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AUTHOR Bean, Thomas W.

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ABSTRACT

A study explored preservice teachers' attitudes toward reading through detailed case study analysis of their reading autobiographies. Subjects, 45 students in a required content area reading class in Hawaii, completed a reading autobiography assignment in which they considered their reading experiences from their earliest memory of being read to up to the present. Results indicated that: (1) 67% of the subjects had positive attitudes toward reading, 29% had mixed attitudes, and 4% had negative attitudes; (2) attitudes change over time and were highly individualistic; (3) positive reading experiences were found in rural, modest income families where English was a second language, and in similar settings where parents or other family members offered a positive model, read to children, and provided books in the home; (4) positive experiences occurred in upscale settings where many books were made available and a love of reading was modeled by parents; (5) positive and negative experiences occurred at various stages of reading development; and (6) negative experiences tended to be linked to family upheaval, reading aloud in front of class, book reports, and misuse of placement tests. Findings suggest that very direct methods in a content area reading course will be needed to expand future teachers' understanding of trade books and texts. (Contains 14 references). (RS)

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A CONSTRUCTIVIST VIEW OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARD READING THROUGH CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF  
AUTOBIOGRAPHS

Thomas W. Bean  
Education Department  
University of Hawaii at Hilo  
Hilo, HI 96720  
Ph. 808-933-3582

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## A CONSTRUCTIVIST VIEW OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD READING THROUGH CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

Autobiography is emerging as a useful qualitative research tool in a variety of social contexts. Autobiographies have been instrumental in reconstructing life experiences during the great depression in family research (Handel, 1992), and in personal accounts of teachers' literacy development (Manna & Misheff, 1987).

Graham (1991) argued that the act of writing an autobiography about past learning and literacy experiences helps counter a technocratic view of teacher development. Constructivist theory posits that knowledge is constructed from experience through reflection (Merrill, 1992).

In the constructivist view, a self-conscious rereading of experiences reveals hidden attitudes toward literacy that help or hinder a future teacher. In a critical review of research on teachers' beliefs, Pajares (1992) argued that early life experiences serve as filters for new knowledge. Moreover, these early life experiences forged highly static beliefs that are strongly resistant to change. He viewed autobiography as a useful tool to explore both teachers' beliefs and the influence of these beliefs on classroom practice. Carter (1993) also argued that teaching events are always framed within the context of a teacher's life history. She viewed these life stories as individualistic and resistant to overly simplistic paradigmatic interpretation. Rather, she argued for research that explores the contradictions and complexities of teachers' life experiences.

A number of researchers suggest that a preservice teachers' autobiographical experiences either help or hinder classroom practices. For example, in case studies of preservice teachers, Britzman (1991) found that fledgling teachers often incorrectly assumed that their high school students' experiences were similar to their own. This mismatch and failure to explore its implications in the classroom often centered on attitudes toward reading textbook assignments. Indeed, Bean and Zulich's (1992) case studies of preservice teacher development indicate that personal biography is a crucial factor in an individual's path toward becoming a teacher. Dialogue journals and other reflective assignments like autobiographies can help future teachers construct a more accurate view of their past and present experiences.

The purpose of the present study was to explore preservice teachers' attitudes toward reading through detailed case study analysis of their reading autobiographies. The first study reported here in this planned series of investigations explored some of the assertions made in a study by Manna and Misheff (1987) that investigated teachers' reading development from a positivist perspective.

Manna and Misheff (1987) theorized that teachers' personal experiences with reading would form an important basis for their attitudes toward infusing reading activities in the classroom. These researchers asked preservice and inservice teachers enrolled in their children's and adolescent literature classes at Kent State University to write an autobiographical paper on their early, middle, and more recent memories of reading. In particular, they asked students to comment on "feelings and sensations you associate(d) with reading" (Manna & Misheff, 1987, p. 162). Out of a total sample of 1000 autobiographies collected, the researchers randomly selected 50 for a frequency analysis of positive and negative factors which were expressed in percentages. Their results for positive factors showed that family reading was mentioned by 72 percent of the sample. Libraries were mentioned by 68 percent; 54 percent mentioned the influence of friends. Negative factors included reading as a low priority in the home among the preservice teachers (28 %), book reports (84 %), and reading groups (78 %). In addition, lecture methods typical in high schools and competitive assignments were also regarded negatively.

The present study extends Manna and Misheff's (1987) earlier research through detailed case study analysis. Their work hints at the influence of autobiography in the formation of attitudes toward reading, but research in this area must go into greater depth. Furthermore, in Pajares' (1992) critique of work in teachers' beliefs and practices, he argued we must determine how beliefs manifest themselves in classroom practices. The present study represents work in progress toward this goal with a plan to follow some of these students into student teaching and their early careers.

#### Method

##### Subjects

Patterned after Manna and Misheff (1987), forty-five students completed a reading autobiography assignment in a required content area reading class in Hawaii spanning the periods Fall 1991 through Spring 1993.

Content fields represented included mathematics (n=10), science (n=12), English (n=5), social studies (n=12), art (n=3), agriculture (n=1), Hawaiian Studies (n=1), and Japanese Studies (n=1). Ethnic groups included 27 Caucasian, 8 Japanese, 6 Hawaiian, 3 Portuguese, and 1 East Indian. There were 34 female and 11 male students in the sample. These students were taking the class and related observation-participation practicum in order to earn a Secondary Basic Certificate in Hawaii.

#### Materials and Procedure

In one of the early class meetings, students were asked to complete the reading autobiography assignment. Specifically, students were asked to consider their reading experiences from the earliest memory of being read to through elementary school years, high school, college, and the present. They were asked to comment on what they read, feelings associated with reading or being read to, key people who influenced their feelings about reading, and places where they acquire books. Finally, they were asked to discuss how their own experiences might influence them as content area teachers interested in helping students cope with unfriendly textbooks and interested in developing in students a desire to read for enjoyment. The typed autobiographies ran 2-3 pages for most students with a few single page responses.

The autobiographies were given an initial impressionistic reading and coded globally for positive or negative attitude statements. For example, a positive statement would be, "I remember my mom reading Dr. Scuss's The Cat in the Hat before bedtime." A negative statement would be: "My mom refused to purchase the Troll books through the school book club each time I brought the sign-up material home." Following this initial reading the autobiographies were reread and searched for key words and phrases that revealed attitudes within beginning (grades 0 to 5), middle (grades 6-12), and later (college and work) stages of reading development (Chall, 1983). This developmental stage analysis was prompted by Cardarelli's (1992) work suggesting that teachers' attitudes toward reading are more malleable than Manna and Misheff's (1987) work assumes. Cardarelli developed a funded project where groups of middle school teachers read and discussed self-selected books together. This immersion in reading and discussing books for pleasure resulted in a positive change in attitudes and reading practices in the classroom.

Next, the autobiographies were reread 4 additional times to answer the following research questions: a) Who influences positive or negative attitudes toward reading? b) What books and materials played a key role in positive or negative attitudes? c) Where do these preservice teachers get books to read? and, d) What claims are made by these preservice teachers about guiding their students reading of texts and developing a desire to read for enjoyment?

#### Results

In the overall sample of 45 autobiographies, 67 percent revealed a positive attitude toward reading, 29 percent exhibited periods of time where both positive and negative attitudes emerged, and 4 percent displayed consistently negative attitudes toward reading. At the early stage of reading development (0-5th grade), 71 percent had positive attitudes, 16 percent mixed, and 13 percent negative. Similar percentages emerged in the middle stage analysis (grades 6 to 12): 73 percent positive, 13 percent mixed, and 13 percent negative. In the later stage of reading development (college and work), 80 percent were positive, 13 percent mixed, and 7 percent negative. Thus, attitudes toward reading changed for some individuals at later stages of reading development while they remained static across stages for a small number of students.

The four specific research questions posed along with 11 representative cases selected by content field, attitude (+; -; or mixed), gender, and ethnicity shed more light on this issue than the percentage data.

#### Who Influences Positive or Negative Attitudes Toward Reading?

At the early and middle stages parents were the most often mentioned influence (n=31) although grandparents, siblings, and aunts also played a positive role (n=8). "Mom" was the single most important positive influence for this nontraditional group of students raised largely in the 1950's at a time when two career families were not the norm. Reading autobiographies for younger preservice teachers may reveal a very different pattern as alternative family structures replace the 1950's experiences sampled in this study.

Negative influences were most often associated with not being read to by parents at the early stages of reading. Indeed, at times these were painful to read and the case examples show the profound impact ignoring this important part of a child's development has on subsequent memories of reading.

Teachers, particularly in English, played a positive role at middle and later stages (n=26) by encouraging students to join book clubs and modeling reading of captivating literature. In some instances, teachers accounted for negative influences primarily through the association some students had with dull texts. However, teachers who positively influenced these students attitudes toward reading yielded surprisingly vivid memories. Students recalled teachers' names and specific actions in great detail. As curriculum design efforts involve content teachers working in core teams and attempting to integrate diverse curricular areas, will subsequent autobiographies find that other teachers besides the English teacher positively influence reading attitudes?

#### What Books and Materials Played a Role in Attitude Formation?

At the early stage of reading the two most frequently mentioned materials were Dr. Seuss books typically experienced in the home and Dick and Jane basals encountered at school. While Dr. Seuss books were recalled fondly the basals received mixed reviews. Not far behind Dr. Seuss were Golden Books, Aesop's Fables, and Mother Goose rhymes, all associated with being read to by parents and family members. Additional materials included Curious George, Clifford, The Bible, Highlight Magazine, cultural folktales and fables from Japanese and Hawaiian materials, and the individual reading books associated with the Hawaii English Program prominent during the late 1950's and early 1960's in elementary classrooms throughout the state.

At the middle stage encyclopedias, classics (e.g., Steinbeck, Poe), comics, Mad magazine, Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, biographies, horse books, romances, war books, fantasy and teen problems (e.g. Blume, Cleary) all received mention. Textbooks and SRA materials produced negative memories and were largely regarded as interfering with more stimulating reading pursuits. Teen magazines, sports accounts, and the Bible rounded out the positive materials mentioned. Thus, at this middle stage, a much wider range of interests came into play and school played a greater role in attitude formation.

In general, at the middle stage these students commented on the influence of English teachers and English literature. They rarely mentioned any connections between texts and trade books developed in other classes such as science and mathematics. Even history was not mentioned despite instances

where social studies and English teachers have attempted to team in designing mutually supportive reading assignments.

At the later stage, recreational reading was often suppressed in order to cope with massive amounts of assigned textbook reading. Trade books were seen as something one reads to escape from textbooks and then, only during summer breaks. These preservice teachers frequently mentioned stockpiling books to read over the summer which ranged from horror genre, military history, political analysis, mystery, techno-thrillers, romance, classics, biography, religion (East and West), art, food and wine, Reader's Digest, National Geographic, science-fiction, health and fitness, agriculture, athletics, how to books, culture (e.g. Hawaiian), and geography. In short, a very broad spectrum of reading interests was revealed at this stage. Textbooks were now regarded by some students with less disdain and, in some cases, genuine enthusiasm.

#### Where Do These Preservice Teachers Acquire Books?

The library was the primary source of books often dating back to the earliest memories of reading (n=27). Bookstores were next (n=18) followed by booksales and book clubs (n= 7 and 6 respectively). In the autobiographies of students who were raised in rural communities, bookmobiles were remembered fondly (n=3). However, during the semester, these preservice teachers found little time to explore these valuable sources of trade books that might illuminate otherwise dull text assignments.

#### What Claims Do These Preservice Teachers Make?

The last section of the autobiography asked for any comments on how these preservice teachers might make unfriendly texts more manageable and how they might foster reading enjoyment. Of the 45 preservice teachers, 62 percent made some claims about how they would handle challenging texts and how they might foster a love of reading. The other 38 percent made no comments on this issue.

When these preservice teachers made claims they tended to be very nonspecific. For example, a future science teacher commented, "I am excited about the integration of reading into content classes." Even in those instances where more specific ideas were expressed, a very romantic view of reading emerged. A Japanese Studies major said she planned to "introduce them to fun reading (books which I have enjoyed) and demonstrate how to learn from a textbook and enjoy it at the same time." This enthusiasm for the process of



exciting students about reading and hoping that through modeling and osmosis it will work reflects a heavy reliance on idealized memories of school. This romanticism can interfere with grasping the real labor intensive demands of compiling a repertoire of strategies and a powerful bibliography of trade book material linked to a content area. Indeed, 18 of the 28 claims about advancing students' reading were of the nonspecific variety. Of the 10 more specific claims, only two hinted at the actual task of searching and selecting appropriate sources as well as the more demanding art of matching students' diverse interests to materials. A future science teacher said, "I will liven up the theories etc. with the extraordinary lives that produced them." An art major commented, "it is up to me to provide a stimulating reading list. The variety of interesting books about every possible aspect of art is endless. Tattooing to Juan Gris, petroglyphs to graffiti..."

In order to get a more detailed picture of these preservice teachers' reading autobiographies, the following section summarizes 11 case studies spanning positive, negative, and mixed attitudes toward reading expressed by students from various majors. Actual student names have been converted to pseudonyms for this analysis.

#### Positive Attitude Case Study Examples

Barbara Arujo plans to be an English teacher after growing up on the Big Island in a rural, sugarcane harvesting community. She has a lifelong love of reading and books fostered by her family and school experiences. "While I was growing up my parents had a special closet in our house just for my books. I think that our house had about 200 Golden books and Disney books put together. My favorite Golden book was Rufus the Lion and even if I didn't know how to read yet, I had that book completely memorized because everyone read it so often." She recalled in great detail her later reading interests including Judy Blume, Paula Danzinger, and romances. "My family was really great on turning me on to books because from age one to five I was read to everyday from our own personal Golden and Disney book collection. Also, all of my English and speech teachers throughout the years have always recommended reading and I just really love to read!"

Florida Dela Cruz, a future science teacher was also raised in a rural community on the Big Island. "I can still hear my Philippine born mom's voice struggling with the written foreign English words as she taught me how to read..." Florida recalled in great detail all the books borrowed from the

bookmobile that visited their small sugarcane community: The Little Engine that Could, Curious George, Riki Tiki Tambo, Island of the Blue Dolphins, Lord of the Flies and so on. Her more recent reading turned to journals and books related to managing a thriving orchid farm.

Stephen Norton planned to teach history and was recognized by the university as a Presidential Scholar. "My father was and is an avid reader. Consequently, he devoted a great deal of time and energy trying to get me to read. The first books I remember reading were Mother Goose books, Dr. Seuss books and various other kids books..." Stephen commented in great detail on numerous books he read over the years, particularly in high school where he devoured biographies of presidents and historical fiction. Commenting about high school, he said, "I also enjoyed reading my history textbooks."

Valerie Yamashita, a Japanese Studies major said, "as a young girl I remember being read to a lot. Perhaps because my mother is from Japan, the ones that I remember with the most fondness are those stories which come from the Japanese culture. Urahima Taro, Momotaro, and Kaguya Hime...these stories are still favorites of mine." She traced her continuing love of reading through countless visits to the library. "As I moved through the grades I never stopped reading. The one person that turned me on to reading is definitely my mother. She has always been a reader herself and the habit has been carried over to me."

#### Negative Attitude Case Study Examples

John Bannister, a mathematics major said, "I have no recollection of being read to as a child. John was the youngest of four children. As a student he developed strong compensatory strategies that allowed him to avoid reading. "Despite the fact that I seldom read, I have always been able to write my research papers and book reports." However, three lines after that assertion, John said, "Unfortunately, because I was able to do well without reading, my handicap in reading has grown over the years."

John's autobiography was a brief one-page glimpse into his reading past with a final paragraph where he commented, "I hope to encourage my students to read." John then suggested that he could have students read about some of the famous mathematicians as a means to spark their interest in his content area.

Sally Kamana, a geography major began her autobiography by asserting, "I hate reading." She had no memory of being read to yet she

recalled an abundance of books in her home. "My mother was a member of the Doubleday Book of the Month Club even before I was born. I remember using her books for dart practice. Yellow was a low score, pink hardbacks the highest. The books still bear the scars of my darts."

Sally recalled her basal reader experiences where she was placed in the low reading group. "I felt as though I had a stupid sign on my forehead." However, at home she constructed a weather station and conducted her own studies of birds, fishes, and seashells. She began reading the newspaper in high school and said, "I still read the newspaper avidly today. I have yet at my age, to read a fiction book from cover to cover." Sally closed by saying, "I am not a reader, recreational or otherwise. It is a necessity, not a pleasure for me. It satisfies my curiosity, which is omnipresent, but so can CNN and The Discovery Channel. I hate to read."

#### Mixed Attitude Case Study Examples

Marcia Cousin planned to teach science. She recalled positive and negative dimensions in her early reading experiences. "I recall my mother's reading to me at bedtime. There were Uncle Remus stories with different voices for Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox, and Brer Bear. My other favorites were the Winnie-the-Pooh stories. The nights she was too busy to read were spent crying myself to sleep."

Marcia's first grade memories paralleled Sally Kamana's basal reader experiences. "At school I recall being in a special reading circle with my teacher and one other girl. I had the teacher almost all to myself, and she wanted to listen to me--how privileged I felt until a friend told me I was in the dummy group." This foreshadowed her middle grade experiences. "By sixth grade school was not where I wanted to be, and books were my worst enemy." But that summer she reluctantly read books from a required summer reading list prior to private school admission in seventh grade. As a result her reading attitudes changed. "By my senior year in high school I was not only reading the required books but got into the habit of ending each day reading for fun before going to bed." Marcia developed a real love of reading after a rocky start in her elementary years. She said, "reflecting on my exposure to reading, I know there was a strong desire from an early age that was also killed at an early age because it lacked nurturing."

Tom Suzuki, a mathematics major recounted his initially positive start in reading that later degenerated into a negative attitude toward books. "As far

back as I could remember, my parents read to me. They read Dr. Seuss books and other children's books." But in the elementary grades, Tom found that he disliked the Hawaii English Program. "We had different levels of books and the teacher would assign each person individually the pages they wanted us to read. We would have to go home and read to one of our parents and they would have to sign something once we completed the assignment. When we went back to school, the teacher would call us up individually and tell us to read part of the assignment to her. She would test us on our comprehension..." Tom said, "I was a pretty good reader and got to quite a high reading level, but I didn't enjoy reading. There was always something better to do than read. I just started to read books for enjoyment recently. Tom gravitated toward sports books and biographies of athletes. "This past break I went home and my mother was so happy to see me sit down and read a book. When I read a book about a professional athlete or violations about a college athletic program, it answers questions about how it is to be a pro athlete or a high school superstar. I just can't put the book down. I always imagine how I would react or feel if I was that person."

Lester Pascua was an art major who experienced periods of real enjoyment in reading and times where reading took a back seat due to family problems. "I can clearly remember being read to at the age of two. My mother would read the same books to me so often that I could pick the book up and recite the book by memory page by page, making people think that I was actually reading the book." Lester learned to read and found kindergarten and first grade to be boring. By third grade he was devouring monster books in the library and spending significant amounts of time reading. But by sixth grade the family moved to the Big Island and life at home became difficult with a new stepfather. Initially, reading was an escape. "I remember spending many rainy summer days indoors reading everything from comics to the encyclopedia." By high school, surfing and hanging out with friends filled the time while Lester's reading time diminished. Later, his original love of reading was rekindled by his girlfriend, an excellent student. "After high school I met my present girlfriend who was a top ten graduate and scholarship recipient. She encouraged me to go to college. I presently enjoy reading material that is related to my hobbies and interests. I recently bought a book on the Dutch Flemish painter Peter Reubens. I also recently borrowed a book on Hawaiian musicians which I really enjoy." As he reflected on his past,

Lester said, "I feel that even though I have experienced negative obstacles in my life, it only made me a better person in the long run."

Haunani Kaahaiwaola was an agriculture major who started off as a child with very negative reading experiences. She was tested in first grade and placed erroneously in the lowest reading group. Upon retesting she was shifted to the highest reading group. "I was good at reading but had no interest in it. The teacher used to bribe me with stickers so I would move along at a proper pace with my readings. At home my parents did not make me read other books besides my school text.." She recalled reading only one book for pleasure at home and commented, "there wasn't much books around my house for me to read. When I took home the order forms from the Troll book company, my mom never ordered any so I guess that is part of the reason why I never liked reading during my childhood."

All this changed as Haunani entered junior high. "I had a fond interest in learning more about my Hawaiian culture and people. At this point my mom started to take me to the public library and I borrowed many books about the culture." She also borrowed books for younger children and wished she had read these earlier in her life. By high school she was an avid reader and found the literature selections in her English classes to be captivating. As a university student, she said, "I enjoy reading. I really enjoy horror novels and read the works of Stephen King, Dean R. Koontz, and John Saul. I also enjoy books about plants, motivation strategies, and teaching."

Adele Takaguchi planned to teach social studies. Her early stage of reading was overwhelmingly positive but a good many negative associations occurred as she advanced through the grades. "I have many memories of being read to during the years that I could not read." She recalled reading picture book and nursery rhymes. "I used to love to go to the public library to borrow books. I used to borrow five or more books every visit." This love of reading persisted through her elementary and junior high years but it began to change by high school. "In high school my reading interests were starting to fade. I used to only read my text books and when I had to write book reports. I remember for English we had to write book reports. I used to use books that I had already read in intermediate just to make life easier for me." She did recall reading and enjoying Hemingway's The Old Man and The Sea and the Sweet Valley High romances. "My mother always pushed me to read other books but I refused. She hardly read herself, therefore I felt it was not necessary for me."

Adele's attitude toward reading remained negative into college. "I read only what is needed to be read, my textbooks. Looking back over my reading history I noticed that my interest in reading faded. I know that I have a lack of reading and I remember how excited I used to get reading as a child. I wish that I could go back to those years and keep reading so that today I would not reject reading as much." She indicated that she plans to interest students in reading by making them "understand why it is important in life. I can tell them my past history as a reader and how I feel today, regretting not reading continuously through my older years."

#### Discussion

Of the 45 students in the present study, 67 percent had positive attitudes toward reading. This corresponds closely to the 72 percent of Manna and Misheff's (1987) sample indicating positive attitudes due to family reading. Also in the present study, 29 percent had mixed attitudes indicating that reading was at times viewed positively and other times negatively. Manna and Misheff found that 28 percent of their sample indicated that reading was not a priority in the home. Finally, for this global analysis, 4 percent of the students in the present study manifested negative attitudes toward reading.

In contrast to the Manna and Misheff data, the present study found that attitudes changed over time and were highly individualistic. When preservice teachers reflected on their reading experiences at early, middle, and later stages, the following factors played a role in the formation of positive and negative attitudes.

Positive reading experiences occurred in rural, modest income settings when parents or other family members offered a positive model, read to children, and provided books in the home. In addition, school and teachers played a powerful role in developing students' attitudes toward reading. At the secondary level, English teachers were often mentioned as influential.

Positive reading experiences were found in rural, modest income families where English was a second language. A supportive home setting, reading to children, and access to bookmobile services made a difference. Similarly, positive reading experiences were associated with books and stories keyed to the person's unique culture (e.g., Japanese folk tales or Hawaiian legends) and visits to the library.

Positive experiences occurred in upscale settings where many books were made available and a love of reading was modeled by parents.

Negative associations with reading corresponded to not being read to as a child even in homes that had an abundance of books. Negative experiences in classrooms were usually linked to labels within reading groups that clearly indicated a student was inferior to others. Being in the low reading group resulted in vivid, lifelong resentment toward the process, materials, and teachers associated with this practice.

Most importantly, positive and negative experiences occurred at various stages of reading development suggesting that attitude toward reading is not a fixed aspect of preservice teachers' development. Negative experiences tended to be linked to family upheaval, reading aloud in front of class, book reports, and, misuse of placement tests.

These 45 preservice teachers traveled similar routes to their present reading stage yet their navigation on these routes was highly individualistic. In his ethnographic study of 16 successful Navajo fifth grade readers, Hartle-Schutte (1993) interviewed a group of students who had wide ranging home environments and might be categorized by traditional measures as "at risk." Unemployment, alcohol abuse, and traditional teaching approaches relying on basal readers and standardized tests were factors that could have inhibited these students' reading development. Yet, Hartle-Schutte identified a number of factors that increased Navajo fifth graders' chances of literacy success. Their multiple pathways to literacy success included being read to by parents and other relatives. But additional factors often overlooked by narrow conceptions of literacy included the print related routines of daily living. For example, one student reported reading the words in television commercials at home after school. Others were exposed to daily living print related to paying bills, looking up information, and filling out forms.

Unfortunately, the classroom environment failed to replicate the rich array of print students encountered at home. Despite the sharp differences in these students home environments within the same cultural group literacy was valued by these families and used for functional purposes. Consistent with a constructivist view of reading development, these students traveled highly individual paths to literacy but their efforts were at odds with the narrow basal reader approach they experienced in school. Indeed, over 90 percent of the students said they like to read but viewed themselves as less than good readers. Similar to preservice teachers' reflections about their early classroom reading experiences, these fifth graders doubted themselves as

learners in light of reading group placements, grades, and test scores. Hartle-Schutte argued for print rich classrooms that reflect the many functional uses of literacy and a recognition that there is no single route to literacy. Rather, multiple pathways must be recognized and valued. In this study, Hartle-Schutte found that students' attitudes toward reading instructional materials were generally negative.

Defining reading as an all or none proposition ignores the fluid nature of individual reading development. Bintz (1993) found that 44 high school students regarded out of school reading as functional and in school reading as "boring." More importantly the students' teachers indicated they knew little about how students develop as readers in the secondary grades. When questioned, these teachers felt that students should be forced to read and classroom control should be improved.

In their study of 414 secondary students in the midwest, Moffitt, and Wartella (1992) found that 78 percent liked to read books for pleasure. However, these were self-selected books well apart from their classes. The real question is how to link students natural desire to read and augment textbook concepts.

Regardless of the reading experiences described by each of the 45 preservice teachers in the present study, many made claims about how they would encourage students' reading. But these preservice teachers often had a dated repertoire of adolescent literature sources. Books they read as adolescents such as Lord of the Flies, A Separate Peace, and J. D. Salinger's work largely ignore the explosion of contemporary sources in young adult literature that can be linked to content area topics (Nilsen & Donelson, 1993). Thus, the present study suggests that very direct methods in a content area reading course will be needed to expand future teachers' understanding of trade book sources and strategies for integrating trade books and texts. Future studies will explore how this curriculum change might be accomplished.



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