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AUTHOR   Johns, Jerry; And Others
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ABSTRACT
        After defining whole language as a philosophy of
literacy instruction based on the concept that students need to
experience language as an integrated whole, this ERIC "FAST Bib"
presents an annotated list of 35 ERIC documents and journal articles
consisting of critiques of and responses to the whole language
approach in the elementary school. The materials, which were
published between 1988 and 1992, are divided into six sections: (1)
Overview; (2) Critiques; (3) Recent Research; (4) Elementary
Applications; (5) Applications to Special Populations; and (6)
Teachers' Roles. Some related publications are also cited at the end
of the document. (RS)

WHOLE LANGUAGE
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
by Jerry Johns, Cheryl Coseglia, and Peggy VanLeirsburg

Whole language is a philosophy of literacy instruction, based on the concept that students need to experience language as an integrated whole. This philosophy focuses on the need for an integrated approach to language arts instruction within a context that is meaningful for students. This *FAST Bib* presents a number of critiques of and responses to the whole language approach. Six sections are included: (1) overview; (2) critiques; 3) recent research; (4) elementary applications; (5) applications to special populations; and (6) teachers' roles.

Two types of citations are provided in this bibliography: ERIC documents and journal articles.

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Overview

Burchby, Marcia. "Literature and Whole Language," *New Advocate*, v1 n2 p114-23 Spr 1988.
Summarizes some of the criticisms which have been directed at basal instruction. Discusses how whole language approaches enhance the ability to teach students to read and engage them in a democratic and democratizing educational experience.

Gursky, Daniel. "After the Reign of Dick and Jane," *Teacher Magazine*, v2 n9 p22-29 Aug 1991.
Examines the philosophy of the whole language approach to teaching and learning. Stresses that language should remain whole and uncontrived, that children should use it in ways that relate to their own lives, and that finding correct answers is not as important as learning processes.

Pace, Glennellen. "When Teachers Use Literature for Literacy Instruction: Ways That Constrain, Ways That Free," *Language Arts*, v68 n1 p12-25 Jan 1991.
Identifies key premises from whole language theory relative to language and language acquisition, reading and writing processes, teaching and learning, and curriculum. Discusses questions and underlying principles using classroom events.

"Why Whole Language?" *Instructor*, v99 n9 p46-49 May 1990.
Presents comments by several reading experts on the whole language approach to teaching reading and on the whole language debate. Includes definitions of whole language, characteristics, justifications, shortcomings, and critiques.

Critiques

Ford, Michael. "Whole Language Change: Lessons from Hostile Audiences," *Journal of the Wisconsin State Reading Association*, v35 n1 p25-35 Win 1991.
Answers the five following common objections to the whole language approach: Haven't we tried this all before? What will happen to the child if some teachers use whole language and others don't? Where does the teacher

find the time to do all this? Where's the proof that it works? and What about the future?

Moorman, Gary B. and others. "The Rhetoric of Whole Language: Part One," *Reading Psychology*, v13 n2 piii-xv Apr 1992.

Presents the explicit assumptions structuring the whole language movement using 18 articles cited in the ERIC database. Attempts to accurately portray the whole language position in terms of definitions of whole language and statements about reading/writing behavior and instruction.

Moorman, Gary B. and others. "The Rhetoric of Whole Language: Part Two," *Reading Psychology*, v13 n3 piii-xv Jul 1992.

Uncovers and presents the implicit assumptions of whole language, the beliefs that lie beneath the arguments, and perhaps beneath the level of conscious awareness of those who make the arguments. Uses the figurative language in whole language writings as the basis for an interpretive and critical method called deconstruction. Expresses concern that the rhetoric of whole language may block the process of thoughtful, substantive change.

Thompson, Richard A. "A Critical Perspective on Whole Language," *Reading Psychology*, v13 n2 p131-155 Apr 1991.

Attempts to appraise the whole language instructional philosophy in relation to what is known about reading methodology. States that this critical perspective is catalytic.

Zarrillo, James. "Theory Becomes Practice: Aesthetic Teaching with Literature," *New Advocate*, v4 n4 p221-34 Fall 1991.

Asserts that there is a gap between theory and practice in literature-based reading programs. States that such programs often lack an underlying theory and mimic methodology associated with basal programs.

Recent Research

Antonelli, Judith. "Decoding Abilities of Elementary Students Receiving Rule-Based Instruction and Whole Language Instruction," 1991. 30p. [ED 331 002]

Reviews a study which investigated the decoding automaticity of elementary students when receiving rule-based instruction (as a process of applying syllable and structural analysis rules and limited phonics) and when receiving holistic instruction in a whole language program (exercises in listening, reading, and writing, integrated with classroom instruction when possible).

Edelsky, Carole. "Whose Agenda Is This Anyway? A Response to McKenna, Robinson, and Miller," *The Educational Researcher*, v19 n8 p7-11 Nov 1990.

Disputes the version of whole language presented by Michael McKenna, et al., in an earlier article. Argues that whole language is an educational paradigm complete with theoretical, philosophical, and political assumptions and a congruent research agenda. Contends the "paradigm blindness" prevents critics from seeing the legitimacy of whole language-generated research.

Klesius, Janell P. "A Whole Language and Tr tion Comparison: Overall Effectiveness ar of the Alphabetic Principle," *Reading Res struction*, v30 n2 p47-61 Win 1991.

Examines the differences in the effect language and traditional instruction in enc reading, writing, and spelling achievemer with varying levels of incoming phonemic reading, and writing ability.

Kucer, Stephen B. "Authenticity as the Basis *Language Arts*, v68 n7 p532-40 Nov 1991

Reports on research that investigated tions of the purpose of certain whole lang sons. Concludes that, even in whole langu authenticity may be missing. Helps educa deeply about what literacy lessons should dents and how instruction can help develc strategies while maintaining the integrity

Lehman, Barbara A. and others. "Teacher Per Practices for Using Children's Literature Reading Instruction." Paper presented at ing of the National Reading Conference. 329 937]

Examines three questions regarding: (views about the role of children's literatur program; (2) how teachers implement lite: reading programs in their classrooms; and ence between teacher perceptions and teac literature-based reading instruction.

McGee, Lea M. and Lomax, Richard G. "On ples and Oranges: A Response to Stahl an *view of Educational Research*, v60 n1 p.

Offers criticism of a research study by Miller which compared the effectiveness c guage/language experience programs vers approaches to teaching reading.

Shaw, Patricia A. "A Selected Review of Rest Language," *Journal of the Wisconsin Stat ciation*, v35 n1 p3-17 Win 1991.

Identifies quantitative research on pre: literature and basal approaches to teachin; first-grade children, whole language and t proaches to beginning reading, students' v whole language and older students, and in Concludes that whole language may be m different stages of reading development.

Schickedanz, Judith A. "The Jury is Still Out Whole Language and Language Ex· ·enc for Beginning Reading: A Critique .. Stah Study," *Review of Educational Research*, Spr 1990.

Criticizes the study by Stahl and Mille longitudinal data, alternative interpretatio: tion concerning the broad goals of whole l proaches.

Elementary Applications

Huebsch, Winnie R. "Utilizing Tradebooks in the Elementary School: Considerations and Implications for Change." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, 1991. 10p. [ED 334 559]

Reviews changes made in a Milwaukee, Wisconsin district of the reading program, based on a philosophy that spoken, read, and written language must flow naturally from the child, be used in meaningful ways to communicate real need, and involve tradebooks. Discusses challenges which remain involving distribution of tradebooks, financial constraints, and developing methods of assessment consistent with the principles of whole language. Provides a list of the tradebooks used in the district and a tradebook evaluation guide.

Jett-Simpson, Mary. "Organizing the Whole Language Reading Class: Readers' Workshop and Focused Study Reading Workshop," *Journal of the Wisconsin State Reading Association*, v35 n1 p49-55 Win 1991.

Describes the Readers' Workshop and the Focused Study Reading Workshop. Offers them as a way to accommodate the characteristics of individuals, to respect the knowledge of readers who are at earlier stages of reading development, to establish a system which teaches problem solving, and to provide for active child involvement and ownership in the reading program.

Larrick, Nancy. "Give Us Books!...But Also... Give Us Wings! (Concepts and Themes)," *New Advocate*, v4 n2 p77-83 Spr 1991.

Discusses problems associated with literature-based reading programs which use children's literature in the same way basal readers are used. Encourages teachers to allow students the freedom of exploring and learning from books without creating drill and vocabulary lessons from them.

Linek, Wayne M. "Grading and Evaluation Techniques for Whole Language Teachers," *Language Arts*, v68 n2 p125-32 Feb 1991.

Identifies the need to resolve inconsistencies between the whole language teaching approach and school, district, or state grading and evaluation policies.

Midvidy, Nancy. "Teaching Beyond the Basal Program," *Reading: Exploration and Discovery*, v13 n1 p19-26 Fall 1990.

Provides examples of how holistic procedures can be implemented by teachers who want to supplement the required basal. Demonstrates how student's reading ability, language acquisition, and communication skills can be strengthened as teachers activate prior knowledge, provide language-rich environments, consider reading/writing connections, and focus on thinking.

Miller, James G. and others. "Whole Language--Inside and Outside!" *Pathways to Outdoor Communication*, v1 n1 p14-15 Fall 1991.

Describes a teacher's efforts to create an anthology of poems written by fourth grade-students. Includes whole language activities progressing from poetry reading and group writing to individual writings based on outdoor themes.

Rabin, Annette T. "Selecting Literature for the Whole Language Classroom: What Factors Should We Consider?" Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, 1991. 6p. [ED 334 553]

Identifies factors which whole language teachers view as important to the readability of the literature they select: print size, illustrations, repetition, vocabulary, predictability, and interest.

Schroeder, LaVern. "Custom Tailoring in Whole Language Evaluation," *Journal of the Wisconsin State Reading Association*, v34 n4 p45-55 Fall 1990.

Clarifies the term "emergent literacy" and reviews significant informal assessment techniques, record-keeping systems, and reporting measures appropriate for emergent literacy. Discusses guidelines for whole language assessment and outlines steps to follow in developing local assessment measures.

Stanek, Lou Willett. "Whole Language for Whole Kids: An Approach for Using Literature in the Classroom," *School Library Journal*, v37 n9 p187-89 Sep 1991.

Discusses the use of literature in the whole language approach. Describes the integration of a second grader's experiences with the curriculum, integrating the language arts in the middle school via study of the author as well as the book, and the integration of literature into the study of history.

Applications to Special Populations

Allen, JoBeth and others. "'I'm Really Worried About Joseph': Reducing the Risks of Literacy Learning," *The Reading Teacher*, v44 n7 p458-72 Mar 1991.

Shares the findings of three classroom teachers and a university professor from their collaborative study of how whole language instruction affects the students that teachers worry about most.

Calfee, Robert. "Schoolwide Programs To Improve Literacy Instruction for Students at Risk." 1991. 33p. [ED 338 726]

Argues that a reformulation of reading and writing in the elementary grades can integrate the following three buzzwords of American education: (1) students at-risk for school failure; (2) the whole language movement; and (3) restructuring. Describes a schoolwide approach to the literate use of language, beginning with anecdotal accounts of two correlated programs, Project READ and the Inquiring School.

Gersten, Russell and Dimino, Joseph. "Visions and Revisions: A Perspective on the Whole Language Controversy." Version of a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference, 1990. 24p. [ED 329 913]

Contrasts philosophies of optimal reading instruction held by special and general education, which appear to be in stark conflict. Discusses approaches based on the work of cognitive psychologists that can be integrated into either direct instruction or whole language frameworks to address some of the nagging concerns about each of the

two models. Suggests that educators consider seriously the issues and criticisms raised by whole language authors.

Johns, Jerry L. "Helping Readers at Risk: Beyond Whole Language, Whole Word, and Phonics," *Journal of Reading and Writing*, v7 n1 p59-67 Jan-Mar 1991.

Describes five generalizations for reading instruction with disabled and normal readers: (1) caring, positive relationship between teacher and student; (2) the role of re-reading and daily reading; (3) appropriate materials; (4) interest as a springboard to learning; and (5) the unification of instruction.

Teachers' Roles

Koepke, Mary. "The Power to Be a Professional," *Teacher Magazine*, v2 n9 p35-41 Aug 1991.

Describes experiences of a fifth-grade teacher who converted her classroom into a whole language classroom. Emphasizes student empowerment and decision making, cooperative learning, and flexibility.

Martin, Rodney D. "Empowering Teachers to Break the Basal Habit." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, 1991. 7p. [ED 334 568]

Discusses events between the late sixties and the eighties which were major influences in empowering Australian reading teachers to break the basal habit. Explains reasons why teachers were so willing to break away from dependence on basal texts including the empowerment of teachers through political acceptance of alternatives, training, a grass roots movement, and cooperative effort.

Monson, Robert J. and Pahl, Michele M. "Charting a New Course with Whole Language," *Educational Leadership*, v48 n6 p51-53 Mar 1991.

Enlarges the phonics/whole language debate by focusing on the classroom teacher's evolving role. Suggests a complex paradigm shift is needed from teacher's transmission of knowledge to students' transaction or engagement with constructing meaning.

Sumara, Dennis; Walker, Laurie. "The Teacher's Role in Whole Language," *Language Arts*, v68 n4 p276-85 Apr 1991.

Searches for some precision in the discourse of whole language with respect to the role of the teacher as expressed in words such as empowerment, control, predictability, and authenticity. Observes and interprets the practice of two successful whole language teachers to refine understandings of these concepts as they are enacted in classrooms.

Winners, Diane; Cassidy, Judith K. "Teaching Reading and Writing in a Whole Language Atmosphere: The Teacher's Role," *Ohio Reading Teacher*, v24 n4 p14-17 Sum 1990.

Discusses the whole language teacher's role in the development of children's writing and creating a positive writing environment in the classroom.

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