi-god or hero status. Further, throughout most of history reading and writing have been controlled by the priestly classes. The very earliest writings almost always appear to be tallies of the possessions of some king or other high-ranking individual. Thus it would appear that writing was not invented by Thoth, Apollo and his Muses, or some demi-god. It was invented by some long-dead certified public accountant.

A mounting body of evidence indicates that, contrary to what we previously believed, reading and writing did not evolve independently in such varied places as Babylonia, Egypt, China, and India. There are even some reputable scholars who contend that it did not evolve independently in Mesoamerica. I find this assertion a little incredulous, but some scholars claim that writing in Mesoamerica had too much in common with Chinese writing to be coincidence. Although pottery fragments have been found in China with markings on them that date to about 4,000 B. C., there is no consensus that these represent real writing or even pre-writing. Clearly the writing of Japanese, Korean, and other eastern languages evolved from the Chinese, but whence came Chinese?

Having been practiced in Mesopotamia and points east for some two thousand years, the idea of complete writing apparently diffused from there to north-central China, where, due to the demands of the Chinese language, writing went on to assume its unique East Asian cast. (Fischer, 2001)

If history is the written record of the experiences of humankind, then it appears that Samuel Noah Kramer ([1959](#)) was justified in entitling his book, *History Begins at Sumer*. Fischer states:

Though there are other possible interpretations, the cumulative weight of evidence urges the consideration that the idea of complete writing may have emerged only once in humankind's history. Drawing from a standardized repertoire of pictograms and symbols - the distillation of a long development from notches to tablets - the Sumerians of Mesopotamia elaborated what has since become humankind's most versatile tool. All other writing systems and scripts are, then perhaps derivatives of this one original idea - systemic phoneticism - that emerged between 6,000 and 5,700 years ago in Mesopotamia. (Fischer, 2001)

What an epiphany for one person and what a boon for humankind the moment that our ancient Sumerian CPA realized that if he elaborated his counting marks he could

make them represent speech sounds and if he could represent sounds he could make his marks record anything that he or anyone else could say! We can only imagine how dazzled he must have been by that insight. The subtle move from complex mnemonic marks to phonetic representation represents the first real or complete writing.

Although we have real writing that far back in Sumer, to date we do not have examples of the work of school children that far back. However, in Sumer a goodly number of tablets have been found dating from about 2,500 B.C. that are obviously the work of schoolboys learning to be scribes. We can tell that it is because on individual clay tablets or pottery shards we have the same word, sentence, list or passage written over and over again in the same hand. We also have passages written by long ago Sumerians in which they describe their activities. Kramer found one man's essay in which he describes a day at school when he was a lad. Like some of us when we tell children about our school days, I expect that he embroiders his experiences a bit. Kramer states of this essay:

In school the monitor in charge said to me, "Why are you late?" Afraid and with pounding heart, I entered before my teacher and made a respectful curtsy.

But curtsy or not, it seems to have been a bad day for this pupil. He had to take canings from the various members of the school staff for such indiscretions as talking, standing up, and walking out of the gate. Worst of all, the teacher said to him, "Your hand (copy) is not satisfactory," and caned him. This seems to have been too much for the lad, and he suggests to his father that it might be a good idea to invite the teacher home and mollify him with some presents - by all odds the first recorded case of "apple-polishing" in the history of man. The composition continues: "To that which the schoolboy said his father gave heed. The teacher was brought from school, and after entering the house he was seated in the seat of honor. The schoolboy attended and served him, and whatever he had learned of the art of table-writing he unfolded to his father."

The father then wined and dined the teacher, "dressed him in a new garment, gave him a gift, put a ring on his hand." Warmed by this generosity, the teacher reassures the aspiring scribe in poetic words, which read in part: "Young man, because you did not neglect my word, did not forsake it, may you reach the pinnacle of the scribal art, may you achieve it completely. . . Of your brothers may you be their leader, of your friends may you be their chief, may you rank the highest of the schoolboys. . . You have carried out well the school's activities, you have become a man of learning." (Kramer, 1959)

It would appear that a little bribery would go a long way in those days. However, this and other Sumerian schoolboys had their work cut out for them.

Thus the neophyte began his studies with quite elementary syllabic exercises such as tu-ta-ti, nu-na-ni, bu-ba-bi, zu-za-zi, etc. This was followed by the study and practice of a sign list of some nine hundred entries which gave single signs along with their pronunciation. Then came lists containing hundreds of words that had come to be written, for one reason or another, not by one sign but by a group of

two or more signs. These were followed by collections containing literally thousands of words and phrases arranged according to meaning. . . . A collection of most common expressions used in administrative and legal documents was also included as well as a list of some eight hundred words denoting professions, kinship relations, deformities of the human body, etc.

It was only when the student had become well acquainted with the writing of the complex Sumerian vocabulary that he began to copy and memorize short sentences, proverbs, and fables, and also collections of “model” contracts, this last being essential for the redaction of legal documents, which played a large role in the economic life of Sumer. ([Kramer, 1963](#))

Does all this have a familiar ring? To me it sounds like letter learning, word families, sight words, word lists, common phrases, and learning from a model.

Ancient Egyptians called writing. . . “god’s words” - because they believed it to be the gift of Thoth, the ibis-headed scribe of the gods, healer, lord of all wisdom and patron of scholars. . . . Few writing systems in the world have been as beautiful or captivating. None has had such far-reaching effects on humankind. (Fischer, 2001)

Archeological evidence indicates that contact with Sumer, directly or indirectly, is what gave writing to Egypt, not Thoth.

Egypt had borrowed from Sumer not simply the ‘idea of writing’, but logography, phonography and linearity with sequencing. The Egyptian sign inventory was codified very early on, with set phonetic values and sign usages. Then, recognizing specific requirements of the Egyptian language, scribes innovated new writing tools. (Fischer 2001)

Thus the Ancient Egyptians did what the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and others did; they adopted an alphabet and adapted it to the needs of their language. The only major group not clever enough to adapt the alphabet they adopted were the people who spoke English, but more of that later.

The Egyptian hieroglyphs were representations of sounds. They were not, as we might assume from looking at them, ideographs. By the way they are hieroglyphs, not hieroglyphics. Hieroglyphic is the adjectival form of the word. We would not want members of the American Reading Forum calling them hieroglyphics. Ancient Egyptian students were taught to read primarily by spelling the word and by sounding out the syllables. You think we don’t still use something as primitive as the spelling method? In response to the question, “What is this word?” how many times have you heard teachers or parents say “Spell it.” Obviously 5,000 years later we are still trying to teach children with this ancient method.

Of course, the Egyptians rather than the Greeks or Phoenicians were apparently the first to represent single consonants with only one sign corresponding to each

consonantal phoneme in their language . . . This brilliant way of writing . . . Spread to Sinai and Canaan and revolutionized writing in terms of flexibility and economy. One no longer needed to learn hundreds of signs; usually, fewer than 30 . . . (Fischer, 2001)

Speaking of consonants, the Egyptians and many other early writing cultures used only consonants in their texts. They did not use vowels. Can you imagine trying to teach our youngsters to read English using no vowels? It can be done, by the way: nglsh cn b rd wtht vwls, bt nt wtht cnsnnts; Ei a e ea iou oe, u o iou ooa.

'The Phoenicians who came with Kadmos,' wrote Herodotus in the fifth century BC of the legendary Phoenician prince of Tyre . . . Introduced into Greece, after their settlement in the country, a number of accomplishments, of which the most important was writing, an art which, I believe, had been unknown to the Greeks until then.' While the Greeks received consonantal alphabetic writing from the Phoenicians, syllabic writing had been known to them long before this . . . Since Kadmos had lived, as Herodotus also alleged, approximately 1,650 years earlier—that is, when the syllabic writing of the Phoenicians' ancestors had arrived in Hellas—perhaps the historian was recalling a legend relating to the Greeks' first borrowing of writing rather than the second. (Fischer, 2001)

The Ancient Greek student did not have an easy time learning to read. His texts had no spaces or other markers to indicate where words start and stop. They also had no markers such as upper case letters or periods to separate sentences. Some of you may remember that at the first meeting of this association Hecker, Jerrolds, and Benton ([1981](#)) presented a paper in which they proposed a new type of informal reading placement test, one in which the student was faced with the same problems as his counterpart in Ancient Greece. By the way a recent review of the literature revealed that the new informal reading placement test of Hecker, Jerrolds, and Benton has not been heard of since.

It took the Greeks until about 400 years B. C. before they figured out that they could draw horizontal lines in the text to separate words. While they were at it, they decided they could indicate new sentences by enlarging the first letter and/or indenting.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus tells us how they learned to read.

We first learn the names of the letters, then their forms and length, then syllables and their usual variations. Then we begin to read and write, but syllable by syllable and slowly until we have acquired some facility, then connectedly. . . . ([Lampert, 1935](#))

That sounds suspiciously like synthetic phonics to me.

Because it was Greek to them, these ancients had to be resourceful in their teaching techniques. Lampert cites Athenaeus:

Kallias of Athens . . . composed the so-called Alphabet-Revue on the following plan. Its prologue is composed of the letters of the alphabet, and it is to be read in such a manner as to divide the letters according to the punctuation and bring the conclusion in the manner of a tragic denouement back to the letter alpha, thus: Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, The chorus of women is composed by him with the collocation of letters in pairs, set to meter and accompanied by tunes
 (Lamport, 1935)

This sounds like the alphabet song to me and dramatization of reading material. And here we are in 2002 still using choral reading as a part of our repertoire.

Another novel approach was used by a wealthy Greek named Atticus. His less than bright child could not seem to learn his alphabet, so the father bought 24 slaves, gave each the name of one of the Greek letters, and gave them to his child as playmates. And some of you thought that Reading Recovery was expensive! We have no record of the effectiveness of the treatment. I do not advocate the Atticus Method. I feel that it is excessive.

Have you noticed that no matter how impressive a new development might be there is always someone who thinks that it will be the ruination of the next generation. Bright as he was Plato was extremely suspicious of books.

The art of writing was to be sure in Plato's time nothing new; but the Greek book . . . was scarcely yet a century old. Something of its newness is reflected in the delightful version of the story of the invention of books and letters, attributed to Theuth (Thoth) of the Egyptians, 'This,' said Theuth, 'will make the Egyptians wiser and give them better memories; for this is the cure of forgetfulness and folly.' To him replied Thamus, King of the Egyptians: 'O most ingenious Theuth, he who has the gift of inventions not always the best judge of the utility of his own inventions to the users of them. This invention of yours will create forgetfulness in learners' souls because they will not use their memories.'
(Hendrickson, 1929)

Plato was not the alone in his grave misgivings about books. He and others felt that they had indeed already brought about forgetfulness. In ancient Greece that loutish and lazy younger generation was not bothering to remember that which could easily be looked up again in a book. It occurs to me that we are now hearing the same complaint leveled against computers, which will be worse because computers can look it up for you. And, by the way, the younger generation is still loutish, lazy, and going to hell in a handbasket. But speaking of Plato, he presents Socrates as saying, "I know what I do not know." (Buchanan, 1948) Now, if that is not metacognition, I don't know what is!

Although I have not found the source, I have read that the Ancient Hebrews with a taste for learning used a board much like the hornbook that we meet later in reading

education. To reward academic achievement the teacher would drizzle honey in the shape of a letter. When the scholar had mastered the identification of the letter he was allowed to lick the honeyed letter from the board. Quintus Horatius Flaccus whom we know as Horace was a Roman of the first century. Horace also recognized the importance of rewarding children with food even though he wrote satires on the culinary arts (Marshall, 1911). “He commended the innovation of awarding children toothsome dainties molded in the form of letters when they had mastered the alphabet and thus as it were made them swallow it” (Lamport, 1935).

Although this method had several names through the ages, in honor of Aunt Ludie I call it the Biscuit Method. I remember Aunt Ludie saying, “Why, some of them people in’ around criticizin’ teachers couldn’t teach a yard dog to eat a biscuit.” In England it became known as the Gingerbread Method and it was widely recommended in Europe as late as the 18th century. Huey ([1909](#)), Smith ([2002](#)), Lamport (1935), and all the rest of us love Matthew Prior’s poem:

To Master John the English Maid
 A Horn Book gives of Ginger-bread:
 And that the Child may learn the better,
 As he can name, he eats the Letter;
 Proceeding thus with Vast Delight,
 He spells, and gnaws from Left to Right.

Speaking of Nila Banton Smith, I chose this topic because I had made the first moves toward writing a history of reading instruction. In the process I learned about Lamport’s 1935 dissertation in which he had already done most of what I thought I might do. Toward the end of my preparation for this presentation I found that Nila’s excellent book was coming out in a special edition with an updating chapter by P. David Pearson. So now I don’t have to write a history of the teaching of reading. By the way, the special edition of the Nila’s book has an excellent epilogue in which Norm Stahl helps younger readers understand the importance of the book and the context in which it was written.

By the time the German, Basedow, wrote his *Neuen werkzeug zum lesenlehren* in 1787 the Biscuit Method had been fully developed. I mention this book because I had to demonstrate a reading knowledge of German while in the doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin; and, after all these years, I wanted to make some use of the experience. Basedow was teutonically specific on the Biscuit Method stating, “No child needs to eat the letters for longer than four weeks” (Lamport, 1935).

In case you think that the Biscuit Method died out in the 1700’s consider today’s alphabet soup and alphabet cereal. Think also on the number of parents who bribe and reward their children with food for doing their homework or getting good grades. I can remember the 1960’s when we as teachers rotted all those teeth with M&Ms because the psychologists were telling us to reinforce learning with our conditioning techniques.

The Roman alphabet was their adaptation of the Greek alphabet. We do not know

when they first learned to use the Greek alphabet, but it was long before their conquest of Greece. Apparently they had picked it up from the Greek colonies in southern Italy or those on the islands off the southern coast.

Much of what we know of Ancient Rome's educational theory and practice we owe to the writing of the Spanish-Roman, Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, generally known to us as Quintilian. In A.D. 68 Quintilian was granted a professorship, marking the first instance in which the government assumed any responsibility for public education.

The basis of education in Quintilian's time was *mos maiorum*, the way of our fathers. In other words, boys and girls were to be educated by observing and imitating their elders. From its earliest days of power Rome was a society based on warfare and slavery. With the coming of the emperors Roman society became a quagmire of corruption, intrigue, and violence. In this setting Quintilian and many other thinkers developed an almost pathetic faith in education as the remedy for society's ills ([Smail, 1938](#)). This is a phenomenon that we have with us today.

We might have expected a man of Quintilian's intellect and apparent goodwill to have had more to say than he does about the nature of the injustices, corruption, and violence in the world under the rule of Vespasian and Titus and especially under Domitian. Perhaps, as is sometimes the case today Quintilian did not always take the high road because he found himself much obliged by his professorship.

Quintilian begins by affirming the supreme importance of elementary education, the foundation upon which the whole superstructure must rest (Smail, 1938). Some of you in this room are still trying to make the same point 1934 years later. Why? Because, despite all the lip-service given to the concept, in practice we are still not placing the emphasis on elementary education.

And what kind of teacher would Quintilian have in an elementary school? The following quotation gives us some idea:

Would Philip King of Macedon have chosen that the first rudiments of letters should be imparted to his son Alexander by Aristotle the greatest philosopher of the day, or would the latter have undertaken the task, save in the belief that the first elements in our studies are best handled by the best teachers and that these elements have an important bearing on the final result? (Smail, 1938)

Although others at the time held that instruction should not begin until age seven, Quintilian said it could be started earlier if it had elements of play and if the teacher were not too exacting in his demands. Quintilian warned against too much rigor with young children lest the teacher cause the children to hate learning. He stated, "For just as narrow-necked jars spill a flood of liquid poured over them, whereas they fill up when it flows in gradually or even drop by drop, so we must observe carefully the capacity of youthful minds" (Smail, 1938). Now, see, right here the man is talking about immersion whether the whole language people know it or not. I have always maintained that in

immersion some will swim and some will drown. Being a renegade Methodist, I have never been sold on immersion anyway. I know one thing for sure; when I taught in public schools I had my share of narrow-necked jars.

Quintilian had some very specific suggestions for the teaching of reading, one of which was called tracing.

When the child begins to trace the outlines of the letters it will be useful to have them cut out on a board . . . so that his pen may be guided along them as if in furrows. Thus he will not go wrong as in writing on waxen tablets (for he will be confined within the edges on either side and will therefore be unable to deviate from his model), and by tracing definite outlines with great speed and frequency he will develop the proper muscles and will not require the helping hand of a teacher placed upon his own. (Smail, 1938)

Now, some of you can call it the Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile Method of you want to, but you are still using that same old technique. And in severe cases, I think you are well-advised to do so.

Quintilian also suggested giving the child blocks to play with that had the letters carved or painted on them. The blocks could be thrown like dice, and the child was to identify the letter that came up. He could also set up the blocks in rows to spell words. Sounds to me a little like ABC blocks and some of the reading games we use today.

Quintilian and his contemporaries were sold on syllables. He said, “There is no short cut to the learning of syllables. They must all be learnt by heart; nor, as is frequently the case, should the more difficult be postponed till they are dealt with in writing words” (Smail, 1938). That ought to make even you Rudolph Fleschites in the audience happy. However, I would hasten to point out these were Romans, using the Roman’s language, Latin, and the Roman alphabet. They were not trying to read English which uses the Roman alphabet which is 20 letters short of the number needed to pronounce English. I am a great believer in phonics, but I am not a phonics fanatic. You will remember that Santayana said, “Fanaticism consists of redoubling your effort when you have forgotten your aim.” Our phonics fanatics of today would take us back to the way Dionysius of Halicarnassus was taught to read in 60 B.C. Phonics works well for those languages that use alphabets that were designed for or adapted to the language. However, English speakers did not significantly adapt the Roman alphabet. Hence, in those programs that over-rely on phonics the English-speaking child tries to spit, cough, grunt, and groan his way to literacy.

Quintilian also wrote, “The skilled teacher, when a pupil is entrusted to his care, will first of all seek to discover his ability and natural disposition” (Smail, 1938). Here is a man talking about diagnosis and individual differences nearly 2,000 years ago, and we are having teachers today using whole language as an excuse for having all the children doing the same thing at the same time. In another sense of the word Quintilian was out of step with his time, and to a lesser extent with ours.

As for corporal punishment, though it is a recognized practice and though Chrysippus does not object to it, I am altogether opposed to it, first because it is disgusting. . . In the next place, because a pupil whose mind so ill befits a free man's son as not to be corrected by reproof, will remain obdurate even in face of blows. . . and finally because such chastisement will be quite unnecessary if there is some one ever present to supervise the boy's studies with diligence. (Smail, 1938)

Quintilian said that in teaching reading one principle was fundamental, "There is, therefore, only one general principle which I would lay down here to enable my pupil to do all these things correctly, viz. let him *understand* what he is reading" (Smail, 1938).

In a day and age when home schooling was the rule among Romans, Quintilian did not support the practice. He felt that competition was good for children. When they were taught at home they were spoiled and self-centered. Private tutors caused apathy, conceit, and /or shyness. In the school setting they would meet with competition and face more of the realities of life. Everybody thinks that whatever produced him is the best of all possible worlds, and Quintilian was no exception. He wrote of his own school days.

Tests of progress were held from time to time, and to earn promotion was a great prize with us, whilst to be head of the class was by far the most coveted honor. The class order was not decided once and for all. Each month gave the vanquished a fresh opportunity to do battle. (Smail, 1938)

In the debate of private tutor versus the school teacher Quintilian said that the teacher found more inspiration with a larger audience. Throughout my teaching career, I found myself sufficiently inspired.

Apparently in none of the ancient cultures did people read silently. There is some evidence that they knew it could be done, but they did not do it. One of the reasons that few scholars took note of that fact is that the Ancient Greeks and Romans used words that could mean "listen" or "read" so interchangeably that translators often could not tell whether reading or listening was meant. Even when alone, individuals read aloud. Reading silently was viewed with considerable suspicion, as if one were trying to hide something. In view of the fact that so few people could read, perhaps it was considered selfish, or at least bad manners to read silently. Hendrickson (1929) says that among some Jews instructions were given to never read the sacred literature with the eyes alone. Even when no sound was to be made, the words should be formed with the lips.

To the ancients, "Silent reading . . . was not apparently unknown; but where it is alluded to, a special motivation or comment seems to be present to explain it as something anomalous" (Hendrickson, 1929). "Reading silently was not, therefore, impossible (though the degree of silence is still open to debate); but it not only was unusual, it was accounted an imperfect and defective method of reading" (Hendrickson, 1929).

The Ancient Romans had to deal with some pretty capricious gods and goddesses. Ovid has one of his characters say, "I read what you had written without a sound, lest my tongue unawares might swear by some god." (Hendrickson, 1929)

Romans in the Christian era were still reading aloud. St. Augustine seems obliged to explain the strange behavior of the venerable St. Ambrose when reading.

But when he read his eyes ran over the page and his heart searched out the meaning, but his voice and his tongue were at rest. Often when I was present - for I have seen him reading thus silently, never in fact otherwise. We would sit there in long silence (for who would venture to intrude upon him so intent upon his study?) and go our way. We hazarded conjectures as to his reasons for reading thus; and some thought that he wished to avoid the necessity of explaining obscurities of his text to a chance listener, or that he avoided thus the discussion of the difficult problems that would arise and prevent him from doing the amount of reading that he had planned in a given time. But the preservation of his voice, which easily became hoarse, may well have been the true reason for his silent reading. (Hendrickson, 1929)

Conclusion

I recognize that my title was overly ambitious and that I have dealt with precious little beyond the ancients. I assure you that I have looked fairly carefully at the history of reading instruction through the 19th Century, and the pattern continues. Let us quickly list a few generalizations that can draw from 5 - 6,000 years of teaching reading.

1. Teachers throughout the ages have used the same of the same techniques. They have used them because they are effective. They are effective because they are consonant with the nature of the written language or with human motivation.

2. The written form of language is incredibly resistant to change. Originally this resistance was based on beliefs that writing came from the gods. For the greater part of the time that writing has been in existence it was controlled by the priestly and upper classes who knew what the control of writing was the control of power. Today resistance to change in writing continues. We know, for example, that the Roman alphabet is inadequate for English, but we will not change it. Consider, if you will, your computer keyboard. It is as plain as a pikestaff that we could type twice as fast if the home keys were the vowels and a couple of the most commonly occurring consonants. Why are they a, s, d, f, j, k, l, semicolon? - because the keys on manual typewriters used to stick.

3. We don't always notice the obvious. It took about 3,000 years to take note of the fact that we could separate written words with a space. It took nearly 5,000 years to discover that we could teach children to read better if we used materials written for children. In English we didn't discover the question mark until 1587, and even now we put it on the wrong end of the sentence. Those and other examples make us wonder what

might be out there that we have not yet noticed.

4. We need to remember that the techniques, motives, and tools that the reformers and theoreticians were advocating through the ages were not in widespread use at the time, otherwise, they would not have been trying to promote them. And , today, many of you have been trying for years to get teachers and parents to employ your ideas about the teaching of reading.

5. Lastly, in any given time, most especially our own, whatever is being promoted is always in a new dress, and we tend to think it is something new and wonderful. Further, the promoters usually present it as if it were a panacea. We are the most advertised and propagandized generation in the history of reading education. Whenever you read or hear about some nine day's wonder in the field of reading stop and analyze its basic elements. I'll bet you find yourself saying, "Been there; done that; bought the t-shirt."

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“Best Practices” Survey Results by College Teachers of Developmental Education

**Chester H. Laine
Michaeline E. Laine
Terry L. Bullock**

Mayer ([1988](#)) defines learning strategies as “the behaviors of a learner that are intended to influence how the learner processes information” (p. 11). Nist and Simpson ([2002](#)), in their review of college studying, argue that many popular learning strategies are not supported by empirical research and that “most of these learning strategies are taught because of tradition or instructors’ personal beliefs about their effectiveness rather than because the empirical research confirms their advantages and benefits” (p. 653).

In this paper, we summarize the responses from a “best practices” survey given to college developmental educators, and we compare what our sample said about best practices with current thinking on learning strategies as revealed in the literature. Finally, we examine whether our respondents formally evaluated the impact of these “best practices,” whether the practices led to other changes in their programs, and the implications of these findings for future research and practice.

Theoretical Frame

Thomas and Rohwer ([1986](#)), using data drawn from actual classrooms, provided college educators with a theoretical model that captured many factors that had an impact on learning, including experiences, ability, materials, task factors, and course conditions. This model remains viable for 21st Century classrooms and reminds us that factors other than learning strategies contribute to students’ success or failure in college classes. In addition to learning strategies, the college educators who responded to our survey addressed learner characteristics, such as prior knowledge and students’ interest in what they were reading or studying.

Methods

The intent of the survey was to document what "best practices" college developmental educators said they were using in their classrooms. A copy of the five questions related to “best practices” appears at the end of this article. In order to send the survey to the greatest number of developmental educators, a mailing list of 443 names was obtained from the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE). The survey along with a cover letter was mailed to all 443 addresses. Thirty-five completed surveys were returned. Although this was only a 13% return rate, we believe that the information we received is useful as a preliminary examination of how college developmental practitioners think about learning and instruction.

Using Thomas and Rohwer's (1986) model and the research literature, we identified sixteen characteristics of research-validated learning strategies. Our list appears at the end of this article. The thirty-seven "best practices" provided by our respondents were compared to this list of sixteen characteristics.

Results

Nineteen of the thirty-seven responses were not directly related to learning strategies. These practices dealt with attendance policies, techniques for quickly learning students' names, policies for resubmitting assignments, and effective icebreakers.

We received no "best practices" that aligned with five of the characteristics found in the literature (items 12 through 16 on the list at the end of this article). These were practices that were taught over an extended period of time; required students to generate elaborations; addressed the cognitive and metacognitive processes students were using when they read and studied, as opposed to just the strategies they were using; required students to monitor their comprehension; or required students to become aware of their personal beliefs about learning. These will be discussed later in this article.

Eighteen of the thirty-seven "best practices" offered by our respondents aligned with eleven of the characteristics of research-validated learning strategies (items one through eleven on our list at the end of the article). The practices were intensive and of significant duration; required students to generate questions about what they had read; required students to identify main ideas and subordinate ideas, make connections among those ideas, and choose a way to visually represent those ideas in a spatial form (e.g., concept maps); involved the blending of motivation and cognition; required students to focus on the teacher's objectives and how the teacher thinks about his or her content domain; required students to use their prior knowledge; involved specific instructor feedback on the students' attempts to use a particular strategy; required students to generate a writer-based summary; required students to use a strategy within a specific context (e.g., authentic task and text); were explicit and direct; or required transfer (e.g., students had to modify a particular strategy for fit a new situation).

Using the model proposed by Thomas and Rohwer (1986) as our frame, in the next three sections, we discuss some of the "best practices" that were related to learning strategies, learner characteristics, and course characteristics.

Learning Strategies

The most researched and validated, although not necessarily the most effective, learning strategies are those designed to help students organize information (Nist and Simpson, 2002). One of our respondents offered "Paragraph Puzzles" as a learning activity that she uses in both reading and writing classes to help students "focus on organization and relationships by recognizing topic and concluding sentences, transitions, and major and minor details." In this activity, students type individual sentences from a

paragraph on to separate slips of paper. The students, working in pairs, arrange the sentences in the correct order. Typically, each pair has the same group of sentences.

Another learning strategy that was mentioned as a “best practice” by several of our respondents was the writer-based summary. A learning strategy rooted in the research on text summarization, writer-based summaries are “external products that students create for themselves in order to reduce and organize information for their subsequent study and review” (Nist & Simpson, 2000, p. 655). Writer-based summaries have been shown to improve students’ comprehension and help them monitor their understanding ([Valeri-Gold & Deming, 2000](#)).

Learner Characteristics

Our respondents also offered “best practices” that addressed learner characteristics. Several noted practices that increased motivation, students’ interest in what they are reading or studying, or ownership of their learning ([Au, 1997](#)). “Students demonstrate ownership by reading books of their own choosing, keeping journals, and sharing books with one another, even when these activities are not assigned by the teacher” ([Au, 2003](#)). Many of our respondents provided their students with opportunities to select texts that were of interest. For example, one respondent requires students to select a novel to read as homework and to turn in weekly reports on their reading. Students may change books until they find one that grabs them and the books need not be finished by semester’s end. For many students this is the one book they’ve ever truly read.

In a similar way, another of our respondents encourages students to select “any fiction book of their choice of at least 150 pages.” He explains that his students are “extremely enthusiastic. Many have not read an entire book as an adult. They love sharing their books in class and their one-page book reviews showed their enthusiasm.”

The resources are not always fiction. One of our respondents provides “supplemental materials that are timely and peak interest.” Another allows her students to “select their own expository texts to read for a developmental reading class. Since interest is a prime factor for ‘hooking’ disenfranchised readers, this has proven successful. Articles come from the newspaper, periodicals, the Internet, etc.” In a final example of the power of choice in generating motivation, one of the college teachers describes how she uses “self-selected fiction and non-fiction books” for reading material instead of “reading texts, workbooks, and programmed materials.” She argues,

Students are far more interested in reading materials they choose, material that relates to their lives. The average student reads between 800-1000 pages per semester. They were incredibly proud of their achievement and they dramatically changed attitudes about the value of books.

Although there is some evidence that prior knowledge can actually interfere with learning ([Alvermann, Smith & Readance, 1985](#)), frequently the greater a student’s prior knowledge, the more likely that student will perform well on an academic task ([Pritchard,](#)

(1990). Several of our respondents referred to activities that they used to help students develop the habit of activating prior knowledge. For example, one of our respondents consistently has her students “write out pre-reading journal entries to tap or enhance their schema.”

Course Characteristics

Many of our respondents described course characteristics that have an impact on learning, such as the pairing of the reading course with a target course, the amount of time devoted to instruction or the degree to which the instruction is explicit and direct. In their review of the research on college study, Nist and Simpson (2000) argue that research-validated strategy instruction should occur within a specific context. One method that is highlighted in their review, and is referred to by several of our respondents, is “pairing” strategy instruction with a high-risk course. In a paired course, the teacher attends the high-risk course, reads the assigned material, takes lecture notes, and then provides instruction on how to study, making sure that the strategies pertain to the tasks and texts in the target class.

One of our respondents described how she taught learning strategies that she knew her students would need in the target class. Throughout the course, she asks the students to share the effectiveness of that strategy with others in that class. In another example, the instructor explains, “My developmental reading course is paired with a credit-bearing course, Introduction to Social Science.” Instead of using a reading textbook, this college educator generates most of her instruction from the text for that paired course. We know from the research that, to be effective, students must practice strategies with authentic texts and tasks in order to determine which strategies are most appropriate. One respondent compiles

a list of 628 vocabulary words used in that book, broken down by chapter, and analyzed according to how frequently each word is used by the author. Because it will be very difficult for developmental students to truly master 628 words, I focus on the 96 words that appear 3 or more times. In short, instead of teaching vocabulary in isolation, I teach words that students actually encounter as they read for the credit-bearing course.

For other respondents, in non-paired situations, learning strategies are introduced within the context of a course assignment, such as a final research project.

Research-validated strategies, like organizing strategies and writer-based summaries are not quickly mastered. We know from the research literature that a substantial amount of time has to be committed to instruction. Such instruction must be intensive and of significant duration. In fact, some of the studies reviewed by Nist and Simpson (2000) saw no effect until after four weeks of intensive instruction in strategy instruction. Several of our respondents described the importance of providing explicit instruction of some duration. One college educator, for example, explained,

We often tell ESL students to use context to understand new vocabulary words, but neglect to tell them how to use context. Using Kate Kinsella’s *Steps in*

Determining Meaning from Context, I demonstrate one to two techniques that we then practice for several weeks before adding the next technique.

Finally, we know that for any learning strategy instruction to be effective, it must be explicit and direct ([Nist & Holschuh, 2000](#)). Among those who addressed this notion were respondents who suggested “direct instruction” using instructional technologies, such as course web sites and computer laboratories. They often referred to some form of computer-assisted instruction to improve comprehension.

Research-Validated Learning Strategies Not Offered by Respondents

We received no “best practices” that aligned with five of the characteristics found in the literature (items 12 through 16 on the list at the end of this article). For example, a learning strategy that is supported by the research is known as “self-generated elaboration.” We know that students can be taught to generate questions about what they read and that this learning strategy can significantly improve their performance on immediate recognition and recall measures, as well as delayed recall measures (Nist & Holschuh, 2000). None of our respondents offered “best practices” that called upon students to generate these types of elaborations.

A learner characteristic that was not addressed by our respondents was students’ metacognitive abilities. We know that even mature readers may have limited metacognitive skills. Many high school and college readers not only fail to monitor their comprehension, they also have monitoring problems when it comes to test preparation and predicting how well they performed on a test. In order to be successful in academic settings, students must have well-developed metacognitive skills. The research indicates that there are large payoffs when students are taught metacognitive skills (Nist & Holschuh, 2000). It is not enough to teach a strategy, teachers must also address the processes underlying the strategy. We want students to focus on the processes they are using when they read and study, not just the strategies they use. If they can learn to think about the cognitive and metacognitive processes demanded in a task, students can define their goals and study appropriately.

Generating and Evaluating Best Practices

As shown in [Table 1](#), most respondents said that they developed their “best practice” themselves. Others encountered these practices at a professional conference, in a journal article, or on an Internet site. Some said that they created the practice, learned it during their graduate studies, or simply did not remember when or how they first adopted the practice.

Table 1 – Percentage of respondents & how they learned about the “best practice.”

Source of Best Practice	# of Responses	% Total Responders (31)	% Total Surveyed (35)
Learned about it at a conference	8	26%	23%
Read about it in a journal/textbook	5	16%	14%
Saw another teacher demonstrate it in a classroom/workshop	4	13%	11%
Developed it on your own	22	71%	63%
Saw it on a website or list server	1	3%	3%
Other—see 3 remarks below	3	10%	9%
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A

[BACK](#)

Although our respondents were very generous in sharing their ideas, less than half of those who describe having a “best practice” formally evaluated it. However, the majority said that implementing these practices led to other changes in their programs.

Conclusions and Implications

Distinguishing Skills from Learning Strategies

Frequently, we were not sure whether our respondents’ “best practices” were skills or learning strategies. Alexander and Jetton ([2002](#)), in their review of learning from text, say that there has been little effort to unpack the meaning of the term strategy (p. 295). They propose two differences relevant to text-based learning: automaticity and intentionality. Skills are “academic habits” or “reutilized automatic procedures” (p. 295). Strategies are consciously evoked when these skills, or typical behaviors, prove inadequate or unsuited to the task at hand. “At such times, students must be cognizant of their performance limitations, intentionally weigh their options, and willfully execute compensatory procedures” (p. 295). They then become strategic.

Therefore, according to Alexander and Jetton (2002.), the same procedures (e.g., finding the main idea, locating supporting details, or making inferences) can fit under both the skill and strategy categories. The appropriate label rests on whether that reader

“consciously evokes the procedure” or is simply functioning in “a typical, automatic way” (p. 296). This distinction is similar to the one made by Holdaway ([1979](#)) when he notes, “The major difference, then, between ‘skills teaching’ and ‘strategy teaching’ concerns the presence or absences of self-direction on the part of the learner (p. 136). Routman ([1994](#)), in a similar manner, argues, “The learner must know how and when to apply the skill; that is what elevates the skill to the strategy level. (p. 135).

Several of the responses we received illustrate this confusion between skills and strategies. For example, one of our respondents referred to the intensive instruction provided by a required computer laboratory component that met one hour per week outside of the regular course. “This self-paced and individualized component is based on a placement test built into the program. Personalized objectives are generated and students read material at an appropriate reading level.” It is likely that some of these students are practicing existing skills, while others are developing learning strategies.

In a similar manner, another respondent, attempting to provide intensive instruction for a significant duration, administers “weekly tests to determine each student’s mastery of course objectives.” These objectives include “getting the main idea, locating supporting details, making inferences, determining bias, using figurative language, learning about propaganda, increasing vocabulary knowledge.” The respondent argues, “Students who listen, take notes, review their notes, and attend regularly perform well on these weekly tests. Frequent testing reduces anxiety.” Are these students practicing skills or learning to be strategic? If the students are consciously evoking a procedure, they are acting strategically. However, if they are simply functioning in a typical, automatic way, they are practicing existing skills.

Future Practice

Nist and Simpson ([2002](#)) argue that there is a scant research base for the strategies typically recommended by practitioners and commercial materials and that most of these learning strategies are taught because of tradition or instructors’ personal beliefs about their effectiveness rather than because the empirical research confirms their advantages and benefits. Our limited survey was unable to support or refute this claim.

We did not uncover many blatant examples of practices that were used solely because of tradition or personal preference. Several respondents highlighted well-supported strategies such as pairing strategy instruction with high-risk courses and encouraging the creation of writer-based summaries. Finally, many of the most validated strategies were not among our respondents’ “best practices,” particularly asking students to generate questions about what they have read and training students to create self-generated elaborations.

Future Research

Our respondents’ failure to offer practices that aligned with these characteristics may have been due to the open-ended nature of our survey instrument rather than to the

fact that they did not employ practices that reflected these characteristics. We know that college developmental teachers use scores of practices. Due to our open-ended format, many of our respondents may have overlooked practices that they currently use. The responses that we received were also based on the self-perceptions of our respondents. These self-reports may have been unreliable. In a future survey, we will specifically list the research-validated strategies for our respondents and include additional closed-ended questions. Barry ([2002](#)) recently used this approach in her attempt to determine what reading strategies her prospective secondary teachers actually used when they assumed teaching positions.

Also, because of the amount of open-ended questions and writing involved, we will consider offering a web site for respondents to type in their answers and e-mail the survey back. This may increase the rate of return. Researchers have noted the use of web surveys is increasing dramatically and provides exciting possibilities for future studies ([Coomber, 1997](#); [Eke & Comley, 1999](#); [Smith, 1997](#)). College developmental educators are often members of a professional organization at either or both the international/national and the regional levels. Using the Internet to survey college developmental reading educators would be an efficient, fast and cost effective means of reaching those most active in the field. In addition, most college developmental educators have access to the Internet through home or school computers. Another advantage is that college developmental educators are becoming increasingly familiar with email surveys and following Internet links.

Researchers report a fast turn-around time, greater convenience for study participants, and more anonymity. Surveys on the Internet give researchers more candid and extensive responses. In addition, using Internet surveys makes it possible to identify and eliminate duplicate responses, follow up on non-responses, and send out other communications easily ([Coomber, 1997](#); [Eke & Comley, 1999](#); [Smith, 1997](#)).

Finally, it is clear that the very notion of “best practices” may be inappropriate. Thomas and Rohwer (1986) argue that there are no generic best learning strategies. Strategies are considered appropriate when they meet the demands of the task and the beliefs and background knowledge of the learner. Moreover, as Nist & Holschuh (2002) explain, “any teacher-directed strategy presented to students should have the potential of becoming generative in nature” (p. 94). In other words, instructors need to scaffold strategy instruction to the point where students can use the strategies independently. Perhaps we have found a way to ask the right questions. Another, perhaps more important question, is how can we move the profession to more research-based strategic teaching?

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Appendix A

“Best Practices” Survey

1. Please describe your “best instructional practice(s)” below and why you think this practice(s) has been so successful with students in your program.

2. Have you formally evaluated your “best practice” using either a standardized test or an informal evaluation instrument? Yes____No____. If yes, would you please name or describe the instrument you have used and the results of this evaluation.

3. Has using “best practices” in your classes led to any other changes in your program? Yes____No____. If yes, please describe.

4. How did you come to learn about and use this practice? (Please check all that apply.)
 a. learned about it at a conference
 b. read about it in a journal/textbook
 c. saw another teacher demonstrate it in a classroom/workshop
 d. developed it on your own
 e. saw it on a website or list server
 f. other (please explain)

5. Do you have any innovative reading courses in your program? Yes____No____ If yes, could you briefly discuss and send a syllabus.

Appendix B

Sixteen Characteristics of Research-Validated Learning Strategies

1. Practice is intensive and of significant duration.
2. Practice requires students to generate questions about what they have read.
3. Practice requires students to identify main ideas and subordinate ideas, make connections among those ideas, and choose a way to visually represent those ideas in a spatial form (e.g., concept maps).
4. Practice involves the blending of motivation with cognition.
5. Practice requires students to focus on the teacher's objectives and how the teacher thinks about his or her content domain.
6. Practice requires students to use his or her prior knowledge.
7. Practice involves specific instructor feedback on the students' attempts to use a particular strategy.
8. Practice requires the students to generate a writer-based summary.
9. Practice requires students to use a strategy within a specific context (e.g., authentic task and text).
10. Practice is explicit and direct.
11. Practice requires transfer (e.g., student must modify a particular strategy for fit a new situation).
12. Practice is taught over an extended period of time.
13. Practice requires students to generate elaborations.
14. Practice addresses the processes students are using when they read and study, not just the strategies they use (e.g., cognitive and metacognitive processes demanded in a task).
15. Practice requires students to monitor their comprehension.
16. Practice requires students to become aware of their personal beliefs about learning.

Reading Connected Text Online: A Fresh Look at the Reader/Text Relationship

Lynne D. Miller

Technology provides access to much more information, more rapidly, than the good old days of library research in which journals and books in paper format provided the bulk of reference material. With technology come different demands on the reader, creating a shift in the reader/text relationship. In her article, Julie Coiro (2003) thoroughly illuminates a variety of ways that use of the Internet is creating a demand for new proficiencies in reading comprehension. Drawing heavily from the RAND Reading Study Group report (2002), she explains how electronic texts with hyperlinks and hypermedia clearly present new and sophisticated demands on readers' abilities to extract and construct meaning. While advanced interactive reading opportunities exist online, in many instances, readers must still use literacy abilities associated with reading traditional paper-formatted text.

The topic for this investigation grew out of personal experiences in reading connected text online. In recent years, I often search online databases for information, usually articles, relevant to various research topics. When I locate a useful article and begin reading through it on my computer monitor, within moments, I find myself wanting to underline key points or jot margin notes. I ascribe to the thinking skill notion that interacting with text using a variety of text markings and making notes frees up thinking as the reader constructs meaning. More often than not, I end up printing the article so that I can make notations directly on the paper copy. Additionally, I usually want to refer back later to different parts of an article, and having a paper copy tends to make this process simpler than retracing steps through a series of web addresses.

Participants and Methodology

Given my personal experiences, I wondered how others deal with issues related to reading connected text on line, so I surveyed 63 graduate students enrolled in an MS in Reading program. Students in this program are required to engage in a variety of research projects that include use of online resources. Further, early in the program, many of the students participate in library training sessions that help develop necessary skills for locating information, including articles, online.

The survey included the following items:

- (1) How often do you use online resources to fulfill requirements for your graduate courses?

- (2) How often do you find yourself having to read journal articles or other connected text (defined as more than 1 page of text written in paragraph form) online to fulfill requirements for your course?

(3) In general, do you find reading connected text online more difficult, less difficult or neither more nor less difficulty than reading connected text in paper format? Briefly explain your choice.

(4) What are the benefits to you for reading connected text online?

(5) What are the drawbacks to you for reading connected text online?

For items 1, 2, and 3, students selected one of the choices given. For item 3, students were also asked to briefly explain their choice. For items 4 and 5, students provided short answers.

Results

All 63 students voluntarily completed the brief 5 item survey forms in writing. Data analysis revealed that students reported they did indeed use online resources to fulfill course requirements (see Table 1) and they often need to read articles or other connected text online (see Table 2). A large number of students reported that they found reading connected text online more difficult than reading connected text in paper format (see Table 3).

Table 1

Frequency of Using Online Resources

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Often	49	78%
Sometimes	10	16%
Infrequently	4	6%
Never	0	0%

n = 63

Table 2

Frequency of Reading Journal Articles or Other Connected Text Online

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Often	48	76%
Sometimes	13	21%
Infrequently	2	3%
Never	0	0%

n = 63

Table 3

Ease of Reading Connected Text Online

	<u>Number of Students</u>	<u>Percent</u>
More difficulty than reading connected text in paper format	55	87%
Less difficulty than reading connected text in paper format	3	5%
Neither more nor less difficult than reading connected text in paper format	5	8%

n = 63

Only a small number of students indicated that they did not experience a difference between reading text online or in paper format. Similarly, only a small number of students indicated that reading text online was less difficult. These students explained that they were able to skim for information more quickly, and they were able to stay more focused on the task when reading on the computer screen.

The students who found reading online more difficult than reading using a paper format offered a variety of reasons to explain their choice. Students indicated that when reading online, there was too much to remember without taking notes or underlining/highlighting key information in the article. Reading online meant that they could not underline/highlight or make notes directly on the article. They indicated that

when they took notes from the article, by handwriting them on sheet of paper or by typing them or cutting and pasting parts of the article (when possible), they had to write so many notes that they felt like they were copying large sections of the article. Students thought that this note taking was too time consuming. Students also reported that they found it more difficult to skip around in the text and then return to a place they had been before. That is, they tended to lose their place more often when trying to skip between different sections of the text to clarify or confirm information.

In addressing survey item 4, which asked students to identify benefits for reading connected text online, the students seemed to be in strong agreement about enjoying access to material. Students' responses indicated that online databases provided rich sources of journal articles and other materials. The students regularly used these databases to locate information for their research and curriculum development projects.

In response to survey item 5, which asked students to identify drawbacks to reading connected text online, students reiterated that they found the inability to underline, highlight or make margin notes problematic. They reported that they found taking extensive notes from articles to be cumbersome and time consuming. A number of students indicated that they found reading from a computer monitor physically draining, both in terms of body posture and eye strain. A large number of students indicated that they solved the problems they encountered when reading connected text online by printing the articles, so that they could write directly on their paper copies.

Discussion

As much as different aspects of literacy may be changing with the emergence of new technologies (Dresang & McClelland, 1999; Leu & Kinzer, 2000), readers must still be able to skillfully extract and construct meaning through what may now be seen as traditional means. Reading connected text on the Internet seems to pose many of the same challenges as reading from a book or journal in which the reader is not permitted to make text markings or margin notes. This survey indicated that when interacting with connected text online, many students felt the need to read and write in traditional ways as they sorted important information and constructed meaning.

Mounting evidence reveals that some tasks on the Internet require different and new sets of literacies (Coiro, 2003). Other tasks, such as reading connected text online, require that readers apply traditional comprehension skills within the new, online context. For students or teachers who have ready access to a printer, making paper copies of online resources seems to be a favored way of gaining access to text that can be written upon. We must be sensitive to the needs of those who may not have the means to print volumes of articles and work with them to develop traditional and technology-based strategies to support their comprehension, retention and retrieval of information found online.

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OF STUDEBAKERS AND READING CLINICIANS

Darrell Morris

A few years ago, a colleague of mine mischievously nicknamed me “Studebaker,” referring to my seemingly-pedestrian work as a university-based reading clinician. I took no offense. In fact, I embraced the moniker as perfectly apt, and took to displaying a photo of this reliable, economical, but unexciting automobile on my office door. Just as the Studebaker went out of style and production in the 1960s, so in recent years have reading clinics—long a staple of effective teacher training—begun to disappear in colleges of education. In this paper, I want to discuss reading clinics—why they came into existence, what they have contributed, and what may be lost to our profession if they disappear. But here at the beginning, I will tell the story of how I (and perhaps other reading educators) first became interested in clinical work, the craft of assessing and teaching struggling readers.

The Handing Down of a Craft

Many years ago, after completing a masters degree in Psychology and serving a short stint as a consulting special education teacher, I realized that I was most interested in the problems poor children confront in school, reading being foremost among them. A good friend of mine, Tom Gill, was enrolled in a graduate program in Reading Education at the University of Virginia. Tom said that if I spent one year at the McGuffey Reading Center, I would learn how to teach a child to read. That sounded good to me.

My professor at the University of Virginia was Edmund Henderson. I quickly realized that he was an experienced scholar who possessed a first-rate analytical mind, but what struck me about Henderson was his genuine commitment to clinical diagnosis and remediation, the applied “nuts and bolts” of the profession. In our reading diagnosis course, a child with a reading problem came to the clinic each week to be assessed. One student in the graduate class administered informal reading tests to the child, and a second student administered a psychological test. The rest of us, along with Henderson, observed this testing through a one-way mirror. In addition, while the child was being tested, a third student conducted an interview with the parents. On Wednesdays, we came together as a group to discuss the child’s case. After the reading, psychological, and parent interview data had been shared, Henderson, a master clinician, delighted in “walking us through” the diagnostic process, always ending with concrete recommendations for instruction. What made a lasting impression on me as a doctoral student was the man’s enthusiasm for and curiosity about this clinical endeavor. I sat in on Henderson’s diagnosis class for three consecutive years. At least once per semester, he would say, with a broad grin, “Isn’t this fun? Do you believe they *pay* me to teach this course?” I remember thinking at the time, “If this full professor, who is knowledgeable and highly intelligent, is this interested in diagnosis and remediation issues, they must be important.”

As graduate students, we also tutored a remedial reader each day under the supervision of Henderson or an experienced doctoral student. The supervision was perhaps

not as close as it might have been, but the important thing was, we had ongoing opportunities to try out techniques that we were learning in methods courses (e.g., language-experience, word sorting, directed reading-thinking activities, repeated readings), and to discuss our teaching successes and failures with an interested group of colleagues. Henderson ([1981](#)) later wrote about his philosophy for training reading teachers:

I am convinced that a year-long practicum should be required for all reading specialists. The work should be carried on under the direct supervision of an experienced clinician who can show by example both the techniques and the exercise of judgment that are needed. No formula will suffice nor will practice by a teacher alone convey what must be mastered... It is only by experiencing the effects of refined teaching that students learning to be teachers are gradually able to free themselves from the false belief that it is the method rather than they themselves that must control the set for learning... Such teaching skill is learned only gradually, by example and practice. (pp. 129-130)

But where and when did Professor Henderson develop his intense interest in and respect for clinical work? Not surprisingly, it was in his own graduate training in the late 1950s under the experienced and watchful eye of another reading clinician, Dr. Russell Stauffer of the University of Delaware. Henderson was Stauffer's first doctoral student at Delaware and, in fact, took his degree in Educational Psychology because there was no doctorate in Reading Education at the time. He divided his time between taking academic psychology and research courses and helping Stauffer run the university's Reading Clinic. When Henderson would excitedly share with his mentor some new psychological finding he had come upon in his academic coursework, Stauffer, a committed scholar himself, would admonish his student: "You go over there and take those psychology courses, but just remember that it's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading."

Henderson never forgot Stauffer's admonition, and he shared it at least once per year with his own doctoral students. *It's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading.* Does this statement simply mean that you learn to teach disabled readers by teaching them in a controlled situation while receiving feedback from an experienced coach? It does, but it also means more than this. Both Stauffer and Henderson believed that you could come to understand the learning-to-read process—the *psychological* process—only by engaging in the teaching act and thinking deeply about what you observe. In fact, they believed that if a current theoretical explanation of reading, however popular it might be, does not comport with what you see children do with your own eyes, the theory should be questioned. In other words, theoretical explanations must always be grounded in the real world of teaching children to read. This perspective offers huge advantages to doctoral students and neophyte professors. For young scholars faced with an overwhelming and steadily increasing research literature on the reading process, clinical experience can help separate the gold nuggets from the dross in a field where dross is abundant.

Let us go back one more generation, to where Russell Stauffer developed his interest in clinical work. Stauffer started out as a sixth-grade classroom teacher in western

Pennsylvania, so he came to graduate school at Temple University with no preconceptions about the importance of careful one-to-one reading diagnosis and instruction. At Temple in the 1940s, Stauffer studied under Emmett Betts, a major figure in the reading field, who just happened to direct the university's Reading Clinic. Stauffer learned the clinical craft from Betts and later took it with him to the University of Delaware. There, he not only directed a reading clinic himself, but also began to adapt clinical teaching procedures for classroom use. For example, he re-popularized the language-experience approach to teaching beginning reading ([Stauffer, 1970](#)) and developed a seminal approach to teaching comprehension—the directed reading-thinking activity ([Stauffer, 1969](#)).

Adapting knowledge gained in a clinical setting for broader use in the classroom is not uncommon in the history of reading education. [Figure 1](#) shows two “family trees” in reading education (there are many such trees) in which clinical knowledge was handed down from professor to graduate student. Each educator listed in the figure directed a reading clinic at a major research university. Note the important contributions that each of these clinician/researchers made to the broader field of reading education.

Figure 1. Two family trees* in the field of reading education.

Temple University	Contribution
Emmett Betts (Temple University, 1940s)	Directed Reading Activity Informal Reading Inventory
Russell Stauffer (University of Delaware, 1950s-60s)	Directed Reading-Thinking Activity Language-Experience Approach
Edmund Henderson (University of Virginia, 1970s-80s)	Developmental Spelling Theory
Marcia Invernizzi (University of Virginia, 1990s-2000s)	Early Reading Assessment (PALS)
University of Chicago	Contribution
William S. Gray (University of Chicago, 1930s-1950s)	Scott Foresman Basal Reader Gray Oral Reading Test
Helen Robinson (University of Chicago, 1940s-1960s)	Causes of Reading Disability
Rebecca Barr (University of Chicago, 1970s) National-Louis University, 1980s-1990s)	Initial Word Learning Instructional Pacing Research
Michael Kibby (SUNY at Buffalo, 1980s-2000s)	Rubric for Reading Diagnosis

* The reading educators listed serve only as generational examples of many who belong to these lines and who have made distinctive contributions to the field.

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If reading clinics have had this much influence on the field of reading education, how did the clinical tradition begin and why in recent decades has it declined, particularly in research institutions? I now turn to these questions.

The Emergence of Reading Clinics in the 1920s

Educational testing in the second decade of the 20th century showed that many schoolchildren were functioning below grade level in reading. In addition, routine screening of army recruits in World War I revealed that many young men had not attained

basic literacy skills in school ([Pelosi, 1977](#), [N. B. Smith, 2002](#)). Given these findings, the budding discipline of Educational Psychology trained its attention on the problem of reading failure, and, in the early 1920s, reading clinics were established at several major universities. Among the first reading clinics were those founded at UCLA (Grace Fernald), University of Iowa (Samuel T. Orton), and University of Chicago (William S. Gray).

According to Pelosi (1977), the early, university-based reading clinics had several purposes: (1) to conduct research into the nature of reading difficulties; (2) to serve children who needed tutoring in reading; and (3) to educate graduate students in reading diagnosis and remediation. If clinic directors like Fernald, Orton, and Gray were to better understand reading disability, they realized they would need a controlled setting in which to closely observe individual children being diagnosed and taught over time. In this sense, one-to-one clinical teaching offered learning opportunities for both the child with a reading difficulty and the university researcher.

In studying reading disability, reading clinics across the country gradually developed a case study approach. This included (1) taking a personal and school history of the student, (2) administering diagnostic tests, (3) developing an instructional plan based on the test results, and (4) monitoring the success of the instruction. Certain procedures were modified over time; for example there was a gradual move from using standardized tests to using informal assessments in the clinic. However, the basic case study approach introduced in the 1930s was still being used at the University of Virginia when I arrived there in 1976. And for good reason: the approach models rational problem solving and can be applied to almost any teaching situation. That is, based on background knowledge (personal and school history) and initial test results, one makes a hypothesis about instruction. One then teaches, assesses the results, and modifies future instruction accordingly.

Over the years, refinements or improvements in the case study approach were driven by clinician/researchers' attempts to understand underlying learning processes ([Kibby & Barr, 1999](#)). At times, this resulted in a relatively unproductive search for the root cause or causes of reading disability. At other times, however, clinical inquiry aimed at revealing underlying learning processes led to significant advances in reading diagnosis and instruction: for example, establishing functional reading levels (independent, instructional, and frustration) in reading diagnosis; developing a simple task that could measure automatic word recognition; sequencing phonics instruction (e.g., the Orton-Gillingham approach); using dictated stories to establish an initial sight vocabulary; using prediction (and confirmation of prediction) to guide the comprehension process; and so on.

The Demise of Reading Clinics in the 1970s and 1980s

From the 1920s through the mid 1970s, graduate training in reading often revolved around the university-based reading clinic ([Morris, 1999](#)). Major figures such as Gates at Columbia, Betts at Temple, Sheldon at Syracuse, Strang at Arizona, and Chall at Harvard were deeply involved in clinical work, and their students, in turn, carried the tradition to universities throughout the country. During this period, all masters students and many

doctoral students in reading education participated in clinical practica that were closely supervised by tenure-track faculty. The field, as a whole, seemed to agree with Russell Stauffer's adage: "It's here in the clinic where you will learn about reading."

Sadly, things have changed. Reading clinics have disappeared at most research universities, and supervised practicum courses, once the core of graduate study in reading, are now an appendage. That is, clinical courses are still included in the course of study, but the faculty commitment and university resources necessary to make such courses viable (e.g., space, reduced class size) are often missing. Let me provide several disheartening examples from my own experience. A few years ago, a promising young graduate of our masters reading program, who possessed *one* year of classroom teaching experience, enrolled in a doctoral program at a major university in the Southwest. On arrival he was promptly assigned day-to-day responsibilities for directing the university's Reading Clinic, and began to teach clinical courses to both undergraduate and graduate students. In this role, he was training some teachers who had more experience than he did in working with disabled readers. Another colleague, who acquired her doctorate at a university that still emphasizes clinical work, accepted a faculty position at a large teacher-training institution in the Northeast. She was using my textbook (*The Howard Street Tutoring Manual*) in a reading practicum course and telephoned me to ask the following question: "How do I personally supervise the tutoring efforts of 25 graduate students when they will be tutoring children away from campus?" Not being versed in magic, I had no answer to her question. And finally, an old friend who directs the reading program at a doctoral-granting institution in the Midwest shared this story with me. He related that his administrative "headache" the previous year had been defending the requirement that doctoral students in reading needed to take at least one clinic course. The younger faculty in his program did not see the need for this requirement. My friend, having graduated from a reading program that required him to take two clinical courses *each* semester, stood fast. His basic argument to his younger colleagues was that no one should receive a doctorate in reading education without having had at least one experience teaching a child to read.

What led to the demise of clinical training in graduate reading programs? There is no definitive answer to this question; indeed, the question is seldom raised by reading educators, especially in print. Here I venture several reasons though surely my list is incomplete.

1. The search for a central or single cause of reading disability proved to be a futile endeavor. Robinson's (1946) important study showed that the etiology of reading problems is complex, with multiple causes usually contributing to the condition.
2. By 1960, much clinically-derived knowledge about reading diagnosis and remedial instruction had been written down or codified in reading textbooks. This may have led to the belief that craft knowledge could be transmitted through traditional methods courses as opposed to labor-intensive clinical practica.

3. Federal funding for reading research, which began in the second half of the 20th century, was seldom targeted for clinical endeavors. The federally-funded methods comparison research of the 1960s, the word recognition and comprehension research of the 1980s, and the motivation and early reading research of the 1990s focused on the testing of theoretical models or on classroom applications. Because funding priorities drive the research and reputations of reading professors at research institutions, scholars who had an interest in hands-on clinical work may have shied away from this mode of inquiry.
4. Clinic supervision required a pragmatic bent, attention to detail, and the ability to work well with people. Sadly, it was often viewed by tenure-track faculty as a time-consuming, energy-sapping obligation, and thus passed off to underlings or graduate students. In other words, clinical work in reading lacked cachet at many universities, where it struggled along as a neglected stepchild or was phased out altogether for lack of interest.
5. Critics maintained that reading clinics were based on a medical or deficit model that overemphasized diagnostic testing and under-emphasized instruction.
6. Critics also noted that most classroom and remedial reading (Title 1) instruction occurs in small groups. Therefore, they questioned the relevance of one-to-one clinical training for teachers who will eventually have to diagnose and teach in small-group settings.
7. Reading clinics and clinical courses required additional institutional resources. For example, classroom space was needed to tutor children and to house a clinic library. Faculty release time or secretarial help was needed to recruit children, talk with parents, reshelf books, and mail case reports. And reduced class size or additional clinical supervisors were needed in teaching practica if teachers-in-training were to receive necessary guidance and feedback (see Morris, 1999). In tough economic times, one can see how the Dean of a College of Education would have been less than enthusiastic about supporting a reading clinic.

The Role of Reading Clinics in Teacher Training

For the most part, research generated in reading clinics focused on understanding the nature of reading difficulties, not on understanding how clinical experiences influence the development of teachers (Kibby & Barr, 1999). Remember, however, that one of the original reasons for establishing reading clinics in universities was to educate teachers in reading diagnosis and remediation (Pelosi, 1977). In the absence of a solid research base, I can only comment on my own experience (and that of colleagues) with regard to the reading clinic's role in training teachers.

My graduate students have routinely told me that the teaching practicum (a 3 semester-hour course in which they tutor disabled readers under close supervision) was one

of the most important courses in their reading program. They say that “the practicum helps them put things together.” I am reminded of one student in particular. She was an intelligent, confident young teacher to whom I assigned two severely disabled readers. After helping her get started, I observed her tutoring lessons twice weekly and together we reflected on her instruction. After a few weeks, this student was teaching so effectively that, in observing her, I was beginning to refine some of my own understandings about clinical teaching. This young teacher was a “natural” who seemed to be gliding effortlessly through the practicum experience. Therefore, I was somewhat surprised when I read the following paragraph in her Masters thesis, completed two years later:

In studying for a Masters degree in reading education, I took courses in the teaching of beginning reading, reading assessment and correction, and even a seminar with a focus on reading disability. However, the course that had the greatest influence on my understanding of the reading process and indeed the course which prompted me to write this thesis was a practicum in the clinical teaching of reading. In this semester-long practicum, I worked with two different clients, meeting with each of them twice a week. My clinic supervisor monitored my lesson plans, observed tutoring sessions, and discussed with me what he saw happening in the lessons. Before I began this practicum, I felt that I had a sound understanding of the reading process; however, when I was engaged in the practicum, the reading process took on a whole new shape. Reading instruction was no longer an abstract sequence of skills, but now a very real conversation. Through these tutoring lessons, I learned how it is that people learn to read. Through these discussions with my supervisor, I was given the language to understand and to think about how this process was occurring ([Mock, 1996, pp. 83-84](#)).

One writer who has helped me understand the value of practicum training—understand what the process offers to the teacher-in-training—is Donald Schön, an organizational theorist at MIT. In his book, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, Schön ([1987](#)) argues persuasively that in learning any complex, professional task (e.g., teaching, lawyering, doctoring, counseling), the student needs to *do* the task, to experience it in the presence of an expert or “coach” who can provide feedback and guidance. If the student is doing the task correctly, the coach’s feedback can be affirming silence. If the student errs or needs help, the coach can step in and model correct technique or provide a verbal suggestion.

Envision a graduate student conducting a phonics lesson (long-vowel patterns) with a struggling second-grade reader. The supervisor (or coach) notices that the lesson is too difficult and that both the child and the tutor are becoming frustrated. The supervisor, on the spot, intervenes, suggesting that the tutor might want to review short-vowel patterns a bit longer before moving to the more difficult long-vowel patterns. This simple intervention accomplishes two things. First, it places the struggling reader at a level where he can perform successfully. Second, by having the child at the correct instructional level (i.e., short vowels), the graduate student is in better position to observe the learning process. Children do not learn when the task is too easy or too hard, and teachers-in-

training cannot observe the learning-to-read process when their students are either bored or in a state of frustration.

Another important role of the clinical supervisor is to help the teacher-in-training relate what he or she is observing in the tutoring lessons to a guiding theory of reading development. Methods courses can transmit theory and knowledge about the teaching of reading. If taught well, such courses describe specific teaching techniques and offer reasons why the techniques work. Nonetheless, it is often in the follow-up practicum course where the student makes the real connection between theoretical construct and pedagogical action, and it is the coach's job to make sure these connections are made. For example, let's say that over a few tutoring lessons a beginning reader becomes more accurate in finger-point reading simple texts. The coach might say to the tutor, "You see, Mary is paying attention not only to the spaces between words but also to the beginning consonant letter in each word. This is helping her track the print, word by word." Such an explanation could be made in a methods class, but it is so much more effective when provided immediately after the tutor has observed the behavior.

Practica and Reading Professors

We have seen what a supervised practicum experience can offer to the teacher-in-training. But what does it offer to the supervising professor who must invest significant time and energy in such a course? Obviously, the practicum context affords the supervising clinician ongoing opportunities to observe children with reading problems and to test remediation hypotheses. But more basically, the practicum grounds the university professor in reality. Theory remains important, of course, but only to the degree that it can help explain the reading problems facing real children in the clinic. Two examples illustrate my point.

Edmund Henderson, my mentor, was trained in the language-experience tradition in the late 1950s. This tradition, which might be labeled holistic or child-centered, emphasized dictated experience stories, directed reading-thinking activities, and creative writing. When Frank Smith's top-down, psycholinguistic model of reading burst onto the scene in the early 1970s, Henderson was quite taken by the model. It matched his philosophy of instruction. Nonetheless, in my graduate school years in the late 1970s, I saw my professor begin to question Smith's (1971) popular explanation of reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game." It is true that Henderson was reading experimental research that countered the "guessing game" model, but it was his experience with children in the McGuffey Reading Clinic that gnawed at his initial acceptance of Smith's position. Henderson realized that it was accurate, automatic word recognition that these disabled readers lacked, not the ability to guess or anticipate upcoming words in text. His insight about the crucial importance of automatized word knowledge put Henderson directly at odds with the prevailing Whole Language movement of the late 1980s and 1990s. However, he did not care. He knew from his clinical work that the centrality of word knowledge could not be ignored in any serious explanation of the reading process.

My second example comes from my own experience and involves the area of severe reading disability or dyslexia. In graduate school, I learned that dyslexia does exist in perhaps 2-3 percent of the population, but that the condition is very difficult if not impossible to treat. The best we could do, I was taught, was to apply traditional methods (a balance of supported contextual reading and direct phonics instruction) and hope for the best.

We remember our graduate school lessons; in fact, they produce a theoretical orientation that guides our later work in the field. After assuming directorship of my own reading clinic at National-Louis University in Chicago, I worked with several children and adults who had severe reading problems. I steadfastly used traditional, balanced reading instruction with these students, but with little success. Later, after moving to Appalachian State University in rural North Carolina, I began to encounter more and more cases of severe reading disability in my clinical work. I could no longer tolerate my ineffectiveness in teaching these children to read. Abandoning long-held theoretical biases, I and a few colleagues began to search for alternative approaches to teaching dyslexic readers. We pursued training in multi-sensory, systematic phonics approaches (e.g., Orton-Gillingham) and, though we have not discovered a quick cure, we are convinced that we are now on a better track in working with the problem of severe reading disability. My point is that it was the face-to-face encounter with dyslexia in the clinic that led me to rethink what I had been taught in graduate school and search for better ways to help students with this devastating problem.

Clinical Training: What Does It Take?

Reading clinics in university settings require resources. They require physical space in which to house the clinic, faculty release time or secretarial help to enroll children and converse with parents, and extra clinical “coaches” (qualified doctoral students or experienced reading teachers) to allow close supervision of the tutoring. Along with these basic requirements, other factors are involved in establishing an effective clinical training program.

First, instruction in a reading clinic should be guided by a comprehensive model of reading development, one that accounts for scientific evidence and defines pedagogical boundaries, but at the same time is sufficiently flexible to accommodate the complexities of clinical teaching. Two models that come to mind are Chall’s (1983) “stages of reading development,” and the more elaborated stage model described by Spear-Swerling and Sternberg (1998). Ideally, teachers-in-training would first be exposed to the model of reading development in their foundations or methods courses; then they would revisit the model in the clinical practicum where, assisted by the coach, they could observe its relevance to practice.

Second, a good clinic or practicum is defined by a finite set of diagnostic and instructional practices. The idea is not to accrue every reading test, reading kit, or reading instructional procedure that has ever been developed. Not only would this crowd the clinic room, but also it would crowd the graduate students’ minds. The basic practices that we

use in our clinic can be written down on the back of a napkin. The goal is for the teacher-in-training to become confident and proficient in using this limited set of important tools.

Diagnostic tools	graded word recognition lists; graded reading passages; graded spelling lists (yield measures of automatized sight vocabulary, oral reading accuracy, rate, and comprehension, silent reading comprehension and rate, spelling proficiency)
Instructional tools	Materials: carefully leveled narrative and information texts (early-first grade through sixth grade); a carefully sequenced phonics curriculum (beginning consonants, short, long, and other vowel patterns, multi-syllable words) Strategies: guided reading to develop comprehension skill (e.g., picture walks for beginning readers; DRTAs for independent readers); word sort or categorization activities to develop word recognition skill; fluency-building activities to increase reading rate (e.g., echo reading, repeated readings, taped readings)

Third, a reading clinic needs a director, a tenure-track faculty member who has standing in the university academic community. The clinic director should understand the developmental reading process, have actual experience teaching children to read, and be committed to helping others learn to teach struggling readers. Further, he or she should be able to impart to graduate students the excitement of clinical teaching; to show them how much can be learned in a tutoring context if they plan, teach, and reflect in a careful manner. And finally, the clinic director should be able to defend the intellectual and practical importance of clinical training to university colleagues who are unfamiliar with and, therefore, lukewarm toward the concept.

In conclusion, we might consider the following questions. In the year 2003, is a clinic director of the kind described above to be found at most universities that train masters-level reading specialists? I suspect not. Maybe more important, how many clinical mentors of this kind are to be found among the reading faculty at research universities around the country? I suspect the answer is, very few. And this presents the field with a huge problem. Newly-minted professors of reading education are, for the most part, produced at research universities. If reading clinics and clinical training have all but disappeared at these institutions, where in the future will we find reading professors who are interested in clinical work? Put another way, where will we find the future Russell

Stauffers, Edmund Hendersons, and Rebecca Barrs? And if such reading educators do not emerge, what will we have lost? The humble Studebaker disappeared in the 1960s, but it was quickly and satisfactorily replaced with other economical automobiles, both domestic and foreign. I am not confident that it will be so easy to replace the university-based reading clinician.

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The Digital Video Documentary: Engaging Students in Ideological Becoming

Timothy J. Murnen

Tapping the *Other* Language Arts Through Digital Video

In my language arts methods courses, my students and I spend a great deal of our time trying to reconcile the actual with the possible. Each week when they return from their visits to their school placements, we confront the realities of what they are seeing and experiencing, even as we unveil a new set of constructs or approaches to the teaching of language arts. And as we proceed, we ask ourselves: Amidst the actual, what is possible; given the realities of life in classrooms, what can we hope to accomplish? This week we have turned to the Writing Process, exploring the actual challenges classroom teachers face amidst the possibilities that the writing process promises. As a compositionist, I believe deeply in the writing process—in the possibilities it offers students to be constructors of meaning rather than passive receptors of information. However, as a language arts methods teacher trying to direct my students to engage their students in literacy-rich activities that involve all six of the language arts, I find myself confronting reading and writing's claims of supremacy. What I mean is that, as I work with my students to create rich language arts pedagogy ([Tompkins, 2002](#)) saturated with opportunities for reading and writing, I find myself pushing them to explore the relatively untapped potential of the other language arts (listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing). In this essay, I want us to consider how we engage the other language arts, by asking: Amidst the actual, what is possible?

One of the “possibles” that I have been exploring this semester is digital video (DV), and its potential to build on the foundations of the traditional essay or research paper, and to engage several of the language arts that written composition alone was not designed to do. This essay focuses on the digital video documentary and its potential to engage all six language arts in ways that reading and writing alone cannot. In order to stake out such an argument, I build on Kay Halasek’s ([1999](#)) work in composition, in which she borrows Bakhtin’s ([2000/1981](#)) concept of ideological becoming, shaping it into an explanation for how students engage the composing process. Extrapolating beyond composition, I argue that if our goal is to provide students opportunities to engage in ideological becoming, we need to provide other genres beyond the traditional essay; one such example is the digital video documentary.

Authoritative vs. Internally Persuasive Discourse

Ideological becoming, according to Bakhtin, is “an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values” (2000/1981, p. 346). He explains further: “One’s own discourse and one’s own voice, although born of another or dynamically stimulated by another, will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of the other’s discourse” (p. 348). Bakhtin also calls this act of ideological becoming “retelling in one’s own words” (p. 341), but which for my purposes I

will gloss as *taking other people's words and making them one's own*. For Bakhtin, all of the words with which we shape meaning for ourselves come from others—from parents, from written texts, from the ongoing discourse in which we engage. Ideological becoming, then, is the act of staking out our own meanings, our own understandings, with words populated with others' meanings and intentions. Bakhtin explains that ideological becoming begins with how we read texts—authoritatively, or internally persuasively: “The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it” (Bakhtin, 2000/1981, p. 342).

Halasek (1999), building on Bakhtin's explanation, argues that we engage in ideological becoming in the act of composing, which consists of the reciprocal processes of reading and writing. Halasek argues that before student writers can stake out their own ideological space in their writing, they first have to learn how to be strong readers who won't simply bow to the authority of the text. She explains that “when a reader reads a text authoritatively, that reader's voice, authority, and subjectivity are undermined. This model of reading valorizes the text and the power of the author and establishes a seemingly objective meaning. Those who read authoritatively do not achieve a dialogic understanding of a text” (Halasek, 1999, p. 122). Conversely, internally persuasive discourse does not demand to be read a particular way, but enters into a dialogue with other texts in order to produce new meaning. Bakhtin explains:

Internally persuasive discourse—as opposed to one that is externally authoritative—is, as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with “one's own word.” In the everyday rounds of our consciousness, the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's. Its creativity and productiveness consist precisely in the fact that such a word awakens new and independent words, that it organizes masses of our words from within, and does not remain in an isolated and static condition. It is not so much interpreted by us as it is further, that is, freely, developed, applied to new material, new conditions; it enters into interanimating relationships with new contexts. More than that, it enters into an intense interaction, a *struggle* with other internally persuasive discourses. Our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values. The semantic structure of an internally persuasive discourse is *not finite*, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever newer ways to mean.... We have not yet learned from it all it might tell us; we can take it into new contexts, attach it to new material, put it in a new situation in order to wrest new answers from it, new insights into its meaning, and even wrest from it new words of its own (since another's discourse, if productive, gives birth to a new word from us in response). (Bakhtin, 2000/1981)

Internally persuasive discourse functions by stimulating dialogue rather than closing it down. As Halasek says, “Internally persuasive discourse does not demand allegiance but encourages creativity. Meaning-making is achieved by continuously and cooperatively sharing discourses” (Halasek, 1999).

In *Pedagogy of Possibility*, Halasek makes a strong case that ideological becoming is central to the composing process; the process of composing a written text is an act of taking other people's words and making them one's own. But it is also clear that ideological becoming is not limited to the writing process. Students are just as engaged in ideological becoming as they grapple with concepts in classroom discussions, or when they are asked to construct an oral presentation. If we envision our courses as language arts broadly writ, encompassing all six language arts (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and visually representing), then it is not difficult to see ideological becoming at stake in all that we do. Lurking beneath our language arts lessons is the goal of bringing students toward ideological becoming, where they are capable of taking other people's words—concepts—and constructing their own arguments, themes, theses, etc. Digital video can function, not simply for novelty sake, but as a genuine means to students' ideological becoming. A case in point is the experience of Kay.

Kay: Video Documentary as Ideological Becoming

Kay was a college freshman in a composition course in which literary texts (novels and short stories) were the central objects of study. During the semester in which I observed this classroom, Kay struggled to stake out her own ideological space amidst the complex and heteroglossic discourse of the college composition classroom—the teacher's discourse, the discourse of more vocal students, and the discourse of the literary texts that students were reading and responding to. How students shape their own subjectivities within the complex social space of the discourse of the classroom has been the object of study of a growing body of research in sociolinguistics and education, as exemplified in the work of James Gee (1999), members of the Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group ([Floriani, 1993](#); [Green, 1983](#); [Prentiss, 1994](#); [Rex, Murnen, Hobbs, & McEachen, 2002](#); [SBCDG, 1992a](#); [Tuyay, Jennings, & Dixon, 1995](#); [Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993](#)) and others in the field of English composition ([Brandt, Cushman, Gere, Harrington, 2001](#); [Brodkey, 1994](#); [Brooke, 1988](#); [Faigley, 1992](#); [hooks, 1989](#); [Horner, 1997](#); [Spellmeyer, 1989, 1993](#); [Welch, 1993](#)). In the environment of the composition classroom, Kay was a silenced student who rarely spoke in class. Her final presentation, however, stood out among the discourse events of that classroom for its illustration of the creativity with which a silenced student might respond to the complex challenge of ideological becoming—of taking other people's words and making them her own. While most of the other students presented little more than a plot summary with commentary, Kay created a video presentation—a mock interview with Wally Lamb, the author of *She's Come Undone*, portrayed in the video by one of Kay's buddies who lived her dorm. Kay's choice to use video has powerful implications for the teaching and the learning of language arts, and calls on us to explore the extent to which we engage all six language arts in our classrooms.

The challenge for Kay was how to turn a stressful public speaking situation into an opportunity for ideological becoming. Kay had to construct some way to speak in class that maintained a comfort zone for her. Her video presentation provided her this opportunity to speak, and to construct her interpretation of the course, without actually having to do much talking, and in doing so, Kay staked out for herself a silent space from which to speak. To accomplish this silent space, Kay constructed for herself three roles, or subjectivities: one in the classroom outside of the videotape, and two within the confines of the world of the videotape. First, outside of the videotape there was Kay the silent student, uncomfortable with public

speaking, even from a position at her window seat, let alone in a standing position front and center. On a second level, within the video presentation, there was Kay the interviewer, asking questions of the mock author of the novel. And on a third level, there was Kay the author of the script from which both the interviewer and the mock literary author were reading. Through her use of these multiple subject positions, constructed around the video format, Kay crafted a comfort zone from which to enact the assigned objective, which was to demonstrate not only an understanding of the text she had read, but to demonstrate an understanding of the central concepts and issues that had emerged during the course.

In the video presentation, Kay relegated herself to the role of interviewer, using fairly short questions to shape and frame the responses that came out of “Wally Lamb’s” mouth. Lamb did most of the talking, while Kay the interviewer interjected periodically with questions. However, hovering over both the interviewer and the mock author was Kay the author of all of the words that both characters spoke. For instance, as Lamb spoke, he discussed the relationship between his novel and the other novels in the class, and in doing so, he appeared to be the persona who did the work of discussing the key concepts of the course. However, the relationships Lamb drew between his novel and the other novels in class were Kay’s words, Kay’s ideas, scripted onto little blue notecards for the mock author to read. Without having to do the public speaking, Kay the silent student sat mutely while her construction of childhood, and her construction of the class, were enacted by her friend playing Lamb, who seemed to love the spotlight. What Kay created were layers of silent Kay’s who managed to have a great deal to say. Throughout the semester, other students owned the discourse; in her video presentation, Kay owned the discourse, by constructing the discussion in ways that provided her the opportunities to be an ideological being. The video format allowed Kay to speak where other genres or technologies did not, to essentially frame a new subjectivity for herself that other genres did not.

Digital Storytelling

Digital video, as I use the term, refers to media that has been digitized so that it can be edited using readily-available computer software. Primarily, this is video footage shot with a digital camera, or traditional video footage converted into digital format. Kay’s mock interview with Wally Lamb, transferred into digital format, would constitute one example of the use of digital video in the classroom. However, digital video might also refer to other uses, such as still photographs combined with audio and other graphics to create a video document. As Tom Banaszewski ([2002](#)) explains, creating “digital stories does not require a digital camcorder” (p.3). Ken Burns’ *Civil War* documentary might serve as the most widely-viewed example of this second use of digital video, but it is certainly not the only example. Joe Lambert ([2003](#)) and others at the Center for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley have been telling stories through digital video for nearly ten years ([Baldwin, 2003](#)), and teach workshops to interested individuals, including school teachers and professors who want to do this with their students. Out of this movement in digital storytelling, students as young as fourth grade are creating their own digital documentaries (Banaszewski, 2002). With readily-available digital video editing software, now common on most newer computers, any 6th grader can make her own digital documentary, with a little guidance from a teacher who has some idea of how to do this. However, how this is done is not the subject of this essay. Instead, the focus of concern in this paper is on what digital video

can accomplish for students' development. (For information on how to implement digital video, see Banaszewski's article, as well as the detailed "digital cookbook" available online from the Center for Digital Storytelling, <http://www.storycenter.org>.) To illustrate the potential for digital video, I offer the case of my daughter Lily (a second grader at the time) and her geography project on The *Continents*—and how digital video might have played a role in her ideological becoming.

Lily's *Continents* Essay as Digital Video Documentary

Lily's second grade social studies class was working on a *Continents* project. The teacher had divided students into seven seating clusters and assigned each group a continent. As a class, they learned what they could about each continent. For their final project, each student was to write a three page paper about the continent she or he was assigned, by gathering information about the following categories: countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population. Students were to use three sources.

Lily had been assigned the continent of Europe. This meant that she was to explore the continent in some manner in three pages of handwriting paper—those newsprint sheets with the superwide-ruled blue lines and the dotted half lines for lower case letters. Beyond these directives, there were no other guidelines for the project. The students were to do the paper on their own, outside of class. It was a pretty big project for a seven year old to manage. What was unclear, however, was whether the students had to cover each country broadly and generically in their essay, or whether they could focus their three pages on a particular country, or particular aspects of Europe. How students access such a broad project is quite central to ideological becoming, as evidenced in Halasek's argument: "Until they actively engage other's discourses they will be unable to produce their own effective responses" (Halasek, 1999). When the subject matter remains a distant topic to report on, it remains the teacher's project, not the student's. However, when students are given ways (or find their own ways) to access a broad topic like Europe, then they can begin to own the project, to take it and make it their own. As a second grader, Lily didn't know how to turn such a large project into something manageable, or personal, or meaningful. However, as a parent, and compositionist and teacher of language arts, I had some suggestions, which combined family history research, biography writing, and the possibilities of digital video.

For years in my own language arts and college composition courses, I have assigned a biography project which asks students to do their own research, primarily in the form of interviews, of someone who grew up in an earlier generation. In addition to the personal interview process, the student writer must also research an historical time period in which their interview subject lived, or to which their interview subject referred. This seemed like a model Lily might be able to use for her *Continents* project. She could interview her grandmother, whose family has its roots in Germany and France, and access the broad scope of Europe from the inside out, from the personal, from family history. Lily thought it would be a great idea, and after getting approval from her teacher, she began to work on questions that she might use to interview Nana. At the same time, she tried to keep in mind the primary objective of the assignment, which was to be able to say something about the countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population of her assigned continent. She was

beginning to take other people's words and make them her own. In the end, Lily would write a three page paper, but they would be her words, her research, and not simply categories lifted out of encyclopedias or almanacs.

Despite the deeper focus the family history approach gave to the project—or maybe because of it—I began to realize that this project might be even more interesting, and more satisfying for teacher and students, if it were conceived as a digital video project rather than as a traditional pencil and paper essay. What if, as Lily interviewed her Nana, she were able to capture the interview on video? And what if Nana brought with her photographs and other documents which might illustrate the family's relationship to the old country in Europe? And what if, during the interview, Lily were able to elicit from Nana a really interesting story, which might be incorporated into her essay, or which might serve as the structure of a piece of digital storytelling? While Lily worked on her project, I began to imagine what it might look like as a digital documentary, rather than as a traditional essay.

My goal was to explore how a digital video documentary could incorporate all of the components of a traditional essay project, but expand the project to engage the other language arts. For instance, the goal of a digital documentary should not be to replace the writing assignment; it should maintain the writing component, while expanding other language arts components. In the *Continents* project, for instance, students were to gather information from a list of geographical and cultural features—countries, location, languages, food, clothing, shelter, climate, vegetation, and population—using at least three sources. Lily gathered her data through a combination of personal interviews, and library and internet research. In the end, she would turn this material into a three page paper. My goal was to use all of the data Lily had gathered, including the three page paper, and incorporate it into the digital video documentary. When Lily interviewed her Nana, I videotaped it. When Nana pulled out photographs and other family documents, such as her grandfather's naturalization papers, I was able to capture those photos and documents on video, which could later be turned into stills or snapshots, and edited back into the final video. And when Nana referred to incidents in history that Lily new nothing about, she turned to print and internet sources.

The documentary that Lily and I created consisted primarily of the interview between Lily and her grandmother, or Nana, in which Nana explains what she knows about her grandfather Wendlin, who emigrated from Germany in the 1880s. As the interview proceeds, Nana shares an interesting set of facts with Lily. Wendlin left his hometown in Germany in 1887, but when Nana returned to visit in 1987, the town was in France, not Germany. Nana explained that the border between the two countries changed hands during the Prussian War, and she shared a hand-drawn map to illustrate just where the town now sits inside the French border. This is a powerful illustration of the value of students doing primary research combined with the digital documentary format. Had Lily approached the *Continents* project by simply gleaning generic facts about Germany or France from encyclopedias and almanacs, she would never have learned about the Prussian War or border disputes between France and Germany. However, as a result of the interview, she was able to turn to traditional sources such as the encyclopedia with a focus and a purpose, to develop an understanding of what the Prussian War was, when it took place, and how it affected and continues to affect people's lives today.

There were, as well, other examples of details that Lily encountered through the interview/documentary process that she might never have known. When Nana visited the old homestead in 1987, an old man—her uncle Louis—came out of the barn wearing wooden shoes, and Nana was able to tell Lily that, much to her own surprise, some Germans actually do wear wooden shoes, at least for working in the barn. Lily also found out that that barn had been bombed during World War II, and had to be rebuilt, but the house was never harmed. And in the video footage, we were able to capture two photographs of the house, nearly identical: one in black and white, taken around the turn of the last century, and one in color, which Nana had taken herself back in 1987—proof enough that the house had indeed withstood the test of a difficult century. The culmination of the documentary was Lily’s voice-over narration, in which she read her three page essay while a series of still photographs slide across the screen to illustrate the points she makes, and the little story she tells. The text, the visual images, and the audio track, wrapped in the personal approach of digital storytelling, combine to articulate a perspective which cannot be achieved by the written text alone.

Implications and Conclusions

So is the digital documentary just a new array of bells and whistles? What does the digital documentary accomplish that the traditional essay or presentation cannot? First, from Kay’s experience, we can see that it provides students another option besides standing in front of class. For students who have ideas to share, but have not yet developed a comfort zone for presenting from the front of the room, the digital documentary allows them a safe space from which to share their understanding. Second, the digital documentary doesn’t simply replace writing. Students still have to learn the conventions of written English. But they have the opportunity to expand or enhance their words by combining those words with video and audio tracks. They have to make choices about how their audience will respond to the combination of images, words, and sounds. They also get the opportunity to take ownership of the project, by personalizing the generic assignment, by developing their own personal viewpoint or perspective. In fact, using visual images to crystallize their perspective may provide students with a deeper sense of how to shape their perspectives through the written word, by prompting them to make words engage their readers’ visual and auditory capacities.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, the digital documentary encapsulates Bakhtin’s theory of how meaning is constructed through dialogue. The digital documentary functions dialogically, by gathering distinct voices to tell their part of an ongoing tale. The student author or director incorporates a layering of multiple voices to tell the story or shape the argument. In the digital documentary we created from Lily’s raw materials, Lily has a clear voice, a clear perspective on the *continents* project; but other voices speak too. For instance, we get to see and hear Nana share her perspective on family history, rather than get it completely filtered through Lily’s write up, as might happen in a more traditional essay. In the video, Nana speaks in her own words. And in Lily’s voice-over narrative, Nana and Papa speak as they try to introduce themselves to Eugenia, Nana’s long lost cousin who still lives in the old family homestead. The culmination of these pieces is that digital video provides students the opportunity to engage all of the language arts, not simply reading and writing, and in doing so, it provides students a means toward ideological becoming. The student author/director must first be a listener in the

data gathering process; she must be able to sift through all of the material—other people’s words loaded with other people’s meanings—to pull out the threads she wants to focus on. Second, she becomes a speaker, scripting and speaking the voice-over that gives structure to the documentary. Furthermore, she is also engaged in viewing and visually representing, sifting through a great deal of video footage and stills in order to shape the story or argument into a coherent whole. This kind of learning, where the language arts are multiply and simultaneously engaged in the act of meaning construction, illustrates the very essence of Short, Harste, & Burke’s ([1996](#)) concept of the authoring cycle.

At its best, digital video leads to ideological becoming. It provides a structure and process by which student authors take other people’s words and make them their own (Bakhtin, 2000/1981), and it functions as a tool ([Vygotsky, 1978](#)) by which students construct meaning. We must keep in mind, however, that ideological becoming is not just the process of writing words; it is the ongoing process of simultaneously shaping one’s own understanding and one’s own identity, or subjectivity. If, as language arts instructors, we are engaged in shaping our students’ ideological becoming, then we need to explore how we engage other language arts besides reading and writing. Digital video has the potential to crack open traditional reading/writing assignments in such a way that students have opportunities to engage all of the language arts—which is, after all, the goal of the language arts classroom.

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Exploring the Home Literacy Environment of College Students

Angela Nickoli

Cindy Hendricks

James E. Hendricks

Children's early experiences with reading are believed to contribute to their later successes or failures in learning to read. The importance of parental involvement in these early experiences has never been in doubt. In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education (reported in [Education Week](#)) identified parental involvement as one of the leading factors influencing the literacy development of our nation's students. Indeed, Karther ([2002](#)) reported that the role of parents in children's literacy development has been well documented.

When educators and researchers are questioned about why children enter school at various stages of preparedness for reading, most respond with an answer that involves some aspect of the home literacy environment ([Burgess, Hecht & Lonigan, 2002](#)). Se'ne'chal and LeFevre ([2002](#)) suggested that a direct relation exists between early home literacy experiences and fluent reading and that early home literacy experiences are indirectly related to later reading performance.

Spiegel ([1994](#)) emphasized that parents play a crucial role in the literacy development of their children; what parents do in their homes (their literacy environment) significantly affects the development of literacy skills and abilities. According to Spiegel, home literacy environments have several components, two of which are the artifacts of reading (books, newspapers, pencils, paper, letters, junk mail, and other print-related material, especially children's materials) and events (reading to and with children). Spiegel concluded that parents of successful readers impart a love of reading and a sense of the value of reading to their children through creating rich literacy environments.

Metsala ([1996](#)) reported that early research on the effects of home environment on literacy focused on family status characteristics (socioeconomic level, parent education level). She stated that later research focused on characteristics of the home environment by identifying a common core of characteristics associated with positive reading outcomes (available children's books, frequent reading to children and with children, special space and opportunities for reading, positive parental attitudes and positive models of reading, frequent visits to libraries, and parent-child conversations).

Mikulecky ([1996](#)) stated that research over the past two decades has established several aspects of parent-child interactions that are associated with children's later literacy success: parental reading to and with children, language used between parent and child, parental conceptions of the roles of education and literacy, and literacy modeling and support present in the home environment.

More recently, Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002) agreed that reliable relations between the home literacy environment and educational and developmental outcomes have been

demonstrated. Furthermore, they explained that to understand the nature of the relations between the home literacy environment and the development of literacy, researchers must conceptualize the home literacy environment as complex and multifaceted. According to Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan, the home literacy environment, “...is a part, albeit a potentially significant one, of the overall environment that plays a role in literacy development” (p. 423).

Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan focused their research on the home literacy environment of early readers. Home literacy environments have previously been studied with elementary school populations; however, in general, there has been a limited amount of research related to the home literacy environments of older readers. Additionally, there has been little research related to the home literacy environments of those who intend to teach our nation’s children about reading. Therefore, this investigation focused on the home literacy environment of college readers. Specifically, the purpose of this investigation was to compare the results of the home literacy environment survey scores of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors to determine if there were differences in the home literacy environments of education and non-education majors.

Methods

Participants

A total of 201 teacher education majors (enrolled in a freshman introductory education course) and 201 non-teacher education majors (enrolled in a freshman introductory criminal justice course) at two Midwestern universities participated in this investigation. Students at both universities were predominately Caucasian. The survey was administered in the fall; thus, most of the students at both universities were in their first few months of college.

Instrument

The Home Literary Environment Survey attempts to establish the literary richness of the environment from which the student has come ([Kubis, 1996](#)). Field-testing on this survey involved two freshman English classes and two senior-level Advanced Learning Program classes. Some questions from the Home Literary Environment Survey, deemed not relevant to the investigation, were eliminated ([see Appendix A](#)).

Procedures

All students enrolled in both introductory courses were given the survey to complete. To ensure anonymity, students’ names were not recorded on the surveys, nor were the surveys coded prior to administration. The teacher education majors’ surveys were duplicated on colored paper to ensure accuracy in coding.

Data Analysis

Each student’s home literacy environment survey was scored. Several items on the survey had multiple response options; thus, they were scored separately. These included items 1

(Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) read to you when you were a young child?), 2 (Who was the person who read to you the most?), 23 (What was the education level of the parent/guardian with whom you spent the most time when you were a preschooler?) and 24 (Number of subscriptions currently coming to your house for your parent(s) or guardian). For coding purposes, a *yes* response was coded as a “1” and a *no* response was coded as a “2”. Thus, a low score is indicative of a positive home literacy environment. Independent samples t-tests were used comparing the teacher education and non-teacher education majors surveyed. For each of the t-tests, a standard .05 alpha level was used.

Results

A total of 402 surveys were coded for analysis. After examining the results between groups, there were significant differences in the home literacy environment between teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors. Out of 20 possible questions, 8 showed statistical significance (3, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 18) at the $p = .05$ level ([see Table 1](#)).

The items that showed statistical significance related to the number of people who read to the student on a regular basis, attendance at story hours or other programs at the library, owning a library card, discussions regarding what was learned in school, parent subscriptions to magazines by parents, student subscriptions to magazines, receiving a daily newspaper, and having friends who like to read books/magazines. The data suggest that the teacher education majors were more likely to have engaged in the aforementioned behaviors more frequently than their non-teacher education major counterparts.

Table 1

T-test Results for Teacher Education vs. Non-Teacher Education Home Literacy Environment Scores

Question	Significance
3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?	$t(400) = -2.303, p = .022$
4. Did your primary care-giver work outside the home before you began kindergarten?	$t(400) = 0.199, p = .843$
5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?	$t(400) = -1.684, p = .093$
6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?	$t(400) = -3.537, p = .000$
7. Do you presently have a library card?	$t(400) = -5.223, p = .000$
8. Do you and your family members give each other books as gifts?	$t(400) = -0.499, p = .618$
9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home?	$t(400) = 0.000, p = 1.000$
10. Do you have a library of your own books at home?	$t(400) = -1.297, p = .195$
11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read?	$t(400) = -0.809, p = .419$
12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) ask what you learned	$t(400) = -2.798, p = .005$

-
- in school?
13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)? $t(400) = -0.229$, $p = .819$
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With respect to the items where multiple choices were presented (1, 2, 23, 24), students were more alike than they were different. For example, when asked if their parent or guardian read to them when they were young, 96% of the teacher education majors answered that they were read to “sometimes” or “often” while 94% of the non-teacher education majors responded in a similar fashion. Similarly, when asked whom the person was who read to them the most, both teacher education and non-teacher education majors reported that the female parent read to them more often (68% and 84%, respectively). Both male and female parent readers accounted for 79% of the responses for teacher education majors and 90% of the non-teacher education majors’ responses.

When asked about the education level of the parent/guardian with whom they spent the most time as a preschooler, 48% of the teacher education majors reported the education level as college graduate or advanced degree. Their non-teacher education counterparts reported 37% of their parents were college graduates or advanced degree holders.

The final question related to the number of subscriptions that the students’ parents received. Of the teacher education majors, 17% reported their parents did not receive magazine subscriptions, while 30% of the non-teacher education majors reported their parents did not receive magazine subscriptions.

Discussion

It is clear from the data that there do appear to be significant differences in the home literacy environment of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors. If Spiegel’s (1994) classification scheme (reading artifacts and reading events) were applied to the results, some additional insight might be shed on the home literacy environments of the students who participated in this investigation. Of the items where significant differences occurred between teacher education and non-teacher education majors, five would be classified as reading events (number of people who read to the student on a regular basis, attendance at story hour, owning a library card, discussing what was learned, and having friends who read) and three would be classified as reading artifacts (parent subscriptions, student subscriptions, newspaper). Thus, the significance lies in those items related to reading events, rather than reading artifacts.

Conclusion

Differences in the home literacy environments of teacher education majors and non-teacher education majors were evident in this investigation, although no attempt was made to control variables such as age, gender, or SES. While significant differences did not occur in all areas, it is clear that the majority of differences occurred in the area of reading events rather than reading artifacts. These results support Spiegel’s notion that it is not what parents have as resources but what they do in their homes or their literacy environment that has the most effect

on their children's literacy development. While this finding seems significant, it is important to note that the data were collected from college students' recollections of their home literacy environments.

Burgess, Hecht and Lonigan (2002) suggest that exposing children to home literacy environments rich in literacy activities is beneficial and influences contemporary educational theory and practice. The results of this investigation suggest that not only must educators assist parents in the development of literacy rich home environments, but they must also assist parents in understanding what READING EVENTS they should be doing with their children and how to effectively use the READING ARTIFACTS that they provide for their children.

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Appendix A.
Literary Environment Survey

Please answer the following questions by circling the best answer.

1. Did your parent(s) or guardian(s) read to you when you were a young child?

a. Never b. Sometimes c. Often

2. Who was the person who read to you the most?

Female parent or guardian

Male parent or guardian

Older brother or sister

Grandparent

Other: _____

3. Did more than one person read to you on a regular basis?

Yes No

4. Did your primary care-giver work outside the home before you began kindergarten?

Yes No

5. Did you visit the public library when you were young?

Yes No

6. Did you attend story hours or other programs at the public library?

Yes No

7. Do you presently have a public library card?

Yes No

8. Do you and your family members give each other books as gifts?

Yes No

9. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) have a collection of books they own at home?

Yes No

10. Do you have a library of your own books at home?

Yes No

11. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) show interest in what you read?

Yes No

12. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) often ask you what you learned in school?

Yes No

13. Do you ever discuss books or magazine articles with your parent(s) or guardian(s)?

Yes No

14. Does your parent(s) or guardian(s) subscribe to magazines which are mailed to your home? If they do, please list the titles at the end of this survey.

Yes No

15. Do you have your own magazine subscriptions? If you do, please list the titles at the end of the survey.

Yes No

16. Do you remember having subscriptions as a child? If you do, please list what you can remember of them at the end of this survey.

Yes No

17. Is there a newspaper coming to your home on a daily basis?

Yes No

18. Do your friends like to read books and/or magazines?

Yes No

19. Do you discuss books you've read with your friends?
Yes No
20. Do you and your friends recommend good books to each other?
Yes No
21. Did your parent(s) or guardians restrict the number of hour or the shows you watched on TV when you were young?
Yes No
22. Do your parent(s) or guardian(s) restrict the number of hours or the TV shows that you watch now?
Yes No
23. What is the educational level of the parent or guardian with whom you spent the most time when you were a preschooler?
Some high school High school graduate Some College
College graduate Advanced degree I don't know
24. Number of subscriptions currently coming to your house for your parent(s) or guardian(s):
0 1 2 3 4 or more

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Writing a Literacy Dissertation: Looking Back, Looking Forward

Jennifer Moon Ro

A. Jonathan Eakle

George Hruby

Leslie Rush

Donna E. Alvermann

Ira Aaron

These are papers from a panel session that focused on research by four University of Georgia doctoral students and introduction from their dissertation chair. Ira Aaron provides a brief reaction to the papers.

Introduction to Writing a Literacy Dissertation

Donna E. Alvermann

Gone are the days when a doctoral student's committee members could expect with a fairly high degree of certainty that the dissertation presented for defense would include five chapters (introduction, literature review, data collection methods, analysis, and implications). Also largely absent among literacy teacher educators are any expectations that the dissertation will conform to a particular methodology narrowly defined and conceptualized. Instead, committees are increasingly working with students whose interests and expertise in scholarly inquiry allow them to experiment with a wide range of methodologies embedded in multiple theoretical perspectives. Their choices in analytic methods and representational formats also vary considerably, ranging from those grounded in postpositivism to poststructuralism.

What these changes in writing a literacy dissertation suggest is that more and more professors of literacy teacher education who serve on doctoral committees are (or soon will be) experiencing a re-education of significant proportions. So great are these changes, in fact, that Nell Duke and her colleagues (Duke & Beck, 1999; Duke & Mallette, 2001) have put forth a call for institutional and faculty support in preparing new literacy professionals for positions in higher education. Specifically, they argue that such preparation "should change in response to the growing diversification of epistemologies and methods employed in literacy research" (Duke & Mallette, 2001, p. 345). It was this argument and its implications for literacy teacher educators that largely influenced us—Jennifer, Jonathan, Leslie, George, and Donna—to propose a session for the 2002 ARF program that would reflect the growing diversity in dissertation writing. We decided that in keeping with the theme of the conference (Looking Back, Looking Forward), it would be advantageous to add Ira's voice to the mix. As the founder of the Reading Education Department at the University of Georgia, Ira was in a unique position. We needed his perspective.

Participants

It should be noted that George, Leslie, and Jennifer have since graduated with a Ph.D. in reading education from the University of Georgia and have taken positions as assistant professors at universities across the United States. Jonathan is in his third year of doctoral study at the University of Georgia at the time of this writing. The participants' four dissertations (both completed and proposed) make use of a range of theoretical frameworks and analyses, including a socionaturalist narrative on the bio-ecological dynamics of reading and literacy development (George), a study of four Korean-English biliterate students' literacy practices (Jennifer), an analysis of the multiliteracies of thru-hikers (Leslie), and a multiliteracies framework for examining how visual and spatial texts are appropriated for various ideological purposes (Jonathan). As the doctoral students' supervisor, I have been on faculty at the University of Georgia since 1982 and have witnessed firsthand the changes in students' interests and expertise alluded to earlier.

Data Sources and Methods

In discussing their alternative approaches to framing and writing their dissertations at the 2002 ARF meeting, Jennifer, George, Leslie, and Jonathan cumulatively relied on the following data sources for their write-ups: reviews of the current research and theory in psychology, anthropology, cognitive science, linguistics, and philosophy of mind, particularly work informed by conceptual advances in the life sciences; data from Korean and English language samples collected from children's literacy practices in their homes, church, and schools; artifacts, observations, field notes, interviews, and journals collected while hiking the Appalachian Trail; and photographs, field notes, and interviews collected at an archaeological site and museum in Mexico City. They also commented on the problems they faced in designing a hybrid conceptual-manuscript dissertation (George), representing bilingual data for a monolingual doctoral committee (Jennifer), creating appropriate tools for analyzing data from an ethnography conducted while hiking the Appalachian Trail (Leslie), and conducting multimodal literacy research at an archaeological site in Mexico City (Jonathan). The analyses they used and the interpretations they drew are part and parcel of the reports that follow.

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The socionaturalist narrative: An approach to the bio-ecological dynamics of reading and literacy development

George Hruby

Dissertation Form

The *socionaturalist narrative* (Hruby, 2002) is a conceptual-manuscript dissertation, a hybrid of two dissertation forms, neither of which is commonly employed in reading and literacy research theses. To my knowledge, no one in our field has ever attempted such a hybrid form. Thus, this dissertation is an experiment in form as well as substance. But the form does allow for a unique demonstration of the substance. It demonstrates the first two of the three hopes for the conceptual argument: that a body of work in life science-informed social science, here termed socionaturalism, can be conceptually, professionally, and pedagogically useful in reading and literacy education research.

Conceptual dissertations consist of a thesis, or rational argument, in the form of a philosophical essay on some particular theoretical question. Broad reviews of the literature are usually included, and extensive analysis and extension of key corollaries to the axioms and categories generated by the question are examined. The number of chapters is indeterminate. *Manuscript dissertations* are commonly employed in the natural sciences. They consist of two or more papers, usually research reports, prepared and submitted to, and preferably published by, scholarly, peer-reviewed journals. A simple introduction, literature review (complementary but not redundant to the literature reviews already contained in the individual papers), and a conclusion bracket these manuscripts, followed by a reference list and any other materials as necessary. Experimental attempts at manuscript dissertations in teacher education have sometimes been called portfolio dissertations.

A *conceptual-manuscript dissertation* is a manuscript dissertation where the manuscript chapters are not merely presented at face value (although they can be read that way, too), but are part of a larger argument set up by introductory conceptual chapters. The manuscript chapters in such a hybrid dissertation may provide the extension of the argument, or they may, as in *The Socionaturalist Narrative*, provide exemplars for the argument.

Overview of the Chapters' Content

There are ten chapters to this particular conceptual-manuscript hybrid dissertation, a reference list, and an appendix. Chapters 1-4, and 10 are the conceptual portions of the dissertation. Chapters 5 through 9 are the manuscript chapters. The conceptual chapters argue for a unique theoretical framework (the socionaturalist narrative) with which to inform reading and literacy research. The manuscript chapters are examples of how this unique perspective can be employed, either as a central theme or as a subtext, in publishable scholarship.

How to conceive of an epistemologically coherent, and metaphysically grounded theoretical framework, or paradigm (Chapter 2), why we in reading and literacy need a new paradigm when we clearly have at least two already (Chapter 3), what the unique theoretical

framework I propose looks like (Chapter 4), and what it could mean for reading and literacy education (Chapter 10), are the contents of the conceptual portion of the dissertation. These chapters demonstrate why socionaturalism could prove *conceptually useful* for our field. The manuscript chapters are all informed by socionaturalism to some extent, and the fact that all have seen print in peer-reviewed journals, or edited volumes, demonstrates that there is some *professional value* in this perspective.

To describe the chapters in greater detail: Following this introductory overview, Chapter 2 briefly reviews the conceptual history of developmental psychology and how historians of that field employed Stephen Pepper's theory of world hypotheses (Bornstein & Lamb, 1999; Learner, 2002; Overton & Reese 1973; Pepper, 1948; Reese & Overton, 1970) to make some sense of it. The history of developmental psychology is found to share certain interesting similarities with the history of reading and literacy education research. But while developmental psychology has moved beyond its paradigm debates, we in reading and literacy education have not. In this chapter I review how developmental psychology got past its nature-nurture controversy in the 1970s, and give Pepper's theory some of the credit. (For ease of reading, I have located the details of Pepper's philosophy of science in an appendix.)

In Chapter 3, the history of reading and literacy education research is reviewed, and compared to that of developmental psychology. The paradigm debates are also noted as are the recommendation by some that we lighten up on theory and get back to pragmatic research (e.g., Dillon, O'Brien & Heilman, 2000; Kamil, 1995; Stanovich, 2000). I argue just the opposite, that we need more theory to complement our research, in particular metatheoretical analyses, and demonstrate how Pepper's theory of world hypotheses can be applied to making sense of the theoretical reading and literacy education landscape.

In Chapter 4, socionaturalism is described in greater detail as a truly organicist-contextualist perspective. Several central concepts, including emergence, transaction, structural-functional analyses, and adaptation are explained in some detail. Empirical and theoretical advances that illustrate these themes are drawn from several of the developmental sciences.

Chapter 5 is the first of five previously published manuscripts. "Cognition and the mind" (Hruby, 1999b), a review of Eric Jensen's *Teaching with the brain in mind*, is a simple book review from *Roeper Review*, a journal of gifted education. The topic of the book reviewed is neuroscience research and its implications for improved teaching practice. It is not a complimentary review. But note the first sentence of the last paragraph: "It may be hoped that both the current coalescing of the neurosciences and the naturalistic turn in philosophy of mind bode well for an eventual neo-naturalistic framework for educational research" (p. 327). I was aware of moves to tie philosophy of mind and the neurosciences together—they had been going on since the 1980s. There was a lot of coalescing going on in computer science, neural network modeling, complexity theory, evolutionary and ecological psychology, and cognitive ethology, too. Neo-naturalism was my general handle for all of this, which I refer to in this dissertation as socionaturalism.

Chapter 6 was originally entitled "The biofunctional theory of knowledge and ecologically informed education research" (Hruby, 2000a) from a special double issue of the

Journal of Mind and Behavior on Ali Iran-Nejad's bio-functional theory of cognition and learning (Iran-Nejad, 1999). In my brief review, I compare Iran-Nejad's theory to the ecological theory of perception held by J. J. Gibson. Still, in the last two paragraphs, I first suggested one of the central ideas in socionaturalism.

Perhaps knowledge and understanding are not about the mechanics of data processing, but about the organic development of epigenetic, ontogenetic, and phylogenetic adaptations to an ecological surround (Bidell and Fischer, 1997; Hendriks-Jansen, 1996; Michel and Moore, 1995). Perhaps knowledge is not about the algebraic manipulation of representations, but about the meaningfulness inherent in the organism's relationship to its perceived world (Bruner, 1990; Clancey, 1997; Neisser, 1993). But an understanding of understanding, as Iran-Nejad suggests, requires a disciplinarily integrative approach that is "wholetheme" in nature, that relates, in other words, to the many aspects of our perceived ecological surround—a surround at once physical, biological, psychosocial, cultural, linguistic, personal, sensory and symbolic (Hruby, 2000a, p. 102).

Chapter 7, originally published as "Sociological, postmodern, and 'new realism' perspectives in social constructionism: Implications for reading research" (Hruby, 2001a), from *Reading Research Quarterly*, examines the topic of social constructionism. I review its history and application in reading and literacy research. Although this work may seem to have little to do with socionaturalism, the new realist and neo-naturalist perspectives described in this article as third wave social constructionism are clearly philosophically related to it. Indeed, socionaturalism presumes a neo-realistic social constructionism.

Contrary to what many brain-based education promoters (and even some cognitive neuroscientists) seem to think, the neurosciences are not epistemologically unrestrained, and if we in the reading and literacy community are ever going to make sense of their research, we are going to need a coherent theoretical frame by which to do so. The neurosciences are not the only area that requires theoretical framing, however. So does educational technology research. Chapter 8 appeared in *Reading Research and Instruction* as "The descent of Internet publications: A review of literacy journals online" (Hruby, 2001b). Don Leu, the guest editor of a special technology issue of that publication, invited this review. Using evolutionary theory to interpret the development of different textual forms is the perspective I employed. See especially the section subtitled "Problems with the evolutionary analogy" for an obvious tie-in to socionaturalism.

Chapter 9 was the keynote address paper published in the *Yearbook of the American Reading Forum, 2000* and entitled "The social construction of literacy development and classroom ecologies" (Hruby, 2001c). This is based on the keynote address I presented that year at the Sannibel Island, Florida, conference as a last-minute stand-in, since P. David Pearson was unable to present due to illness (Hruby 2000b). This paper lays out much of the argument of the conceptual chapters of this dissertation, especially those found in Chapter 3.

Chapter 10 concludes the dissertation by retracing the dissertation's argument, and asserting its success. It then looks forward conceptually and methodologically toward future research. Exploratory definitions of "reading," language, learning, meaning, comprehension,

representation, and communication are offered, and their implications for reading research offered.

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Dealing with Bilingual Texts in a Dissertation

Jennifer Moon Ro

Recently, I was at the local library fingering through the rows of books and reading occasional titles when I realized that I was no longer reading English, but Korean text. I stepped back, and there they were, several rows of Korean books in the middle of English books. Dueling thoughts came to mind; one that these Korean books looked rather disruptive and out of place alongside English titles, and the other that just of moment ago I was able to read these titles as smoothly as I had read the ones in English. I realize that not everyone will have the second thought that I had. This is a simple example of how having access to two languages influence the way I read, react, and interact with text. Being bilingual is sometimes disruptive to the taken-for-granted flow of life lived by those who do not have to ‘deal’ with two languages. This is a long way of explaining why I decided to include Korean texts in my dissertation.

My dissertation (Ro, 2002) involved an in-depth look into four Korean-English biliterate students’ literacy practices in their multiple contexts (home, school, and church). Many of the previous studies with biliterate students have addressed mostly isolated reading skills (Bialystok, 1997; Droop & Verhoeven, 1998; Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Koda, 1996; among others). However, to perceive literacy as only a cognitive set of skills mean that the social contexts wherein these literacy practices are utilized and have meaning are never explored. The underlying notion behind my study was that literacy is a social practice (Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Gee, 1999; Hull, 2000). According to Hull, literacy is viewed as “social,” as it is “connected to activities wherein people read and write and talk about texts, hold certain attitudes and values about them...” (p. 4). Under the social theory of literacy, different literacy practices exist among the different groups of people rather than a set of skills in individuals.

I collected data in both Korean and English in each of my participants’ three contexts. Being biliterate, I was in a convenient position to record their spoken and written uses in both languages. Under the social theory of literacy, I felt that it was especially important to record exactly what the participants said and wrote because the subtle nuances and meaning may get lost in the translation. Therefore, when writing field notes or analyzing them, the data made sense to me. It was not until I began thinking about writing-up the findings for my monolingual committee did I realize I will have to deal with the problem of representing bilingual materials to a monolingual audience. After consulting with a linguistic professor in my committee, I decided to keep the Korean text in the dissertation. I was at first concerned that the foreign texts that have no meaning for the committee might turn them off to reading it. After all, the Korean alphabet looks drastically different from English. Therefore, including Korean text would be more disruptive to the flow than with Spanish text. Then I thought beyond the present committee-audience, to where there will be individuals who will be able to read Korean texts. As future literacy research will potentially involve texts other than English, I felt that literacy professionals may benefit by becoming more accustomed to research including multiple texts.

The influence of technology has dramatically changed the way we disseminate professional literature. As a graduate student at the University of Georgia, I spent many hours standing in the library searching for articles and books. As an assistant professor at my

institution, I am encouraged to rely on electronic journals. In fact, anyone who subscribes to databases that store literature on literacy is able to access it from the comfort of his or her home. Therefore, in the future, our literature may be read by an audience that extends beyond our English-speaking countries.

Including Korean texts in an English dissertation is not unlike including samples of email messages written by a participant or including students' writing samples with their non-conventional spellings. Including the original Korean texts with pronunciations of the word, coupled with the translation is a more authentic representation. It allows the able reader to readily assess my interpretation of the data by reading the original text. The three forms of representation (Korean texts, pronunciation, and translation) of the same text unit made sense to me as I wrote around those examples. If I had decided to not include the original Korean text, it would not make much sense to me or to future readers who are knowledgeable with Korean text. When I came across a dissertation study about the language use of Korean-English bilingual children, I was surprised to find that the author had not included any original Korean text (Baek, 1992). Ironically, I found it more difficult to read the study because I was never certain to which Korean words (written as pronunciations with translation) she was referring. Therefore, I felt that including original Korean texts used by my participants was necessary.

Deciding to include Korean text into my dissertation meant that I had to 'deal' with practical problems that came along with it. For instance, I had to replace my MS Word with a Korean version of the MS Word program. With the Korean MS Word program, I was able to type both Korean and English texts. However, this was not as easy to do as I first thought. I had to first affix a Korean alphabet sticker onto each of the keys on the keyboard. With the push of the "ALT" key, I was able to switch back and forth from Korean and English letters. However, to my frustration, the "ALT" key did not work on certain keys on the keyboard, and so, when I wanted to type in English, unwanted Korean letters popped onto the screen. Problems with using Korean texts continued during the final stages of the dissertation process. The year that I graduated was the first year where dissertations were to be submitted to the Graduate School in electronic form. The Graduate School's computer did not have a Korean language program installed and my Korean text appeared on the screen scrambled when my dissertation file was viewed. After a few agonizing hours, the problem was resolved, I was able to submit my electronic dissertation (with the Korean text intact) successfully, and I graduated.

To return to my current state of life: I am regularly 'disrupted' by living in a world of two languages and 'dealing' with issues that arise. Not a day goes by when I am not reminded of my two linguistic backgrounds. My daughter has grown since my dissertation writing days. She is beginning to speak and experiment with writing. I am often asked in what language is she speaking her first words or in what language is she beginning to scribble on the walls. I answer, "I don't know. It seems to me to be both, but I cannot be certain." She, too, seems to be taking her time to sort through the two sets of phonemes and dealing with her first issue with living in a world of two languages. My hope as a teacher, researcher, and a mother is that not only will she be ready to live in her biliterate world, but that the world will be ready in practical ways to embrace her biliteracy.

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Full Circle: A Personal/Research Story

Leslie Rush

One important aspect of qualitative research is that the person of the researcher is key. Eisner (1998) describes this as one of the most important features of qualitative studies: “the self as an instrument” (p. 33). In other words, researchers develop sensitivity to a situation that enables us to be able to see what is important in that situation, based on our background, our subjectivities (Peshkin, 1988). There are two aspects of my background that are important to know, in the context of understanding my choices regarding my dissertation, my current employment, my research interests, and this article: I am a long-time avid backpacker, and I taught high school English for 12 years. When I moved to Georgia to pursue doctoral studies at the University of Georgia, it didn’t take long until I began to hear stories about the Appalachian Trail (AT). Thru-hikers, they were called, those people who hiked all 2,160 miles of the AT, and legends about them in Georgia are numerous. I was intrigued and fascinated. I began to think about how I could work in a thru-hike of the AT with finishing my degree and getting a job. It seemed to me that the best time to pursue this dream would be after graduation. However, I also wanted to get a job in academia; I wanted to be involved in teaching and research. I couldn’t imagine going to my (as yet fictional) department head and saying, “Thanks very much for the job offer. I’ll take it. Only first, I’ll be backpacking for six months along the Appalachian corridor.”

So one day, jokingly, a fellow graduate student said to me, “Well, you could do research on the literacy practices of Appalachian Trail thru-hikers.” We laughed. I told a few others about my “new” dissertation topic, and we all laughed together; one, a fellow student who is an exceptionally intense and deep thinker, came back to me the next day and said, “You know, Leslie, you could do that. You could thru-hike the AT and study the literacies of thru-hikers.” So that’s what I did. My dissertation research (Rush, 2002) concerned the multiliteracies and social practices of the community of thru-hikers, and during the six months that I collected data, I was also part of the community, hiking 1400 miles of the AT in the process.

In this article I’m going to be sharing with you some of the issues that developed as I was planning for and carrying out my research, as well as some consequences that I have had to deal with as a result of what one of my committee members called “edgy” research. All of these issues have to do with two elements of my identity: that I am a backpacker; and that I am an academic/classroom teacher. They also spring from my attempt to do research that incorporates both the notion of cultural impacts on literacy and a broad definition of literacy that goes beyond spoken and written texts.

Combining Personal and Research Goals

During both data collection and analysis, but especially important during data collection, was the struggle that I went through to make decisions as both a thru-hiker and a researcher. Rather than viewing these as two separate entities, I see this double identity as occurring on a continuum. Throughout my research and thru-hike, I slid back and forth along this continuum in both my thinking and my actions, sometimes favoring my thru-hiking ambitions and at other

times favoring my research ambitions. Occasionally, I had to rethink the balance of these two identities because of their impact on my research and my body.

Gaining formal access to the thru-hiker community was not difficult, as no institutional entity grants permission to thru-hike; the trail is open to any who choose to use it. Like other thru-hikers, I spent several months planning and preparing for my hike, and when the time came for me to head out, I simply left home and started hiking. I chose to hike northbound, because a larger proportion of thru-hikers choose this route. Gaining informal access, becoming a member of the community of thru-hikers, was a little more complicated.

As a member of the thru-hiking community I adopted trail traditions, such as taking trail names – the nicknames that most thru-hikers adopt during their hikes. I gave myself the trail name “Turtle,” based on a necklace with a jade turtle given to me by a friend a few days before I left. Along with this gift came a card describing the turtle as a symbol of persistence and connection to the earth. I knew that if I wanted to spend six months hiking, I would need perseverance and I hoped that I would become more connected to the earth. I also realized that my hiking pace was going to be a slow one, so the name Turtle seemed appropriate. From the first days of my hike, I introduced myself by this name, and it is as Turtle that I was known for most of my thru-hike. Having a trail name was an important part of being a member of the thru-hiking community.

I also participated in the common practice of reading and writing in shelter registers: blank notebooks left in shelters, in which hikers write their thoughts about the day, communicate with other hikers, draw pictures, etc.

Of course, I was not the only person trying to be part of the community. We were all learning together how best to do this thing we had committed to doing. We learned together about the best way to set up our tents, to pack our gear, to hang bear bags, cook food, clean up, use privies, feed our bodies, and hike. We traded ideas on light but calorie-heavy food items, pieces of gear that would make life easier, such as alcohol stoves to replace white gas stoves, and most of all, we began the trail-long process of getting rid of unnecessary weight in our backpacks.

Throughout the remainder of my thru-hiking experience, I continued these practices: viewing myself as part of the community of thru-hikers, using my own and others’ trail names, signing into shelter registers, and socializing with other hikers. Most importantly, perhaps, I continued to hike north along with other members of the thru-hiking community.

My process of gaining informal access seemed to be fairly smooth and easy. I planned to thru-hike the entire Appalachian Trail, I was in company with others hiking the same trail, I participated in the community’s traditions and ways, and thus I was part of the community. Ultimately, however, the smoothness of my identification with the community of thru-hikers began to backfire. As I began to become more physically fit and capable of hiking longer and longer days, I began to fall in with one of the thru-hiking community’s strongest values: high-mileage days. Originally, I had planned to average 8 miles a day for the first two weeks, 10 miles a day for the next two weeks, and then 12 miles a day for the remainder of my hike. After about

a month, I found myself pushing for more and more miles every day, so that by the beginning of May, I was averaging 16 miles a day. These added miles meant more time spent hiking, which left less time and energy for writing fieldnotes and analyzing data. During the last few days of April and the first 2 days of May, I paid little attention to my role as a researcher. I took no fieldnotes, talked to no one about my research, and began to think of myself as a thru-hiker, and only a thru-hiker.

In early May, my body saved me and saved my research by rebelling. Climbing a steep set of stone steps out of Laurel Gorge, Tennessee, I pulled a muscle in my buttocks, which put pressure on the sciatic nerve, shooting excruciating pain down my right leg. I got a lift into the nearest town, Damascus, Virginia, and spent several days there attempting to get medical help and to handle the continuing and increasing pain, until I finally decided that the pain was unbearable. By May 5th, I was off the trail, perhaps, or so I thought, for good.

During a month and a half of recuperation, physical therapy, and thought, I began to see that by identifying so strongly with the community of thru-hikers, I had neglected the research that had brought me there in the first place. The goal of reaching Katahdin – the northernmost terminus of the AT -- had overshadowed my desire to learn about the multiliteracies of thru-hikers. This forced reminder of my two goals helped me to begin to balance them more carefully. When I returned to the trail in mid-June, I skipped a 400-mile section of the trail in Virginia. This was done partly to give me a chance to make it to Katahdin before it closed in mid-October and also to keep hiking with other thru-hikers that I had known before I was injured. After skipping this section, I knew that I would not be able to hike the entire trail. This knowledge helped alleviate some of the self- and communally induced pressure to hike big-mileage days. I went back to the trail with a clearer focus, once again planning on using my membership in the thru-hiking community to further my research. When I returned to the trail, I was also given an addition to my trail name reflective of my injury; instead of being known as simply *Turtle*, I became known as *Bad-Ass Turtle*.

The struggle to balance my goals as researcher and thru-hiker continued throughout my hike. It was always difficult for me to be forced by my injury to keep an appropriately slow pace. I fretted when people passed me by and when they talked about their plans to hike 20-plus mileage days. I often wanted to hike longer miles than I could comfortably do, in order to feel that I was making better progress toward the goal of Katahdin. And sometimes I did do just that – choosing to hike two back-to-back 20 mile days in Pennsylvania, after which I was so exhausted that I could barely eat supper, much less write fieldnotes and think coherently. I did, however, continually attempt to maintain my focus on both hiking and research, which meant that I saw myself both as part of the community of thru-hikers and as separate from it, as is evident from this comment made when Streisand interviewed me:

Yeah, it's funny. Because I mean I see myself as a thru-hiker, definitely. I have a trail name and I'm hiking every day. You know, I have the huge appetite and all that stuff like most thru-hikers. But in some ways I don't see myself as part of THE GROUP. And also as a researcher, I think I spend a lot of time sort of sitting back and observing and not really being a mover and shaker. Like, I'm not the one who organizes a group of people to slackpack. But um, I don't know, I see

myself as part of the group, cause I'm a thru-hiker. But also I see myself as sort of being different, because I have this secondary or really primary purpose for my thru-hike that really no one else I've met has. (July, 2001)

The tension between my two goals can be seen in my hesitation over my “secondary or really primary purpose.”

When I reached New England, I found it necessary to take some time off the trail for the sake of my mental and physical well-being. Because of the extreme heat in New England during the summer, the scarcity of water, and the emotional impact of being away from family and loved ones for such a long time, I took one week off in August, spending it with a friend in Connecticut, and another two weeks in September to spend with my parents traveling through Maine. Of course, taking this much time off from hiking and doing research meant that I was separated from my thru-hiker community and that I would have to skip even more miles before meeting my fiancée for the last two weeks of our hike and the summit of Katahdin. Skipping these additional miles led to an intensification of the feeling of separation from the community of thru-hikers. At a hostel in Monson, some weekend hikers asked me if I was a thru-hiker, and I began giving a wishy-washy answer about having been a thru-hiker in the past, but taking some time off, and not being sure if I could currently call myself a thru-hiker. In the middle of this exchange, which occurred over the breakfast table, Buffalo, a fellow thru-hiker and research participant, leaned over and whispered to me “You’re a thru-hiker.”

On October 2nd, my thru-hike ended with a summit of Mt. Katahdin, the northernmost point on the Appalachian Trail. Even this summit, which in many ways was a joyous occasion for me, was clouded by my uncertainties about my membership in the thru-hiker community, based on my failure to complete the entire trail. I believe that this uncertainty can be traced to a division within the community itself, over issues of how to define a complete thru-hike.

Making Connections between Research and Teaching

One of the biggest dilemmas I have faced since embarking on this research endeavor, including writing and defending my dissertation, interviewing for jobs, and now writing using my dissertation data, is making connections between my research – which is based entirely on non-school based learning – and possibilities for teachers and classrooms. I have often felt that my research has implications for theory about literacy – especially having to do with providing data to underscore a theoretical construct that previously had little actual research to back it up. I wonder, however, how generalizable my research is to classrooms. In the future, I would like to extend these findings into educational settings. I would like to examine the multiliteracies that students practice both in and out of classrooms. These may be uses of and proficiencies in literacies that are not valued in schools and may reflect styles of learning, knowledge areas, and skills that are necessary for living in the world but that are not addressed by traditional schooling. For example, young people may excel in reading maps, reading their own bodies, reading landscapes, reading and creating multimedia texts, etc. I believe that learning more about these forms of literacies may help us to push the boundaries of education in helpful and transformative ways. This research will involve observing classroom interactions and activities

outside of school to document these literacies. In addition, I plan to interview teachers, students, and parents concerning their experiences with both traditional literacies and multiliteracies.

I would also like to begin to examine what happens when students write in multiple genres; using, for example, Romano's (1995, 2000) conception of a multigenre research paper. I believe that encouraging students to use multiple forms of writing and incorporating the use of technology as part of that push has the potential to engage students, to help them to recognize multiple perspectives, to shed new light on a very stale format (the research paper) and to help students learn about writing in different genres. I see this as key to the type of education that the New London Group (2000) calls for in its description of the changing and challenging global world for which we must prepare students.

Rejoining the Academic Community

After completing my dissertation, I applied for several positions in reading education and in English education. I interviewed for three of those positions and was offered two; I took a position in English education at the University of Wyoming, which I think is absolutely a perfect fit for me as both a hiker and a researcher and a teacher. I see the position I have taken as completing a circle in several different ways. For one, I was an English teacher for many years before pursuing advanced degrees in reading education, and now that I am working at preparing and supervising pre-service English teachers, I get a sense in which I am home. In addition, the state of Wyoming holds many attractions for me as a hiker – it has lots of mountains nearby – and opens up a new world of winter sports that I have never been able to participate in living in the south, as I have. In addition, I believe that the field of English or English education is a bit more open to the types of literacies on that my dissertation explores than the field of reading has been. Now obviously, I haven't done a scientific study of this belief; it is based on the reactions of reviewers to articles and conference proposals based on my dissertation research.

During my data collection period, on several intensely hot days when I wished myself anywhere but outdoors, I thought to myself several times, "Leslie, you could be doing a classroom-based study somewhere indoors, with relative ease. Instead, you're hiking every day for six months, sleeping outdoors, getting filthy. What were you thinking?" During the time when I was trying to secure a job, I found myself asking similar questions. Why did I choose a topic that seems so closely related to my own interests, so unrelated to the topics occupying the interests of those in government and schools?

The answer that I have found, at this point, is that just as I see literacy --- reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and interpreting – as closely related to and dependent on personal, cultural, and ecological ways of being, I see research in the same light. My research is truly mine, in the sense that I created it, I shaped it, I collected and interpreted the data – it comes from who I am – my past experiences with teaching, with the outdoors, with reading and writing, with research. I believe that the research I have done in my dissertation speaks about me, just as I speak about it. And I feel that I am uniquely lucky to have been able to do this research and to have the opportunity to work in a place that values it.

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Multimodality, Literacies, and Dissertations

A. Jonathan Eakle

Recently, multimodal forms of literacy have received much attention (e.g., Alvermann, 2002; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). We see large publishers, such as the International Reading Association, publish online journals with sections devoted to new literacies research and practice (Reading Online, 2003) and the appearance of dissertation work, such as that of my fellow authors, that chart new directions for multimodal literacy studies. Indeed, the literacy research landscape is changing. All one must do to witness these changes is to observe the multiliteracies practiced by young people as they use various aspects of print, the visual, auditory and feelings (e.g., emoticons) in their digital communications. Vanguard literacy dissertation work is needed to keep pace with these transformations.

Thus, as I “look forward” to my dissertation in reading education I find it both fascinating and important to examine the broadening of literacy (Flood & Lapp, 1995) and the reactions against the distinct preference in our traditional field and our culture toward monomodal written texts. Scholars such as Kress (2000) and Bolter (2001) have argued that studying literacy monomodally is no longer adequate in a world dominated by media, one where the visual, in particular, “breaks out” (Bolter, 2001, p.47). The purpose of this paper is to describe a few elementary aspects of multimodal literacy. After a brief theoretical review, I will discuss one of its branches, social semiotics, and sketch how I have begun to use its framework to collect research data.

Semiotics

Tracing multimodality back to its most elemental components led me to the field of semiotics, the study of signs. As Semali and Fueyo (2001) inform us, “the underlying assumption of the study of new literacies is that signs are the basic building blocks of human communication, which takes place in many forms” (p. 5). These basic building blocks include pictures, language, space (social, physical, and abstract), and written texts. Semiotics is at the root of a number of educational theories, such as Vygotskyian constructivism, which examines responses to “self-generated stimuli, which we call signs” (Vygotsky, 1930/1978, p. 39). Signs are communicative units, so it is not surprising that the study of signs is broad, a tree with an immense canopy that contains many branches.

General semiotics is a field laden with abstraction, a formal treatment of signs with hierarchical structures similar to systems such as syntactic grammar (Chomsky, 1964). For instance, Goguen (1998) formulates conductive algebraic proof structures of doubly reversed signs (images of flags). General semiotics certainly has applications, such as pointing to ambiguities in visual compositions. However, it is a branch of semiotics that tends to be decontextualized from the everyday uses of signs; specifically, it is a static system that does not account for the dynamics observed in learning situations (Kress, 2000). In education, how then can researchers utilize semiotics in studying contextual literacy practices?

A contextualized semiotic would attempt to show how multiple signs are used to construct meaning within social environments using texts (broadly defined to include the visual,

auditory, tactile, and spatial). Further, these texts would not be considered in isolation, but would take into account notions of intertextuality. In education, this work has begun, for example, in museums, where reading objects-as-texts is explored by constructivists, often influenced by Vygotsky (see Leinhardt & Crowley, 2002; Paris, 2002). Nonetheless, this line of research focuses principally upon language use and not upon other semiotic modes. To be sure, “learning talk” (Ashe, 2002) is an apt means for studying certain semiotic “meaning-making” processes while individuals interact around objects alone or in groups. Although crucial to consider, this is a limited notion, for other ways of interacting with texts, such as visual ones, are primary literacies (Sinatra, 1986). Of course, reading most texts (Braille would be an exception) involves a visual component, but still studies in education remain principally bound to linguistic codes. Multimodal semiotics attempts to examine all of the senses: sight, hearing, feeling, smelling, a line of research advanced by the New London Group (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) and in detail by social semioticians (Hodge & Kress, 1986; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2001; Lemke, 1995).

Compared to Vygotskian sign theory, in social semiotics there is less emphasis on point-in-time individual stimulus/response learning events; social semiotics acknowledges the broader ideological contents of literacy (Street, 1995). In relation to this stance, central to Hodge and Kress’ (1986) social semiotic are issues of power and solidarity. Further, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) detail aspects of critical multimodal theory of communication, broadly categorized as: (a) discourse, (b) design, (c) production, and (d) distribution. According to Kress and van Leeuwen, designs are the midpoints between concept and expression, production is design organization that is semiotically distributed, articulated, and interpreted. Like other critical theorists, they focus attention on apparatuses of production and consumption. Design, too, is part of this cycle. Design “takes place in the field of social action, and with the agentive force of individual (even if the individual is socially/historically shaped) interests” (p. 63). Therefore, an arguable difference between typical constructivist approaches and those of the social semioticians is that the latter is as much an explicitly political project as it is a social one.

Several aspects of the semiotic design/production/consumption cycle have been of particular interest to me as I advance toward my dissertation research, especially: (a) the creation of visual texts and (b) Street’s (1995) model of literacy: ‘the when, for whom, for what purposes, and in whose interests’ visual texts are produced and the effects these texts have on their consumers. Before I proceed, it is important to mention one other part of my scholarly interest: what the linguist Saussure described as an arbitrariness of signs, an idea later taken up by the poststructural project of deconstruction. To the poststructuralist, language and all other signs are an interpretation of interpretation and thus meaning is always deferred; “There is thus no phenomenality reducing the sign or the representer so that the thing signified may be allowed to glow finally in the luminosity of its presence” (Derrida, 1967, p. 17). The immense literature concerning the poststructural challenge to the interpretation of signs cannot be adequately summarized here (see for instance, Norris, 2002 for an overview of deconstruction). Nonetheless, social semiotics attempts to deflect the poststructuralist challenge by appealing to pragmatics; a practical way to work with signs is to allot signs degrees of transparency within their contexts of use (Hodge & Kress, 1988). A gross example of this reasoning is that the meaning of a McDonald’s sign, the arches, would be more transparent to most people in the West than would be ش.

In the next section of this paper, I will sketch some of my work looking through a social semiotic frame. During the summer of 2002, I collected data in four museums in Mexico City. The data sources of this pilot study included in-depth interviews with museum curators, administrators, and conservators, some of whom are Aztec (Mexica) scholars and archeologists. In addition, I concentrated much of my attention upon collecting observational and photographic data (see Edwards, 2001). A guiding question was how visual and spatial texts were appropriated for various ideological purposes. My readings of these texts are situated in the interpretations of the local expert participants that I interviewed as well as from my reading in historical documents. Some of my data are represented in the following section of this paper.

Mestizo Literacies

The history of the Mexica is complex, full of myth, and a subject of controversial scholarship. Some descriptions chart the migration of the Mexica from an island called Aztlan while others suggest the civilization migrated from local mountain caves where, according to myth, the god Huitzilopochtli in the form of a hummingbird summoned the Mexica to congregate their monumental civilization. Regardless of debates over their origins, most historians agree that the culture was established in Central Mexico in the late 12th century and from that formation, a century later was founded what is now known as Mexico City.

In 1521, the Spaniards conquered the region and the empire that had been established there three hundred years earlier was destroyed (Duran, 1964). The record of how the conquest by the Spanish of the Mexica civilization was conducted includes the destruction of the Mexica temples and other artifacts of the culture, as well as the enslavement of the native peoples. Included in this devastation was the orderly destruction of most of the Mexica texts, codices that communicated through pictographs, iconographs, ideographs and phonetic signs (Boone, 2000). Over time, the Spanish invaders mixed with the indigenous populations, including, but not limited to, the Mexica. The result is that the present-day Mexican population is mostly characterized as Mestizo, and can lay claim to both European and indigenous lineage. This sketch is a history that most schoolchildren in Mexico are taught in their school textbooks.

Aside from classroom lessons and other conventional literacy practices, Mexica history is retold in the streets and in homes visually and spatially. This is perhaps most notable in Mexico City's central square, the Zócalo. There, in the open interior of the National Palace is presented another text depicting the local history, one that is exclusively visual. This text, *The History of Mexico* mural, was executed by Diego Rivera from 1929-1935, following the Mexican Revolution. Rochfort (1997) informs us that during this time the political dynamics and underlying "ideological discourse...formed the basis for a fresh national and cultural identity for Mexico" (p. 83). *The History of Mexico* was a key text in this reformulation of identity, the identity of Mestizo, the mixture of the lineages of the two continents, commissioned by political reformists for this purpose. Rivera's text has three massive pages (walls) with multiple configurations; temporally it can be read from right to left (what I will refer to respectively as pages one, two and three). Spatially it can be read from many positions, in one regard because staircases circle the 2-story text (see <http://www.diegorivera.com/murals/mural2.html> for a virtual tour of this and other public narratives).

Upon what could be reasonably called the first page of Rivera's text, is represented the past, where an orderly image of the pre-Hispanic Mexica civilization is painted. At its axis, the center focal point of this page, is located the heart of the mythological god-king Quetzalcoatl and above him a disappearing, inverted sun (axial centrality is a principal component in occidental painting since at least as early as Giotto—it denotes a region upon which the composition revolves). Mirroring this page is the wall of the future (what I call page three), also an ordered narrative. However, on page three along the vertical axis are images of Marx, the worker and rising sun. Marx, occupies a visual position that, according to Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) grammar of images, is within a "given/ideal" plane (pp.193-194). Further, by pointing with a visual line of force Marx gestures Mexico to a future "given/ideal" utopia. This is a small, but important component of this complex image, but one that points *us* to its ideological intent.

Connecting these two image pages, in the middle is a third, more chaotic and violent page representing the conquest, Mexican Revolution, and political reorganization. In the three-page cosmological scheme, the middle page can be read as Mexico's present, according to Rochfort (1997), a period that has and is fixing the idea of Mestizo into the cultural fabric of Mexico. Central figures on the page are political reformists and a colonial soldier whose sword penetrates a cache of gold coins (want could certainly be read as "capital") that are in the position held on page one (the page of the past) by Quetzalcoatl's heart. A smiling pope, another central figure in this narrative and in present-day Mexican culture, gestures a sign, blessing the coins and these historical events.

The visual text of Rivera spills out from the palace and into the city. It is a text of recurrent public discourse, the search for identity. As any text, Rivera's pages can be interpreted differently and appropriated to serve different purposes, but again, according to social semiotics, some signs are more transparent than others. On the streets of Mexico City, from Rivera's page three, the utopian revolutionary images of Ché, Castro and Rivera himself reappear on T-Shirts, hanging like mobile galleries from vendor wagons in the Zócalo. During my data collection, at the same time and in the same space, protesters circle the massive square advancing their opposition to a state-sponsored airport proposal that will appropriate land from the indigenous 'peasants' in the surrounding countryside; often the land granted to them during the revolution, "all that they have" (see Accion Zapatista Report, 2003). The protesters hold images of the revolutionary figure Zapata and red star banners, salient signs represented in the Rivera murals. Soldiers, like Rivera's, in dark fatigues with automatic weapons keep the peace; they are the signs of Fox's government. In the countryside, peasants are killed over the airport dispute, while other signs, billboards, are erected along the Periferico, the main transportation artery of Mexico City, announcing a Hollywood movie that glorifies the life of the Frida Kahlo (Rivera's wife, see <http://fridamovie.com/>). To be sure, Rivera's revolutionary images (page two) remain visible, but are appropriated and circulated for different purposes, sometimes for protest and at others for commercial purposes.

Page one of the Rivera mural is also appropriated for political and individual purposes. For example, the sun and its movement was a central aspect of Mexica civilization and again is a central sign on Rivera's first page. From reading the sun's movements and other natural signs, the Mexica developed a calendar that was employed for rituals and for practical matters such as planting and harvesting (see <http://www.earthmatrix.com/serie02/cuad02-1.htm>). According to

Boone (2000), the Mexica calendar signifies a 260-day ritual cycle in which 20 days are repeated 13 times. Each of the 20 days has a corresponding name and symbol, such as dog, death, and rabbit that are repeated 13 times. The sun calendar and its signs are represented throughout Mexican popular culture today and are employed in contemporary literacy practices.

In the present-day Zócalo, for instance, the calendar is used to perform spatial literacies. The calendar's ritual iconographic patterns and folklore are enacted in the movements of Mexica dancers, who take on the symbols of the calendar during performances. Boone (2000) described that in Mexica annals, such spatial and temporal movements are related to contemporary Labonotation studies, a standardized system for analyzing and recording human motion, most often used in recording ballet texts (Griesbeck, 1996). A Mexica dancer explains "To the East is white and yellow... The East symbolizes intelligence, the South the will, the West transformation and the North consciousness." Specific movements and positions have been passed on since pre-Hispanic times both orally and through picture texts and through the histories written by chroniclers.

Mexica dancing, like the visual texts of Rivera, serve varied purposes. Dancers in the Zócalo perform in order to display their heritage, to entertain, and for money. For comparison, at night in other public squares of the city young people meet and study pre-Hispanic teachings (multimodal texts such as the codices) and dance the calendar, to connect with their pasts, the "ancient wisdom," for free. In addition, pre-Hispanic era dancing has been incorporated lately in political protests and in other ceremonies, most notably during last year's Papal visit to Mexico, when the Church canonized its first Mexican "Indian" saint (Pope John Paul II, 2002). The public mixture of the indigenous and European traditions, the Mestizo identity, remains as strong as when the Rivera text was planned and executed.

The multimodal literacies of Mexico were central to pre-Hispanic rituals and practices and have been instrumental in the formation of Mestizo identity. These literacies are evident today, not only in the cabinets and halls of the historical museums and in schools in Mexico, but also are living literacies that recur on the walls and in the streets of the city. Dissertation study of these multimodalities may serve education by nudging literacy practices away from its preference toward strictly linguistic forms of communication. Further, it can provide information, "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez & Moll, 1995) that could be helpful to U. S. educators as they encounter classrooms with increasing numbers of students emigrating from Mexico. As our field advances in further multimodal research, studying the discourse, design, production, and distribution of these and similar semiotic chains, should prove to be useful in enhancing literacy theory and practice.

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Reaction to Writing a Literacy Dissertation

Ira E. Aaron

This session was unique in that a major professor, three of her former doctoral students, and one of her current doctoral candidates “looked back, looked forward” as they discussed parts of the three completed literacy dissertations and the one still in progress. Though the four studies were quite different in nature, they all four involved a less traditional and enlarged definition of literacy. The presentations were interesting and well organized. As the presenters talked, I thought of how useful it would have been to have a presentation like this one when I worked years ago with the doctoral seminar in Reading Education at the University of Georgia. The content would be quite helpful to doctoral candidates and doctoral advisors as well as to others interested in literacy research.

In addition to hearing the presentations, I read materials the speakers sent to me prior to the conference. (A Reactor receiving papers in advance at ARF may also be unique!) I also “looked over” (read selected parts) of the three completed dissertations prior to the conference. I was impressed with the quality of their work and with the clarity of their reporting. Completing a literacy dissertation or a dissertation in any field involves a lot of planning, a lot of time, and a lot of hard work – which was evident in the three completed dissertations.

George’s dissertation was more theoretical in nature; Leslie and Jennifer used a case study approach; Jennifer’s study also dealt with Korean-English biliterate students; Jonathan is gathering historical data. As I read the papers, looked over the dissertations, and heard the oral reports, I thought of the many dozens of dissertations I had directed and the many other reading committees on which I had served. Seventeen years ago when I retired, most of the dissertations were loaded with statistics or were theoretical in nature. Qualitative studies were just beginning to show up in Reading Education dissertations. Three of the four studies were quite different from those with which I had been associated. The variety of the four topics in this session made for interesting reading and listening.

All four studies were obviously in areas of interest and concern to the presenters, which likely means that they will continue to work beyond the dissertation in the same areas. The presenters who have not prepared articles for publication based upon their studies should do so. They have findings which need to be disseminated more widely.

Candidates traveling the long and sometimes twisting road to dissertation completion need all the support they can get. The three acknowledgements and dedications call attention to friends, families, and committee members. I recall a dedication in a dissertation completed a half century ago at a university in which I was a doctoral candidate. It stated: “I wish to express appreciation to my wife and children – without whose help I would have finished some three years sooner.” The presenters were much kinder! Jennifer thanked her family members, including her baby who was not too much of a distraction; Leslie (Turtle, as she was known on the Trail) thanked her fellow travelers on the Appalachian Trail; George thanked the people at Harry Bissets (a local restaurant) and those at the Georgia Bar, two places where he had

socialized part-time. In his speaking notes, Jonathan acknowledged and thanked his companion and interpreter for her help and support.

Eyes Like Saucers: Using Multi-Genre Projects to Stimulate the Writing Lives of Teachers and Students

Dan Rothermel

I think back to the beginning of the semester when I, like my students, viewed writing in the classroom as a dreaded chore. Listening to my students come from their English classes complaining about five paragraph persuasive essays and standardized tests made me wary of even mentioning the word writing in fear they'd revolt. As I began to evaluate my own writing, I realized that I had a similar attitude toward the process.

Melissa, middle school social studies teacher

A dreaded chore! She is not alone in her distaste for writing and her fear of the teaching of writing. As a public school classroom teacher for twenty plus years, a supervisor of student teachers, and the lead university professor for a local professional development school in Connecticut, I have seen many resistant students and recalcitrant teachers when it comes to the teaching of writing. As far as the teaching of writing goes, standardized testing has been a good news/bad news proposition. The good news is that standardized testing has grabbed the attention of administrators and teachers and created an urgency to teach writing. The bad news is that too much of the writing instruction is disconnected and prompt-driven, where too many students see no purpose in the writing they are expected to do. What a loss that is! Writing holds such promise for understanding the curriculum and self-exploration for our students. Establishing reasons for students to care to write is the place for effective writing instruction to begin. Multi-genre projects may open such possibilities to teachers and students alike.

The purposes of this paper are: (a) To describe a multi-genre writing project, (b) to speculate on the impact these projects have on preservice and in-service teachers participation, and (c) to speculate on how such participation builds commitment to the teaching of writing.

Framework

While boredom is a leading cause of student dissatisfaction with schooling (Ohanian, 2001), models of teaching that have teacher-centered classrooms that students find boring are still too numerous when it comes to the teaching of writing. Hansen (1998) highlights the importance of students building a community and becoming public and “known” so that they can learn from each other; this is especially true for writing communities. Nelson (2000) underscores the importance of students’ stories in making meaning of their schooling. Graves’ (1994) identifies the value of teachers knowing their students in order for teachers to be effective in the teaching of writing. Multi-genre writing in a learner-centered workshop setting supports the goal of building writing communities where students reveal themselves to each other in the sharing of public writing. Romano (1995, 2000) and Allen (2001) offer a foundation and structure for

multi-genre writing projects and how such writing can be implemented in elementary, middle and high schools. Dewey's (1938) belief in experiential education based in reflection and continuity of experience supports teachers and students using what they learn in writing workshops to inform their future writing and learning experiences. Rather than predominately paper and pencil tests for assessment and evaluation, multi-genre writing projects address Sizer's (1992, 1996) belief in the value of students demonstrating their learning through exhibition.

Description of a Multi-Genre Project

Drawing from Romano's work in multi-genres, I believe that to teach writing well is to first understand oneself as a writer. Indeed, writing helps students understand their relationship to the world (Graves, 1994). Writing teachers and future teachers, then, need experiences as writers before we can expect them to teach writing well. Incorporating elements of Macrorie's (1988) I-Search strategies of self-exploration through writing with Gardner's (1993) work with multiple intelligences, I have my students select an interest of theirs to use as an exploration to find reasons to care about and be engaged in writing. My students experiment with at least four different written genres to tell the stories of this self-selected aspect of their lives. In addition to short stories and poetry, multi-genre possibilities include songs, recipes, pamphlets, lesson plans, advice columns, picture books, chapters from a romance novel, thumbnail sketches, metaphors, television commercials, journal entries, tabloid pieces, monologues, dialogues, shopping network spiels, Venn diagrams, plays, report cards, and news releases. In addition, students include one visual or performance genre related to their subject, which can include drawings, music, Power Point presentations, mock interviews, and video clips. At the end of the semester, students demonstrate their learning by performing or showing their visual and by reading one of their pieces from their multi-genre collection.

In the beginning of the semester, students submit a proposal to me responding to the following points: *Why the multi-genre project is important to them, two to three questions that they hope to answer by doing this project, the exploration into genres they will take, and one to three questions for me.* Midsemester, students provide an update of their progress with the following information: (a) *a preliminary table of contents for their paper*, (b) *one to two paragraphs of their successes and challenges with their multi-genre writing to date*, (c) *one to two sample paragraphs of their writing to date*, (d) *their plan to complete the project on time*, and (e) *one to three questions for me*. I provide formative assessment to them in the best traditions of the writing workshop.

Multi-genre projects allow students to explore literacy and writing in a creative and open structured format. Project themes vary as is evident in the multi-genre writing projects that my students have completed: (a) music performance, (b) that's entertainment (luaus and other meal preparations), (c) great American pastime (baseball), (d) antiques, (e) golfing, (f) butterfly gardens, (g) school clothes (coming of age story), (h) belonging: my past, present, and future self explored, (i) horse back riding, (j) in pinstripe tradition (a love affair with the New York Yankees), (k) Quaddick Lake (summer experiences at a cottage there), (l) shadows, (m) photography, (n) you'll always be "Pooh" to me (about

her son), (o) cheerleading, (p) youth ministry and Christianity, (q) making contact with the self: a personal journey into the martial arts, and (r) a family lifebook. These wide-ranging themes are evidence that students can find many ways to “plug in”, as they make personal meaning when they write.

A Brief Example

A practicing elementary school teacher and graduate student’s multi-genre writing project provides a snapshot of this learning experience as he writes in his reflection:

This was without a doubt the most exciting and introspective assignment of all my college experiences. My enthusiasm was driven by one main element. It was my own personal choice. I was able to experiment with ways that I could combine my love of music with writing and teaching. It is essential that we share our personal talents and passions with our students. This allows them to not only get to know who we are as teachers, but also leads to self-exploration for students.

Greg, third-grade teacher

With passion and commitment, Greg included these genres in his multi-genre writing collection: (a) a short story – “The Audition,” (b) journal entries – “A Week’s Journey of a Teacher/Musician,” (c) words to classical music – “A Troubled Friend,” and (d) a musical poem – “Riding the Rails.” For his performance piece, he gathered the fifteen of us in class together, pulled out his guitar, and sang his composition “Day One Blues.” The first three verses follow:

*Woke up this morning, Not feeling so fine
I stare at the wall and wonder, Will they eat me alive?*

*Tie is straight shoes are laced, Look ready to go
My heart is racing, Says no, no, no*

*Teacher, teach me something I wanna know.
You got to prove to me that you’re for real and not a show.*

Greg’s engagement in multi-genre writing warmed my heart and satisfied his yearning to explore in-depth, to understand himself further, and to celebrate this vital aspect of his life. In turn, Greg can bring these same opportunities to his own students.

Reactions to Participation in a Multi-Genre Writing Project

In a review of the reflections of student writing, a pattern of responses developed such that the words “enjoyment” and “writing” *could* be used in the same sentence. As if they were surprised, students found the writing experience personally meaningful.

I experienced a lot of pleasure in writing it and felt that I learned a lot

about my writing style and myself.

Jamie, a first grade teacher

As a teacher of writing, I was not surprised by the greater understanding of self that Jamie expressed. Taking time to discover and rediscover ourselves promotes the process of self-knowledge and growth. Writing is a good vehicle for this kind of exploration. Another student added:

Initially, I was nervous about doing a multi-genre project. My experiences with writing had unfortunately not been very positive. In school it was always the dreaded thing to do. It always seemed like a negative experience. This outlook on writing has changed drastically because of my experience in this writing class. Dan, I really want to thank you for helping me to enjoy writing for the first time in my life. Even though I don't have aspirations of being a famous writer, I at least can enjoy writing because it doesn't intimidate me anymore... I have learned so much about myself through this writing process. Writing has a way of bringing out parts of oneself that are otherwise afraid to shine.

Loretta, first-grade teacher

Enjoyment for the first time? What went wrong in her years of schooling that only as a graduate student would Loretta find connection and enjoyment in writing? She, too, used the “d” word (dreaded) and added the “i” word (intimidation) to her gut reactions to writing. And these two women are “success stories” of our public school system as graduate students and successful teachers in the classroom!

Self-knowledge and the value of being safe again come through for a sixth-grade teacher:

I found my multi-genre experience very enjoyable and non-threatening. For me, lengthy writing assignments are often associated with certain levels of anxiety. This project however, was a very comfortable experience. I also don't usually make time in my life to write poetry. That also was a fun and interesting experience.

Jewell, sixth-grade teacher

More questions! Why were these teachers so fearful? What can be done so the pattern of dread is not passed on to the next generation? A high school English teacher, offers her reasons why multi-genre writing worked for her:

During the whole project, I really had a great time. I felt personally connected to what I was doing, and so I found myself giving it a true effort. Somewhere in the middle of it all, in fact, I forgot it was an assignment. My revisions and thoughts about what I was writing were never connected to a grade, but rather to an investment in myself. (I hope this is how my students would feel.)

Kristin, high school English teacher

Multi-genre writing became personally meaningful to other students. A high school special needs teacher, too, found personal connections gave meaning to her writing:

As I reflect on my student choice project and this class in general, excitement and anticipation surge through me like an electric current...This class and the student choice multi-genre writing assignment have helped to transport me to my youthful carefree days when my imagination would magically bring me to new and wonderful places.

Rachel, high school special needs teacher

These teachers identified that connections and feelings of personal safety come through as fundamental for the success of multi-genre writing. It is not much of a leap for teachers to conclude that the proper classroom atmosphere sets the stage for writing success.

Other students discussed the importance of freedom and choice in the multi-genre writing projects.

Giving students exposure to all genres lets them practice to see which they are best at. In future writing projects they would have many options from which to choose.

Jamie, first grade teacher.

Throughout the whole process [writing in multi-genre way] I also tried to think of ways that I could set up and use the project in my classroom. I love the connections that are possible, and the freedom it grants the writer. I believe that assignments are meaningful when students have some control over the directions of their learning.

Maggie, high school English teacher

Projects in the classroom tend to be boring, and tend to be feared by students of all ages, but by giving students the freedom to choose whatever genre they prefer, projects may prove to be a bit more exciting and a bit more useful.

Bob, preservice middle school teacher.

As hallmarks of successful writing workshops, choice and freedom resonate with

my students. Education is a collaborative venture with teachers learning about their students as individuals and having the curriculum make daily connections to the lives of their students.

Multi-genre projects seemed to be adaptable and transportable to public school classrooms, as is evident by the directions developed by a third-grade teacher:

Creating a multi-genre classroom

- 1. Start your unit by modeling an interest of yours. Show students a high level of enthusiasm and allow them to explore any and all possibilities!*
- 2. Have students brainstorm a list of topics they might be interested in presenting or sharing through the magic of writing.*
- 3. Allow students to become as creative as possible, guiding them in their exploration of the many types of writing genres available.*
- 4. Have fun with it. I've had a great time exploring my love of baseball and students will have the same reaction.*

Andrew, a third grade teacher

Other teachers describe goals, plans, and rationales for including multi-genre projects in their teaching.

My goal is to get my students excited about writing. I am going to continue to work on proofreading skills and some spelling, but am going to focus more on different genres of writing. Next year I am going to have my students do a multi-genre project. I think that they will learn to enjoy writing more once they have experienced this process. I plan on writing with them as much as possible. My students don't often see success in things they do in life, but I'm hoping that they will be able to come away from the experience feeling proud of their accomplishments.

Loretta, first grade teacher

Multi-genre activities will allow me to provide choices of topics that fit within the American history curriculum while letting the students decide how to write about them. They will have the ability to use their imaginations, creativity, and multiple intelligences which will highlight their individual strengths.

Melissa, eighth grade social studies teacher.

Full participation by teachers as companion learners with their students offers students models that bring home the message that writing really *does* matter and that teachers are lifetime learners themselves. The classroom is, indeed, a learning partnership.

Teachers discussed how multi-genre projects have potential to make education meaningful for special needs students.

I've already begun planning with the regular education teachers for next year and I'll be co-teaching writing with the two sixth grade classes. I can hardly wait to begin.

Amanda, middle school special needs teacher.

The beauty of a multi-genre portfolio is that it can easily be adapted to any age or grade level with a few modifications, including length of pieces, number of drafts, and specific genres...Portfolios are excellent for the reluctant writer because they allow students to explore their interests and provide exposure to a multitude of writing...Students are given the opportunity to explore and challenge themselves in writing, and strengths, not their weaknesses become the area of focus.

Rachel, high school special needs teacher.

Teachers identify multi-genre projects as ones where all students have the opportunity to succeed. This fundamental democratic belief needs to be reinforced in word and in practice day in and day out in the classrooms of our country.

Implications for Teachers

Classroom Atmosphere Begins with Safety and Encouragement

In such a setting, students feel they have value and become willing to take the risks that good writing requires. Setting the nurturing atmosphere in the classroom begins with “pointing.” Pointing is telling the writer something you like about the writing. Soon feedback for students can come from classmates telling the writer where they would like to know more and teachers nudging and expecting more from their students. As teachers of writing, we cannot wait until graduate school, as Loretta did, to have our current students find meaning and enjoyment in writing.

Connecting Writing Assignments to Lives of Students is Crucial

When our students make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections (Keene and Zimmerman, 1997), they engage themselves in their own learning. Since the demand of preparing students for standardized testing is strong and real, teachers need to occasionally teach their students the “test writing” genre to give students experiences in that kind of writing. Yet, the large majority of writing time should be spent giving students opportunities for authentic writing so that they can make meaningful connections and learn that writing can have personal value for them.

Freedom of Choice is Necessary for Student Engagement

The power of choice that Greg and others have identified cannot be denied. Including our students in decisions about their own education seems patently obvious. It’s time to act on such self-evident truths.

Teachers are the Dominant Models that Writing Matters

Teachers sharing themselves through their “in progress” writing establish themselves as companion learners and reinforce the value of writing in the eyes of their students. Students can learn that adults experiment with word choice, write with humor, wonder about endings, and are, at times, unhappy with their writing after three drafts. Modeling by teachers establishes that the classroom is truly a learning community for all.

Writing can be Empowering for Students.

If we are truly *to leave no child behind*, all our students need access to the best pedagogy and understanding of participatory learning of writing workshops. When we “bond” with students as Routman (2003) suggests, we as teachers demonstrate faith in our students as learners and show that we value them as individuals. The democratic aspirations and understandings of our students will be hollow if we deny them access to writing’s tremendous power for discovery, understanding, and insight.

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Reading, Writing, and Spelling in a Speech-Language Room

**Bob Schlagal, Appalachian State University
Helen White, Catawba County Schools, North Carolina**

I (the second author) have worked as a speech-language pathologist (SLP) in a public elementary school for a good many years now. In the mid 1990s I also became a teacher of reading and language arts. That is, I began to incorporate reading, writing and spelling activities into my speech-language therapy sessions. Part of this move was due to my own growing interest in the language arts (including enrollment in a Master's program in reading) and its potential as a tool in Speech-Language work. Another part of my move into literacy work was my school's commitment to improve reading skills in every area of instruction. The use of reading and writing in my room has been a strong support to my students in their reading and writing development, and it has also strengthened my work as a speech-language pathologist. I would like to share something of my rationale for teaching reading and writing, describe my basic approach, and comment on the successes that I am experiencing.

How It Began

I began to become interested in reading due to the fact that a good number of my speech-language students each year also have reading problems. The connection was clear to me. There are elements of language competency that are important to the development of reading ability. My experience and conclusions in this regard are supported by researchers who now assert that underlying language difficulties are the source of many reading problems. As Boudreau and Hedberg (1999) note, "The coexistence of language difficulties and problems in literacy acquisition has long been observed by clinicians providing services to children with language impairments; however, it has only been recently that researchers have investigated this relationship. Studies have clearly documented the fact that children with language impairments are at risk for difficulties in learning to read and write" (p. 249).

At the same time as I was drawing these conclusions, I began to feel that all of my young clients, whether they had reading problems or not, would benefit from reading and writing activities. I saw in such activities a way to provide an additional modality to help focus attention on elements of speech and language use. That is, I saw reading and writing as ways to underscore and reinforce the skills that I am trying to assist my clients in mastering.

With these thoughts in mind, I was delighted when my school undertook to extend reading instruction into every part of the teaching day. In fact, every teacher in our school--from the physical education teacher to the regular classroom teacher--was required to establish objectives for improving reading. This coincidence of my interest and the school's commitment was just what I needed. Our new initiative gave me the opportunity and support to fully incorporate reading and writing methods into my teaching sessions. Of course, the key concern for me was to make sure that such instruction complemented students' Individualized Education

Plans and advanced my therapeutic goals. This proved to be easier than it might sound, but oral language goals are easily achieved in written language settings.

Speech Pathologists and Reading

Because the field of speech language pathology is very much aware of the connections between language difficulties and reading problems, it has recently begun to move into the area of reading instruction. A powerful impetus for this move has been the research finding that phoneme awareness (the awareness of individual sounds within spoken words) plays an important role in reading acquisition (Adams, 1990; 1996).

In response to the phonological awareness research, many speech-language pathologists who undertake literacy work have adopted intensive drill-based instructional models. These models address reading and writing in the context of intensive code-based training. Such programs restrict students' reading to decodable, phonetically controlled texts that march hand-in-hand with phonic skills that have been pre-taught. Further, these programs generally limit students' writing to encoding teacher-dictated, phonetically-driven sentences or paragraphs. In other words, learners are placed in highly constrained circumstances where errors are least likely to occur. When errors do occur they are immediately corrected, and if necessary the skill is retaught. Most of these programs were developed for severely disabled readers and have a history of success with that population, although transfer of reading to natural language materials is commonly delayed until well into the advanced stages of the instructional sequence. For many students, this transfer may be postponed for years, and many continue to struggle with less structured materials.

At least one program of this kind--perhaps the most popular one with SLPs--was developed through the combined efforts of a speech pathologist and a linguist. As with the aforementioned programs, the Lindamood Phonemic Sequencing Program for Reading, Spelling, and Speech, or LiPS (Lindamood & Lindamood, 1998), is a highly scripted code-based instructional package. The principle difference is that this program involves extensive and thorough training in the production and classification of speech sounds--a course, quite literally, in the science of phonetics--prior to addressing these things in the context of letters and written words. While such programs have an obvious appeal to speech therapists because they revolve around elements of speech and language with which they are more than familiar, *such programs do not address the diverse needs of my students*. Only a small number of my students suffer from severe deficits in phonological processing (6 per cent, at this time). Further, such programs as we have described do not allow for the focused natural language use that encourages students to exercise and apply skills they are working on. Nor do these programs allow me to monitor freely occurring errors in my students' language use.

My Students

As a speech-language Pathologist, I see children with many and varied needs. I currently serve over 60 children. Some of my students have speech impairments: These range from children who need articulation therapy for a few sounds-in-words like /r/, /s/ or /z/, to those who

stutter or have developmental dyspraxia (an impairment in the ability to correctly pronounce and sequence sounds and syllables) and may need from 20 to 40 sounds in sounds-in-words corrected. I also have students who are language impaired: These students exhibit depressed receptive and/or expressive language skills. They may have word finding disabilities, problems with listening comprehension, difficulty understanding question formats, or problems with vocabulary function. Or they may be too quiet or talk too much. They may also have difficulty with language in the area of morphology (word structures), semantics, syntax, and/or pragmatics, and so on. Again, a limited number of these will experience extreme difficulty with learning to read.

While the problems that SLPs encounter are diverse, one problem that SL Pathologists commonly deal with is the difficulty that many of our students have in making the transfer from corrected sounds or language forms in therapy to correct application in normal language use. It is one thing to learn to produce a correct speech sound in a training session, it is another for that child to apply it correctly in less controlled contexts. It is our contention in this article that reading and writing activities allow my students to extend our speech-language lessons into freer settings while at the same time advancing their literacy skills.

Writing and Language Use

One of the ways to encourage free language use is through writing. Writing is a very important part of my resource room. Each child writes at every therapy session. Writing may seem like an unusual activity in a speech-language room, but I want my students to extend their speech and language issues into written form in order to maximize their communication and language development (Goldsworthy, 1996; Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman, & Yoder, 1991).

Writing in particular seems well suited to helping students develop their competency with phonemic analysis, especially when the spelling of a word is unknown and must be sounded out (Schlagal, B. 2001).

At a very basic level, constructing words with letters emphasizes the phonemic structure of language--that is, it clarifies that there is a sound system of the language that is represented in alphabetic writing. Writing also provides support for learning the specific relationships between phonemes and graphemes. At a higher level, of course, the experience of writing helps make clear how language may be structured to express ideas in writing (MacGinitie, 1991, p. 58).

Meaningful and functional use of written language is enhanced when readers attend to speech sounds at the level of the phoneme and use resulting discoveries about phonemes and letters of the alphabet to guide their writing and reading (Richgels, Poremba, & McGee, 1996, p. 633).

For these reasons every child who comes to my room writes, kindergarten through grade 6.

As a warm-up activity during each session, children seat themselves and individually write a sentence. My rule is that the sentence must contain at least the same number of words as the child's age. When the spelling of a word is unknown to a child, she is asked to "sound it out." I ask children to say the target word out loud slowly. Or, if there are articulation issues, I will say the word myself and model sounding it out. Peers may also help with spelling. Children can help each other sound out words or point out the word on my Word Wall if it is there. (First graders can be quite excited when the Word Wall begins to make sense to them and they can read a growing number of words on it.) In addition, there are dictionaries which older students may use. But for the reasons cited above my primary emphasis is on sounding out words.

When a sentence has been completed, the child must read it to me twice for fluency, pointing to the words as they go. Then they count out the number of words to prove that they have reached the minimum goal.

Kindergarten and first grade children (and those who are severely limited in independent writing) dictate their sentences to me. Using classic language-experience technique (Hall, 1981; Stauffer, 1970), I record exactly the language that I am given, saying each word as I write it in clear, appropriately sized print. As I do this I am getting an ongoing language sample and I am also monitoring articulation errors and noting error locations for later work. Once the beginner's sentence is composed in this way, I model a finger-point reading of it. The child then reads it back twice, pointing to the words. For children who have difficulty with matching spoken to written words, I am right there to catch and support them through an accurate finger-point reading of their sentence. This necessary beginning reading skill (Morris, 1983) is not always well-established among my younger students. If students are pointing to one word while saying another, they cannot use their emerging phonic skill (e.g., beginning consonant knowledge) to assist them with word recognition (Morris, Bloodgood, & Perney, 2003). Kindergarten and first grade teachers are not always able to give the kind of individual attention to children who need to learn this task. When the dictated sentence has been read correctly twice, the child copies it (beneath the dictated sentence) and the sentence sheet is entered in the child's work folder.

The sentence writing (or sentence dictation task) serves to get students seated and on task at the beginning of each session. But it also reinforces a host of skills. Those who are writing are discriminating phonemes to sound out beginning consonants, medial vowels, and final consonants, creating first words and then complete sentences. Those who cannot yet write are reinforcing concept of word--accurate finger pointing--and they are picking up sight words. For example, Christopher, a first grader and an emergent reader who has just been labeled learning disabled, had been absent for more than two weeks. On his first day back Christopher sat down, opened his work folder and read his last dictated sentence word-for-word with accurate finger-pointing.

Children with articulation difficulties are writing sounds that are (or will be) addressed in their speech therapy. The child who has difficulty with the /th/ sound, for instance, may write "fum" for thumb. I am thus able to document a trouble spot and spend time on it in speech therapy. Further, because I have acquired an understanding of developmental spelling, I am also able to monitor the plausibility of children's errors and observe and intervene if students fall into

confusion and begin to use unproductive strategies like guessing at spellings rather than sounding through words.

Many of my students take on sentence length as a challenge and compete with each other to write the longest sentence in the class. One kindergarten boy dictated a complete sentence containing forty words, and my second graders may write entire pages. A dictated sentence is only judged too long if the child cannot control it during the rereadings.

Sentence writing has evolved into other kinds of writing, as well. Some students create journals of daily activities at home and at school, while others create stories or write about themselves and their feelings. Dialogue journals have also grown out of this. Students may write to each other and pass notes back and forth while I am doing individual therapy at the speech mirror. One group of second graders types their collaborative story composition onto the computer. These stories are saved, copied, and illustrated. Then the story may be read again to the teacher or to classmates or parents.

The parents of my students are interested in the evolution of their children's writing. Some have come by specifically to read their children's sentences, journals or stories. In them they can see evidence of evolving skill in the spelling of words as the children become more complete and accurate in rendering them. They can see growing control over sentence forms and increasing productivity. And they can see handwriting improvement over time.

Group Dictations and Group Compositions

Much of the work of speech language pathologists is focused on correcting expressive difficulties. Expressive problems can be seen when children use incorrect verb tenses, use telegraphic speech, begin sentences with him instead of he, or have difficulty explaining what activity they just finished. Expressive problems can also be seen when children cannot form proper questions, cannot retell or sequence stories, or are too quiet. Such children benefit from tasks that support them in developing fuller, more expressive and accurate language. One of the most useful activities that I know of in this context and one that I have used for years is a small group language experience dictation. These group dictated stories are a richer and more developed form of the individual dictated sentences described above.

True to language-experience precepts, I encourage students to create a story that I record in print; and I write down exactly what is said, errors included. Therefore when a child with past tense -ed problems says "My mom pick me up," I write it down. As we read back the sentence before going on to the next, she may catch her error; if not, one of her classmates may. If the error still passes unnoticed, there is a third opportunity: the editing phase when I ask children to proofread sentences looking for specific errors. Once an error has been identified, we make necessary changes and practice the corrected version of the text. Now I have a written record of the error occurring in free speech, and we have a self-corrected form of the child's own language to work with. (If the error is not caught, it will be left for that day. It will be brought up again during a different therapy session when I target past tense -ed.) After each composition, each member of the group will finger-point read the text aloud, with a level of assistance appropriate

to skill level. In this way, the group hears and reads along through the story three to four times. For younger students, this gives the opportunity to absorb sight vocabulary; for more able students, the repetition promotes fluency (Samuels, 1979). Each group's story is then printed and shared with each of the other groups, regardless of their grade.

I continue to use these stories to focus on particular skills. We play games with the stories for points, counting sentences, capital letters, verbs, nouns, homonyms, synonyms, and the like. Groups will even compete to see who can find the problem/solution to the stories when they are composed using a conventional story form.

I encourage 3rd through 6th graders to collaborate on writing their own stories. Each child chooses a different color marker (to identify individual sentences), and together they choose a topic and begin writing on the marker board. Each student reads his sentence aloud after he writes it so the others will see and hear what has been written. Corrections can be made if errors are discovered during the reading. Reading the sentence aloud helps with proofreading and with decisions about word choice and style (Cramer, 1978), but it also helps cue the next writer into what might logically follow in the sequence. On one occasion my principal observed one of these writing groups creating a story. She told me how surprised she was that the children could naturally pull the story together into a coherent sequence while there were four different voices composing the story.

I ask that these group stories contain at least six to ten sentences. I seldom have to remind them of this, because their interest in sharing in the creation of plot leads them regularly to exceed my minimum. In fact, the larger problem lies in bringing stories to a timely conclusion. Once the story is complete, I ask questions about the story and students must read back or identify the part of the text that answers the question. Next I type the story on my computer, print and distribute copies to all of the classes that week. The story also remains on the board for several days, and I find many students reading it out loud when they come into the classroom and wanting to know who wrote it.

Conclusion

The traditional language arts activities that I have integrated into my daily work, are somewhat novel in a speech-language setting. Although my professional organization, the American Speech, Hearing, and Language Association, (ASHA) has recently defined literacy problems as part of the Speech-Language Pathologist's responsibilities, the direction I have taken comes from my own studies in reading and the language arts. These new methods have stimulated interest and excitement among my students, and they have given me new and productive ways of working with speech and language difficulties. My work is primarily an instructional and therapeutic intervention for students with linguistic weaknesses, but it is also an important source of support for busy classroom teachers who have little time for individual remedial work.

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Crossing from Theory to Practice: A Circle of Culture

Bernadine Skowronski

Socio-economic status and race impact education in the United States in a variety of ways but particularly in determining the standards of language used in schools. This emphasis on one accepted conventional form of language often leaves behind students who do not come from the social class or race that this standard represents. Because of this, researchers such as Gee (1996), Freire (1985; 1993), Heath (1983), Shor (1980; Shor & Freire, 1987), and Comber (2001) repeatedly emphasize the need to work with students at their individual education levels, in their home communities, and using their language, that is, in the language that the students naturally use at home and in their communities. These researchers have also promoted a conscious awareness of both the power of language and the political nature of education and how these affect schools and students.

Inspired by the work of these scholars and that of Elizabeth Peavy (2000), I facilitated a circle of culture with a group of GED students at an adult school located in a municipal housing authority neighborhood of a large midwestern city. Drawing on the work of Freire and Macedo (1987), a circle of culture is defined within this paper as a gathering of people interested in identifying an issue they believe is important in their lives, studying it to understand its affect on them more fully, and working to change the ways that it affects their thinking and their lives.

The participants named the project CUPS, which stands for Communicating, Understanding, Participating, and Striving and represents the participants' goals both for themselves individually and for the group. The participants also chose the theme of the circle of culture – Discrimination of Poor Neighborhoods – based on their response to dialogue about their community and its assets during an early session. The initial objective of this pilot study was to learn what happens when members of a group are allowed to share in defining the nature of the inquiry of a research project. In particular, did the participants: Take an active part in dialogues and conceptualization? Engage in additional writing or reading related to the themes? Change the behavior/attendance within the project or the GED program? Additionally, I wanted to learn how circles of cultures work and evolve and what it was like to facilitate one.

The philosophy of Paulo Freire was used to lead the participants through dialogue to critical understandings of issues studied and effects of social and political situations on issues (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This type of dialogue occurred within what Freire and Macedo (2001) called a Culture Circle. Hoff, Eddings, and Peavy (2001) described a circle of culture as participants in a community meeting in a circle to engage in dialogue and action, linking the participants' knowledge and actions to culture. The circle's participants do this through dialogue and conceptualization that leads to action. As action is undertaken, dialogue and conceptualization continue. (Freire, 1993; Hoff et al., 2001; Peavy, 2000) The dialogue requires much more than people talking to each other. Dialogue is the combination of reflection and action, beginning with the naming of the world through the spoken word. Freire and Macedo (1987) described this process as part of reading the world and a necessary first step towards literacy, or reading and writing words.

Critical Race Theory was selected as a lens for analyzing the data from this study due to the setting of the study in a public housing project where the residents are primarily African Americans. The key points of Critical Race Theory (CRT) include: the idea that racism is normal within the American society, the incorporation of storytelling to analyze the components of common culture that oppresses all minorities, the critique of liberalism, and the argument that Whites have been the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Under CRT, racism is argued to be inherent in the original rights built into the U.S.'s history since its beginning through property rights and their original restriction to White men.

Additionally, the stories of the minority peoples are brought out and given voice by their telling and this voice is another way of "naming one's reality" (Ladson-Billings, 1999). This point is similar to Freire's idea that naming one's reality is one of the first steps towards overcoming the oppression suffered by persons denied access to the systems of power in society, namely education, political power, and work that lifts the worker and his or her family out of poverty (Freire, 1993). The use of CRT helped to ensure that stories were given voice, listened to, and responded to within CUPS by all participants, and led to a growing awareness of commonality of experiences - the first step towards change.

Peterson (1999) connected CRT to adult education through the examination of the role that race has played in four key areas of education: curriculum, instruction, assessment and funding. She established the historical problems that many African American have faced and continue to face within the public school systems and adult education programs, such as approaches that "emphasize the poverty, the lack of skills, and the failures of the students enrolled" (p. 85). Peterson also maintained that storytelling – or sharing – can lead to trust and greater learning to overcome these difficulties. Within CUPS, the sharing of stories by all participants led to the development of a mutual trust and willingness to continue exploring the topics. These actions also led to the circle of culture addressing of the ideas of privilege.

Wildman and Davis (1996) described privileged group members as those persons whose characteristics and attributes are the same as the societal norms. They stated that because privilege is not visible to the holder, one from privileged groups, such as white and middle class, may not recognize the benefits that these power systems provide.

Privilege is an important concept within CUPS because I am a white woman who was raised in a lower-middle class household in another Midwestern city several hours distant from the community where CUPS took place. Although the lifestyle I grew up in was decidedly middle class, my parents were both from working class families and worked hard to make ends meet to raise four children solely on the salary of a retail store manager. While we were fortunate never to lack for the essentials, we did not have the more luxurious things that many of my friends and classmates took for granted, such as cable television, new school wardrobes every year, or a family cabin in the northern part of the state. Additionally, my status as a full-time graduate student who has lived, studied, and worked in many different regions of the United States and the world further distinguished me from the students at the school and made me aware that I must be conscious of the privileges of class and race that I had usually taken for granted and how these privileges affected my interpretations of others' experiences, stories, and life in general. Furthermore, the theories of CRT and privilege took on a deeper, more personal, significance when I used them to consider the reception of many Americans to my boyfriend, a

Pacific Islander, whom I have repeatedly observed to be judged by strangers solely based on his skin color.

Setting

This circle of culture took place in the classroom of a social services agency in Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati is historically one of the most racially divided cities in the United States and recently experienced extensive racially-motivated protests. The agency is located within one of the city's municipal housing authority projects and the community served is primarily made up of African Americans. The agency is a non-profit organization that was started more than 50 years ago in response to community needs. It presently offers adult education, emergency relief for food and rental assistance, and other services, and typically serves several hundred clients each year in one capacity or another. Its goal is to help the community residents become more aware of the opportunities to become self-sufficient.

Participants

The participants of this circle of culture were all students in the GED program. A total of ten participants signed consent forms, eight African American women and two African American men, and only these participants' responses were included in the data analysis. Nine of the ten participants requested full confidentiality on their consent forms while the tenth waived confidentiality and requested that her name be used. Consequently, all names used in this article are pseudonyms except for Flora's. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to over 50. There was also a wide range in the levels and skills of the participants, with some participants performing at low levels, based on TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) results, and others almost ready to take the GED test. While the majority of the participants were native to the city, at least three were either from or had lived in other parts of the country. Participants took part in an average of five sessions of CUPS, with one attending only once, one attending three times, two attending four times, two attending five times and four attending seven times.

Methods

CUPS was a participatory action research (PAR) pilot project conducted through a circle of culture. Park (1993) describes participatory research in part as "ordinary people with problems to solve who form a partnership with the researcher, for learning about the dimensions of oppression, the structural contradictions, and transformative potentials open to collective action" (p. 3). This depiction of PAR echoes Freire's (Freire & Macedo, 1987, 2001) description of a culture circle. Within CUPS, the dialogic nature of the sessions encouraged the participants to share their own stories, experiences, and knowledge about discrimination, poverty and neighborhoods. Because this pilot only lasted for nine weeks, it was too short for action, a key component of PAR, to be undertaken. Yet, participants could plan action and conceptualize the possibility of change.

Although the overall theme of the circle emerged through participant dialogue, the initial research questions included: Would the participants take an active part in dialogues and conceptualization? Would participants engage in additional writing or reading related to the themes? Would participants change their behavior/attendance within the project or the GED

program? How do circles of culture work and evolve? What is it like to facilitate a circle of culture? While these questions helped to guide the initial analysis of the data, additional themes emerged from the data (Patton, 1990): project format, trust and respect, and commitment to the project.

The circle of culture met weekly for a period of nine weeks. All sessions took place in the classroom of the social service agency. I both participated in and observed all sessions of the circle of culture. Being aware of Wildman and Davis's (1996) description of privilege, I worked to create an environment within CUPS that ensured that the unconscious privileges granted by society did not silence the stories of the rest of the participants. Along with addressing the topic directly with the other participants, I regularly restated that the reason that we started each session with blank flip chart pages was because not only did the stories and ideas not lie solely with me, but that I did not necessarily have the same stories or ideas that they did, and that I looked forward to everyone sharing their experiences so we could all learn and grow together. I also brought in prompts, based on the weekly discussions, that were used as catalysts for additional discussion and broader understanding of the many components of the circle's themes. These catalysts included a variety of pictures, quotations, and stories that provided perceptions of the themes from many different angles.

All observations were recorded in field notes as soon as possible after the sessions. Personal reflections on the sessions and the meanings of the observations were recorded in a separate journal after the sessions and whenever additional ideas or questions emerged. Seven of the sessions were audiotape recorded with the consent of the participants. Indices were made of the audiotapes, but only selected portions of the audiotapes were transcribed. These portions were selected based on their relation to the key themes that emerged during data analysis. All artifacts created with the participants were collected for analysis, including flip chart pages and collages. Beyond what occurred during the sessions, no additional writing or reading related to CUPS themes took place.

Additionally, three of the ten participants from the circle were interviewed about their involvement in the project. These participants were selected based on their level of participation and consent to be interviewed. Every effort was made to ensure that different levels of participation were represented in the interviews. However, some participants did not agree to be interviewed. All interviews were audiotape recorded, lasted less than thirty minutes, and were conducted at a semi-private location in the school where the participant could express his or her opinions freely.

The data from this project were analyzed throughout the duration of the project via the interpretation of the collected materials and consisted of repeated reading of field notes, personal reflections, tape indices and multiple listenings of the taped sessions. This analysis led to several key themes important to the project – project format, trust and respect, and commitment. These themes were discussed with participants to check validity. The original research questions were also discussed with the participants for validity and relevance to the project. After data collection stopped, all of the materials were analyzed. All analysis was grounded in the qualitative research theory described by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Patton (1990).

The Process

Words Have Power.

The first session of the circle of culture began with a look at the words that the participants commonly used or heard in their homes, school, and community. This approach was used both as a way to generate ideas for the circle as well as to develop the participants' sense of community (Freire, 1993; Hoff et al., 2001). I started the circle by asking the participants to create their own lists of words they used or heard in these three categories and, later, to add their words onto group lists. Once everyone agreed that the common lists contained the most common words or phrases, we examined the lists for similarities and differences. After determining that "bad language" (signifying cuss words) appeared on all the lists, we discussed why this was the case. Among the ideas that emerged during the discussion was that "bad language" was often used to sound cool or just for fun, but that at times it was used to have power over the person addressed. I then guided the group through probing questions to consider how bad language can make a person feel and how these feelings can be different depending on who uses the words and the tone of voice used to say them. We ended the session by conceptualizing the idea of language as "the power that words have to heal or hurt whenever they are used."

What is a Community?

During the second session, prompted by my initial question about what a community is, we discussed the community where the school is located. The participants identified things that were in the community and things that they would like to change about the community. The participants also talked about whether each item on the lists had a positive or negative effect on the neighborhood. This led to a discussion about how sometimes community assets – such as the skills that the people who lived there had – were usually overlooked when people talked about the community. Similarly to what we noted during this session, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) stated that even the seemingly poorest areas of all have individuals and organizations that can be resources for change. The lists were then used to discuss possible themes of the circle of culture. When one of the participants suggested that we use the time to look at discrimination of poor neighborhoods, everyone quickly agreed. This became the overriding theme that was broken into individual parts and explored during the remaining sessions.

"We All Should be Treated Equal."

The third and fourth sessions were spent looking at the issue of discrimination. First, prompted by my question, "What is discrimination?" participants identified different types of discrimination, including work place, gender, age, race, sexual orientation, handicapped, and appearance. Next, we discussed different reasons why discrimination occurs. Reasons for discrimination that participants brought up included jealousy, ignorance, power, prejudice, education, and fear. We continued by matching the reasons to each category of discrimination that had been identified. This matching led to the realization that in all cases of discrimination there were many possible reasons why it occurred. Then, a series of pictures of different types of discrimination was used to further probe the ideas of discrimination, the victims of

discrimination, the effects it has, and how people should be treated. I found these images through an Internet search on discrimination and the pictures included signs prevalent during segregation, protestors for handicapped rights, an African American picketing outside a company that only hired whites, and Asian political picketers. Afterwards, we tried to identify who discriminates and quickly determined that everyone could potentially discriminate against others, even against those who were similar to them. Several of the participants noted that sometimes the discrimination practiced by other African Americans was worse than that of other races. This fits exactly with Freire's (1993) argument that after gaining power the oppressed sometimes become worse oppressors than the original oppressors. Finally, using quotations about discrimination to promote more discussion, the participants began to generalize about what it meant to discriminate or be discriminated against. These quotations were also found through an Internet search and included federal definitions, statements from religious groups, and a United Nations anti-discrimination pledge. Topics of these passages included prejudices, discrimination against Native Americans, and sexual discrimination. Towards the end of session four, Mercy, a woman in her thirties, summarized the discussion with these words, "No matter what you is, we all should be treated equal."

"I Never Knew Poverty was All This."

During sessions five and six, the circle of culture looked at the idea of poverty. First, I prompted discussion by asking "What is poverty?" This led us to generate a list of what it meant to be poor. This list included ideas such as not having insurance, education, money, a home, or good health. With more prompting through my probing questions, the participants expanded the list to include other forms of poverty, such as the lack of morals, spirituality, friendships, or family ties. Using this list, we tried to categorize the kinds of poverty, which led some participants to realize that poverty is not just the lack of money. We determined that poverty could be monetary, spiritual, social, or educational. I then provided the participants with additional prompts to explore different concepts of poverty, including a story about one woman's life in poverty, government definitions of poverty, and several quotations, including bible verses, poetry, and works from the World Bank's Internet collection of the literature of poverty. After discussing these prompts, the participants began to generalize their ideas, saying: "Poverty is a label," and "Poverty is a lack, sometimes of money and sometimes of other things." Finally, we tried to make connections between poverty and discrimination, however this was not explored fully. After these sessions, Mercy stated, "I never knew poverty was all this."

Neighborhood or Community?

During session seven, the key theme was neighborhood. We revisited the ideas about community from session two and compared them to what makes up a neighborhood. We determined that the two words did not mean the same thing because a neighborhood is often defined by geographical boundaries whereas a community is not. Several participants also said that communities are usually united around something while neighborhoods might not be. Some participants shared their personal experiences with neighborhoods and communities, both locally and in other cities, and generalized about why each might form. In particular, the participants brought up the formation of gangs within their neighborhood and in other areas of the city. Reasons given for these gangs being formed were:

“Identity”
“Security”
“For the lack of what [they’re] not getting at home”
“Just to be tough”
 “[To] gain a reputation”

At the end of the session, I asked the participants to make connections between the key themes of poverty, discrimination, and neighborhoods. One of the ideas that they came up with was that titles are deceiving, because neighborhood names were used as a way to describe stereotype areas as rich or poor while not everyone living in those different areas fell into the category used to describe them.

Tying It All Together.

Sessions eight and nine were used to bring closure to the pilot study. During session eight, the participants created collages of their ideas about discrimination, poverty, and/or neighborhoods and shared them with the rest of the circle. Only three of the five participants present during this session actually created collages, the other two said that they were unable to find pictures or words that they wanted to use and spent most of the session flipping through the magazines and pointing out images to the participants sitting around them. The completed collages included images of unity between peoples of every color and the need for all peoples to have relationships. The following transcription of Emerald sharing her collage, chosen because of the way she expressed these concepts, is an example of this:

...And basically just picked out, like, articles on racism, like back in, like, the 1960s and all the boycotting that they did. Umm ... [Pointing to words she'd cut out] Be yourself. ... Um... And this [pointing to a picture], like, picture of the bubble gum... ‘cuz I cut it out to look like a heart and love, I mean it's just pictures of all different colors, like bubblegums and, that could be us. You know, who are we in all these colors? You know. [Pointing to a picture] All kidding aside. This is basically people who think racism doesn't exist, you know, you're kidding yourself because it does. [Pointing to a story headline] Black and discrimination. [Pointing to a picture] The little, you know, what do you call those things, a banner, I guess, and it says, “Make love not war.” And, um, [pointing to a picture] a little boy that looks like he's very sad and I thought that he was sad about racism. And, um, [pointing to a sentence] “Remember when you wanted to change the world?” You know, because I think that we'd like to change racism. I know that I would, I would like to change it if I could.

The last session was used to discuss the preliminary findings from the data analysis. Participants had the opportunity to respond to both the preliminary research questions and the themes of project format, trust and respect, and commitment that had emerged through analysis of the transcripts of the previous sessions. These findings are discussed in the next section.

Findings

The first finding of this project was that active participation in dialogues and conceptualization varied from week to week. From analysis of the transcripts, it appeared that the participation levels often depended upon who was at the session. During some sessions one or two participants dominated the dialogue. There were also a few participants who rarely volunteered their stories but would share when asked directly for their input.

When a participant dominated the discussion for a length of time, others usually would decide that they did not agree with what was being said and begin to talk over that participant's comments. At times, this led us to close the classroom door to ensure that no one else in the building was disturbed. The first time that this happened, I was unsure whether or not I should step in and restore order or just let the participants continue and see what happened. I decided not to take any actions and the participants eventually settled themselves down and the group discussion rose to a higher level of understanding overall. Thereafter, whenever the discussion started to get lively, I just closed the doors and let it happen. I did, however, urge the participants to respect one another's comments and opinions.

The audiotapes and transcripts also revealed that contributions to the dialogue were very much couched in storytelling to share personal experiences with discrimination, poverty, or belonging to a community. This sharing through stories, a key component of CRT, led to a community of trust within CUPS. Moreover, through their stories, the participants began to realize the similarities of their experiences and to develop a greater awareness of how their actions and those of others fit within the greater society. That is, they began to recognize their realities (Freire, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1999). I also shared stories within CUPS, including stories about my storage locker in my apartment complex being broken into and the responses of both White and African Americans to my boyfriend and me when we go out. These stories helped the participants realize that many other people, of all different races, also confront many of the same kinds of experiences that they do. Overall, as CUPS continued and the participants became comfortable with the format, participation levels increased and so did the number of stories told.

When asked about their participation in CUPS, most of the participants said that taking part in CUPS did not affect their normal attendance at school. However, Flora, a participant in her mid-fifties, reported that not only had she altered her personal schedule in order to take part in CUPS, the project also was encouraging her to take advantage of other activities within the school that previously she had ignored, such as programs on raising children. She also said that she was taking ideas from both CUPS and these other programs home to discuss or use with her children and grandchildren. Flora's actions exemplify Freire's (1993) conception of education as a liberatory practice. Her reflections on what she was learning led her to actively and consciously work to transform her world both by participating more frequently and by sharing her new knowledge and ideas at home.

Project format was another important factor of the project because the participants were able to sit anywhere in the classroom that they wanted rather than required to all sit together at

one grouping of tables like during the classes at the school. In this way, students not sure whether or not they wanted to participate could join in if they decided to. This format evolved based on participation patterns and where participants were seated when a session began, because often participants sitting at tables away from the traditional “class table” did not want to move, and since all the tables were close, discussions could take place easily without requiring them to move. One example of this occurred during the second session. Emerald had been working at the table closest to the blackboard (where classes typically gather) when it was time for CUPS to begin. She literally gathered up her work and moved to a different table, saying as she moved “I’m not going to participate.” However, the dialogue that occurred during the session interested her and by the end of the session she was one of the most active participants – even suggesting the overall theme that CUPS chose to work with. After the session, when asked about her behavior by another participant, Emerald said, “I didn’t think it would be this interesting.”

Additionally, almost every week someone who was sitting away from the majority of participants would add a story or respond to something that was said within CUPS. When this occurred, I tried to ensure both that the new participant was included throughout the rest of the session and that the individual was informed about the research project so consent could be obtained. If participation had been restricted to only those in a particular part of the classroom, the project would have been limited in both size and richness of the dialogues. The project format also emphasized that all participants had knowledge, not just me as the facilitator, another key part of Freire’s (1993) concept of liberatory education. Thus, we all learned from each other and became jointly responsible for the project’s process.

Trust was another key theme that emerged during data analysis. We had to trust each other to respect one another’s ideas and not to talk negatively about each other’s experiences. Additionally, the participants had to trust that my intentions were really what I said that they were and that I was not going to use what they said against them in any way. This trust was gained slowly, through the sharing of our stories, as the sessions took place and nothing happened because of something that was said, even when it reflected negatively on the school staff. Finally, the participants also had to trust that I really did come to them without answers already predetermined for the topics. This was particularly important to one of the male participants, Justice, who over several sessions asked me what ideas I had about the topics. Because I had tried to ensure that I did add any ideas that I had that were not already mentioned to the discussion, I asked Justice why he kept asking me what my ideas were. His reply was: “You know how some people, they already have their little whatever mapped out and come to class.”

The last finding was that the commitment of all participants was an important factor in CUPS. Without the participants’ commitment to attend the sessions and to actively engage in the dialogues and conceptualizing, the project would not have succeeded. Additionally, as we arrived at the last sessions and began to look forward to the next phase of the project, Mercy pointed out that the next phase would require even more commitment than this one if CUPS was going to take action. My commitment to CUPS was also important because I had to spend a lot of time outside of the sessions considering the many possibilities that could occur in the discussions and finding as wide a variety of prompts as possible to promote a wide exploration of the themes.

Implications

As Peterson (1999) discussed, approaches that emphasize the knowledge that the adult students already have can make a difference. Allowing these students the opportunity to share their stories led to trust between the students and me and strengthened the sense of community within the school. Projects similar to CUPS should be used more frequently to emphasize the knowledge the students already have in order to contribute to the potential for success in adult education programs and beyond. These projects could provide students with opportunities to learn research skills, work on their writing, and read a wide variety of materials – activities that would help the students with their studies and also, potentially, to develop job skills.

Although CUPS has been a short-term entry into the use of PAR in an adult education program, it has shown that, when given the opportunity to define the direction of their education, adult students are interested in participating. Additionally, CUPS has shown that adult students will actively participate in these projects when they are confident that no repercussions will occur based on the stories they share. CUPS has shown that at least some participants may increase participation and attendance in other school-related activities. Thus, more projects of this nature should be attempted in order to further engage the adult learners in their education. Future researchers should investigate the impact such programs have changing participant's actions in their cultural settings.

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What Preservice Teachers Learn by Using Games in Tutoring.

Mary Timothy, Ed.D.

Arthur Quickenton, Ph.D.

Gayle Turner, Ph.D.

With the concern and movement towards better teacher preparation, universities are implementing tutoring as one possibility for early field experience. Tutoring allows preservice teachers to explore different opportunities and ways to practice strategies and methods to help children learn. Research has been conducted about tutoring in regards to successful tutoring programs. Often children have difficulty learning concepts (Murphy, 2000). The literature supports the use of games as a tool to help children learn and apply concepts. This study examines the potential benefits preservice teachers receive from using games as a tool in helping children comprehend concepts during tutoring in math content area reading. The researchers argue that games are typically under utilized in K-12 classroom instruction and in tutoring. This paper explores this assertion through an examination of relevant literature and research data. Central to this task is the development in preservice teachers of an understanding of the use of games in learning. Components of this understanding include several key elements: (a) games can provide an introduction to a subject, (b) game playing, and the creation of self-generated games can encourage the development of higher order thinking skills, (c) games can provide drill and practice in the selected subjects, and (d) games can be used as a form of assessment.

Movements for educational reforms call for changes in teaching practices, yet it is difficult to change core teaching beliefs and practices (Borko, Flory, & Cumbo, 1993). Change can begin in teacher education programs. This study considers what preservice teachers learn from creating and playing games as a form of tutoring in math. The study examines preservice teachers tutoring fieldnotes/reflections and surveys.

Games

Games have a history of use in some fields of K-12 instruction, particularly in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms (Domke, 1991; Holt, 1995). According to Holt (1995), the use of age-appropriate games enhances instruction in language and literacy development. Domke (1991) reported on ESL instruction in the former Czechoslovakia, where supplies were extremely limited. Both teachers and students created and played games for the purposes of enhancing learning and the games served as a means of assessment of student learning.

Games used as an introduction to a topic or subject can help student reinforce background knowledge. In a study by Hitchcock (2002), he used role-playing games to introduce a time period/topic to be studied. The game motivated his students and they exceeded Hitchcock's expectations. Hitchcock found that playing the game should not be

too complicated and should be interesting enough so that students will spend more time playing the game rather than learning how to play the game.

Game playing has also been conceived of as a form of learning by theorists such as Piaget, Montessori, and Vygotsky. Piaget (1962) believed that it is through various forms of play that children both construct knowledge and promote their cognitive development. Montessori (1912) noted that play is children's work, while Vygotsky (1978) argued that play is central to both the emotional and cognitive development of the child. When children themselves create games to play, they choose the rules they wish to use to negotiate their play, and hence internalize those rules in the process of creation and implementation of the game (King, 1986). Creating and playing games teaches children reasoning strategies and skills; while playing manufactured games such as checkers, according to Fernie (1988), teaches offensive and defensive alternatives within the clear conceptual frame of the game. Games also can motivate children intellectually. Many researchers have found that games motivate students in mathematics by providing them with an enjoyable structure for recalling and restructuring their knowledge (Carr, 1990; Clark, 1997; Fernie, 1988; Hartog & Brosnan, 1994; Hitchcock, 2000; Suydam, 2000).

One key to mastering math is frequent practice. However, repetitive math worksheets are tiresome to both students and teachers (Clark, 1997). Games provide the opportunity to practice math and critical thinking skills (Clark, 1997; May, 1998). The games can be as simple or complicated as teachers or students desire. Clark, (1997) discovered that when her students employed successful strategies during the games, the students were able to employ the same strategies when taking the exams.

Often teachers will use games as a form of drill and practice. May (1998) stated that key to mastering math was frequent practice. She found that by using games as a form of practicing math, students retained the concepts. Bingo (commercial or teacher-made) can be used to reinforce number recognition and concentration (Holt, 1995). ESL classrooms will use Word Bingo (teacher-made) to help students listen for vocabulary words used in a song (Domke, 1991). Math Bingo, teacher-made, was used by a Chicago elementary school to practice solving math problems.

Games allow instructors to assess student learning. In traditional forms of reading assessment, it does not allow instructors to see the process involved in reading, but lets the teacher infer how the student has comprehended (Powell, 1989). In traditional math assessment, the answer is either right or wrong (Lampert, 1988). The math process may not even be seen by the assessor.

Standardized testing has been on the increase across the nation (Powell, 1989; Clark, 1997). Both Presidents Clinton and Bush have proposed national standardized testing in math. According to Ratnesar & Ghosh (1997), "Education experts agree that American public schools badly need tougher—and higher—national standards. National testing would enable parents and schools to measure an individual student's performance against a common yardstick." (p.68) However, those opposed to national testing claim that results from math tests (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997; Wiggins, 1990) will classify poor

and minority students as educationally inadequate. A second concern is that the test results will weigh too heavily in the decision to promote a child to the next grade (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997). National testing also could label schools and teachers with low performances on tests, as failures without examining other important factors such as parental socioeconomic status, per pupil expenditure, classroom size, and intervention programs (Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997). With this kind of pressure on performance, some teachers “teach towards the test.” Opponents argue that standardized math texts only examine rote memorization; that is, the recall of what is learned out of context (Nikiforuk, 2001; Ratnesar & Ghosh, 1997; Wiggins, 1990), while critical thinking skills and application are not assessed (Wiggins, 1990). Therefore, teaching to these tests results in a curriculum that is filled with worksheets and rote memorizations and devoid of problem solving and critical analysis. Introducing games into such a curriculum will increase student opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving. In addition, game playing can be used in assessing higher order student learning.

Often teachers and researchers look for “authentic” assessments to discover what children are really learning from math (Powell, 1986; Wiggins, 1990). Authentic assessment requires a *performance* of acquired knowledge in pursuit of a worthy task, whereas traditional modes of assessment, such as standardized tests, assess what students *recognize or recall*. Wiggins (1990) contends that teaching which employs authentic modes of assessment improves both teaching and learning; students perform what they have learned, while teachers can directly see how instruction relates to performance. We see game playing as a movement toward more authentic assessment.

Preconceived Knowledge in Preservice Teachers

Students enter teacher preparation programs for many personal reasons, a good number are personal. They come to these programs with existing ideas about teaching and content areas (Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991; Pajares, 1993). One idea students bring with them is the fear of math, and the teaching of math. Preservice teachers may also believe that teaching is transmitting knowledge by standing in front of the class and manipulating what information is shared, or knowing how to present knowledge in such a way that learning appeals to students (Feiman-Nemser, 1985; Holt-Reynolds, 1994). Preservice teachers that enter teacher preparation programs have explicit and idealistic ideas of what teaching is from personal histories as students (Blanton, 1999; Carr, 1998; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991). These preconceived ideas held by preservice teachers must be challenged to provide for the possibility of new ways of thinking about teaching and learning. If we expect new teachers to be well informed and to have the flexibility to deal with new classroom situations, critical thinking must then be an essential component of preservice teacher education programs (Knapp, 1992).

Tutoring

Tutoring gives preservice teachers a small taste of teaching in a one-to-one situation by reading with students, supervising homework, and stimulating learning. Tutoring allows preservice teachers to become involved in schools with students

(Fischetti, Maloy, & Heffley, 1988) and apply what they are learning (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000). It fosters the opportunity to learn how to connect with individual students and how to design instruction that will support their learning (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000). Tutors can put into practice what is being learned in the college classroom, by working with individual students while not having the responsibility of dealing with whole classrooms (Korthagen, 1985).

Bates (1984) studied the effects of tutoring reading with secondary education majors. These preservice teachers found tutoring contributed to their professional growth by practicing what they learned, while at the same time reducing anxiety, and promoting positive attitudes. Data suggests that preservice teachers engaged in tutorial programs learned not only about students but themselves through developing higher thinking skills, better communication skills, and good work habits along with reviewing content material (Gausted, 1993; McIntyre, Bryd, & Foxx, 1996). The benefits of tutoring increase if reflection is included in the experience and program (McIntyre, Bryd, & Foxx, 1996; Pajares, 1993). Tutoring provides an excellent opportunity for preservice teachers to explore personal inquiry regarding their beliefs, strategies, methods, and learning.

Method

According to Bogden & Biklin (1998), "If you want to understand the way people think about their world and how those definitions are formed you need to get close to them, to hear them talk, and observe them in their day-to-day lives" (p.32). Qualitative methods were chosen as a form of naturalistic inquiry, which allowed the researchers to approach the setting and the participants without a predetermined hypothesis (Patton, 1990). In the setting in which we collected data, the tutors were assigned to work with students one-on-one, or in small groups.

Participants

Participants in this study were nine preservice teachers enrolled in their first educational course in one of the larger teacher education programs in the southeastern United States. This course included a field experience in tutoring. The tutors represented a variety of subject and grade levels foci. Before students are assigned to their tutoring position in the public schools, they were required to attend workshops to help them prepare them for tutoring. During the workshops, math and reading instructional strategies, and alternative assessments strategies were presented and discussed. In the final workshop, tutors were asked to work in groups and role-play tutoring in math or reading. At tutoring sites, games were available for tutors to use with students.

Nine preservice teachers submitted on-line teacher belief surveys and student biographies at the beginning of the semester. They were collected and examined using content analysis to establish which preconceived ideas were exhibited by the tutors. Tutors' individual on-line fieldnotes/reflections were collected and examined for emerging themes. Three raters independently examined the data for common themes regarding their attitude towards games and the use of games during tutoring. After the

raters completed the independent analysis, they met to discuss the findings and emerging themes.

Data Analysis

For this study, multiple sources provide data: (1) Teacher Beliefs survey, (2) student biographies, and (3) student fieldnotes/reflections. The first two established preservice teachers thinking (preconceived ideas) prior to tutoring. The latter is a reflection of changing perceptions.

The literature establishes that students came to teacher preparation programs with pre-existing ideas regarding teaching. Prior to tutoring, tutors completed a Teachers Belief the survey. The survey focused on tutors' beliefs about learning, through asking for response questions such as: What is learning? How do children learn? What is teaching? Why do children succeed or fail? Through their responses to the questions on the survey, the tutors were encouraged to express what they thought they knew about teaching and children.

Student biographical surveys were completed by students at the beginning of the course. The biographies included students' educational histories, their beliefs and perceptions regarding teaching, and reflections on their relationship to schooling. The biographical survey focused on individual preservice teacher's experiences in public school. The survey asked questions such as: What topics and subject matter were easy and difficult for you to learn and why? Describe your prior school. What strengths do you think you have that will assist you in becoming your ideal of the "good teacher"?

Once the tutoring began, the tutors were required to post fieldnotes/reflections weekly through a course webpage. The nature of the fieldnotes/reflections varied from student to student. Some tutors submitted fieldnotes which were short and descriptive, while others showed depth and perception. Nonetheless, the fieldnotes/reflections revealed students' perceptions about what they were doing, and why. Approximately fifty fieldnotes, from the nine participating students, were examined. The fieldnotes/reflections asked students to examine their experiences after each tutoring session through a series of motivating questions in a structured manner.

The two survey results (biographical survey, and Teacher Belief survey), and fieldnote/reflections were compiled and coded for emerging themes and categories. Responses were tabulated across students by questions and general patterns were described.

Results

The Teacher Beliefs surveys gathered data from nine tutors participating in after-school tutoring. Their responses about teachers and learners indicated certain preconceived ideas of teaching:

- (1) Teaching is the transmission of knowledge: that is, "I teach-you learn."

(2) Teaching is what it was for me in my own schooling. Seventy-seven percent of preservice teachers replied that learning was the gaining of knowledge. One tutor wrote, "Learning is the ability to gain knowledge, experience, and 'instinct.' This may seem like a dictionary definition but it is what I believe learning is."

(3) Learning is the processing of knowledge. Thirty-three percent claimed learning was through the process of knowledge. A tutor responded, "Learning is the ability to process information of a subject matter into understanding it."

(4) Children fail to learn largely through their own fault. Eighty-eight percent said it was the child's responsibility if the child failed to learn, sixty-six percent blamed teachers, and forty-four percent held parents responsible.

Reviewing tutor's ideas about teaching and learning revealed a focus on teachers, and on students being responsible for their own learning. When tutors responded regarding their own learning experiences via the student biographies, two areas were most evident in the responses: interest in subject matter and the qualities of the teacher. When asked why some subject matter was easy and others difficult to learn, 99 percent responded that subject interest was the key to succeeding and/or failure.

When asked about their strengths they have that will assist them in teaching, the answers varied. Forty-four percent said interest in people was their strength, while 33 percent said it was their knowledge base. However, 100 percent believed they were strong in their content area knowledge, while 33 percent believed content area knowledge would be a strength in their teaching. Prior to tutoring, the tutors believed that teaching would be easy if they cared enough about the students and had content knowledge. They thought that they would be able to go to tutoring and relate information and the students would learn.

In analyzing the fieldnotes several patterns emerged. Some of the reflections shed light on what was occurring with the tutors and their own learning. Five major themes emerged from the fieldnotes/reflections: (a) traditional teaching methods were appealing, (b) games were not learning, (c) games could be used as rewards and motivators, (d) there was a need to create games, and (e) games could be used to teach concepts. At the beginning of the semester, tutors did not believe games were teaching tools. In the early fieldnotes/reflections, most students referred to tutoring as re-teaching math using traditional methods such as using worksheets for repetitive practice. One student wrote:

My kids got extra practice on multiplication problems today because they all had a bunch of worksheets with multiplication on it. I hope they have a better understanding of this concept and will need my help even less next time on this subject.

Another tutor explained her process of helping children learn long division. She wrote:

One of the steps of long division is multiplication. It intrigues me to see my girls doing multiplication on their fingers. I am glad that they get the right answers, but

at the same time it saddens me to see that they had lost their speed in doing so. Next time I might drill them a little on multiplication to see where their skills are.

These tutors were exposed to worksheets and drill and practice as they learned mathematics in their own K-12 schooling, and as would be expected from the literature, often tutors rely on personal experiences to help them tutor.

Occasionally in tutoring, children will not need help with homework. This often frustrates tutors. One tutor wrote when she encountered this:

What has worked well for me is playing games with the kids. It is not fun for them or me to do their homework because usually they can just do it on their own. So, playing games has helped me to bond with them, but it is not tutoring.

Later in the semester, this same tutor discovered that she could combine games and tutoring.

I introduced the game, “dots” to them, and they caught on quickly and really enjoyed it. I felt great that I had taught them something, and they were having fun at the same time. The game involves strategy and using one’s mind, so it really did have an academic purpose. I noted one of the girls teaching the game to someone else later. I felt quite satisfied that I had passed something on that they had used.

At the outset of the tutoring experience, tutors were apprised that games were available at the tutoring site. Some tutors used them only as rewards and motivators; the idea that games could teach math concepts had not occurred to them, though the subject had been covered in the pre-tutoring workshops. One student reflected, “I am going to take away that twenty four game [homework assignment] with me and maybe use it for fun with the kids when they get done with their homework early.” Here a game was presented in a homework assignment and the tutor saw it as a game to use as a reward for getting work done early. Another tutor used games as a break from learning and doing homework. This tutor wrote:

I wanted to spend some time playing a game with my students to continue to show them that math is fun. Using the girls’ homework to show them to use reasoning skills, we were able to get two things done at once. The girls enjoyed the game of *Uno* as they needed a break from their homework before they went home.

The tutor continued to say that she had to constantly keep the girls on task while they were doing their math homework.

As the semester progressed, tutors views of games started to change, as reflected in the fieldnotes. Some tutors began to think about creating games to help teach a concept, or to use games as an alternative to worksheets. One tutor reflected:

I will create new challenging games dealing with numbers to increase her attention and awareness in math. This way she can relate to her homework along with fun number games and math won't be too boring for her.

Another tutor shared her ideas about starting to use games as a way to teach math. She wrote:

I was a little frustrated with the multiplication problems, because they are of course so easy and fast for me to do. I was trying to think back to how I had learned to do them so well once upon a time. I felt like I needed a game or something to help them understand what I was explaining.

Towards the end of the semester, students became more comfortable using games as a teaching strategy and games became a part of the tutoring experience. This was evident when tutors started playing games before and during tutoring and also bringing games they had created that related to the concept the students were learning. One tutor wrote:

When he was having trouble with math word problems, another boy took out some money and gave my student situations using the money. My student thought it was a game and loved it, not even realizing that he was learning a math skill at the same time.

Another tutor taught her students the game *Buzz*. She was hesitant about using the game, but found it was successful. She wrote:

Games can help a student learn things as much as a worksheet. Games will also entertain the student and the teacher more. This also allows teachers and students to interact and students to interact with one another if the group is big enough. I was nervous about this game with the fourth graders since it is somewhat challenging for adults who play. I look forward to playing it again.

Different tutors used different games to teach different concepts. One tutor used the game of *Crazy 8* to help her teach math. She reflected:

I wanted to show them how math can be fun by playing *Crazy 8's* and incorporating some math into the set-up of the games. During the game, I was able to integrate math problems such as how many cards they had in their hand by doing subtraction and division. By doing that, they were able to see a reason for math.

Not all the tutors learned that playing games enhanced tutoring in math and reading skills. However, many of the tutors did learn the importance of games in helping students understand concepts and problem solving.

For a significant number of preservice teachers in this study, tutoring opened their minds to new ideas about schools, teaching, learners, and assessment. Preservice teachers came to tutoring with preconceived ideas about teaching and children; however, the tutoring experience provided an opportunity for preservice teachers to re-examine their existing ideas regarding teaching and learning, and allowed them to construct meaning from these new experiences.

Discussion

This study examines what preservice teachers learn from creating and playing games as a form of tutoring in math. Tutoring impacted preservice teachers by encouraging them not only to view schools, teaching, and learners from the perspective of a professional entering his or her chosen field, but also to examine math strategies and practices. Preservice teachers had the opportunity to examine what they thought they knew, and to reshape their beliefs regarding the teaching and tutoring of math. Tutoring gave preservice teachers the opportunity (a) to confront and re-evaluate prior beliefs and preconceived knowledge and (b) to construct new meaning through sensory and cognitive experiences gained in the relationship between tutors and students, materials, and ideas. Tutoring placed preservice teachers into the schools where they examined homework and lesson plans given by teachers, and were able to participate first-hand in experiencing how children learn.

The two surveys and fieldnotes indicated that tutors learned about the work of teachers through homework the teachers assigned to their students. Some of the teachers were also available to the tutors for clarification and directions. Tutors did not see teachers implementing the curriculum during the school day, but they did experience developing and playing games to help students connect with homework. Often tutors were surprised by how students at different grade levels reacted to learning through games.

Initially, tutors described themselves as having a mastery of math content. However, once tutoring started, the tutors became frustrated as they tried to explain math to their students. Though the tutors themselves knew how to do the work, they were unable to explain *how* they were doing it. Tutors began to see that using games could help them explain something to their students by demonstrating math concepts. Tutors began to see how children learn; they began to learn what motivates children, and to understand what interests them. Some tutors confronted reconceptualizing teaching by considering the use of games as a learning strategy instead of as a reward. One tutor wrote:

She [the student] wants to get her homework done as much as she can and she doesn't allow time for us to do other things because she would rather finish her homework. My question arise[s], if it is better to finish her homework or is it better to provide extra time to play games and not finish her homework. I feel that I should allow time for us to play math games and apply what she is doing in class.

The exploration of methods and materials through tutoring was beneficial to tutors as they prepared to become teachers; one tutor found that making multiplication flash cards with her student was more beneficial to the students' learning than completing worksheets assigned as homework. Other tutors invented their own manipulatives for helping students complete worksheets.

Preservice teachers brought with them preconceived ideas regarding games and traditional methods of teaching and tutoring. Their initial ideas regarding education were rooted in their own schooling experiences (Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991; Pajares, 1993). When confronted with new ideas about playing games, preservice teachers reverted to their own schooling, where games were rewards for completing work early. Without constructive intervention, preservice teachers most likely will teach as they were taught. Tutoring was implemented as a required component of preservice teacher education to encourage students to look beyond their established beliefs and examine schooling through a teacher's eyes. The availability of games in a tutoring setting encouraged tutors to develop a revised conception of the nature and purpose of games.

Tutors also learned that simply telling, and then showing students how something is done was not sufficient. Tutors became frustrated when students did not understand what they were told. Tutors began to learn to create a learning situation around which the student was then able to construct meaning. Some tutors used manipulatives, games, context clues (shopping, making change, telling time) and drawing problems to help students understand math concepts and problems.

Most tutors initially believed there was a "formal" mode of teaching through which knowledge should be transmitted. Tutoring, perhaps, opened them up to the possibility that games, puzzles, and other activities, which for them were not commonly associated with teaching, were in fact beneficial to the students and themselves. Tutors mentioned they re-examined their earlier beliefs regarding the nature of teaching and the variety of methods available to help students learn what was presented. Initially, tutors were hesitant to include games for fear they would interfere with the students' homework; they saved games to serve as a reward when homework was completed. Once tutors began to try the different games available, they realized how math concepts were integral to the games. We believe this study points to avenues for assisting preservice teachers developing notions of teaching and learning that will encourage them to transcend notions of teaching as simply the transmission of knowledge.

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