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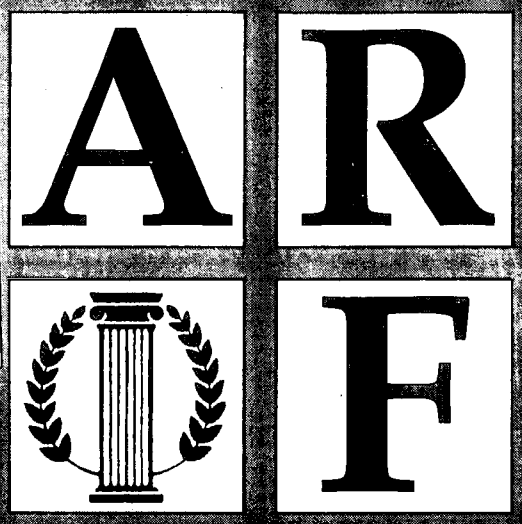
ABSTRACT

The theme of the 1998 conference of the American Reading Forum was "Literacy Conversations: Family, School, and Community." Many papers in this proceedings address this theme directly, emphasizing different types of literacy conversation. Responses to the theme are diverse, encompassing the use of personal histories, therapeutic conversations, official languages, and the rights of readers. Papers in the proceedings are: Keynote Session--"Reading versus Reading 'Something': A Critique of the National Academy of Sciences' Report on Reading" (James Paul Gee); Keynote Session--"Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Literacy as Value Commitments" (Carolyn P. Panofsky); "The Literacy Recollections Project: Building Reading Courses on Oral Literacy Narratives in Teacher Education" (Woodrow Trathen and Michael Dale); "Oral History Interviews as Instructional Learning 'Texts'" (Constance J. Ulmer); "Literacy Recollections Website" (Gary Moorman); "Lit-L. Reflections" (Susan Dean Gilbert); "The Official Language of Literacy" (Rick Erickson; Tom Cloer; Alice Randlett); "Reaction: A Critical Look at 'The Official Language of Literacy'" (Eunice N. Askov); "An Exploration of the Reader's Bill of Rights" (Laurie Elish-Piper; Mona W. Matthews; Jerry L. Johns; Victoria Risko); "Using Our Own Literacy Histories to Inform Practice" (Steve Trowbridge and John C. Stansell); "Using Literacy Conversations for Healing: The Significant Conversationalists" (Cindy Gillespie Hendricks; James E. Hendricks; Lessie L. Cochran); "Wirklichkeitswund und Wirklichkeit Suchend (Stricken By and Seeking Reality): Literacy Conversations Which Restore Families, Schools, and Communities" (Ray Wolpow); "Workplace Literacy Programs: Evaluation Research" (Eunice N. Askov); "Prospective English Teachers: Initial Experiences in Urban Classrooms" (Chester H. Laine; Michaeline E. Laine; Elizabeth A. Peavy); "Intramural Teaching: A Team Approach to Mentoring" (Tara Rosselot-Durbin); "Teacher Education and the Internet: Preparing for the Technology Revolution" (Jane F. Rudden and Anne L. Mallery); and "Gender and Grade Differences in Motivation to Read" (Thomas Cloer, Jr. and Shana Ross Dalton). Individual papers contain references. (NKA)



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1999, VOLUME XIX

LITERACY CONVERSATIONS: FAMILY, SCHOOL, COMMUNITY

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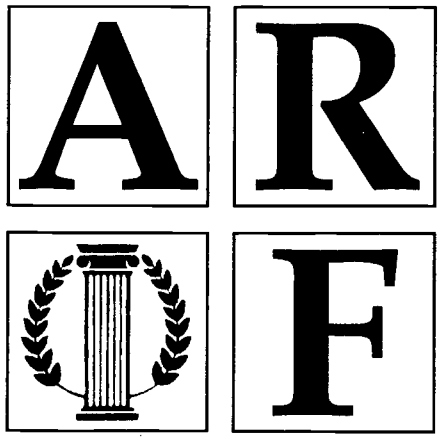

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Editorial Board

The *Yearbook of the American Reading Forum* contains selected papers and reactions to issues or papers presented at each year's annual meeting. The yearbook, a peer-reviewed publication, is indexed with major reference sources nationally. The yearbook is received by the membership of ARF as well as many major libraries in the United States.

Five copies of typewritten double-spaced manuscripts (approximately 5 to 20 pages) that follow current APA form should be submitted. Manuscripts and all correspondence should be sent to Dr. Richard J. Telfer, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, Wisconsin 53190.

Subscriptions to the *American Reading Forum Yearbook* are $20 (U.S.) per year; back issues are $5. Checks should be made payable to the American Reading Forum. Subscription requests and all related correspondence should be sent to Richard J. Telfer, Editor, American Reading Forum Yearbook, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, Wisconsin 53190.

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From The Editor

Volume XIX of the *American Reading Forum Yearbook* contains papers that have been recommended by the Editorial Advisory Board from those submitted by authors who presented at the 1998 Annual Conference. The conference theme was *Literacy Conversations: Family, School, Community.* A significant number of the papers in this volume address this theme directly, emphasizing different types of literacy conversation. The responses to the conference theme are diverse, encompassing the use of personal histories, therapeutic conversations, official languages, and the rights of readers. The 1999 *American Reading Forum Yearbook* offers its readers the opportunity to read about and reflect on a range of literacy conversations.

In Memoriam

Volume XIX of the *American Reading Forum Yearkbook* is dedicated to the memory of Reed R. Mottley, long time ARF member and friend. Reed's warmth, compassion, and storytelling will be missed.

American Reading Forum

Volume XIX, 1999

Contents

Papers

Reading Versus Reading Something: A Critique of the National Academy of Sciences' Report on Reading

James Paul Gee

The National Academy of Sciences' report *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) appeared amidst much applause and approval from the public, politicians, and educational organizations like AERA, IRA, and NCTE, organizations which, by and large, with some dissenting voices, celebrated the report in newsletters and sessions. However, I find both the report and its reception odd. The report seems to be paradoxical and, at times, nearly contradictory. While it discusses a wide range of issues relevant to reading and classroom instruction, it devotes the lion's share of its focus to the importance of early phonemic awareness and sustained overt instruction on "phonics" for learning what the report calls "real reading." The report defines "real reading" as decoding, word recognition, and comprehension of literal meaning of text, with a focus on phonemic awareness and the phonological-graphemic code. In a quick survey of the report's index, categories concerned with sound, decoding, and word recognition take up nearly as many headings and sub-headings as all categories concerned with society, culture, families, poverty, race, comprehension, reading stories, narrative, language, learning, development, and related terms, combined (By my count, there are 244 heading and sub-headings for the former and 275 for the latter).

What renders the report odd and paradoxical is, I believe, this: "reading" in the sense in which the report discusses this term does not "really" exist. To develop this idea, I will first offer a critique of the

Academy's report. I will then return to why I believe reading in the sense the report discusses it does not exist and what does exist in its stead.

What is the "Crisis?"

The Academy's report is part of a long line of reports written in the now familiar "we have a crisis in our schools" genre. Unfortunately, the report has a hard time naming the crisis to which it is directed. Its authors are well aware that there is, in fact, no "reading crisis" in the United States:

> Average reading achievement has not changed markedly over the last 20 years (NAEP, 1997). And following a gain by black children from 1970 to 1980, the white-black gap has remained roughly constant for the last 16 years...Americans do very well in international comparisons of reading—much better, comparatively speaking, than they do on math or science. In a 1992 study comparing reading skill levels among 9-year-olds in 18 Western nations, U.S. student scored among the highest levels and were second only to students in Finland. (Elley, 1992, 99-98)

There is here, of course, already the hint of paradox. The report does not take note of how odd it is (or what implications it might have for reading) that a country could do very well in reading, but poorly in content areas like math and science. For the writers of the report, it is as if content (things like math and science) has nothing to do with reading and *vice-versa.*

However, this paradox is endemic to the report as a whole. Note the report's remarks on the much discussed issue of the "fourth-grade drop off:"

> The "fourth-grad slump" is a term used to describe a widely encountered disappointment when examining scores of fourth graders in comparison to younger children (Chall, et al., 1990)...It is not clear what the explanation is or even that there is a unitary explanation. (p.78)

The fourth-grade drop off problem is precisely the problem that lots of children learn to reading in the early grades, but then cannot read to learn anything contentful in the later grades. The fourth-grade drop off problem would, on the face of it, lead one to worry about what we mean by "learning to read" in the early grades and how and

why this idea can become so detached from "reading to learn." No such worries plague the Academy's report. It assumes throughout that if children learn to engage in what the report calls "real reading," they will thereafter be able to learn and succeed in school. But the fourth-grade drop off problem amply demonstrates that this assumption is false.

The report's cavalier attitude towards the content of reading—that is reading as reading something and not just reading generically to develop "reading skills"—can be seen, as well, in the following remark the report makes about comprehension:

> Tracing the development of reading comprehension to show the necessary and sufficient conditions to prevent reading difficulty is not as well researched as other aspects of reading growth. In fact, as Cain (1966) notes, "because early reading instruction emphasizes word recognition rather than comprehension, the less skilled comprehenders' difficulties generally go unnoticed by their classroom teachers." (p. 77)

Note the paradox here: The report acknowledges Cain's claim that we know too little about comprehension difficulties because research as concentrated on word recognition, but then the report goes on blithely to concentrate on decoding and word recognition, as if we can safely ignore our ignorance about difficulties in comprehension and make recommendations about reading instruction in the absence of such knowledge. Of course, the report does call for teaching comprehension skills, but the teaching it calls for is all generic (things like summarizing or asking oneself questions while reading). It is not rooted in any details about learning specific genres and practices and certainly not about learning different sorts of content (e.g., science, literature, or math).

Yet reading (and, for that matter, speaking) always and only occurs within specific practices and within specific genres in the service of specific purposes or content. And, indeed, it is precisely children's difficulties with using language and literacy within specific practices and genres that fuels the fourth-grade drop off. The worldwide genre movements, which have stressed this fact about literacy and its myriad implications for pedagogy, go virtually unreferenced in the Academy's report (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1994; Christie, 1990; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Freedman & Medway, 1994; Martin, 1989).

Reading, Racism, and Poverty

The Academy's report is well aware that, in the United States, poor readers are concentrated "in certain ethnic groups and in poor, urban neighborhoods and rural towns" (p. 98). In fact, this is the true "crisis" in reading in the United States, though one the report never focuses on. Here, too, we are faced with paradoxes. Let us return to the quote from the report with which we started:

> Average reading achievement has not changed markedly over the last 20 years (NAEP, 1997). And following a gain by black children from 1970 to 1980, the white-black gap has remained roughly constant for the last 16 years...Americans do very well in international comparisons of reading—much better, comparatively speaking, than they do on math or science. In a 1992 study comparing reading skill levels among 9-year-olds in 18 Western nations, U.S. students scored among the highest levels and were second only to students in Finland. (Elley, 1992, pp. 97-98)

Here the report mentions the now well known and much studied issue that from the later 1960's to the early 1980's, the Black-White gap, in IQ test scores and other sorts of test scores, including reading tests, was fast closing (Neisser, 1998; Jencks & Phillips, 1998). This heartening progress, especially in regard to achievement tests, ceased in the 1980's. One certainly would have thought that a reading report would care deeply about the factors that had been closing the Black-White gap in reading scores. Clearly, these factors were, whatever else they were, powerful "reading interventions," since they significantly increased the reading scores of "at risk" children. But the report shows no such interest, presumably because these factors were social and cultural and not factors only narrowly germane to classroom instructional methods.

Though the matter is controversial (Jencks & Phillips, 1998; Neisser, 1998), these factors were, in all likelihood, closely connected to the sorts of social programs (stemming originally from Johnson's "War on Poverty") that were dismantled in the 1980's and 90's (Grissmer, Flanagan, & Williamson, 1998, 221-223). An approach like the Academy's that sees the key issue as "real reading" is not liable to see such social programs as central to a report on reading. Ironically, though, the progress made on reading tests during the time the Black-White gap was closing was far greater, in quantitative terms (Hedges & Nowell, 1998), than the results of any of the interventions (e.g., early phonemic awareness training) that the report discusses and advocates.

The following remarks from the report are typical of the sense of paradox bordering on outright contradiction that pervades the report on the issue of poor and minority children.

> For students in schools in which more than 75 percent of all students received free or reduced-price lunches (a measure of high poverty), the mean score for students in the fall semester of first grade was at approximately the 44th percentile. By the spring of third grade, this difference had expanded significantly. Children living in high-poverty areas tend to fall further behind, regardless of their initial reading skill level. (p. 98)

If these children fall further and further behind "regardless of their initial reading skill level," how, then, can we help them by increasing their initial skill level at "real reading" through things like early phonemic awareness and overt instruction on decoding, as the report recommends?

Finally, we reach the issues of racism and power. It is widely believed that such issues are "merely political," and not directly relevant to reading and reading research. The Academy's report is certainly written in such a spirit. But the fact of the matter is that racism and power are just as much cognitive issues as they are political ones. Children will not identify with—they will even disidentify with—teachers and schools that they perceive as hostile, alien, or oppressive to their home-based identities (Holland & Quinn, 1987).

Claude Steele's groundbreaking work (Steele, 1992; Steele & Aronson, 1995, 1998) clearly demonstrates that in assessment contexts where issues of race, racism, and stereotypes are triggered, the performance of even quite adept learners seriously deteriorates (see Ferguson, 1998, for an important extension of Steele's work). Steele shows clearly that how people *read* when they are taking tests changes as their fear of falling victim to cultural stereotypes increases. To ignore these wider issues, while stressing such things as phonemic awareness built on controlled texts, is to ignore, not merely "politics," but what we know about learning and literacy, as well.

In fact, one can go further: Given Steele's work, it is simply wrong to discuss reading assessment, intervention, and instruction, as the Academy's report does, without discussing the pervasive *culture of inequality* that deskills poor and minority children and its implications for different types of assessments, interventions, and instruction. This is an empirical point, not (only) a political one.

The Academy's report does not define the "reading crisis" as a crisis of inequality, though it might well have done so. Rather, aware, as it is, that reading scores are not declining among the vast majority of the student population, the report takes the now fashionable tack that the "reading crisis" is really due to the increased demands for higher-level literacy in our technologically-driven society;

> Of course, most children learn to read fairly well. In this report, we are most concerned with the large numbers of children in America whose educational careers are imperiled because they do not read well enough to ensure understanding and to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive economy. Current difficulties in reading largely originate from rising demands for literacy, not from declining absolute levels of literacy. In a technological society, the demands for higher literacy are ever increasing, creating more grievous consequences for those who fall short.

While this is a common argument today, it ignores the fact that modern science and technology, in fact, create many jobs in which literacy demands go down, not up, thanks to human skills being replaced by computers and other sorts of technological devices (Aronowitz & DiFazio, 1994; Carnoy, Castells, Cohen, & Cardoso, 1993; Michel & Teixeira, 1991). This is true not just for service sector jobs, but also for many higher status jobs in areas like engineering and bioscience. Indeed, there is much controversy today as to which category is larger: jobs where science and technology have increased literacy demands or those where they have decreased them.

This remark, like the report as a whole, also ignores the fact that in our technologically-driven society, literacy is changing dramatically. What appears to be crucial for success now are abilities to deal with multi-modal texts (texts which mix words and images), non-verbal symbols, and with technical systems within specific, and now usually highly collaborative, institutional practices. The Academy's report doggedly focuses on reading at the "Dick and Jane" level (albeit with, perhaps, more interesting texts), while calling for students prepared to work in the 21st century. In the coming world, we are going to face not just a fourth-grade drop off problem, but a "life drop off problem" as people at every age fail to be able to keep up with fast-paced changes requiring multiple new literacies. The Academy's report pales to near insignificance in this context—ironically the only context in which the report acknowledges that we have a "reading crisis." My discussion of language abilities in the next section is relevant, as well, to this matter.

Language Abilities

It is a deep irony that a report that spends most of its time recommending early phonemic awareness and early sustained and overt instruction on phonics is replete with comments that appear to undermine its recommendations. For example, consider the following remarks from the report:

> Studies indicate that training in phonological awareness, particularly in association with instruction in letters and letter-sound relationships, make a contribution to assisting at risk children in learning to read. The effects of training, although quite consistent, are only moderate in strength, and have so far not been shown to extend to comprehension. Typically a majority of the trained children narrow the gap between themselves and initially more advanced students in phonological awareness and word reading skills, but few are brought completely up to speed through training, and a few fail to show any gains at all. (p. 251)

> When classificatory analyses are conducted, phonological awareness in kindergarten appears to have the tendency to be a more successful predictor of future superior reading than of future reading problems (Wagner, 1997; Scarborough, 1998). That is, among children who have recently begun or will soon begin kindergarten, few of those with strong phonological awareness skills will stumble in learning to read, but many of those with weak phonological sensitivity will go on to become adequate readers...

> In sum, despite the theoretical importance of phonological awareness for learning to read, its predictive power is somewhat muted, because, at about the time of the onset of schooling, so many children who will go on to become normally achieving readers have not yet attained much, if any, appreciation of the phonological structure of oral language, making them nearly indistinguishable in this regard from children who will indeed encounter reading difficulties down the road. (p. 112)

There would seem to be an important theme here, one to which the Academy's panel might have paid a bit more heed. Tests of early phonological awareness (or lack thereof) do not fruitfully select those students who will later have problems in learning to read. Furthermore, while a stress on phonological awareness and overt phonics instruction does initially help "at risk" students, it does not

bring them up to par with more advantaged students, and they tend to eventually fall back, fueling a fourth-grade or later "slump" (this fact is amply documented in the report, see pp. 216, 228, 232, 248-249, 251, 257).

From remarks like those above, it would certainly seem that the problems children (particularly poor and minority children) have with reading must lay, for the most part, someplace else than the lack of early phonemic awareness. The fourth-grade drop off tells us this much, as well. Though much of the Academy's report is driven by the correlation between early phonological awareness and later success in learning to read, the report does readily acknowledge that such a correlation does not prove that phonological awareness causes success in reading. And, indeed, remarks from the report like those cited above, and the fourth-grade drop off problem itself, would seem to indicate that something else causes *both* reading success (or failure) and early phonemic awareness (or lack of it).

The report is, ironically, aware of what this something else might be. It readily acknowledges, but ignores the fact, that another correlation is just as significant (if not more so) as that between early phonological awareness and learning to read. This is the correlation between *early language abilities* and later success in reading. And, as one might suspect, early language abilities and early phonological awareness are themselves correlated:

> Chaney (1992) also observed that performance on phonological awareness tasks by preschoolers was highly correlated with general language ability. Moreover it was measures of semantic and syntactic skills, rather than speech discrimination and articulation, that predicted phonological awareness differences. (p. 53)

> What is most striking about the results of the preceding studies is the power of early preschool language to predict reading three to five years later. (pp. 107-108)

> On average, phonological awareness (r=.46) has been about as strong a predictor of future reading as memory for sentences and stories, confrontation naming, and general language measures. (p. 112)

It is simply a mystery—at least to me—why the Academy's report stresses throughout the correlation between early phonemic awareness and learning to read, while giving such short shrift to early lan-

guage abilities, a factor that seems to have so much more relevance to both becoming literate and being able to use literacy to learn. One can only suspect that it was the urge to make the Academy's report a "report on reading," and to speak within the frame of current public debates about reading, that led the Academy's panel in the direction it took towards early phonological awareness and phonics and away from early language abilities.

So what are these early language abilities that seem so important for later success in school? According to the report, they are things like vocabulary—receptive vocabulary, but more especially expressive vocabulary (p. 107)—the ability to recall and comprehend sentences and stories, and the ability to engage in verbal interactions. Furthermore, I think that research has made it fairly clear what causes such verbal abilities. What appears to cause enhanced verbal abilities are family, community, and school language environments in which children interact intensively with adults and more advanced peers and experience cognitively challenging talk and texts on sustained topics and in different genres of oral and written language (see pp. 106-108).

However, the correlation between language abilities and success in learning to read (and in school generally) hides an important reality. Almost all children—including poor children—have impressive language abilities. The vast majority of children enter school with large vocabularies, complex grammar, and deep understandings of experiences and stories. It has been decades since anyone believed that poor and minority children entered school with "no language" (Gee, 1996, Labov, 1972).

The verbal abilities that children who fail in school fail to have are not just some general set of such abilities, but rather specific verbal abilities tied to specific school-based practices and school-based genres of oral and written language. So, we are back, once again, to where we started: reading something, that is, reading a specific genre for specific purposes within a specific activity, and not reading generically. The children whose vocabularies are larger in ways that enhance their early school success, for instance, are children who know, and especially can use, more words tied to the specific forms of language that school-based practices use. A stress on language abilities would have required an emphasis on learning, content, and the relationships between home-based cultures and school-based practices (i.e., social, cultural, and, yes, "political" issues).

Reading versus Reading Something

I said at the outset that what I believe made the Academy's report paradoxical is that "reading" in the sense in which the report discusses the term doesn't really exist. This itself sounds paradoxical, so let me explicate what I mean.

There is not such thing as "reading" *simpliciter*. When we read—child or adult—we always read *something*. This something is always a text of a *certain* type (in a certain genre) and is read (interpreted) in a *certain* way. What makes a text a certain type of text (e.g., a piece of literature, a reading test passage, an "educational" book, a piece of language play, and so on and so forth through nearly endless possibilities)? What determines the way in which a text is to be read (e.g., as a literary figuration of deep themes, a historical reflection of a time and place, a test of one's abilities, a guide for future living, and so on and so forth through nearly endless possibilities)?

The answer to both of these questions is this: Social (really, sociocultural) groups (families of certain sorts, churches, communities, schools, workplaces, clubs, academic disciplines, interest groups, and so on and so forth through nearly endless possibilities) engage in shared practices using texts. These groups and their practices, now and in history, *make* a text function as a certain type (or genre) and demand that it be read in a certain way (and not others). For the teenage hard rock fan, the lyrics of a heavy metal song are a different type of text read (and consumed) in a different way than the same lyrics are by a cultural studies professor in an avant garde English department. *Doctor Seuss* in the hands of myself and my three-year-old is a different type of text read in a different way than it is in the hands of pre-school focused on early phonemic awareness. It is different, again, in the hands of an African-American mother and her three-year-old focused on the language values of her own culture. As Lucy Calkins points out (Calkins, Montgomery, Santman, with Falk, 1998), one and the same passage is a very different sort of text read in a very different way on a reading test, in "real life," and in various non-test school-based practices.

Learning to read a text of a given type in a given way, then, requires scaffolded socialization into the groups and social practices that make this text of this type to be read in this way. Being able to read a text of a given type a given way requires that one is a member of such social groups and able to engage in their practices. And here is the final rub: those practices, even as they recruit written texts centrally, rarely involve only written text. They involve ways of talking and

listening, acting and interacting, thinking and believing, and feeling and valuing, as well. All this—types of text, ways of reading them, social groups and their practices that go beyond writing—is what fall under the notion "something" when we talk about reading something and have to say what the something is. To leave the *something* off, which is what the Academy's report ultimately does, is to leave out language, learning, development, society, culture, and history. It is, in the end, ironically, to leave out reading.

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Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Literacy as Value Commitments

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My topic in this discussion is the activity of parents and preschool children engaged in reading books together. For a long time, reading experts have been commenting on the activity of parents' reading to children. In 1908 in *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, Edmund B. Huey wrote of children who seem to learn to read without any direct or explicit instruction. "The secret of it all," wrote Huey, "lies in parents' reading aloud to and with the child" (Huey, 1908, p. 332). A similar conviction can be found in contemporary documents such as *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (1985) which asserts, "The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23).

Interestingly, the concept of parent's reading to children and teaching their children to read can actually be traced back at least to the Reformation. Harvey Graff writes that, "The encouragement of reading among the population and a campaign to increase the literacy levels of the whole populations [sic] were central goals of the Reformation" (1987, p. 141). Moreover, families were enlisted in this campaign, and parents were encouraged to take responsibility for children's literacy through home instruction, particularly "among the urban and rural well-to-do" (p. 140) in northern countries, where literacy rates were already significant.

The activity of parents reading to children itself has been held as a value but until about twenty years ago was little studied and, arguably, even less understood. For example, some experts claimed

that, analogous to language learning, learning to read was "natural"—yet if so, how to explain the universality of learning to speak with the fact that so many do not succeed at reading?[1] Other experts pointed out that children who were read to seemed to be learning to read in the absence of any instruction, a claim which seems to assume a very narrow definition of instruction. Instead, it can now be argued that the lenses of traditional research methodology impeded the recognition of significant activity and that different methodology was needed: the apparent "naturalness" of the learning and the invisibility of instruction reflected the anthropological phenomenon of that which is "seen but unnoticed" by cultural insiders.

As is well known, researchers began to study early literacy activities in new ways in the early 1980s. A conference was held at the University of Victoria in 1982, which resulted in the volume *Awakening to Literacy*, edited by Hillel Goelman, Antoinette Oberg and Frank Smith (Goelman, Oberg & Smith, 1984). In that volume and during that period, works by Shirley Brice Heath (1982, 1983), Catherine Snow (1983), William Teale (1982, 1984) and Elizabeth Sulzby (1985) focused considerable attention on the activity of parents' reading with children and led to the popularization of the term "emergent literacy," first introduced by Sulzby and Teale (see Sulzby and Teale, 1991).

In that early work, and subsequently, researchers have used a variety of research methodologies and theoretical frameworks. Many studies referenced the work of Lev S. Vygotsky and others of the tradition referred to variously as sociohistorical, sociocultural and cultural-historical. Some of the studies used the theory extensively, while others referenced it in a less thoroughgoing way. In my research into parents' reading with children, I have tried to combine an ethnographic approach with cultural-historical theory and to develop a methodological framework consistent with the assumptions of both those approaches. In this discussion, I want to present elements of the cultural-historical theoretical framework and their combination with ethnographic methodology. Following presentation of the framework, I will present some data from the study of parents' reading with children and explore that activity as cultural practice, to identify some important dimensions of what children seem to be "learning."

[1] In fact, the analogy between language and literacy is problematic, since all cultures have language, but not all have literacy.

Elements of a sociocultural or cultural-historical perspective

In order to present a discussion of manageable length, I will limit my discussion of the theoretical framework to consider only six elements:

1. Development as a cultural process
2. Human activity as cultural practices
3. Context as included in research
4. Social unit of analysis
5. "Wholism" and integration
6. Interpretive method

Development as a cultural process. Vygotsky described developing children as "grow[ing] into the intellectual life of those around them" (1978, p. 88). Vygotsky proposed a "law" of development, the General Genetic Law of Cultural Development, as follows:

> 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). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals.... The transformation of an interpersonal process into an intrapersonal one is the result of a long series of developmental events. (1978, p. 57)

Notably, development is viewed as a process which is embedded in culture and which is not a direct transmission from adult to child but, rather, is a transformational process. Further, the typically assumed directionality of learning and development is reversed. It is not that the individual's learning or development is preparation for participation in group or collaborative activity, but the reverse. Social activity is primary: one participates in joint or group activity, before one is able to perform an activity alone.

Human activity is comprised of cultural practices. The activity of human beings is organized by and in cultural practices which are situated historically and socially, as well as culturally. Practices are situated historically in the sense that they are not timeless, but emerge in time. They are situated culturally in that they are not universal, but enmeshed in a particular web of cultural meanings. Practices are situated socially

in that they relate to the specificity of both social organization (such as dyadic or triadic interaction of adult care-givers and children) and ways that roles and statuses may be allocated or assigned, such as more egalitarian or "democratic" vs. more authoritarian power relations between adult care-givers and children.

There are a number of important implications for research entailed by these assumptions, as suggested in the following points.

Context as included in research. Because all human activity is understood as culturally embedded practices, such activity can best be studied in the meaningful contexts of everyday life, rather than in an artificial setting such as a laboratory. Instead of the traditional experimental view that context must be "stripped away" or somehow controlled in order to conduct valid and reliable research, the view here is that the context of routine activity must be incorporated into study. This approach to activity includes its dynamic presence and must account for the cultural meanings of the activity for the participants.

Social unit of analysis. Notice that Vygotsky's notion of development implies that the "unit" of analysis will be social, rather than individual. From the cultural-historical viewpoint, the dominant tradition of studying the child apart from the social relations in which development takes place is unable to examine development as a process; it is, rather, to examine the child's activity alone, without the support of an adult or more capable peer. By contrast, to study development as a process requires observing the child's functioning in the "zone of proximal development," where the child's activity is assisted by an adult or more capable peer, acting in an apprenticeship-like relation.

"Wholism" and integration. Wholism, then, is an important quality of this view. Wholism means both seeing human activity in context and in social interaction and also taking a wholistic view of the growing person engaged in activity. This places the emphasis on integration rather than separation of functions and processes: meaningful activity does not separate thought and action; rather, as thinking, knowing and feeling are integrated in activity and in development, and the individual is integrated with the social unit, so research must study and theorize in terms of an integrated whole.

Interpretive method. As a result, the cultural-historical approach to explanation is not a "cause-effect analysis," but an interpretive analysis. It will look to explain specific cases in fine-grained detail,

rather than to aim for prediction and control of cause and effect. It will seek meaning of the activity for the participants in the context of their activity. Thus, ethnographic observation becomes a significant research modality, with various tools such as the analysis of discourse and "thick description" (see Geertz, 1973).

The research growing out of these theoretical and methodological assumptions has been quite fruitful (see recent overview by Cole, 1996), leading researchers to look in a far more fine-grained way at what may be taking place in activities of adult-child interaction. The work of James Wertsch, Barbara Rogoff and others has revealed previously unnoticed and effectively invisible dimensions of adults' and parents' activity in children's development. Rogoff's uncovering of the apprentice-like participation of children in activity with parents and other adults, for example, seriously challenges claims about learning in the absence of any instruction. In one example of Rogoff's field research, she worked in a Mayan village in Yucatan, where children learned weaving with no or little apparent instruction (Rogoff, 1986; see also, Rogoff, 1990). Through her careful and long-term observations, Rogoff found that adults subtly and skillfully guided children's participation in the activity. The adult might first let the child hold a thread; later the child might be allowed to do a next step, with the adult pointing to certain features of the pattern; gradually over time the adult allows the child to take over increasing responsibility for separate sub-tasks. In this way, the child learns largely through observation and other *non-verbal* means (such as pointing or guiding and holding of the hands), to attend to significant details and to perform in certain ways. Such learning provides a specific example of the social development of voluntary attention, which Vygotsky refers to in the quote presented earlier. The larger pattern of learning in which guided participation takes place Rogoff views as "apprenticeship" to capture the social relations of such learning and the absence of planned, explicit, abstract (in the sense of "out of context") instruction.

The work of James Wertsch has also contributed significantly to ways of observing and understanding development in the sociocultural framework. Wertsch has conducted many studies which examine in a very fine-grained way the "microgenesis" of an activity (see for example, Wertsch, 1979, 1990). Microgenesis refers to the learning and development which may take place in a brief period, such as transformation of a toddler's participation in a puzzle-solving task during a single session of parent-child interaction. Wertsch's studies of dyadic activity have demonstrated ways in which the adult's speech may regulate the child's actions, and that over time the external social process

becomes increasingly internalized by the child, revealed by "the child's emerging control of external sign forms" (Wertsch & Stone, 1985, p. 177).

As both Rogoff and Wertsch stress in various ways, a key notion of development in cultural-historical theory is that development is a process of enculturation. However, a key element omitted from many discussions is that all young members of a social group will be enculturated in the culture as a whole, but all members will not learn to participate in all activities so that, instead, forms of "specialization" will take place. Even in traditional cultures where there is a great deal of homogeneity, individuals pursue differing lines of development in aspects of the culture where there is variation in role assignment by gender or subgroup, such as family or clan.

More importantly for the present discussion, the possibility may also exist for individual choice to be a factor. If this is the case, one asks how the process of choice or selection takes place. Why does a child participate willingly in one ongoing activity but not another? For example, not all Mayan children, girls or boys, learn to weave. Anthropological research suggests that processes of "recruitment" and "maintenance" may be involved: generally, adults act in ways that maintain their culture and that recruit new members to it, so that an elder who is a practitioner of weaving is likely to recruit a learner to that activity. Following this line of thinking, one might speculate that in Rogoff's studies, for example, the children who learn weaving appear to be voluntary participants who would have been recruited in some more or less subtle way. An integrated understanding of the learner in context needs to be able to account for voluntary participation. After all, as teachers we want children to participate in the activities of learning voluntarily, without being coerced. What I'm suggesting is that more attention needs to be given to how voluntary participation is fostered. While the term "voluntary" may suggest a process of individual choice, the framework here suggests, rather, that social and cultural forces are what need to be the focus if educators are to better understand children's enthusiastic participation in learning activities.

Cultural-Historical Study of a Literacy Practice

The question of how children come to be enthusiastic participants is one I have been considering in a study of parents and children engaged in book reading activity. I turn now to an examination of data from that study. Before proceeding, a few details are needed about the study:

- six families participated in a year-long study of parent-child book reading as it was enacted in those families;

- observations were conducted in each home during routinely occurring activity when children and parents engaged in book reading before the child went to bed;

- for each field visit, ethnographic field notes were taken and audio-tape recordings were made (and were later transcribed), and about a third of the sessions were videotaped as well;

- all parents were interviewed several times;

- the focal preschoolers were of three ages at the beginning of the study—2 years, 3.5 years and 5 years—so that data were collected for two children during their year from 2 to 3, two from 3.5 to 4.5, and two from 5 to 6.

Thus, the data were gathered in the context of culturally routine activity for a small group of children who spanned the preschool period from the early speech period around two to school entry around age six. In addition, for each of the three same-age pairs, there was a boy and girl of each age.

When I reflected on the cultural activity of bedtime reading to ask why parents read to children and why the children participated—and so enthusiastically, I was able to identify various observations which seemed to contribute to an answer. As suggested earlier, I am approaching the questions of "why?" in a sociological and anthropological sense, not a philosophical or individual one. The question is not, in effect, theoretical but practical, in the sense of practice. To fully understand a practice, one must understand why participants participate. The overarching answer that I developed can be put simply: at the heart of parent-child book reading activity is a parental value commitment that gets enacted and communicated in myriad ways and that children benefit from and participate in, in the very dynamic yet routine activity in which participation is constituted. Support for the claim comes from both field notes and analysis of the transcripts:

1. Field notes suggested that book reading activity was a highly privileged activity. For example, the activity was protected from outside interruptions such as phone calls or visits from neighbors. The practice was adhered to as if an almost sacred ritual, practiced on a nightly basis without fail and sometimes at other times as well. The

activity was often the only time in the day when the child could count on the undivided attention of the parent and one-on-one interaction for an extended period of time, typically thirty to 45 minutes. The children all issued requests to be read to, to parents and other adults. Adults, even non-parents such as family visitors, reportedly never declined a child's request to read. Especially significant, book reading activity appeared to be an activity in which the child had a high degree of control: children had extensive "rights" which could be examined more closely in the transcripts.

2. Transcript data yielded four different kinds of rights and showed children to have considerable power when conflicts arose in relation to any of the rights, as detailed below. In addition, field notes suggested that similar power was not wielded by children in other domains of activity, nor did these children appear to be misbehaved or over-indulged in ways that might be associated with general "power" over adults. But during the cultural practice of parent-child book reading activity, the parents displayed a kind of indulgence: children were allowed to make all book choices, parents frequently agreed to "just read one more," books were read in ways the child wanted, parents gave in to many conflicts rather than asserting authority, in contrast to other activities observed during the home visits or reported by parents during interviews (such as children's requests for purchases during shopping activity).

Four Rights in the Cultural Practice of Book Reading Activity

To illustrate the four kinds of rights identified in the transcripts, I will present four examples. The examples are taken from instances when conflicts or struggles took place and thus revealed the child's "right" or "power" in the activity. I label the four rights as follows:

Speaking rights

Choosing rights

Management rights

Interpretive rights

Speaking rights. The most pervasive of the rights revealed during book reading activity was the right to speak. There are countless examples in the transcripts of children interrupting the adult while reading or commenting—but not a single instance when a child's interruption was disapproved or even noted. Children could interrupt

the activity at any time to comment on a text or picture, to ask a question, to seek a clarification or even to correct a parent during reading when the child recognized that text had been skipped or misread. The particular privilege of unlimited interruption was enjoyed by all the children during book reading and while it varied across the different families and children during other activities, none of the children enjoyed unlimited interuption during other activities, such as when a parent conversed with another adult or sibling or talked on the phone.

Following are examples of the other three kinds of rights. Along the way, we see some subtle but real power dynamics, especially that children hold considerable power in this activity context. In particular, I would note the importance to the child of two elements—agency and identity: what the child wants to happen and who the child perceives her/himself to be. Parents are very attentive and responsive to those two elements and the children stay in the activity—although they sometimes subtly threaten to quit and the result is always that they get their way. The "bottom line," the children seem to "know," is *staying in* the activity—which reveals the parents' value commitment, one that the children, too, understand.

Choosing rights. Example #1 shows a girl, Sara[2], age 4 years, seven months, reading a book with her mother. Prior to the introduction of this particular book, the pair had read a book which the child had colored in as they read. The previous book was illustrated with line drawings that had only partial coloration; the mother let the child "color in" with markers while they read—this is the activity referred to by the mother in turn 409 in the first several lines. The book in question in the example is, then, the antithesis of the previous one, since it is an especially artful book and the mother wants the child to treat it with special care.[3]

Example #1

409 m Here's a new book you haven't seen before.
It's one of those special ones.
In those kind of books, I'd like you to see the image without it being written on.

[2] All of the children's names have been changed and fictitious names have been inserted into the transcripts. Other "real" names remain unchanged, such as the name of the researcher (since, as a participant-observer in the setting, I was occasionally referred to) or names of authors or illustrators of books.

[3] If the mother's interest in this book and the discussion about "manuscript illuminations" (turn 429) seem unusual, it is important to know that the mother was an artist, that mother and child often looked at art books, that they often engaged in drawing and painting activity in a shared space, and that aesthetic matters were frequently discussed.

410 c Why, wha, wha, well, what does it have in it?
411 m Well, it has some very, very interesting special pictures that remind me of Japan. Okay?
412 c Well, I like to write in it. Well, I like to color. If it doesn't have the, um, colors in it, I'll like to color it.
413 m Okay, well maybe we can make a deal.
[c gets up and goes to another room, searching for something]
414 c [calling from another room—]
Hey, my Snoopy book's in here. In your room.
415 m Which Snoopy book?
416 c My, my painting and facts book.
417 m Your painting and facts book?
Well, let's read this one in the meantime, [child returns] 'cause this is a lovely book. Okay? What's this one about?
418 c Dichos?...Dichos?
419 m Who?
420 c Dichos?
421 m This is a dicho?
422 c Dicho-o-o
423 m Dicho-o-o. Dicho-o.
424 c I don't like this picture.
425 m Which one?
426 c [points]
427 m Why?
428 c Cause, it doesn't look good. I don't like that one.
429 m I like these pictures.
They look like manuscript illuminations.
430 c I only like that one, and that—
431 m Which one do you like?
432 c [pointing] This one!
433 m Which one?
434 c I only like these two.
435 m Well, what's that girl like? Look at her hair.
Um, she's pretty. I like this one. Ya know what that is flying? Ya know what that is?
436 c What?
437 m That's like a rug. Like a flying carpet. Like a magic carpet. Aahh. Look at this one. I like these. Huh? Aren't they interesting. Ya know what the girl's name who drew these pictures?
438 c What?

439 m Let's see. Uh, it's a man.
A girl wrote the story and her name's Jane Yoland, and the man's name is Ed, Ed Young. Look at this picture.
440 c No. Ed's picture.
441 m Oh, that's really nice. Look at this, see.
Ya know what that's called? That's a caravan, and this is a special kind a chair. That's a special kind a chair that they carry important people around in. And we all [laughing] wish we had one of those. Ready?
Shall we read this?
442 c Yes.
443 m "The girl who loves the wind."
444 c "The girl who loves [whispering] wind"
445 m Look at that. And you wanna see how pretty that's written? Ya know what they call that? That writing?
446 c No. The writing.
447 m It's a special kind of writing.
448 c Ya know what, when they...
449 m It's kind of fancy. How many stars?
450 c [whispering] one, two, three...
451 m Careful. Careful now Sara.
This is a book you should be more careful with.
452 c [turning pages]
453 m Well, I can't see if you turn the pages too fast.
454 c Let's not read that. Let's not read that.
455 m You don't want to read "The girl who loved the wind"?
456 c I don't want to.
457 m <<Once many years ago—>>
458 c No, let's stop! I don't wanna, I don't wanna read that.
459 m Which one do you want?
460 c I'm never gonna listen to that. You could read it, for you, you and Carolyn, but not me. Ya know—
461 m It's kind of like for grownups, isn't it?
462 c Gimme my Barbie doll-lolly.
463 m Wanna have your poochie? What doll would you like, I mean what book would you like to read? Huh?
464 c You read that for your own self.
465 m For my own self? There's a Mother Goose book down there, that small one. Would you like to read that one?
466 c Yes.

Right from the start, in turn 410, the child resists reading this book by using the verbal but indirect strategy of asking to be convinced: "well, what does it have in it?" suggesting that she does not want to discontinue the drawing activity in which she engaged while reading the previous book. In 412 she again uses an indirect verbal move, but then as the mother is speaking in turn 413 the child resists by getting up and going into another room to search for a different book. She returns with another book, but the mother is still looking at the "special book." At the end of turn 417 the mother asks about the book the child has brought and the next six turns are about that, but the mother continues looking at the "special book." In 424 the child announces directly her resistance: "I don't like this picture." And from that point there are 35 more turns (to turn 459) before the mother stops trying to entice her acceptance and gives in to reading something else.

But the struggle seems to be about more than book choice as a mere preference. For *after* the mother capitulates, the child makes a declaration of identity: "I'm never gonna listen to that. You could read it, for you, you and Carolyn, but not me" and later she adds, "You read that for your own self." Giving voice to identity in this way seems integral to her struggle and the process of resistance. And perhaps such an act reveals a dynamic tension, the dialectic between the processes of enculturation and individuation: with enculturation enacted by the mother as she tries to get the child to participate in this text, but finally sacrifices this text while keeping the activity itself still going; and individuation enacted by the child's expression of preferences which are marked by the child as statements of identity, not merely what the child is willing or able to *do*, but also who she is willing to *be* as she participates in one text or another. In this example, there is an overt struggle over the terms of engagement in participation which results in a negotiated agreement: the struggle begins in a tension between participants who want to interact together, with each having a set of deep interests to work at maintaining the interaction, rather than letting it breakdown; the child is in possession of a set of interests and identity commitments that come into conflict with the parent's interest and to which the adult finally acquiesces. Participation entails both doing and being, "what I do" and "who I am."

Management rights. In the second example, a mother and child are reading a different special kind of book, one that can be ordered with the child's name printed in the text. Thus, in turn 118 the mother reads the child's name, Jason, in the text. The taperecorder referred to in this transcript segment (beginning at turn 141) refers to the small taperecorder which was used to record their interaction. Jason is age 5 years, two months; he has chosen to read this book, though it had not been read for a long time.

Example #2

118 m	<<There they are, said Florence Flamingo. Hurray here comes Hillary Hippo, they all shout. You can ride on me, says Hillary Hippo, but be careful when I go under the tree. I love this ride, said Little Lion. Be careful now, says Hillary Hippo. Here is the tree. Watch Sidney Snake. Why? Sidney Snake shouted at the Baby Elephant. I don't know, said Little Lion. Look at Georgie Giraffe, said Sidney Snake. I did tell him to be careful, said Hillary Hippo. I will go back to get him, says Hillary Hippo. and Jason can help you learn more words.>>
119 c	Uh oh.
120 m	<<Sidney Snake has the word can.>>
121 c	I know. [groaning noises]
122 m	Can you find another "can"?
123 c	Yes.
124 m	Can you find it?
125 c	(groaning noise)
126 m	Well good for you. You're going to miss this word. I'm going to show you.
127 c	I don't like words.
128 m	You don't? (uh-hmm) This is the word "will".
129 c	I know.
130 m	Can you find the word can again?
131 c	This one.
132 m	Two times.
133 c	This one.
134 m	This is the word "goes".
135 c	I know that's the word "goes".
136 m	Where's the word "will"?
137 c	Right there.
138 m	You can do it with your eyes closed.(laughter) <<Sidney Snake has the word can.>>
139 c	[child gets up from seat, starts to walk away]
140 m	Let's finish the story.
141 c	[motioning to tape recorder] How do you turn this thing up?
142 m	How do you turn it off?

143 c I turned it that way but it didn't.
144 r D'you think you might make a loud noise if you did that?
145 c [nods 'yes', grinning]
146 r Well, why don't we let it play a little bit longer, okay?
147 c Nope.
148 r Nope? Then I 'll show you how to turn it up.
149 c [sits down in original place]
150 m <<Thank you Jason for your help.
I need your help to find the words.
Now, let us look at Hillary Hippo's new picture.>>
151 c [laughter]
152 m What picture does she have?
Do you remember?
Uh Oh.
<<Do you like the picture says Hillary Hippo?>>
153 c No.
154 m <<No, they all cried. The picture is wrong.
What is wrong with my picture?>>
155 c I know.
His head is funny.
156 m [inaudible]
157 c A giraffe.
158 m [inaudible]
159 c and him has his face.
160 m Uh huh.
161 c and he has his body.
162 m Strange, that's right, Jason.
<<Hillary Hippo has put the wrong heads on all of us and I am not there at all says Florence Flamingo.>>
163 c The end. [closes book; laughs; gets up]
164 m Isn't there another one?
165 c [walking toward taperecorder]
[How do you (?)] Turn it off.
166 m Um hmm.
167 c [noises]
168 m We haven't read that one in a long time, Jason.

Jason signals his initial resistance to participating in the word search game of this book in turn 119 paralinguistically, with a sighing falling tone: "uh oh," as if to say 'I don't want to be tested.' At first, his

resistance is nonverbal, communicated paralinguistically, but then in turn 127 he states: "I don't like words." He goes along with the game, getting everything right, which prompts his mother to say in turn 138, "You can do it with your eyes closed" as if to suggest, 'so what are you complaining about?' But he continues to resist and in turn 139 gets up and starts to walk out of the room. The mother motions him back, and he returns but at the same time attempts to derail the activity—meaning the quizzing—by talking about the taperecorder which he misunderstands as a "player" which would play a "book on tape" and so wants to "turn it up." Additional negotiations take place, he goes back to participating but continues to resist both verbally and nonverbally. Finally, in 163 he announces "The end," closes the book and laughs. This, however, is not the end of the book reading activity, but only the premature end of *this* book; during this session, three more books were read, all chosen by the child and at his urging.

In this example, the struggle can be seen as resulting in a re-negotiation of the terms of engagement which the child demands for continued co-participation: he will continue to participate, but not to read this book. As in the previous example, the child's identity seems bound up with his preference: he says "I don't like words." He resists being quizzed about words, though enjoys answering questions about pictures, and he ends that text before more word quizzing begins.

Interpretive rights. As mentioned earlier, these first two examples illustrate struggles which I am calling "activity-related" since the conflict is over how the activity of book-reading shall be conducted. The remaining examples are of "text-related" struggles in which the parent and child interpret or view the meaning of the text in differing ways. The third example is between a mother and her son Robert, age 3;4. It is from the book *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss.

Example #3

29 M Do you think he is going to like them?
30 C [nods]
31 M You do?
<<Say, I like green eggs and ham
I do, I like them
Sam I am
So I will eat them in a box
and I will eat them with a fox
I will eat them in a house
I will eat them with a mouse
and I will eat them here and there

Say! I will eat them anywhere
I do like green eggs and ham
Thank you thank you
Sam I am.>>
And that's//

32 C Mom, read this. [turning to illustration on inside of back cover]
33 M That doesn't say anything.
Who's that a picture of?
34 C Sam I am.
35 M That's Sam I am.
What's he got?
36 C He gots eggs [points] egg [points] toast [points].
37 M That's not toast.
What's that? [points]
38 C Egg, toast [points]
39 M Noooo!
That's not toast. [laughing]
40 C [Laughs]
41 M What's that? [points]
42 C Egg, egg, toast. [points]
43 M No, That's not toast, that's ham.
44 C No, its not.
45 M It's toast? Cinnamon toast?
46 C Yeah.
47 M I say it's ham. The end.
48 C How, watch, watch this.
49 M What?
50 C I, That's toast. [altered intonation, flattened, lowered pitch]
51 M That's toast?
52 C He said it. [points to Sam character]
53 M He said it, oh, he was saying that, I see. So if he says its toast... But he ate it all up. Didn't he?
54 C But there's some more. [touching page]
55 M There's more?
56 C Oops, I messed up the page. [gesturing with page]
57 M What's on that page? Be careful with the pages, Robert.
58 C Ooh, I know I can see it. [holds page up to face]
59 M You can see through it?
60 C There's toast.
61 M That's not toast.
62 C Yeah. Yes it is!

63 M It's not toast.
64 C Yes, it is.
65 M No it isn't. It is ham to me.
66 C I'm gonna [take it?] off. [motions to page with hand]
67 M No, don't take it off.
68 C [Laughs]

In this example, parent and child argue over how to interpret part of the text, in this case an illustration. While there is much laughter and the struggle is in a sense a playful one, there appears to be an important interpretive difference involved as well. I read the data as revealing that the child is not simply "being silly," or just "playing around." He is very persistent in asserting his point of view, upholding it for four rounds of turns (36-42) until the mother begins to capitulate. When in turn 48 he exhorts her to "watch" it is as if he is saying, "Watch how I'm going to convince you," and then he shifts his tone of voice and demeanor to assume the persona—and with it the authority—of the character "Sam-I-am" to convince her. A possible explanation of his misunderstanding, hence his struggle, is that in his experience "eggs" go together, not with "ham," but with "toast," and that, lacking an experiential base for interpreting the picture of ham, it looks sufficiently toast-like to him to fit his repeated claim.[4] My point is that the child's tenacity and persistence in asserting an alternative interpretation would seem to reflect more than just a superficial playfulness, and that something meaningful is at stake for him. Ultimately in this example the conflict remains unresolved, although the interaction does not breakdown. This, then, is a struggle which could be characterized as overt contested participation.

The fourth example, a second struggle over textual interpretation, is also one with important meanings at stake for the child, but in this case the conflict is relatively less visible, concealed beneath an apparently harmonious surface of intergenerational discourse practice. The hidden struggle that I mean to identify here is that both the mother and child give a unique meaning to a specific scene in the text, and then each voices that same meaning at successive points during the activity in a way that repeatedly seems to resist or oppose the meaning voiced by the other.

[4] This was a child who was especially attentive to the correspondence between pictorial representations and his expectations. On several occasions, he engaged in repeated questioning about pictures in two other books which were evidently problematic for him and for which the answers he received apparently did not resolve the problem.

The child in this example, Maria, is 3 years, three months, and she and her mother have never seen this text before. The child is evidently quite engaged by the book, for as soon as they reach the end of the text the child requests that it be read again. Maria's comments about "Marcos" refer to her thirteen month old brother. The text being read by mother and child is *Bill and Pete* by Tomie DePaola.

Example #4

325 m	<<and get you a toothbrush before you start school tomorrow.>> See he's got teeth so he's got to brush his teeth like you do.
326 c	Have big teeth, huh?
327 m	Yes.
328 c	He's has a big mouth, huh?
329 m	He has a big mouth. He's got a lot of teeth, huh?
330 c	Yeh, like me, huh?
331 m	You have a lot of teeth? Yeah, you sure do.
332 c	Marcos no have other teeth. Marcos only have a little bit.
333 m	Oh, he only has a little bit, yeah. Look. [turning page]

In this first segment, the mother is the first to introduce a comparison between the child and the crocodile. Her comparison supports a parental agenda: "he's got to brush his teeth like you do." The child ignores the implied moralistic imperative of this comparison and initiates two different and inter-related comparisons: first, she and the crocodile have a lot of teeth and, second, the having of teeth contrasts to her little brother who has only a few. The mother's restatement of the child's claim is in a non-committal tone, followed by an apparent attempt to move on and to downplay this appearance of sibling rivalry. They continue reading through the book, with many stops for dialogue along the way, finally finishing the story at turn 550, and the child responds, "Yeah, now, now read it again, let's read it again. [She grasps the book and turns it over.] See. Read it again."At the same point in the story during a second reading, the following exchange takes place.

Example #4 (continued)

564 m	<<One day, the mama says, William Everett, now that you have nice crocodile teeth we must go to Mr. Hippo's store and get you a toothbrush before you start school tomorrow.>>
565 c	They're big huh. Like his mom, huh?
566 m	Yes. <<William Everett liked Mr. Hippo's store>>
567 c	Yeah
568 m	<<Because it was full of things.>> What did he go buy at the store, Maria?
569 c	Um, toothbrush.
570 m	He went to buy a toothbrush, why?
571 c	Because he washed his teeth tomorrow and had to go to school, huh?
572 m	Yes. Good girl. He's going to school so he had to brush his teeth like you do. Do you go to school?
573 c	Yep.
574 m	And do you brush your teeth?
575 c	Yep.
576 m	Good girl. <<Hi said a toothbrush. What's your name? My name's William Everett, what's yours? Pete, said the toothbrush.>>
577 c	[inaudible; getting up]
578 m	I thought you wanted to read it. Sit down. <<I found a toothbrush I want Mama said William Everett. His name is Pete>>

In the second segment, the child has again commented on the "bigness" of the boy crocodile's teeth and identifies them as comparable to the mother crocodile's teeth. The mother-reader again brings up the parental toothbrushing agenda (turn 570) and initiates a recitation sequence which has the same general theme as her statement in turn 325 in the previous reading—"So he's got to brush his teeth like you do"—which the child did not respond to. In turn 571, the child shows that she understands the mother's point and her recitation responses "Yep" in turns 573 and 575 are unambiguous in tone, if indirect,

expressing impatience, followed at 577 by her movement to quit the scene (turn 577). Finally, still later, after roughly fifty more turns:

Example #4 (continued)

636 m	<<Oh Bill, Mama beamed>>
	Oh, she was so proud because he got a new name.
637 c	See here take him. [pointing]
638 m	Who's this, the bad guy? [pointing] The crocodile?
	<<Bill and Pete were sitting on the River>>
639 c	Take him. [pointing]
640 m	Yeah, the bad man got some more of the
	crocodiles and he was going to take them,
	he was going to kill them and make suitcases.
	Uh oh.
641 c	His Mom . . . a baby, and that's a daddy one,
	huh? [pointing]
642 m	Yes.
	No, but don't sit on the book.
	See and
	<<One day Pete and Bill were by the river>>
643 c	See, that's a big, have a big [pointing]
	[points] Him have a little bit like Marcos,
	[points] and him have a lot like me.
644 m	A lot of teeth yeah,
	Come here. [M wipes C's nose]
645 c	Lot of teeth.
646 m	Yeah,
	Look what happened. What happened?
	He caught Bill.
647 c	Yeah.

In the last segment, the child is discussing a picture of two crocodiles: one is the "Bill" character who she has compared herself with before, and the other, which she compares to her year-old brother, has many fewer teeth. In fact, the crocodile she takes for a baby is actually supposed to be "an old crocodile swimming by"—wrinkled and with few teeth—but her mistake is irrelevant. The point is that she has once again asserted the same identity claims in which she identifies herself with the protagonist in the story, identifies the protagonist with a form of prowess or maturity and distinguishes this shared superiority from the relative inferiority of her brother. The mother acknowledges almost none of these meanings, and when she does, it is a relatively minor connection in the service of a different and distinctly parental agenda. The mother's failure or refusal to acknowledge the child's

re-initiation of textual meaning in her theme of identity-as-superiority-over-sibling leaves this interpretive struggle unresolved. While the child does not threaten to withdraw from participation as overtly as in other examples, her movement at turn 577, following her annoyed recitation (turns 573 and 575), shows that she too, though much younger, can use resistance when a parent's interpretation conflicts with her own.

Thus, children across the age range of participants in this study engaged in various forms of struggle and resistance when some aspect of a parent's reading practice conflicted with some significant commitment of the child. At the same time, the responses of all the parents reflected a commitment to the activity itself: keeping the activity going was the ultimate value for which other values were lesser and might be negotiated away. This value commitment was revealed in actions, not words, and—not surprisingly for a deeply held cultural meaning—interview probes suggested that both the value and the ways it was enacted were out-of-awareness for the parent participants. It is through the operations of such values or ideological commitments, in and through cultural practices, that children are recruited to those cultural practices and the values and practices of the culture are, thus, maintained.

Implications for book reading in classrooms

Just as cultural-historical theory asks us to examine home contexts as culturally organized, so the application of findings from that cultural context requires thinking about schools as culturally organized sites. In introducing the examples, it was mentioned that children occasionally threaten in subtle ways to quit the activity and this works to get what they want (and reveals to researchers the ideological limits of the practice). But children in classrooms can't threaten to leave—compared to the home, children in classrooms are significantly more limited in the expression of preferences and the exercise of power.

However, there are ways that classroom culture can be organized more like that of some homes in order to promote children's participation and engagement. Anne Barry, the teacher in *Making Room for Students: Sharing Teacher Authority in Room 104*, written by Celia Oyler (1996), has transformed her classroom to be more like the homes I observed—where children were, without exception, voluntary participants in reading and enthusiastically so. There are several conclusions which can be drawn from the study of home book reading activity, and which an adaptation such as Barry's seems implicitly to take account of.

First, children's participation in book reading activity is *negotiated.* Children are not simply "guided participants" (cf. Rogoff, 1986) in the activity but have certain interests and preferences which must be addressed if they are to become engaged and to remain engaged. In part this is a matter of children needing to learn to take pleasure in reading—which adults need to foster. But it is more than that, because, as the examples have shown, when the issue of personal identity is at stake no amount of parental persuasion can engage a child's participation. Thus, *negotiated participation* may be a more apt model than one of guided participation (Rogoff, 1986, 1990).

Second, given that negotiation is a key factor in the ongoing interaction between adults and children during book reading activity, it is important to recognize that *conflict plays an integral role.* The appearance of conflict is not a sign of failure in the activity—though it could become so if ignored or responded to uncompromisingly. Moreover, conflict of the kind we have seen in the examples is not an aberrant event during book reading, but routine. Arguably it is the stuff of all significant human interaction. I suspect, however, that conflict tends to be viewed as a sign of relational failure and that, as such, it may be ignored or avoided in many studies of adult-child and especially parent-child interaction. For teachers, the willingness to recognize conflict and to negotiate children's participation in activity is likely to be key in their—and children's—success or failure.

Third, children are being *recruited* to the activity and more broadly to a community of practice. In the anthropological sense, elders of any cultural group must recruit new members as an essential dimension of maintaining a way of life. In the process of recruitment, the appropriate dispositions, or *habitus* in Pierre Bourdieu's framework (e.g., Bourdieu, 1977), are formed and this is part of becoming a member and feeling a sense of belonging in the community. When Anne Barry opens up her classroom—letting children leave their seats and assemble around her, when she lets them choose and she reads several books in a session, and when she allows them to speak up whenever they want or to get up to retrieve props or other books relevant to their book talk—she is negotiating their participation in ways which confer on her students the kinds of speaking rights, choosing, management and interpretive rights that I found in homes where children voluntarily participated with such energy and enthusiasm—and where they internalized a commitment to literacy.

In summary, then, Mrs. Barry's new way of interacting with her students recruits them to the cultural practice of book reading activity, contributes to the formation of dispositions in ways that are similar to

the future successful readers I observed, and enrolls them, so to speak, as members of a community of practice. These children are taking up a value commitment to literacy. One of the parents interviewed during the study of Mrs. Barry's classroom expresses in moving words the difference the new way of teaching makes. This parent had an older child who had been in Mrs. Barry's classroom before the teacher developed her new approach:

> I always like to say that Melinda is a chain reader. We'll be coming to and from school, and she'll be reading one book, and she'll have two or three others on her lap. She can forget everything else, but she makes sure that when we leave the house she has books. Everyone makes fun of her bookbag, they go, "What do you have in there—rocks?" She has a little boy holding up the bookbag because it's that heavy. She found a new way to carry her bookbag—through the front. *My main thing I've noticed is that to her, reading is fun, it's not a chore. That's the difference I see having one daughter in this class the way it is now.* (Turning to Anne) I didn't see you were too much into that then, I didn't really hear from Claudia about books. Melinda's confidence is so high. She wasn't as outspoken before. She was more to herself. Now, you ask her, "What do you think of this?" and she'll give you an honest opinion. It's helped me at home on a personal level because she reaches out to me more. Now it's in her mind that it's okay to say what she's thinking, it's not going to get her into trouble. (Oyler, 1996, p. 48; emphasis added)

Melinda is clearly a child who has taken up the identity of a reader and has successfully been recruited to a community of practice by her classroom experiences—and her teacher. Recruiting children to the community of readers is not always taken to be the work of teachers. More typically recruitment is seen to be the work of parents, as implied by the oft repeated claim, addressed at the beginning of this discussion, that parents should read to their children. The suggestion here is that recruitment is the *sine qua non* for reading instruction to truly succeed. Therefore, teachers must organize classrooms and instructional experiences to create a community of practice into which the recruitment of new members is a primary goal.

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The Literacy Recollections Project: Building Reading Courses on Oral Literacy

Michael Dale, Gary Moorman, Susan Gilbert, Woodrow Trathen, Connie Ulmer

This Problems Court and the following four papers are a result of interactions among a group of regular ARF attendees. We meet for lunch after the last session each year to discuss how we can use what we have learned to improve our practice. The closing session of the 1997 conference was the presentation by James King and Norman Stahl (King & Stahl, 1997) on oral histories. We decided to return to our campuses and attempt to integrate some of the concepts from that address into our content area reading courses. Our experiences at ARF led us to the literature on personal narrative and story. In turn, we developed the Literacy Recollections Project. We continued our dialogue over email, and constructed a website that was used to organize the project and record our students' oral histories. What follows are individual accounts of our experiences. These four papers attempt to synthesize our thinking on how instructional activity that engages students in the active telling, writing and reading of personally relevant narratives affects their education as teachers.

Trathen and Dale begin by framing a theoretical perspective on narrative story. The purpose of their paper is to examine ways that the reading and writing of narratives contribute to teacher education, in particular, the potential of narrative to shape ways of thinking, attitudes and beliefs. Next, Ulmer describes how students in her content

area reading course interviewed teachers and students gleaning stories that connect instruction to real life experiences. Moorman follows with a description of the "Literacy Recollections Room," a web-based literacy biography project. Students in this project attempted to capture the story of the process of acquiring literacy, both their own and others. Gilbert* concludes with an examination of narrative reflections that students wrote as part of participation in email discourse.

*The former Susan Nelson was married during the summer of 1999, and now goes by Susan Gilbert—but that's another story.

Narratives in Teacher Education

Woodrow Trathen, Michael Dale

> A man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through them; and he tries to live his life as if he were telling a story. (Jean-Paul Sartre)

Teaching, then, is intimately tied to the understanding and telling of stories—stories of communities, students, and the lives we all live, as well as the stories embodied in the disciplines we teach. Learning to teach involves becoming attuned to particular narratives, learning to do what teachers do, learning to think and talk as teachers, and ultimately becoming what a teacher is. Stories embody language (the primary tool) as the vehicle for developing concepts, meanings, and understandings about teaching. Through stories we learn to think, feel, and talk like a teacher. Skill use, ways of thinking, and language use are embedded in the narratives of the teaching community, and we develop the identity of a teacher by engaging in these. Borrowing from James Gee's (1990) articulation of literacy as social practice: Becoming literate in the discourse of teaching, then, means that we must acquire the tool use skills, ways of thinking, language, attitudes and beliefs of the members of the community of teaching. Narratives offer a means of entering the discourse of teaching. Jo Anne Pagano (1991) has described the relationship between narrative stories and teaching in this way:

> Teaching is, among other things, a discursive and interpretive practice...When we teach, we tell stories about the world. Some stories are scientific, some historical, some philosophical, some literary, and so on. Educational theories are stories about how teaching and learning work, about who does what to whom and for what purposes, and most particularly, educational theories are stories about the kind of world we want to live in and what we should do to make that world. (p. 197)

Why narrative?

The *Oxford English Dictionary* relays the following meanings for narrative and related terms:

> Narrate: 1) To relate, recount, give an account of; 2) to

make a relation. Narration: 1) The action of relating or recounting; 2) a story; 3) that part of an oration in which the facts of the matter are stated. Narrative: 1) That part of a deed or document which contains a statement of the relevant or essential facts; 2) an account or narration, a history, tale, story, recital.

From these meanings, three characteristics of narrative seem germane: (a) Narratives are an accounting of information, a way of relating information; (b) the information that narratives present ("state") is deemed important and relevant; (c) the tale or story form is used to present this important information. Yet, narrative is much more than is contained in these descriptions.

Narratives (stories) contain the potential for an emotional connection to our lives and imagined ones. "Reading great works of art and reading life are different but not unrelated activities" (Putnam, 1990, p. 183). What Putnam suggests through this comparison is an intimate connection between the narrative form and understanding human lives, our own and the lives of others. Narrative forms are a means to experience and touch the world, its joy and despair (Iser, 1972; Johnson, 1993; Touponce, 1966). Narrative, both the construction of our own individual stories and the reading of others', is a way of seeing and understanding the richness and complexity of human lives.

Narrative can be a crucible, a meeting place of experience and philosophical ideas, where emotion is transmitted as narrative shows us worlds we do not know, or corrects our perspective toward the world we know all too well (Freund, 1965). In essence, the narrative form elicits a morally imaginative engagement. Martha Nussbaum describes aspects of moral imagination in *Cultivating Humanity:*

> We are drawing on Socrates' concept of "the examined life," on Aristotle's notions of reflective citizenship, and above all on Greek and Roman Stoic notions of an education that is "liberal" in that it liberates the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world. (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 8)

> To become world citizens we must not simply amass knowledge; we must also cultivate in ourselves a capacity for sympathetic imagination that will enable us to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us...Here the arts [narratives]

> play a vital role, cultivating powers of imagination that are essential to citizenship. (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 8)
>
> [Through narrative, readers] embrace the ordinary...with a textured vividness unavailable [in other types of text]. (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 95)

Novels and other narrative forms enable what Louise Rosenblatt (1994) calls "aesthetic" reading, a personal, lived through experience of the text which can have a liberating, fortifying effect on the reader's life. Although Nussbaum has argued eloquently and persuasively in a number of her writings that novels are unique constructions for rendering the richness of human life, other narrative forms also are capable of revealing "the interaction between general human aspirations and particular forms of social life that either enable or impede those aspirations, shaping them powerfully in the process. Novels [and other narrative forms] present persistent forms of human need and desire realized in specific social situations" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 7).

In teacher education programs, then, fictional narrative and other narrative forms (Bullough, 1994; Bullough, Crow, & Knowles, 1992; Bullough & Gitlin, 1995) are critical (arguably necessary) components if we want prospective teachers to understand education as a "liberating art," and not primarily as a means of slotting students for narrowly defined economic roles. In particular, given the characteristics of students entering teacher education, these prospective teachers need a richer and more enriching story of education. They need a story (a theory) of education to counter the narrow and corrupting economic story they currently live and enact.

Dewey (1904) and others have argued the importance of a coherent theory of learning and education—in Pagano's (1991) terms, a coherent *story* of learning and education—to guide teachers' instructional decisions.Yet, researchers have found teachers' theories and beliefs to be shaped by years of experience (their lived stories in school), often experience that runs counter to perspectives engendered by teacher education programs. Furthermore, these beliefs seem to be resistant to critical reflection and change (Kagan, 1992; Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Students entering teacher education possess what Martha Nussbaum (1995) has referred to as an "economic mind"—what we would call an economic story about the meaning and value of education. No one who has been in teacher education for any length of time can fail to recognize the characteristics of these students; the most salient one is the seeking out of "techniques" that will

be "useful" in their imagined classrooms of the future. Such students come to us already disposed to see education and teaching and learning (including their own learning) through a particular story, one which is in complex and subtle ways tied to an oftentimes unreflective acceptance of economic utilitarianism. So, like any other form of education, educating teachers is a process of building upon, extending and reconstructing past experiences—particularly schooling experiences (Dewey, 1938)—and assisting students in creating new stories of teaching.

However, it is not just the narrative but also how one reads the narrative. In teacher education, novels and short stories about the complexity of human lives inside and outside of school settings give occasion for students to confront the narrowness and limitations of an economic perspective of education and to develop a richer conception of education, one tied to discovering truths about the human condition and our role in it. Adler and Van Doren (1972) refer to this kind of reading as syntopical, and argue that it requires the highest level of reader engagement: "A book is like nature or the world. When you question it, it answers you only to the extent that you do the work of thinking and analysis yourself" (p. 15). Students can critically reflect on perspectives of education and begin to develop alternative conceptions of education through thoughtful reading of narrative and critical discussion in class.

The "call for stories" in education and teacher education and arguments for their value is not new (Booth, 1988; Bruner, 1996; Coles, 1989; Greene, 1978, 1988; Nussbaum, 1986, 1990, 1995, 1997). However, the assault on narrative seems especially intense as the next millennium begins. From state mandated accountability measures to the pervasive framing of education within a narrow economic perspective we find a constriction of vision, an obtuseness in seeing the world of teaching and learning. This constriction of vision represents an immense challenge for teacher educators as the 21st Century approaches. But as Nussbaum has concluded: "Obtuseness is a moral failing; its opposite can be cultivated" (Nussbaum, 1990, p.156). Constructing and reading narratives within teacher education are powerful ways of cultivating sight which is "finely aware and richly responsible" (Nussbaum 1990, p.136).

Unless prospective teachers can come to see themselves and their own learning within a perspective that respects the mystery and complexity within each life, then they will never be able to see this mystery and complexity in the children and adolescents they will teach, never see and understand the ways in which their students' desires

and aspirations are either enabled or impeded within the social context of schools, homes, neighborhoods and society. Narratives (reading and writing them) have a critical role to play in both eliciting and developing the ability to see and understand the complexity and richness of human lives. Each of the remaining papers will examine various narrative forms (oral stories, written biographical stories and narrative reflections) as critical tools in teacher education. In the next paper, Connie Ulmer uses teacher and student historical narratives to explore the implications of classroom experiences on literacy development.

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Oral History Interviews As Instructional Learning "Texts"

Constance J. Ulmer

As societal needs and goals of the new millennium change, governmental, educational, social, and political forces combine to promote the growth of individuals so that they can become better citizens of the world. This challenge is not new, but how it is approached is changing. The lines of communication are fluctuating between horrendous and stupendous with the bombardment of the information age and improvements in technological communication. With these fast paced advancements (email conversations, video on line interactions, telecommunications internets, websites, webtvs, virtual reality encounters, etc.), dialogue can get lost in the movement, and it is from the dialogue that learning and growth take place. Dialogues that occur between different arenas of society support learning from the past and dreaming for the future.

In the educational arena, theory and research are embracing the constructivists' theories of learning (Rosenblatt, 1978; Smith, F., 1985; Wells 1986). Constructivists, beginning with Piaget (1923/1926), Dewey (1938), and Vygotsky (1978), have laid the foundation for us to consider dialogue as a key player in growth and learning. For Piaget, children construct their learning through cognitive development where "the dialogue" is internal (Ginsburg & Opper, 1969), and for Dewey and Vygotsky individuals are always constructing meaning through their own participation in events where "the dialogue" is external. The dialogues that occur in these events often provide the medium for learning to take place. As participants construct their own understanding, they are better able to communicate that understanding and transfer it to new situations. It is important that students in these classrooms are encouraged to learn from a variety of dialogues.

One form of dialogue that is conducive to introspective thinking is an oral history interview. Through oral history interviews, students learn from others informally; the conversation sets the pace and direction in which the dialogue evolves. "Classroom oral history is a process whereby student interviewers and their historical informants create tape documents of lasting personal and scholarly value" (Sitton, Mehaffy, & Davis, 1983, p. 115).

Oral histories begin with historians learning about events that happened in the past from interviewees who were present or who

were members of the time when an event occurred. The focus of oral histories is the event. During the taped interview the interviewer takes notes and later transcribes the tapes, which are then recorded and preserved for the future. Another form of oral histories is storytelling. Through storytelling a great deal of unrecorded information is passed from one generation to the next. Storytelling keeps history alive because it emphasizes the "humanity" of the events that take place. Unlike the taped oral history interviews, storytelling is about the people in the event and takes the form of monologue, which does not allow the listener many opportunities to dialogue with the individual.

Combining the two (storytelling and interviews) allows for a more interactive conversation. Qualitative researchers use this combination more often today as a way of interpreting oral histories for a variety of studies investigating literacy processes (Freeman & Lehman, 1998; Pile, 1992). As a result, using oral history as a learning tool, the focus of the interviews continues to change. The process is being considered as well as the product. What can be learned by doing oral history interviews? Sitton, Mehaffy, and Davis (1983) state "the participation becomes the focus rather than the event. Learning is created in an authentic setting. . . Students feel they are 'doing real work'" p.115.

Method

This is a descriptive study of the use of oral history interviews in two different classrooms. Two questions related to the use of oral history interviews were examined. The first class was asked what they could learn about literacy instruction in content classes from oral history interviews. The second was asked what they could learn about curriculum design from oral literacy interviews.

Participants

Following the Foxfire principle of inquiry (Wigginton, 1986), using oral history interviews, two university classes set out to find what they could learn about literacy instruction in their future classrooms. The term literacy is inclusive of traditional parameters such as reading and writing, but it is not exclusive of newer parameters that invite literacy as discourse (Burbules, 1993; Gee, 1989). The first group consisted of pre-service teachers (13 undergraduate students) whose content subject areas included mathematics, science, history, Spanish, physical education, health education, and art education. They were preparing to be secondary teachers. Students in the second group were teachers in the field (9 graduate students) seeking to learn more about language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and visualizing) instruction

at the elementary and middle schools. Both groups wrote their own autobiographical literacy histories and then interviewed others from the community about their literacy histories and what it means for literacy instruction in the future. For clarity, the first class will be called the content class and the second class will be called the language arts class.

Materials

The materials for analysis evolved from discussions following readings and demonstrations in the classrooms. The materials evaluated were autobiographical literacy histories, parameters for interview design, taped literacy interviews, write up of interviews, literacy history website, and reflection papers. Each will be discussed separately.

Autobiographical literacy histories. Both classes wrote their autobiographical literacy histories before they did the oral literacy history interviews. These autobiographies explored literacy as students defined it from their own disciplines. As a physical education major for example, one entry in your autobiography may be descriptions of different aspects of your childhood that supported your chosen career and descriptions from your childhood that deterred you from your choice. This included your choices based on likes and dislikes of school, community, or governmental encounters that affected your literacy development from childhood to the present.

Parameters for interview design. The parameters for the content class to design their questions for the interviews emerged from discussions students had about their expectations and fears of literacy demands they could encounter when they taught. The students also wanted to know if teachers taught using some of the same methods they were taught with. The prompts for the interview questions were related to the interviewees':

- literacy upbringing.
- teaching field.
- positive and negative experiences with reading and writing in their field.
- college courses and classroom practices.
- changes seen in the future.

- specific content literacy needed to teach in their discipline.

The parameters for the language arts class question design were given in the instruction package the students received with their course syllabus. The directions were:

*Write autobiographies

*Design literacy questions considering the following parameters:

1. Student to student interactions - Discuss what activities promote students working together or hinder students working together. Discuss when students interact.

2. Teacher to student interactions - Discuss who initiates the interactions and how often. What types of conversations occur in the discussions?

3. Tasks - Discuss the types of events that occur in the classroom and when. Describe the activities that occur and who initiates.

4. Time frame - Discuss the duration of events or interactions when they do occur. Who loses interest?

5. Prompts/interjections - What type of prompts or interjections are used to keep interactions going in the class? What types of interjections and who interjects?

*Interview at least one of each: a student, pre-service teacher, elementary school teacher and a middle school teacher.

*Pair up, listen to tapes, and discuss categories that emerged related to literacy.

*Write information on an overhead that related to the five classroom interaction parameters to share with class.

*Write high points most often mentioned from all groups together on the overhead.

*Make a list of positives and negatives for the classroom. Design a classroom considering these changes to use in your language arts class.

Taped literacy interviews. Students in both classes picked out similar themes or issues that most interviews had in common and discussed them in small groups. They shared at least one taped interview that addressed one of the issues or topics.

Interview write ups. After the classroom discussion, students from the content class wrote up what they learned from the literacy interviews and class discussions about literacy in their content area, compared to the different interviewees' perspectives. The students in the language arts class charted what they learned from the interview class discussions and wrote up what a lesson could look like if all the points they learned from the interview were considered.

Literacy history website. Journey into Our Literacy Histories is a website created for students (the content class) to write to each other about their autobiographies and interviews from other professors, parents, community members and elementary or primary students. (Due to technical difficulties in creating the website, not many students were able to post to the site in the time allotted. Therefore the website is not the major focus of this paper.) The purpose of this paper is to discuss what students learned from oral literacy interviews and the autobiographies about 'literacy practices" that should and could occur with successful classroom practices.

Reflection papers. The reflection papers from both groups compared and contrasted what they had written in their own literacy autobiographies and what they heard from the interviews. The process students went through to participate in this literacy project was also included in the reflection papers. In addition, students discussed strategies they tried and will try in the classroom as a result of some of the discussions about the interviews.

Design and Procedure

Considering learners as thinkers and participants in their own knowledge, these two classes were designed to elicit a great deal of dialogue about literacy. The first class looked at literacy in different content fields, and the other investigated changes in the definition of literacy and instruction in language arts classrooms. Instead of the text being a book in the classroom, it was decided that the oral literacy histories and autobiographical histories would be the text for discussion. The content students were introduced to literacy by writing their own autobiographical literacy histories on the website, along with the oral literacy interview write-ups. When students read each others' interviews, they were fascinated by the similarities in their own beliefs,

experiences, and fields of study. On the other hand, they were disappointed that routines in some of the classrooms didn't foster excitement about learning.

In the sample interview summary (see Appendix A), the student describes what she has learned. Throughout her summary, she interpreted and interjected her views, discussing what she learned and what she thinks about what she learned. In her own autobiographical literacy history, she said she always wanted to be a math teacher but she wanted ways to make math fun and not so routine. In her summary she is faced with a teacher similar to those in her past. She has always had teachers who, as she stated, "make the class boring with busy work." Having the opportunity to evaluate her own experiences helped this teacher reinforce her beliefs about teaching. She could see changes she would like to implement in the classroom when she teaches.

Other math teachers in the class shared ways that they could counter the type of teaching the teacher found routine in this particular class. A few students shared some of the hands-on games teachers talked about in their interviews that would increase motivation to enhance learning in math classes. While discussing their interviews, students in the other disciplines (science, history, etc.) explored the idea of becoming change agents because some of their students might fall behind if left in an uneventful environment like the one described in the oral history interview (see Appendix A).

At the onset of the project students were concerned about testing expectations in their field, but in the interviews they found that teachers at the middle school level did not share their testing fears. The classroom teachers discussed ways to help students individually through the testing process. Two interviewers were glad and surprised to see that literacy issues were being dealt with across content areas.

In the language arts setting after the students tallied all the major points from the taped literacy interviews that correlated to the parameters set in the question design, they created a chart describing categories that evolved from the data (see Appendix B). The chart showed all the positive and negative comments from the interviewees (parents, students, teachers, and others), describing their feelings about the type of classroom interactions that occur. Many of the comments about writing, fun, and choices came from the students. Teachers named grammar and task-oriented interactions as the top two things they would like to work on.

The final stage of this project was to design a classroom that takes into account more of the positives and fewer of the negatives described. Students went into their own classes using some of the practices they learned from the oral literacy interviews. The results were good. One teacher said she couldn't believe how easy it was to try *cooperative grouping*, one of the positives she had always heard about. She didn't think her students would work well with each other because they never did. Another teacher talked about having more *choices* in her classroom because all five of the people she interviewed mentioned this as an important part of instruction. Four of the nine teachers said that even though a focus on *grammar* was presented as a negative and *not really creative*, they felt it had to be a major part of the class because of testing.

One reading teacher in the class admitted that she had a very negative attitude in her class many times; but after listening to two of her interviews, the elementary student in particular (Bob), she wants to diminish that negativity. "How do you feel about your school experiences now that you are in the fifth grade? " "I don't like school anymore because they moved me in a low group with a teacher who doesn't like us because she thinks we are stupid...and I guess...we are...dumb." Bob's answer was an eye-opener for her and perhaps a beginning in her own learning about her role in the language arts classroom.

Discussion

Looking at the discussions that occurred when using oral literacy histories as a learning instructional tool, a few implications for classroom instruction become apparent.

1. Discussions become more knowledge based with information from actual classroom settings. Classes should be set up to allow for more dialogue.

2. Teachers begin to listen more and have a sense of ownership of the conclusions they develop. Both undergraduate and graduate students learned by listening to their classmates share information about themselves as compared to others. Students also took more ownership in designing curriculum.

3. Using oral literacy histories also allows students to go beyond themselves in their own thinking process. They think about what learning is all about and about ways to improve environments to provide opportunities for successful learning to take place.

After reading the students' reflections in this study, there is a need to include more oral history interviews in the learning process. In the content reading class, all thirteen students said even though it was a lot of work, the oral history interviews were worth doing; they learned about classroom practices they could and should be taking back to their own teaching. Seven of the students said they never thought they were responsible for any literacy instruction until the interviews. They thought reading skills were the responsibility of reading and English teachers. The other six said they see a need but they feel they wouldn't have time to deal with the reading issue because they would lose content instruction. They did say that a few of the teachers and students they interviewed made them think about the importance of connecting literacy to their content teaching.

The language arts students were all impressed with the process of listening to the tapes in the class. They said they were finding more information from the discussions in class while listening to the tapes. Dialoguing with others helped them interpret what was being said. Three admitted they didn't think they would learn anything from all this work, but they did. A first year teacher was so excited about an activity she learned involving two of the positives on the result chart, she wanted to share it in her final presentation for the class: *Journal writing and experiences with reading*. She brought her 4th grade daughter to class the day we were making books, and her daughter caught on immediately. The daughter not only finished sewing her book together, but she also filled it with three short stories. The mother was so impressed she went to her classroom and had her third graders make books. She shared their books with the language arts class. Overall, using oral history interviews as "text" enhances the transactions that must occur for meaning to transfer into great learning experiences (Rosenblatt, 1978).

Like oral stories as presented in my study, written stories also provide a powerful means for self-reflection and learning, as Moorman reveals in the next paper.

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Appendix A

Oral History Interview Summary of a Mathematics Teacher

He has been teaching there for five years now...I interviewed him on February 2, 1998 on issues concerning literacy. His responses and reactions to his responses follow in five main categories: personal literacy, the teaching field, high school teaching, teaching high school math, and implications/issues raised from the interview.

He remembers doing math "way back in school." He has always liked math, and he especially thinks fondly of his high school years. "I had some math teachers that were good...and math was always my best subject. I enjoyed figuring out other ways to do it (the problems) that the teacher wouldn't teach." His subject preference was not skewed toward mathematics alone. He also enjoyed English. "I had a great English teacher my senior year...Mr. Grant " However, he readily admits that he did not like English as much because he felt like he had a stronger aptitude in math. His perceptions of his ability in math molded the decisions of his future, as well as the influences of his teachers.

He had many teachers in high school that influenced him in becoming a high school teacher. "They (his teachers) looked like they were having a good time with their profession. And that's when I started thinking about becoming...a teacher. Mr. Grant had the most influence over me becoming a teacher because we had a lot of fun in his class." It seems that he was heavily influenced by his teachers to pursue a career in the teaching profession. However, it seems that his motivation for becoming a high school teacher was driven by his passion for high school mathematics and a desire to coach soccer.

He did not speak directly on the subject of high school teaching. However, implied from the conversation is that he loves doing high school math, especially algebra. He feels like he can make a difference in the lives of the kids, and he wants to help them to achieve their goals. From his experiences, he felt that a career in high school teaching was appropriate for him.

The most important aspects of the interview were the issues that he raised about literacy. He established his definition of literacy as being "not only the ability to read, but the ability to understand what has been read." He also distinguished between math literacy and literacy. Math literacy mainly has "different vocabulary." It is important

for students to be able to read so they can understand "the instructions to the different parts of the test, or worksheet or your homework." However, very little independent reading is done from the textbook. He tries to provide as much of the material to the students during class, so that the book is used as little as possible. But he does go over the example problems in the book, helping students to understand the steps taken by the authors of the textbook.

I have the opportunity to observe his class on Mondays and Wednesdays. His class is in a routine every day. The students arrive each day, review homework, learn a new lesson, and then do their homework. The derived implication of the students is that math is the same day in and day out. The implication is that math is only a different set of vocabulary. The focus is that math is something memorized, not something that is gradually learned. However, this is the very reason so many students have problems with math. Math needs to become a process for each student, not discrete facts and vocabulary that when memorized, guarantee success. Math is like any other subject; it requires extensive thought, analysis, and synthesis to make certain ideas more understandable.

Appendix B

Positive and Negative Result Chart of Classroom Interactions

Positive	Negative
Peer tutoring	Fear of failure
Cooperative groups	Fear of risk taking
Partner reading	No chance for creative outlets
Choice of reading	Understanding curriculum
Teacher enthusiasm influenced learning	Pressure to exclude spelling or novels
Empathizing with students	Lack of training
Safe environment	Incorrect grouping
Flexible to change	Favoritism
Respectful	Grammar focus, not creativity
Flexible to learning styles	No effective writing instruction
Reading aloud	No phonics instruction
Reading contests	Negative attitude stemming from instruction
Many experiences with reading	No pleasure reading
Choices	Just function
Comprehension through discussions	Pressure to exclude grammar
Emphasis on speaking skills	Accommodating all levels
Enthusiasm for new teaching ideas	

Positive	Negative
Different modes of communication to teach skills	No games used to teach LA
Enjoys reading groups	Isolation in reading
Writing in journals about personal experience	Time is limited for teaching
Had fun, teacher used projects, and prompts	
Liked correcting grammatical errors in class	Not covering curriculum
Children are there own best critics	
Has students read in different modes	Broad based curriculum
Spelling integrated with novels being read	Preparing students to communicate with other people
Hands on projects	Student reading aloud without warning
Practice time before reading aloud	Rote memorization
	worksheets without purpose
Volunteers to read aloud	Round robin reading
Literature rich classroom	Writing without experience
Tell a story before writing	
Change stories endings; sequels	

Results of the tally of all the student and teacher interviewees showing positive and negative events that occur during literacy interactions in their classrooms. The graduates used these categories to evaluate their own teaching.

Literacy Recollections Website

Gary Moorman

I returned from the 1997 ARF conference with four interrelated concepts running through my mind. First, I have been impressed with the power of narrative as a pedagogical tool, as Trathen and Dale (1999) discuss. I have found that getting my students more in touch with their own personal narratives was an effective way of helping them find the "inner self" that is crucial to effective teaching (Palmer, 1998). Second, I was interested in applying new technologies to my teaching. Particularly, I was interested in the "webboard" software at my university that allows the construction of websites with interactive dialogue capability. Third, I was actively looking for ways to help my students write to authentic audiences as part of an effort for them to see writing in my courses as more than a mere assignment. Finally, I was intrigued with what King and Stahl (1997) had presented in the final keynote address. Could I use oral histories as a tool for uncovering insights into the reading and writing processes, and to literacy instruction? The course I designed for the following semester was based on these concepts. I believed that by integrating literacy biographies into my instructional repertoire, I could enrich my students' theoretical and practical understanding of literacy and literacy instruction. In the following sections, I first provide a description of the course and my thinking during its development, and of the technology I integrated into the course. Then, using mostly the words of the students themselves, I explore some of the insights that students acquired as a result of their participation in the course.

Designing and Implementing the Course

I implemented this project in the spring semester, 1998, in a master's level reading course entitled "Reading to Learn." There were 13 students enrolled in the class; all had teaching experience beyond student teaching, and all but two were currently teaching. This course traditionally focuses on theories of reading comprehension, reading comprehension instruction, and content area reading. Recently, I had struggled to include socio-cultural perspectives on literacy, but had found it difficult to find appropriate ways of framing the theory. Based on King and Stahl's (1997) insights at ARF, my intention was to engage students in a theoretical dialogue by centering the course on the development of a written literacy biography. In other words, the literacy biography would serve as an instructional tool to clarify and illustrate this theoretical perspective. Personal perspectives derived

from the biographies would be the basis for broad discussions of literacy and reading and writing instruction.

An important part of the process of developing and implementing the course was my active participation in all activities and assignments. I joined the students in writing and posting all biographies, as I describe below. Parenthetically, I found this process highly insightful in terms of my own understanding of literacy and literacy instruction, as well as the power of these activities in teacher education.

To prepare for the interview and authoring of this biography, I had each student write two autobiographies. The first focused on students' earliest recollections of literacy events; emergent literacy and early schooling events. The second autobiography explored the students' experiences as literate adults. The students kept a "literacy log," cataloging literacy events during a single day. From this log, they constructed a picture of themselves as a reader and writer, and of how these reading and writing activities fit into their socio-cultural lives.

The experience of writing the autobiography helped in the construction of "interview protocols," which were used to guide the students' interviews. In small groups, students brainstormed questions and prompts, which were then placed on the class listserv, an email network that distributed messages to all class members (see details on the listserv below). Each student then could "cut and paste" from the listserv to develop their own "custom made" protocols.

After securing informed consent from their interviewees, students conducted interviews. I suggested that interviews should last for about an hour, but most students' interviews were substantially longer. All but one student tape-recorded the interview (the exception found that her subject was intimidated by the presence of the tape recorder). Most transcribed at least part, and some all, of the interviews.

During this process, a number of other instructional events were taking place. We read Lee Smith's *Oral History* (1983), a novel about life in the rural Appalachian mountains. Parenthetically, the setting for the book is within a short driving distance of our campus. This book served two purposes. First, it connected students to the Appalachian oral tradition. And second, it allowed me to integrate and discuss content area reading strategies into the course. I would assign the readings along with various strategies, then we would discuss the effects of the strategies in relation to our expanding under-

standing of literacy. I also integrated "writers' workshop" into the class. I provided class time for students to assist one another in revising and editing the biographies and autobiographies. This served both as a model of current best practice in writing instruction, which was explicitly addressed, and to improve the quality of the students' biographies.

Technology Components

Two significant telecommunications technologies were woven into the project. All students subscribed to a "listserv" established specifically for the class. Listservs are email network systems that distribute messages to all subscribers. Students made regular posts to the listserv to discuss class, make suggestions, ask for assistance, provide advice, and generally extend our discussions beyond the classroom walls. In addition, as mentioned above, the listserv was a tool for constructing the interview protocols. All students were able to access protocol ideas from all class members via the listserv. Students could "cut" those suggestions they found useful off their email, then paste them onto word processing documents. This greatly reduced the amount of work required to construct individual protocols, while simultaneously increasing the quality. Gilbert (1999) analyzes the dialogue from this listserv.

The second technology is a website that I constructed with the assistance of Susan Gilbert (1999). This website is available via the World Wide Web (http://am.appstate.edu/~moormang/CLiC/CLICDS.HTM). All autobiographies and biographies were posted on the website. This made all student work public, and the writing and posting of texts an act of authentic publishing. In addition, webboards allow responses to individual posts, which allows feedback from the instructor, classmates, and anyone else who might be interested. In fact, several of the biography subjects posted responses.

Student Insights

This project turned out to be a powerful experience for both me as the instructor and for the students. Using students' personal and first hand experiences as a springboard for discussion seems to intensify the learning experience and bring life to concepts that often remain inert, if learned at all. To illustrate, I will explore how three concepts emerged from the process: (a) that learning to read and write is a powerful process that provides vivid and lasting memories; (b) the importance of being read to as a child; and (c) the lasting effects of both good and poor instruction. I will use unedited text from students' early literacy autobiographies. These writings were far more powerful than I had

anticipated. When designing the course, I had thought that the interviews and biographies would be the primary source of discussion. As the course evolved, however, I found the autobiographies to be an additional source of insight into literacy and instruction.

The process of writing the autobiographies enabled students to reconstruct many long forgotten childhood memories. One student describes the process:

> When I started to write about learning to read as a child I thought I would have a hard time trying to remember the details. The memories came fairly easy once I started. It is always fun to travel back in time to when I was a child. I was very lucky in many ways. My overall view of reading instruction seems to be fairly positive.

The power of these memories is captured in the following post. Note the initial denial of vividness of the recollection.

> My earliest recollections of learning to read and write are sketchy, fragments. Most involve a concrete object or person that triggers a memory of my childhood. Most likely, these recollections are equally memory and imagination. Nonetheless, they seem genuine and indisputable to me. I have many memories of being read to as a child. It was a nightly routine for me to be "tucked in" and read to. All of my memories of this include my father and my grandmother. I'm sure other members of my family read to me but they are the ones I remember. I also remember my father letting me pick the book. I had many books but there were a few I choose every night. These were *Two Little Miners, Horton Hears A Who* and *Mother, Mother I feel Sick.* The latter two of these are filled with rhyming words which I am sure had a great deal to do with my choosing them continuously. *Two Little Miners*, was published in 1949. This book was my father's when he was a child. I think this may have been the reason I initially liked the book but eventually it became one of my favorites. My fascination with this book could be explained in many ways. It is the story two men that in the mines get covered in black soot and by nighttime they were "black as night, black as a crow, black as black, coal black" (I can't believe I still remember that!"). My interest in this book may have been because I grew up in Monroe and was fascinated by the many different races surrounding me. It may have been because I was a naive little girl that thought if we all covered ourselves in soot we could all be just alike and everything would be better. It

could simply be that getting that dirty without getting in trouble seemed too good to be true!

Two themes emerged from the early literacy autobiographies that I would like to explore in the remainder of this paper. The first is on the powerful effect of being read to as a child. The following post is typical of the way students were able to capture a sense of warmth and well being associated with early reading experiences:

> One of my fondest childhood memories is of my parents reading a bedtime story just before tucking me into bed each night. My mother and father would take turns with the nightly ritual. I don't particularly remember having a favorite book, maybe a book about bears. I can visualize the pictures in a Bible storybook. The pictures were always the most important part of a book for me. I guess I have always been a visual person. At one point my parents joined a book club and we received a Disney book periodically in the mail. This bedtime reading continued to take place even after I began school.

The second theme was the lasting effect of both good and poor instruction in the early primary grades. This student writes of a warm (and humorous) memory of school:

> Miss Stamey, my kindergarten teacher, was young and had long soft hair. She kind of reminded me of the pictures I had seen of my mom in the late sixties. I remember singing and writing the alphabet, although I am not quite sure how Miss Stamey went about teaching the alphabet. I do remember a time when Miss Stamey was assessing my alphabet sound knowledge. I was very nervous. She asked me, "What sound does this letter make?" pointing to a "M" on the page. I didn't know. I thought real hard about it and, as I often do when I am perplexed, I took a deep breath and pressed my lips together to make my thinking sound, "mmmm". Of course she replied, "That's right." Well I was so confused. How could I be right when I had not even given an answer? This thought somewhat distracted me during the rest of the assessment.

And a more negative recollection of poor instruction:

> In second grade we had spelling test. This was a somewhat difficult experience for me. I broke down in tears and sobbed through many of my tests. I couldn't spell perfectly, and I was embarrassed. I fixed my weekly anxiety in third and fourth

grade. I learned to cheat. I was not very good at cheating, in fact my strategy was quite blatant. I don't understand why I never got caught when I had my spelling book either hanging half way out of my desk, or laying in my lap.

Oh well, I don't believe that question is important enough to ponder. For some reason I stopped cheating on my spelling tests when I reached the fifth grade, but I still hated spelling. I refused to play spelling games or participate in spelling bees. I still had my anxieties.

Many students became uncomfortably aware of how the effects of a good early literacy start in the home were offset by poor instruction. Note how this student begins with a warm recollection of reading in the home, but follows with clearly negative memories of her early education:

My earliest memories of reading are the ever popular bedtime stories. From the very beginning I always had tons of books. Every night at bedtime I would pick out at least two of my favorites and have mom or dad read them to me. I always wanted "just one more" when the last one was read. I remember two of my favorites were *The Poky Little Puppy* and one that mom and dad ordered special just for me. It was a version of Snow White, but it had my name and my mom and dad's and some friends of the family's names in the story. I can't remember the actual story all that well, but it something to do with a rose and I was helping Snow White & Dopey. Those two books were my absolute favorites and I had to have them read to me over and over again...

Today, I don't like to read. One of the reasons for this was because from first to third grade every night we had a homework assignment to read certain pages in our reading book. We had to read them three times; once silently, once out loud to our parents, and once more silently. Do you know how old a story becomes when you read it three times, and then again in class the next day? Another reason that I dislike reading is because in third grade we had "timed readings." We had three minutes to read a story then we were graded on what we read. Well I've always been a slow reader and three minutes was never enough time for me. I would always do poorly on the quizzes.

I blame my poor penmanship on my third grade teacher. I'm left handed, so I would slant my paper to the left. But Mr.

> Page felt all papers should be slanted to the right regardless of whether you're right or left handed. So every time we had writing class he made me slant my paper in a way that was not natural to me at all. Thus it was very awkward for me to write anything, much less the appropriate form of a certain letter. I make C's in writing that year, whereas in second grade I make A's. You figure that one out.
>
> So today I'm ashamed of my handwriting. I don't think it's pretty at all, and I just hope that anyone who has to read it can. Reading is more work than fun. As a matter of fact, I don't read for fun; I read when I have to. I read well but slow.

This student is even more explicit in pointing out the paradox of the joy of reading in the home with the tedium and stress of reading in the classroom:

> Learning to read and write was an unforgettable experience for me. In Kindergarten, reading was a frustrating task, but it was for reasons other than the material being too difficult, as was thought. As do most Kindergarten classes, we had the three basic reading groups. I was placed in the middle group, and that began my hatred for reading. I would become so angry during our lessons at all the kids who couldn't read, "See Jane run," within a five minute time span. The whole subject of reading was introduced as a tedious and boring process...At night, my whole attitude on reading altered. My father would sit me on his lap for hours reading to me. I would follow along, turn the pages, and sometimes read aloud with him. My attention could not be diverted during this time. Come bedtime, I would refuse to get under the covers unless my mother or father was holding a book, preferably Dr. Seuss. Because of this, my parents couldn't fathom the reports coming back from my teacher about my poor reading attitude.

Conclusions

These excerpts from students' early literacy autobiographies provide substantive evidence of the power of the experience. Too often, teacher education relies on telling students that learning to read is an intense experience; that reading to children is a cornerstone in the process; and that instruction, both good and bad, has a lasting impact on each child. These excerpts demonstrate that writing literacy biographies brings these abstractions to life. Students clearly demonstrate reflection on their own experiences as a learner, the cornerstone for

any meta-level understanding of instructional practice. Understanding their own experiences in learning how to read provides a powerful scaffold on which to base their instruction.

On a more anecdotal level, I found the quality of course dialogue to be among the richest in my teaching career. Students were able to connect to abstract concepts about literacy and learning to read and write in ways that seemed far more powerful than I had previously experienced. The autobiographies and biographies provided a common text which anchored our discussions of reading and writing instruction. Questions of "why" an instructional strategy might be effective seemed always to find their way back to the personal experiences we had uncovered in our writings. I have continued to use and refine this activity for three more semesters. I'm convinced that this is a viable and powerful tool for teacher education.

To gather further evidence of the effects of the project, we archived and analyzed email messages sent by class members to "lit-l", the class listserv. Students were required to post some class assignments to the listserv, but for the most part, it served as a sort of electronic extension of class dialogue. In the following paper, Susan Gilbert, analyzes these email messages. Susan, a doctoral student and research assistant, assisted in planning and organizing the class, and took an active role in contributing to the listserv. Her paper provides further insight into how personal narratives can be utilized in teacher education.

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Lit-L Reflections

Susan Dean Gilbert

Dewey's (1938) assertion that the "history of educational theory is marked by opposition between the idea that education is development from within and that it is formation from without"(p.17) illuminates what student literacy reflections address: teachers developing as professionals, engaging in concrete activities that support and challenge their own professional development. It was in this spirit that the "Lit-L" listserv was established especially for the literacy biography project described by Moorman (this volume). Any email submitted to Lit-L was distributed to all members of the class. The original intent of the listserv was to provide the students with a less structured, informal "place" where their dialogue extended beyond the classroom walls. Lit-L enabled them to reflect on their classroom experiences, university class discussions, Website postings, and readings, evolving into another way for students to reflect, not only on their own work, but on the work of their colleagues. This extended their reflections to another level: what Kusnic and Finley (1993) refer to as self-reflection. At this level students think and write not only about what they have learned, but also about what they have learned in relation to others. Taken as a whole, the emails are an articulate report on the effects of class activities on students' beliefs and practice.

Students submitted over two hundred email messages to Lit-L. Our analysis of these electronic exchanges pointed to an important distinction: that learning to read and write are socially and culturally embedded activities. Students reported a shift away from beliefs about literacy being merely the ability to read and retain information. What emerged instead were new beliefs, ideas and perceptions about literacy that included one's ability to participate in the discourse of a particular setting. Literacy, from this perspective therefore, became, for the students, a social, cultural, and political project (Gee, 1999).

In the following example, a student reflects on how her teaching was influenced by her recalled experiences as a student. She reports that she learned how to read and write with "worksheets and embarrassing read-alouds." In reaction to her own negative experiences as a learner, she now approaches reading and writing with her students differently. She has shifted from an explicit instruction paradigm to a more democratic, respectful, socially constructed learning environment:

As for considerations about curricular development of reading instruction, I feel like the first thing that needs to be done to accomplish successful instruction is to find some way of linking reading instruction to students' interests and needs. This includes making the instruction fun and interesting, providing a multitude of reading materials and experiences linking reading to future endeavors like jobs and school.

Another student writes:

I have learned that there are several things that go into how a person learns how to read. Not all of these things are school related. For instance, I believe that a person's surroundings and community play an important role. Also, people will best learn how to read if they are reading things that are of interest to them.

This student reported that as a result of recalling her own experiences, she engaged her students in a conversation about their literacy orientations. As a result her belief changed from thinking that everyone learned to read and write in a similar way to understanding that children come into the classroom with varied and sometimes profoundly different literacy histories. What resulted from this dialogue was the knowledge of her students' "Discourse" which Gee (1989) defines as "a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network.'" She discovered her students' "identity kit" (Gee, 1989) which resulted in a deeper understanding of their culture:

I was really excited about my class and the reflections. What will my students say about me? Will I be mentioned at all in their recollections? If I am mentioned, will it be positive or negative? In the beginning of the year I was really tested and questioned about why the students needed to know how to read. Many of their parents and grandparents don't know how to read or don't read very well. In fact this type of knowledge is not highly regarded in the culture of my students and it shows. One of my students told me that he didn't have to know how to read, because they didn't have to know how to read in jail. Many of them think jail is a place everyone goes. I have twenty-two students and sixteen of them have at least one parent in jail. Needless to say, there is more of a focus on surviving in their community than on reading. But they are beginning to see that knowledge/literacy and the ability to read and reason can

> open doors. I don't want to dismiss the idea that literacy depends on community, but it can also be challenged and I am praying that for my students it can also be changed.

Another concept that emerged was how early experiences with books and writing with primarily parents and teachers impacted how the students read and write as adults. These experiences have a direct impact on how they currently teach reading. In their literacy autobiographies, many recalled in full sensory detail, including feelings and nuances, their early reading and writing experiences as pleasurable and pleasant. Through their reading and online discussions they discovered that fluent readers share common incubating experiences involving a special time of being read to, usually in the lap or in the arms of a parent, or in the environment of a nurturing classroom. These discussions were particularly powerful as the students allowed themselves to fully immerse in an adult version of their emotions, coming as close as one can ever get to the originating experience. Again, they discussed how this writing/reading/reflecting-through-email experience translated directly into their classroom practices:

> There was this major focus on penmanship, on the mechanics of writing rather than the personal pleasure writing can provide. I think that writing needs to be legible, but many times as teachers we focus on this aspect of writing more than the pleasure that can come from good writing. If we are having a writing workshop in class I think it should be separate from instruction dealing with the mechanics of writing—I had positive experiences with writing in elementary school. My second grade teacher would brag to my mother about my stories. Children need to understand that writing can take you on a journey, so that we need to introduce it in a way that it becomes a means expression for personal reasons.

It was her recollection of positive early literacy experiences with her father, her writing of poetry, and journaling and peer-review in high school, that caused this student to consider the influences of early home and school experiences:

> This recollection got me thinking about how much I do remember from school and the influences in my life in the world of writing. I remember in sixth grade we had a poetry assignment. I don't remember the poetry, but I do remember the feelings I had while writing and the environment. I also remember my Dad and how encouraging and helpful he was. He was in the Air Force during this time of my life and he wasn't

> home a lot, but I do remember he was while I wrote my poetry. I also remember my high school senior English teacher. She was one of the greatest inspirations of my writing/reading career. We would begin the day by responding to a journal prompt she had on the board. We would write a great deal. We were avid creators, writers and publishers. We learned through this and peer-editing about the sense of audience, different styles of writing, writing for specific purposes.

Conclusions show that changing the fundamental beliefs systems of teachers is difficult. This resistance to change stems from teachers' prior experiences as students. Zeichner and Liston (1987), in their analysis of teacher education apprenticeship models, concluded that "conventional approaches to self-directed growth inhibit student teachers and thereby fail to assist in their full professional development." These emails, I believe, are examples of what true reflective practice is: an activity that provides an opportunity for true, fundamental personal and professional growth. This development is ultimately a personal charge and with it must come the willingness to confront what works and what does not, how one changes as a result, and what makes sense in light of those changes. This process puts responsibility for growth and development in the hands of educators themselves. Growth thereby becomes an ethical and moral requirement, a must for the informed practitioner. Stories provide a powerful avenue for understanding and reflection that can lead to such growth.

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The Official Language of Literacy

Rick Erickson, Tom Cloer, Alice Randlett

State and national educational institutions publish official bulletins, catalogs, and documents that contain everything from broad mission statements to specific learning goals for students. At the 1998 ARF meeting one of the problem court sessions featured a panel of literacy professionals who shared their views of different official educational documents. This article contains papers from three panelists. The first two authors critique state literacy learning objectives and the third decries the use of marketing metaphors to frame educational standards.

Rick Erickson's Benchmark Board Game

Illinois has developed an official set of educational standards that students are to meet to progress through grades K-12. Statewide benchmarks for all students are the core of widespread "quality assurance" efforts for holding schools and teachers accountable for student achievement. Illinois is apparently good at writing benchmarks. Ogle (1998) reported that the Illinois standards were rated in the top four in the nation and were the only ones receiving an "A" rating in an *Education Week* survey. In addition to official standards, Illinois is developing state tests that will be used to make decisions about promotion, remediation, summer school, and retention for Illinois elementary students. However, the benchmarks and the tests are not yet aligned. Ogle (1998) reported that Eunice Greer, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) director of standards and assessment, hopes to have a system aligned in five years.

In the immediate future, it will be interesting to see how the use of mandated and fixed benchmarks with accompanying tests works out. One belief is that accountability is unattainable because statewide benchmarks ignore the real world of variance and uncertainty that exists in every classroom. To paraphrase Shrag (1998), the longest distance in the world is between a curriculum policy paper and what goes on in a child's mind. However, this pessimistic view is not the norm, and a significant segment of Illinois school folks are taking the benchmarks seriously. Local districts are keying the 185 benchmarks to specific teaching activities. One Illinois regional office of education has created a web site (http://www.stclair.k12.il.us/makethelink/) with a matrix of the benchmarks and teaching activities.

While the school improvement movement at the state board level seeks to bolster accountability with benchmarks and matching test items, Illinois educators at the local level are concerned. Both teachers and principals say the ISBE benchmarks need to be restated in terms that students, teachers, and parents understand. Concerns about the jargon of benchmarks spurred me to develop a reading task that attempted to test the clarity of the benchmarks. Below is the plan I developed.

I drew a sample of 33 of the 185 Language Arts benchmarks, numbered them 1-33 and assembled decks of 3x5 cards. Each card had one benchmark printed on one side. I made a matrix with empty cells for the 33 cards and asked teachers and supervisors to sort the cards and write the number of the benchmark in a cell to see if they could assign a benchmark to a place on the matrix that corresponded to three criteria: (1) Goal area (reading, reading literature, writing, listening/speaking, application); (2) sub-goal area (for example, under reading are three sub areas: word analysis/vocabulary, reading strategies, comprehension); and (3) level (Illinois benchmarks are placed at five levels—early and late elementary, middle school, and early and late high school). The directions for the sorting task told the respondents to sort the 33 cards into five piles with 8 cards for Goal One, 5 for Goal Two, 7 for Goal Three, 5 for Goal Four, and 8 for Goal Five. Then they were directed to sort each pile into the sub-categories under each goal area. Finally, they were to sort the sub-category cards according to the state specified sequence from early elementary through late high school and write the number of the card in an empty cell on the board game.

Board Game Results

In Fall 1998, 30 teachers enrolled in two of my graduate reading courses sorted the 33 benchmarks across all five goal areas with 58% accuracy for goal area, 44% accuracy for sub-goal, 33% accuracy for school level. A break down of sorting accuracy by goal and sub-goal is as follows. Eight learning to read benchmarks were sorted with 53% accuracy for goal area. For sub-goal sorting, 3 word analysis and vocabulary benchmarks were sorted with 61% accuracy, 2 reading strategies benchmarks were sorted with 25% accuracy, and 3 comprehension benchmarks were sorted with 27% accuracy. Five reading literature benchmarks were sorted with 61% accuracy for goal area. For sub-goal sorting, 3 literary element benchmarks were sorted with 51% accuracy, and 2 read and interpret benchmarks were sorted with 37% accuracy. Eight write to communicate benchmarks were sorted with 61% accuracy for goal area. For sub-goal sorting, 2 spelling/grammar benchmarks and 3 composition benchmarks were both sorted with 58% accuracy. Two writing benchmarks were sorted with 38% accuracy. Five listening and speaking benchmarks were sorted with 74% accuracy for goal area. For sub-goal sorting, the 2 listening benchmarks and the 3 speaking benchmarks were sorted with 62 and 71% accuracy, respectively. Eight benchmarks for the goal area of apply and use language arts were sorted with 52% accuracy. Three sub-goals for locate, the 2 for analyze, and the 3 sub-goals for using information were sorted with 44, 44, and 30% accuracy, respectively.

The benchmark, "Locate information using a variety of resources," was easily sorted with 100% accuracy for both goal area (apply and use) and sub-goal (locate information). Another easy benchmark was, "Apply listening skills as individuals and members of a group in a variety of settings [lectures, discussions, presentations]." It was sorted with 93% accuracy for goal (listening/speaking) and 73% accuracy for sub-goal area (listening). Likewise the benchmark, "Present brief oral reports, using language and vocabulary appropriate to the message and audience [show and tell]," was sorted with 87% accuracy for both goal and sub-goal area (speaking).

Other benchmarks were very hard to sort. For example, "Respond to literary material by making inferences, drawing conclusions and comparing it to their own experience, prior knowledge and other texts," was only sorted with 13% accuracy for goal area (reading literature) and 7% accuracy for sub-goal (read and interpret). The benchmark, "Plan, compose, edit and revise documents that synthesize new meaning gleaned from multiple sources," was sorted with 7% accuracy for goal area (apply and use language arts) and zero % for sub-goal area (use information).

Possible Explanations

The most easily sorted benchmarks contained words that provided clear clues to which goal areas and sub-goal areas they were from. The first easy benchmark said "locate information" which matches the sub goal descriptor word for word. The next two easy benchmarks contain the words "listening" and "oral" and are from listening and speaking goal areas that had no separate sub-goal categories.

The hardest benchmarks to sort were from goal areas and sub-goal areas "read and interpret literature" and "comprehend and use information." The hard-to-sort benchmark from the state matrix for the read and interpret sub-goal was most often assigned to the comprehension sub-goal. Another hard-to-sort benchmark from the state matrix for the sub category using information was often sorted as a writing task. The sub-goal areas related to comprehension, interpretation and application of language arts appear to have the greatest overlap and redundancy.

How Many Benchmarks?

With all due respect for the need to have a comprehensive set of learning standards, the volume of Illinois benchmarks is consistent with the finding that American schools have the most content requirements of any industrialized nation of the world (Daggett, 1994). Furthermore, a breakdown of the benchmarks reveals that the "go to school" nature of the American curriculum is alive and well in Illinois. There are 59 benchmarks for Goal One: Reading With Understanding; 32 for Goal Two: Reading Literature; 27 for Goal Three: Writing to Communicate; 35 for Goal Four: Listening and Speaking; and 32 for Goal Five: Apply and Use Language Arts.

About two-thirds of the benchmarks (118 or 64%) are for reading and writing and apply largely to school reading and writing achievement that prepares students to be successful in the next grade, on the next test, and at the next level of education. Only one-third of the benchmarks focus on the major language processes used outside of school where, at work and as citizens in a democracy, we read, write, speak, and listen in the home, the workplace, or society in general.

Perhaps the suspected overlap, redundancy, and jargon that made it hard for teachers to sort the benchmarks could be reduced by combining goal areas. For example, reading literature might be placed with either learning to read or with applying and using language arts. If the latter were attempted, there could be one application goal area and sub-areas of literature and research.

Clarity of Benchmarks

It is true that taking the benchmarks out of the context of the original matrix made this sorting game difficult. When the benchmarks are read in the total scope and sequence of categories, it is possible to see how they are intended to mark progress across time. Nevertheless, the game provides a way to check on the clarity and meaning of benchmarks as individual items. From this perspective one could conclude that the Listening and Speaking benchmarks, with a 74% accuracy level, were easier to sort than the others. Likewise, the Reading Literature benchmarks, with a 48% accuracy level, were the most difficult. In terms of clarity, the benchmarks with the lowest sub-goal scores could indicate areas of overlap and confusion. This conclusion bears consideration when it is revealed that the four lowest sub-goal scores are for very important items that are supposed to mark progress in reading strategies, comprehension, read and interpret, and using information.

That benchmarks are not clear to teachers is ironic when one reads the introductory notes in the *Illinois Learning Standards*. According to State Board of Education officials, the standards and benchmarks were developed to: "be specific enough to be used in assessing progress and improving students' learning (p. vi)" and, "the standards clearly define the learning needed to reach that goal. They represent the results of schooling and thus may be considered exit standards" (ISBE, 1997, p. vii). This is clearly heavy-duty accountability language. It's no wonder teachers and principals are concerned when unclear and overlapping benchmarks are being used to police students and hold teachers accountable. Perhaps like vague laws that are ruled unconstitutional, vague benchmarks should be ruled uneducational.

Finally, even though Illinois earned a grade of "A" for its learning standards, the results of the benchmark board game speak to problems that accompany attempts to deconstruct literacy and express it in legalized levels of pinpointed achievement. The Illinois benchmarks map the literacy puzzle in great detail. However, when the puzzle pieces were disrupted, a group of Illinois teachers had limited success putting the them back together, suggesting that these literacy benchmarks need some literary reworking and we have a ways to go before we claim to have a genetic map of literacy benchmarks that teachers understand.

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Thomas Cloer, Jr.'s A Step Down from Sterling Standards to Vapid Vignettes

The state document titled *South Carolina English Language Arts Framework* (1996), or SCELAF, is similar to the national *Standards for the English Language Arts* (1996). Both are theoretically and professionally well-developed seminal documents that reveal oceans of differences between theory and practice in literacy development. We fly all over the galaxy with the most laudable, ingratiating standards before landing in a dung heap when showing how these become practice in the classroom vignettes.

This is not new. There has always been this gargantuan abyss between theory and practice. We simply haven't heretofore been forced to adhere to such artificial specificity as of late. We could write, research, and even teach theory without ever really being forced to follow through with concrete, explicit, unambiguous models of pedagogy developed from theory. But South Carolina has gone even further than the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. South Carolina also includes assessment with standards and, of course, the ubiquitous vignettes.

A framework, according to the South Carolina document, is like a poem, a diamante.

> It is a pattern, a format, a design to be completed by the schools and teachers in South Carolina who will use it as a starting point. Like a poem written by a child, it should be taken by each school or school district in the state and fashioned into a finished form appropriate to the needs of the local students and the community. (South Carolina English Language Arts Framework, 1996, p.4)

We have heard that echo, haven't we, every time a new standard has appeared anywhere. The standard will be a veritable slinky and will shift, step, roll, and slide to any beat in any community, anywhere, anytime.

One of the most interesting phenomena of recent times is the fixation on developing knowledge bases. Everything now instead of simply being titled a review of research must have a well-developed knowledge base. So, the first statement about South Carolina's Frameworks asserts that the document is a statement about what we know about teaching and learning of English language arts. I invariably, inexorably, and inescapably begin to think of what we don't know when I see these assertions about knowledge bases.

But, I must say, when I look at some of the things we have ostensibly learned in the last 40 years, I am amazed at the courage, the risk-taking attitude, the raw audacity to make such discipline-splitting statements as "learning is dynamic" or "learning never ceases" (SCELAF, 1996, p.5).

There are, however, several admirable and commendable aspects of these documents. In theory, they really are ingratiating. In the South Carolina document, the learning of language is organized into four strands which are based on the purposes and uses of language. These include: (1) using language to learn, (2) using the conventions and forms of language, (3) using language to communicate, and (4) appreciating language. These strands are then further developed by standards which, like the national standards, outline what students must know and be able to do. For example, in the strand called using language to learn, one standard states that students must synthesize information from a variety of sources. Who could disagree with that? Another strand is titled, "Appreciating Language." This standard states that students are to demonstrate an understanding of the aesthetics of language. Whoopee!

It is at this point, however, that the wheels begin to come off of this idealistic and futuristic paradigm that was to save those of us in the literacy business from ourselves. So let us get to the pragmatic and pedagogical application of these pedantic platitudes.

I hastily turned to the vignettes after soaring high with the theoretical strands and standards. I plowed head first into the mud with the very first model for appreciating language. The standard under appreciating language read: demonstrate an understanding of the aesthetics of language. The first sentence in the vignette starts off well. "The class is working in the school media center, conferring with each other, their teacher, and the school media specialist" (SCELAF, p. 35). Wow! This sounds like it is really going to be on target. My mind raced ahead. I bet they will be reading IRA's Young Adult Choices, the Newbery Award Winners, or IRA's Favorite Paperbacks. I wanted to run into that media center and mention this year's Newbery winner, *Out of the Dust* (Hesse, 1997) and follow that by telling these students they would love *Shiloh* (Naylor, 1992) and *Missing May* (Rylant, 1992), too. They all involved plots about poor people struggling in this class-conscious country. But, then my enthusiasm waned, and I almost dropped the ponderous pounds of standards in my hands when I incredulously read the next line. "All the students have selected a particular word that interests them, and they are searching for uses of their word that display the variety of its denotations and con-

notations" (SCELAF, p. 35). Not a Newbery winner, not a paperback, not a favorite chapter in literature, but a single word. There is no baptism here with life-lifting literature, no immersion, not even a sprinkling. To extend the analogy, a damp cloth for baptism would have been an improvement. Here, the focus is on a single word in the English vocabulary. At this rate of one word a day, considering there are 185 school days in an academic year, it will take 600,000 days, or 3,243 years to cover the English lexicon as it now stands. And remember, the lexicon is continuously growing and expanding.

This fictitious, futuristic, far-sighted vignette goes on to describe Zach, a basketball player, whose word was "game," not even a multisyllabic word, not a rich form class word serving as an adjective, adverb, or participle, but the word "game." This lofty paradigm for future pedagogy goes on to say that Zach wrote his response to this lesson as follows: "I found out that wild animals are described as 'game' because they were hunted for sport. It makes sense, but I hadn't thought about that before" (SCELAF, p. 35). God help us.

I turned to the other vignette that went with the strand, appreciating language, and the standard related to students demonstrating an understanding of the aesthetics of language. Here, I anticipated a teacher who had chosen poignant passages from *Walk Two Moons* by Creech (1994) or *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (1989), or *A Day No Pigs Would Die* (Peck, 1973). I couldn't wait to see what writers the eighth grade teachers would read, or whether the teachers themselves in the 21st century would display their personal writing to really demonstrate their understanding of the aesthetics of language.

But, alas, this was not to be. Instead, each eighth grade student surprisingly was given a huge bag filled with cotton, and the students were expected to clean seeds and trash from the cotton. Oh, I thought. This is leading to *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, the best book ever written on racism by that wonderful African-American writer Mildred Taylor (1976). What a wonderful idea. No, this was not to be. Instead, as they picked the seeds and trash from the cotton, the teacher shows overheads of cotton gins and "a discussion ensues about why this invention was important to cotton farmers" (SCELAF, p. 36). After the students have cleaned a fair amount of cotton, they bring out notebooks and record questions, comments, or thoughts they want to save.

Now, this is a fine introduction to something, I guess, but where is the input regarding an understanding of the aesthetics of language? The kids in the vignette did not read a single word of life-lifting language from any author on any subject in any genre. Where is the

teacher after shuffling and dealing overhead transparencies? "The teacher, meanwhile, is free to help individual students [as they try to teach themselves] or to circulate among peer groups as they confer" (SCELAF, p. 36).

It is not all that hard to produce and circulate babble nationally, regionally, or locally about literacy strands and standards. But, it seems it is extremely difficult to translate these into exemplary pragmatic, pedagogical models. Thus, the vignette was born into the literacy literature. This was a way to ostensibly ameliorate the effects of the standards movement, and yet provide a beacon for those lost in the fog. The vignettes have instead revealed how difficult it really seems to develop and practice the final step, classroom application. May the writer offer a caveat? I would suggest that when in doubt about what to put in a vignette, have children and youth read literature, and then write until developing tendonitis. When in doubt about what teachers should do in vignettes, how about instructing with declarative knowledge about some reading strategies, and then throwing caution to the wind and actually modeling the strategy for the students using fine pieces of literature? When in doubt about teachers' or students' roles, both should simply read and write while choosing from the plethora, constellations, or galaxies of good literature at their disposal. We certainly could do worse as these official documents so clearly demonstrate.

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Alice Randlett's To Market, To Market: Standards and Controlling Metaphors

> If the public has to decide what the school's mandate should be, surely citizens also have to determine whether that mandate is carried out, whether they are getting the results they want. That requires more than setting standards and holding schools accountable. Unfortunately...our conventional ways of defining success and measuring results can (and often do) undermine the principal ingredient of success, namely, a strong sense of public responsibility. (Mathews, 1996)

National Standards vs. University Standards

Because I am not strictly a teacher of teachers but rather a teacher of tutors who may or may not become teachers, I decided to examine university standards, realizing as I did so that there is no single source for such standards other than the laws and regulations codified by the state of Wisconsin. And, in fact, these are not standards in the strictly definitional form of "Exemplar(s) of measure or weight." I thought rather to interview some of my colleagues across the university to determine where they believed standards originate and where one might find them written.

Metaphor

Before turning to my interviews with a university chancellor, social scientist and scientist, I need to introduce the concepts of metaphor and controlling metaphor. So that I might give coherence to the disparities between and among the discourses of social science, science, and administration, I used Lakoff's (1992) general theory of metaphor as cross-domain mappings in the conceptual system. Metaphors are central to ordinary natural language, not mere literary constructs, and have cognitive reality. That is, we shape our conceptions of the world through metaphor. Metaphor allows us to understand a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter in terms of a more accessible, or at least a more highly structured subject matter. Metaphor may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. Such actions will, of course, fit the metaphor. This will, in turn, reinforce the power of the metaphor to make experience coherent. In this sense metaphors can be self-fulfilling prophecies.

A controlling metaphor is one that impacts, controls, or unifies an entirety (e.g., "The Journey," as in "love is a journey," "the hero's journey,"

"time as journey."). Susan Sontag, in her book, *Illness as Metaphor*, provides a discussion of what she sees as the controlling metaphors of capitalism in 19th and 20th century America when she writes:

> Early capitalism assumes the necessity of regulated spending, saving, accounting, discipline—an economy that depends on the rational limitation of desire. TB is described in images that sum up the negative behavior of 19th century *homo economicus*: Consumption; wasting; squandering of vitality. Advanced capitalism requires expansion, speculation, the creation of new needs (the problem of satisfaction and dissatisfaction); buying on credit; mobility—and an economy that depends on the irrational indulgence of desire. Cancer is described in images that sum up the negative behavior of 20th century *homo economicus*: abnormal growth, repression of energy, that is, refusal to consume or spend. (1978, p. 63)

It seems to me that the logical next step in this progression of *homo economicus* into the 21st century extends the requirements of advanced capitalism into a new being: *homo Mercatus*: Market Man. It must be said that my interviews were not guided by this metaphor but rather the metaphor developed out of my reading and rereading of the interviews. What follows is a ragged reporting of my informants' responses to my question: What are university standards and how do we know when we meet them? The interviewees included a university chancellor, a professor of biology, and a professor of sociology. All have considerable histories in the University of Wisconsin System; that is, all are veteran teachers in this mid-sized Midwestern university. All are male, which may or may not have influenced their choice of metaphoric language, but I find the same figures of speech in my own and female colleagues' talk.

Chancellor

Chancellor G. defined standards as assessment related to accountability and stated that the regents of the state university system require accountability. The 1992 *Report of the Governor's Task Force on University of Wisconsin Accountability Measures* recommends that accountability measures be publicized in an annual report or report card "in a highly visible manner," and that the system should also develop other "mechanisms of communicating its performance to *stockholders*" (italics mine). I was shocked by this blatantly economic term until I learned that stockholders is spell-checkerese for "stakeholders." Either way, I see the notion of ownership in a marketable commodity, in this case education, in these terms.

The chancellor says that professional standards are not standard; that is, while some departments must be certified, others do not need professional imprimatur. For instance, NCATE is optional as is American Chemical Society certification. As well, there can be dissonance between state agencies and professional accrediting societies (e.g., NCATE and the Department of Public Instruction).

He closed the interview by remarking that this university is moving to accept SAT scores as well as ACT scores so that we don't lose our *market share* of students who come from schools where only the SAT is given (italics mine).

Scientist

Professor B, a biologist, responded to my questions with a few of his own: "Who interprets the standards?" and "Who benefits from them?" He thinks that evaluation of faculty and students is based on classroom performance but the performance differs, is measured differently, and is based on differing expectations. He believes that we must start with the idea of what makes a good human being and how, as humans, we are minimally accountable. The intentional vagueness of the evaluation process causes stress and consternation to both parties—evaluator and evaluee. For example, he asked whether two scholarly publications in five years was enough?

Professor B asked about who is applying the standards? In his mind, productivity for scientists is measured differently from the social sciences and humanities though all are treated as if they make the same widgets. He also sees a decline in respect for college education. "Now it's simply a thing to check off on the way to success. More students seem to say 'Give me a product and I'll move on and eventually earn a degree.'"

He finds that textbooks drive curriculum and provide a kind of fall-back, fact-based position for many faculty as the ultimate—and easiest—reference. He stated that interpretation, while higher level, is harder to evaluate. Also, unequal preparation during K-12 may handicap minorities and low socioeconomic students. Unequal starting preparation is particularly hard to address in the sciences despite the extensive review in introductory classes.

There is a market for underrepresented groups in faculties, too, he noted. "How can we fix this if the pool of African-American mammalogists consists of three people? The market operates here, too." He closed by saying that having a PE coach for a high school science teacher can be handicapping, too.

Social Scientist

Professor W finds that, unlike K-12, university faculty do not have a contract that provides some standards for teachers. He sees that there are no real criteria for grading and grade inflation seems to be a real phenomenon. "We've fallen into the trap of associating self-concept with grades, as if we can actually give anyone self-confidence. Effort—working very hard—is not enough for an A."

He stated that as we evaluate, it's easy to provide effort, or how-many sorts of data; it's much harder to provide effect, or how-much, data. The hardest thing to document is the connection between what we do and the outcomes of the process. "Can we really say what we do causes the effect?"

"When grade point is the only system for evaluating students, we'll see a lot of subversion of that system going on. We've found we need subjective evaluation, too, and now we see the reinstitution of a sort of old boy network when it comes to affirmative action. We have gone from a sponsor system for mobility to a contest system and now we're returning to the sponsor system."

He contrasted the low degree of consensus about what constitutes knowledge in the social sciences against the high degree found in the sciences. As well, the building block approach of science education is missing in the social sciences, and this makes agreement about criteria for grading or standards difficult.

Market Metaphors

While my informants differ in their evaluation of evaluation, the consensual definition of standards, there does arise some consistency in the metaphors they use to describe their perceptions of the standards question. So, if we say that two problems are alike (e.g., grade inflation, the highly competitive market for minority mammalogists, the low productivity of sociologists, trim the fat from university budgets, market share of students), then we are saying that the solutions are also alike. That is, we can solve them by applying solutions from the marketing literature. But the market metaphor fails unless we find that customers of some institutions are always more satisfied, all their employees more productive, and all their practices less wasteful than those of public institutions.

If we are marketers rather than stewards, who then are our customers? Students? Parents? Taxpayers? Future employers? Conceiving

of education as a market place leaves out the possibility of political action and resistance on the part of students and teachers. Disgruntled customers do not customarily write letters to Congress or state legislators about poor service at K-Mart. Is not the view of "student as wallet" an impoverished one, at best? And, in giving the customer what she wants, do we give up any right to grades other than A's?

As teachers we have a political responsibility that a market metaphor obscures. Our bureaucratic situations presuppose and imply a connection with others that the market metaphor fails to convey. I hope never to see blue light specials in the humanities aisle.

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Reaction: A Critical Look at "The Official Language of Literacy"

Eunice N. Askov

This Problems Court was appropriately titled since the presenters and the ensuing discussion were largely critical of the standards movement. However, the word *critical* also implies reflection, seeing multiple points of view, and evaluation (rather than merely criticism). This reaction paper will attempt to summarize the concerns of the presenters and audience and reflect upon these concerns. First, however, it might be useful to present some background on the movement toward academic standards in schools.

The Changing Educational Environment

Globalization of American business and industry has led to the realization that the U.S. workforce may not be as competitive as that of other industrialized countries. The "products" of our educational system do not seem to be competitive with those of other industrialized countries. Furthermore, recent national achievement tests (National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP) indicate a slow but steady decline in some basic skills from previous years (Williams, Reese, Campbell, Mazzeo, & Phillips, 1995). For example, the average reading proficiency of 12th grade students, including White, African American, and Hispanic students, declined significantly from 1992 to 1994.

In addition, the skills that high school graduates do have seem not to be well matched to the needs of the workplace. A report entitled *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990) called attention to the lack of a

"system" for coordinating school and work, pointing out that many of the graduates from our public school systems were ill-prepared for the modern workplace. It proposed that a new performance standard should be set for all students to be met by age 16. Called the Certificate of Initial Mastery, it would be awarded only when students have demonstrated mastery on performance-based examinations for which they can explicitly prepare. As the report states, "Once created, this system would establish objective standards for students and educators, motivate students and give employers an objective means to evaluate the accomplishments of students (p. 6)." The National Council on Education Standards and Testing (1992), in a report to the Congress, the Secretary of Education, the National Education Goals Panel, and the American people, also recommended the adoption of high national education standards for all students and voluntary assessments that are linked to the standards. The report then recommends specific components for these standards that should be developed at the national and state levels including performance-based testing of competency or mastery.

Educational associations as well as many state departments of education have responded to the skill standards movement by developing education standards. Probably the best known and leader of these efforts is the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) (Malcom, 1993). Similarly, the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English have created joint standards for English language arts (1996).

Problems Court Discussion

Standards state what a person upon completion of study should know and be able to do. Strong concerns were expressed about who is setting the standards and the sources of knowledge from which the standards are drawn. All presenters seemed to recognize that the standards-setting process is an inherently political one.

While it may appear that business is controlling the standards-setting agenda in the schools, and in fact, business has pushed passage of the National Skill Standards Act of 1994 (1994) in setting skill standards for workers in various occupational areas, businesses have not been heavily involved in setting standards for schools. Similarly, educators have not been closely involved with most of the attempts of the business community to establish occupational skill standards, creating a gulf between the content of the skill standards and the curricula of the public schools. In fact, one criticism of the school standards is that they do not relate closely enough to the workplace. In other words,

school seems to be its own workplace that operates in a vacuum from the rest of life (as well as the workplace).

However, the process of setting standards does appear to come from the business culture. Randlett cautions that this use of business and market metaphors in standards-setting turns people into products—that standards fail to convey special relationships between teachers and students. If children are "products," and standards are to control the quality of the products, then standards can regulate teachers and instructional content. Parents who are informed about standards can demand more accountability from teachers and schools. Do standards, then, run counter to having parents involved in school if parents are there to judge the curriculum and the teachers in relation to the standards?

Furthermore, it seems that standards seem to be attempting to make the curriculum "teacher proof" like the old teaching machines. If teachers are provided the standards that children must master at a given level, they won't spend precious time on activities such as reading award-winning children's literature. In fact, Cloer's examples of "ubiquitous vignettes" from the South Carolina English Language Arts Framework illustrate the lack of imagination and disregard for children's literature that can make standards seem trivial and simplistic.

Both Hayes and Smith spoke about accountability at the university level as well. Hayes reported that K-12 standards are becoming a way of evaluating teacher education programs in Utah. Similarly, Smith said that in the near future high school students will have to pass a statewide exam—performance assessments by content area appropriately named PASS—in order to enter the universities in Oregon's state system of higher education.

Much of the discussion in the Problems Court centered around the concern for diversity. Standards, by their nature, appear to eliminate (or at least ignore) differences and diversity. This seems hard to accept in an increasingly diverse society. It could be suggested that standards may be part of a political agenda to disempower minorities who are becoming increasingly more vocal. That is probably not the ostensible intent, but it may in fact become the outcome.

Erickson's Benchmark Board Game with the Illinois state standards illustrates the difficulties of writing standards so that they can be assessed. Apparently, the state educational officials recognize this problem of misalignment between standards and assessments. However, is alignment a desirable process to be done at the state

level? Will a statewide effort ignore the differences in communities across the state?

Perhaps standards are best left as a "veritable slinky" (Cloer) that can fit into any school, community, or culture. Perhaps they best serve the function of providing general guidance while letting local school communities provide the specifics. Perhaps educators should recognize that it is "extremely difficult to translate these (standards) into exemplary pragmatic, pedagogical models" (Cloer). Perhaps our role as educators and researchers should be to advocate for this moderate position, recognizing that standards are here to stay, at least for a while.

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An Exploration of the Reader's Bill of Rights

Laurie Elish-Piper, Mona W. Matthews, Jerry L. Johns, Victoria J. Risko

Issues of democracy are prevalent in educational journals and discussions (Beane, 1998; Fleischer & Schaafsma, 1998). While most educators support the notion that democracy is an integral part and important goal of the public schooling system in the United States, less agreement appears to be present regarding the rights and responsibilities of learners within democratic classrooms and schools (Fleischer & Schaafsma, 1998). More specifically, what rights and responsibilities do learners, teachers, and readers have? All of these issues are embedded within the current political climate wherein state and local mandates are dictating what teachers can teach, and in some cases, how they teach it. This in turn, greatly influences the rights that students have within classrooms. All of these issues challenge teachers and teacher educators to examine what they believe and value in learning and reading.

In his book, *Better than Life*, Daniel Pennac (1994) examines how his son changed from an enthusiastic young reader to a reluctant teenage reader. Pennac ponders how this unfortunate turn of events occurred, and he concludes that well-meaning parents and teachers often limit the choices and rights of readers, thus making reading a negative experience. In his book, Pennac proposes a Reader's Bill of Rights. The Reader's Bill of Rights states that readers have:

1. The right to not read.
2. The right to skip pages.
3. The right to not finish.
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, 1994, pp. 170-171)

As teacher educators, the authors of this paper began to wonder about the appropriateness and usefulness of the Reader's Bill of Rights. Did Pennac's Bill of Rights offer a vehicle for helping teachers examine their beliefs about reading and readers? Did this Bill of Rights offer a tool for asserting what we, as teacher educators, believe and hope to nurture within our students? As Carolyn Panofsky argued in her presentation at the 1998 American Reading Forum Conference, literacy is a series of value commitments (Panofsky, 1998). We wondered if teachers and future teachers viewed literacy as a personal and professional commitment. We questioned if teachers felt that they had rights as readers? Did they exercise the rights that Pennac proposed? Did they feel these rights applied to other readers, including their students?

Based on this framework and the associated questions, we undertook a pilot study with teachers and preservice teachers at our universities and then engaged American Reading Forum conference participants in a Problems Court Session focusing on the Reader's Bill of Rights.

The Pilot Study: Research Perspectives and Questions

As teacher educators, we wondered how teachers would respond to the Reader's Bill of Rights. For example, do inservice and preservice teachers feel the rights describe them as readers? Do inservice and preservice teachers agree or disagree with the rights? A pilot study was undertaken to examine these questions and gather more insight into teacher beliefs and practices associated with the Reader's Bill of Rights.

The Pilot Study: Methodology

We created a survey (Appendix) and administered it to a total of 131 educators who were enrolled in courses at the institutions where we teach in the Midwestern and Southern regions of the United States. The respondents ranged from preservice teachers seeking initial certification to inservice teachers pursuing graduate degrees. Tables 1 and 2 provide information about the respondents.

Table 1

Degrees Sought by Respondents

Degree Sought	Number of Respondents
Bachelor's Degree	16
Master's Degree	71
Educational Specialist Degree	9
No Degree Sought	15
No Response	20

N = 131

Table 2

Professional Positions or Goals of Respondents

Professional Position or Goal	Number of Respondents
Elementary Teacher	86
Middle School Teacher	7
Secondary Teacher	2
Special Education Teacher	7
Other	9
No Response	20

N=131

The surveys asked respondents to react to each statement in terms of "how much the phrase was like you?" and "to what degree do you agree or disagree with each phrase." Percentages were calculated for each item. The percentages were also compared with demographic information such as degree sought and professional position or goal to determine if there were patterns associated with certain groups of respondents.

Results of the Pilot Study

Overall, respondents tended to agree that the positive statements in the Bill of Rights were "very much" or "much like" themselves. By positive statements, we mean the statements that focus on the positive aspects of reading that educators tend to encourage readers to do. We have classified the following statements as positive statements: The right to reread, the right to read anything, the right to escapism, the right to read anywhere, and the right to browse. In response to these statements, those surveyed overwhelmingly indicated that these statements were "very much" or "much like" themselves with percentages ranging from 67% up to 88%.

On the other hand, respondents tended to have less agreement that the negative statements in the Bill of Rights described them. We identified negative statements as those which described reading behaviors that educators tend to discourage readers from doing. We classified the following statements as negative statements: The right to not read, the right to skip pages, and the right to not finish. From 31% to 43% of respondents indicated that these statements were "very much" or "much like" themselves. A summary of this information is provided in Table 3.

The only real surprise in these results was that 35% of the respondents indicated that the right to not read was "very much" or "much like" themselves. Since follow-up questions or interviews were not included in the pilot study, we were unable to determine why these respondents did not read. Furthermore, we were unable to learn if this behavior was characteristic of all reading situations or related to only course readings since all respondents were enrolled in a university course at the time of the pilot study.

In addition, another interesting finding was that respondents tended to indicate that the rights to not read, skip pages, and not finish did not describe them, but they rated these statements higher in terms of other reader's rights in these areas. This finding caused the researchers to question whether respondents replied about themselves as they thought the researchers would want them to reply, or if the respondents had not given themselves permission to engage in what they may have perceived as negative reading behaviors.

Table 3

Summary of Responses to "Very Much Like Me" and "Like Me" Statements

Statement of Right	Percentage of Respondants indicating "Very Much Like Me" and "Like Me"
The right to not read.	35%
The right to skip pages.	31%
The right to not finish.	43%
The right to reread.	70%
The right to read anything.	86%
The right to escapism.	67%
The right to read anywhere.	88%
The right to browse.	87%
The right to read out loud.	57%
The right to not defend your tastes.	56%

The second portion of the survey asked respondents to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the statements. Overwhelmingly, respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with all of the statements except the right to not read. On this statement, 51% of the respondents "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with this statement, indicating that almost an equal number of respondents "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" with the statement. A summary of these results is provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Summary of Responses to "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" Statements

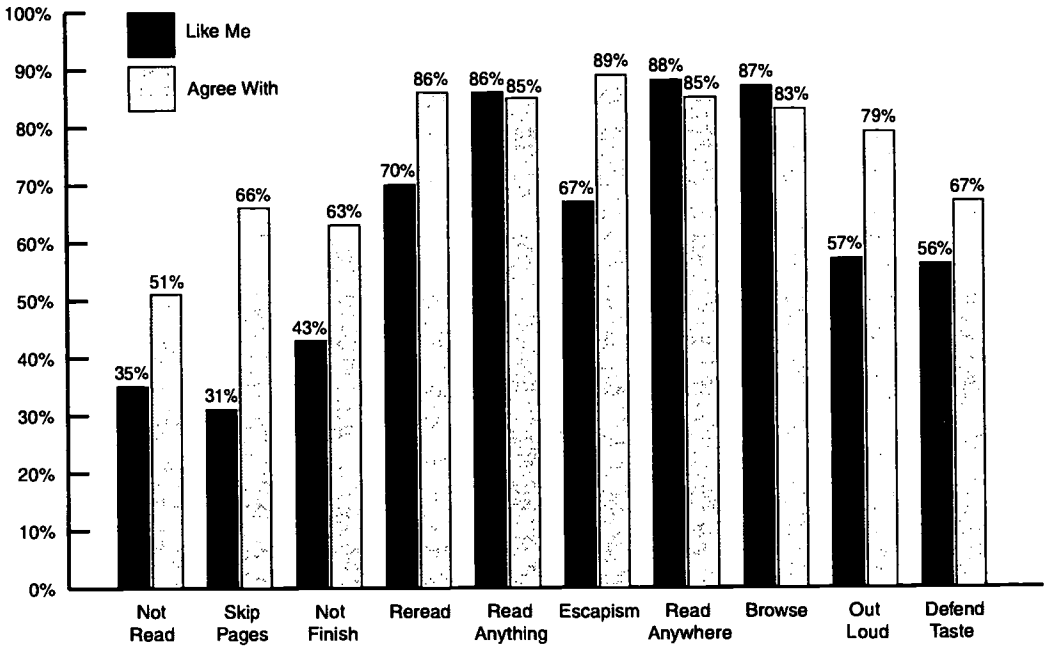
Statement of Right	Percentage of Respondants indicating "Strongly Agree" and "Agree"
The right to not read.	51%
The right to skip pages.	66%
The right to not finish.	63%
The right to reread.	86%
The right to read anything.	85%
The right to escapism.	89%
The right to read anywhere.	85%
The right to browse.	83%
The right to read out loud.	79%
The right to not defend your tastes.	67%

Overall, no clear patterns existed within specific groups of respondents. For example, preservice teachers tended to respond to a given question at approximately the same rate as inservice teachers. A trend was noted, however, from the first group of questions (how much is the statement like you?) to the second group of questions (to what degree do you agree or disagree with each statement?); similar response patterns existed for individual questions. In other words, those statements that received high percentages in the first group of questions also received high percentages in the second group of ques-

tions. This is a logical finding since most teachers tend to try and serve as role models who "practice what they preach." Figure 1 shows a comparison of "Very Much Like Me" and "Like Me" responses on the first group of questions with "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" responses on the second group of questions.

Figure 1

Comparison of Responses to "Like Me" and "Agree With" Statements



Problems Court Session

We shared the results of the pilot study with the participants at a Problems Court Session at the 1998 American Reading Forum Conference. We hoped to gain additional insights into the viability and usefulness of the Reader's Bill of Rights by dialoguing with conference participants about the various statements, the findings of the pilot study, and their personal responses to the survey. In addition, we hoped to get feedback on the design and focus of the survey itself, as well as suggestions about future research.

Session organizers took notes on participants' comments and suggestions. In addition, participants were encouraged to share their written notes with organizers, which several participants did. This information was analyzed to identify patterns, and the following discussion highlights major issues which arose during the Problems Court Session.

The participants supported the idea of a Reader's Bill of Rights for several reasons. They felt it provided a tool to help teachers identify and reflect on their beliefs about reading and readers. One participant described the Reader's Bill of Rights as "an invitation to discuss reading," and several participants indicated that they would use it as a discussion tool in their literacy education courses. Another participant stated that she could use the Reader's Bill of Rights to help students write and reflect on their own literacy autobiographies.

The participants noted that many of the statements addressed motivational issues which underlie reading instruction and success. Furthermore, they discussed the voluntary nature of reading and the complex dimensions of reading. For these reasons, they argued that it was difficult to get a clear picture into the complexity of the respondents' thinking with only the survey instrument. They suggested that conducting follow-up interviews with a randomly selected sample of respondents would allow for a clearer picture of why respondents answered as they did. By combining the quantitative data from the survey with the qualitative data from interviews, trends could be identified and also described. Participants also indicated that findings from follow-up studies would have important implications for policy, curriculum, and classroom teaching.

Implications for the Reader's Bill of Rights Survey and Future Research

Problems Court Participants suggested restructuring the survey instrument so it clarified the intent of the two sets of statements. Consensus was reached that the first set of questions should focus on what the respondent does as a reader, and this could be stated, "As a reader, I believe I have the right..." For the second set of questions, participants indicated that the focus should be on the rights that students have. This could be stated, "As a teacher, I believe my students have the right..."

Participants suggested that gathering additional demographic data about respondents would provide a clearer picture of trends in responses. For example, knowing the teachers' grade levels, numbers of years teaching, and subject areas might provide insights into similarities and differences among the various groups. In addition, participants supported the idea that broadening the survey to include the general public would provide information about how those outside of education think about reader's rights. For the general public, the second set of questions could focus on asking "to what degree should

schools/teachers give students the right to..." Parents could also be included in the survey to gain information on their beliefs. In addition, participants suggested including children from the intermediate through high school grade levels to provide insights into students' beliefs about reading and reader's rights.

Participants also suggested that surveying educators who were enrolled in courses may have skewed responses toward what they thought the researchers, who were also their professors, wanted to hear. Including teachers who are not enrolled in courses could help to provide a broader and clearer picture of teachers' responses to the Reader's Bill of Rights.

Other suggestions included asking respondents to explain why they rated the statements as they did to provide qualitative data to complement the quantitative data gathered from the survey. In addition, including information on responses in terms of narrative or expository texts was also suggested as a way of getting at the different approaches and beliefs that teachers and students have about reading different types of texts.

Lingering Questions and Issues

Some lingering questions and issues related to the Reader's Bill of Rights remain after the pilot study and the Problems Court. For example, why did 35% of the preservice and inservice teachers surveyed indicate that the right to not read was "very much like me" or "like me?" Does this mean that they don't identify themselves as readers? Can and should teacher education programs address this issue, and if so, how would they do so? We wondered if all readers are entitled to the same rights regardless of reading proficiency or age? Furthermore, we questioned if all of the rights serve in the best interest of the individual or society? While we don't have answers to these important questions, we offer them as challenges to ourselves and all literacy practitioners and researchers. With ongoing dialogue, reflection, and future research, we hope to gain greater insights into the rights and responsibilities of readers.

Conclusions

The authors plan to undertake a broader study which includes teachers at all levels, students, parents, and members of the general public. The survey is currently being redesigned to incorporate suggestions from the Problems Court Session. The findings from the pilot study, coupled with the responses during the Problems Court Session,

indicate that the Reader's Bill of Rights is a valuable tool for promoting discussion and reflection about teaching, learning, and reading. As we seek to help teachers become reflective practitioners and students to become aware of their learning and reading processes, the Reader's Bill of Rights holds much promise for helping teachers and learners further their understanding of reading and readers. Furthermore, as educators seek to provide learning opportunities for all students in the spirit of democratic education, the central issue of rights and responsibilities is critical. The authors believe the Reader's Bill of Rights can serve as a useful tool to help educators examine, debate, and address readers' rights in schools and in teacher education programs.

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Appendix

Reader's Bill of Rights Survey

How much is each of the 10 phrases like you? Darken the letter on your answer sheet.		Very Much Like Me	Much Like Me	Somewhat Like Me	Very Little Like Me	Not At All Like Me
1.	The right not to read	A	B	C	D	E
2.	The right to skip pages	A	B	C	D	E
3.	The right not to finish	A	B	C	D	E
4.	The right to reread	A	B	C	D	E
5.	The right to read anything	A	B	C	D	E
6.	The right to escapism	A	B	C	D	E
7.	The right to read anywhere	A	B	C	D	E
8.	The right to browse	A	B	C	D	E
9.	The right to read out loud	A	B	C	D	E
10.	The right to not defend your tastes	A	B	C	D	E

To what degree do you agree or disagree with each of the 10 phrases? Darken the circle on your answer sheet.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. The right not to read	A	B	C	D	E
12. The right to skip pages	A	B	C	D	E
13. The right not to finish	A	B	C	D	E
14. The right to reread	A	B	C	D	E
15. The right to read anything	A	B	C	D	E
16. The right to escapism	A	B	C	D	E
17. The right to read anywhere	A	B	C	D	E
18. The right to browse	A	B	C	D	E
19. The right to read out loud	A	B	C	D	E
20. The right to not defend your tastes	A	B	C	D	E

Please share some information about yourself:

21. Sex
    a. female b. male

22. Professional position or goal:
    a. elementary teacher
    b. middle school teacher
    c. secondary teacher
    d. special education teacher
    e. other

23. Degree being sought
    a. B.A. or B.S.
    b. M.A. or M.S.
    c. Ed.D. or Ph.D.
    d. none

Literacy Histories: Using Our Own Literacy Histories to Inform Practice

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When looking at literacy histories, researchers have reported on such areas as the nature of reflection (Jalongo & Isengerg, 1995; McClaughlin, 1994) and the resistance that the writers exhibited while writing their own histories (Stansell, 1993). Studies of teacher reflection have extended into areas not traditionally seen as literacy areas such as content classrooms (Robinson & DiNizo, 1996).

Research on reflection from several vantage points has been done. Miller (1995) reported on using teacher reflection as a way of rethinking teaching from a feminist point of view. In *Naming Silenced Lives: Personal Narratives and Processes of Educational Change*, McLaughlin and Tierney (1993) used the reflections teachers to examine the experiences of marginalized groups who have been, traditionally, denied full access to education. Collaborative classroom reflection on current practice has also been done to see how it could impact practice (Hassler & Collins, 1994).

Though teacher classroom reflection done to impact one's own teaching is not new, little mention is made of teachers reflecting on literacy life-histories. This is writing the story of becoming literate from one's earliest memories to the present. What similarities will emerge if a group of teachers write their histories and examine them for common threads and common stories?

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine multiple literacy histories from in-service teachers to see what common themes emerge from the data that could have an impact on classroom practice. Are there shared memories that teachers have that will confirm or disconfirm current practice? Do teachers share stories from their collective pasts that might challenge their own personal practices?

Limitations

When working with recollections, selective memory can be problematic. Are we hearing the truth about the past, or the teller's edited version of the truth? As an individual's view of the world is always a personal negotiation (Smith, 1996), we have to read the histories with that in mind.

Methodology

Population

Participants were 60 graduate students in three education cohorts who must take "Literacy Across the Curriculum," a graduate reading course. These students are employed by the same school district and have at least three years of classroom experience. The cohort members have been chosen by their district to represent, as closely as possible, the demographics of teachers in the district with regard to grade level, ethnicity, and content area.

The Data

Students were asked to write the history of their literacies from childhood to the present. Little instruction were given except that they may use artifacts, such as report cards, discussions with significant people, and their own memories to complete the task. They were told that they were sharing their histories in class with an eye to how they might impact what they do in classrooms.

The histories were discussed, and possible uses suggested, for the information. Then, they were analyzed by a professor and volunteer students with the purpose of looking for emerging themes (Goetz & LeCompte, 1981). The data were unitized (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each information unit was placed in a database under the heading "quote." The other headings in the database were "indicators" and "name." Under indicators, the researcher placed any theme that they felt might be used at a later date to identify this unit. A sample of this database might look like Figure 1.

Once all of the histories were unitized, mini-databases were examined to see which indicators seem to appear in many of the mini-databases. This led to finding hidden themes that may have eluded the researchers in other ways. The resulting themes were then analyzed by a professor at another university who works extensively with literacy histories to see if these results coincided with themes that he had seen.

Figure 1

Sample Mini-Database

"Family" – the indicator selected

Indicators	Quote	Name
Preschool	I remember riding in my mother's car	Bill
Signs and asking. what different signs meant		
Family, newspaper, preschool, childhood, reading	At home there was always the newspaper.	Bill
Family, newspaper, preschool, childhood, reading	I remember people reading the newspaper all the time	Bill

Some Emergent Themes

Some themes that emerged from the histories could impact teachers and their classrooms. One of these was the effect of teacher attitude on student performance (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). "Teachers who produce greater learning gains accept responsibility for teaching their students. They believe the students are capable of learning" (Good & Brophy, 1991, p. 443). This certainly doesn't come as news, but the impact of the participants' voices adds power to their confirmation of research on teacher expectation. Terri had both good and bad things to say about teacher expectation.

> Now, I enter Jr. High...My 7th grade progress reports were not kind except for one special nun named Sister M. She was my saving grace in Jr. High. Her kindness and care helped motivate me to try hard and work on my weakness in math. Then there was Sister L. . . who single handedly helped me to hate history and the 7th grade year. Her yelling, slapping us with rulers, and always standing us up for her verbal barrage - these were so embarrassing. (Terri)

Reflecting on one experience, Fransesca shares Terri's sense of embarrassment and frustration. Here, a teacher appears to be setting high goals for the student, but, on reflection over years of experience, she sees through his statement.

> I really do not remember how I was taught, but I remember reading groups. There was a top, middle, and low group. I was in the top group, but I recall Mrs. W., my first grade teacher, saying "If you don't practice, I'm going to have to put you down a group." Now that I think of what she said, I am thinking, "What a horrible thing to say to a child." I was in the top group, yet I was receiving threats instead of praise. (Fransesca)

Things were not all bad for Fransesca, however. She told of a teacher who did have a very positive attitude toward school and her students. She tells here of the difference that this teacher made.

> I remember my kindergarten teacher name was Ms. G. She was so beautiful, and I remember that I wanted to do everything just right, so that I would please her. She taught us the alphabet, not any ordinary alphabet, but the alphabet people. Every letter was represented by an character figurine.

> It was awesome! She would tell the greatest story for each letter and would tell her a better story, if we could. I was hooked. I loved Ms. G. and I loved school. Dear mom says that I knew how to read easy books by the time I entered first grade. (Fransesca)

Another student who talked of the power of expectations was Margaret. The particular experience came at the university, and made a lasting impression on her, as her story made a lasting impression others. A quote from this history now hangs in my office.

> He was the professor who encouraged his students to read difficult passages over and over until they made sense. He was the professor who encouraged us to write in the margins of our books. After all, he reminded us, the books belonged to us. . . we had paid for them. Professor L. has my undying gratitude. Instead of displaying disdain for our ignorance, he chose toteach us. (Margaret)

That last line, "Instead of displaying disdain for our ignorance, he chose to teach us," sums up, for us, the whole notion of teacher expectation and the impact that it can have on students. What a stark contrast to "If you don't practice I'm going to have to put you down a group." The notion of a teacher having the choice to decide to teach what students need to learn rather than trying to force them to keep up is one worthy of sharing and seems clearer in a story than in a statement.

Another interesting area that emerged from these histories was the things that students learned that are a part of the hidden curriculums of classrooms (Goodlad, 1984; Jackson, 1990).

> Second grade is like driving through a thick fog. . . The only memory I have is playing races with a buddy of mine to see who could finish first...I guess this gives you an indication of the type of assignments we were given. I can only remember doing them over because they were messy, not wrong. (Bob)

Jane, too, learned a lesson from a teacher that, we're sure, the teacher never intended to teach.

> My mother raced to school and arranged for the math teacher, Mrs. S., to tutor me after school until the end of school (Oh joy! Thought I). This is when math became my enemy. It

> remains as such to this very day. Now, Mrs. S. was no more interested in tutoring me after school than I was to be tutored. She'd give me math busy work until I was picked up. Mrs. S. and I kind of had a silent understanding. We would appease my mother. (Jane)

We wonder how many of these silent understandings existed, and still exist, in schools between teachers and students? How many times we have *not* verbalized, but accepted, a silent agreement with a student to leave each other alone and just make it through the year.

Jane, of course, learned other things while in school besides keeping secret agreements with her teacher. She also learned how to survive reading down the rows. Unfortunately, she also learned something about being a life long reader.

> We read books aloud. Because I was not a good oral reader, I was one of those who "planned ahead." My paragraph had been well practiced when it was my turn to read and I was really embarrassed if I had miscounted. I would never have thought of reading for pleasure. (Jane)

The last theme that will be discussed here has to do with stories and storytelling. Several participants talked of their early experiences with significant storytellers in their lives. Interestingly, many of them did not mention early reading experiences, but they did not seem to have trouble learning to read. They came to school with a sense of story

> I do have a very vivid memory of my grandmother telling us stories. My grandmother grew up in Marked Tree, Arkansas during the depression. She told stories of her youth and what life was like during those times...Growing up in the South exposed my grandmother to many different cultures and dialects. Thus, my most vivid recollection of literacy at a young age wasn't anyone "reading" to me, but more of my grandmother "telling" me stories. She would different characters in her stories different accents. Most of the characters had a prominent Southern "drawl." My favorite stories were about Uncle Remus, with the Tar Baby, Brer Rabbit, and Brer Fox...I asked my grandmother about these stories and she said that she must have read them to us, but we couldn't find any books in her home. I just remember that she used great facial expression and was very animated and she described the stories so vividly that I can still picture them in my mind. . . .When I went

> to kindergarten, I remember vaguely reading about Dick, Jane, and Spot. I don't remember much about them, other than the fact that I was excited to read about them and find out what would happen next. It was exciting to be able to read. (Betty)

For Bob, not only was it important to hear stories, but it was equally important to tell them

> There was also a rich oral history that included rhymes, limericks, some more disgusting that others, but every kid had to be a master of storytelling to be respected. Stories consisted of real life experiences with a little, or a lot, of fiction involved. This depended on who was telling the story. The favorite type of story that older kids told were scary stories. These stories were not your usual type of scary stories because the event happened not far from where you lived or you knew the street or the building where the gruesome event occurred. I remember being one of these storytellers weaving truth and lies in a master piece that none of the other older kids believed, but the younger ones were impressed. (Bob)

Jaime talked of his grandmother who read to them and told stories. She was a teacher in Monterey, Mexico. He also adds something different.

> In addition, my grandmother played piano and it was always a special treat when she played Cri Cri songs for us. Francisco Gabilondo Soler was a Mexican composer of children's songs during the 1930's and 1940's. All of these popular songs are referred to as Cri Cri songs, and all tell stories that teach values in which young animals are the main characters. Cri Cri songs are the equivalent of the Mother Goose Stories or Aesop's fables. (Jaime)

When Jaime read his history to the class, he added that he had talked to his mother about it. He had told her that his memory of his grandmother telling them, and reading them, stories was strong and that he was glad that she had spoken English. His mother told him that his grandmother had not spoken a word of English. All stories had been told in Spanish. Jaime asked the class if anyone else had been told stories in another language but remembered them in English. We began to ask the same question of some of the participants and found that it was a fairly common phenomenon. We don't know why, but the discussion continues.

Possible Implications

By examining out own literacies, we may be able to better judge our behaviors in classrooms. It is interesting to speculate on things that we, as teachers, may be doing in classrooms today that we ourselves found intolerable as students. Also, if we can identify behaviors of teachers and other significant people in our literate lives who moved us closer to literacy, we may be able to incorporate their behaviors into our own methodology.

One more possible implication emerges from the last theme that was discussed. First, does hearing and telling stories help prepare students for reading just as being read to does? Second, if story telling does help, does it matter what language the stories are told in as long as the student can understand them? Lastly, does this free up some of our non-English speaking grandparents, aunts, and other relatives to begin speaking to kids again? For a while now, some parents have been hesitant to allow non-English relatives speak to their children so as not to confuse them when they went to school. This, often, means the loss of a second language in a single generation. We hope that others will take a research interest in this area.

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Using Literacy Conversations for Healing: The Significant Conversationalists

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The therapeutic value of reading has been recognized from ancient times as its concept, reading is conducive to mental health, can be traced back to the Greeks and Romans. An inscription on a library in Alexandria, Egypt, found around 300 B.C. translates to "the nourishment of the soul" (Cornett & Cornett, 1980). Bibliotherapy has even been traced to Shakespeare, "Come, and take choice of all my library, And so beguile thy sorrow" (Cardenas, 1980, p. 4).

By the end of the eighteenth century books were being used to treat the mentally ill in France, England, and Italy. "Most of the better mental hospitals of Europe had established libraries...Pinal in France and Chiaruru in Italy included reading as an important part of the recreational program for the insane" (Salup & Salup, 1978, p. 2). Libraries had become a part of nearly all European mental hospitals by 1900.

It is clear that bibliotherapy, the systematic use of books to help people cope with their mental and physical needs, has its roots not only in Europe, but also in the fields of library science and psychology. How did bibliotherapy become established in the United States? Who were the proponents of bibliotherapy and what were their contributions? The purpose of this paper is to identify significant conversationalists who were instrumental in using literacy conversations for healing (bibliotherapy) in the United States as well as the significant contributions made by each conversationalist.

Although Benjamin Rush is considered to be among the earliest North American advocates of bibliotherapy (defined as recommended reading, including fiction, the Bible, and other religious materials. for the sick and the mentally ill), John Minson Galt II, a physician, appears to be the first United States citizen to write about the therapeutic benefits of literature in treating the mentally ill. His best-known work is an essay entitled "On Reading, Recreation, and Amusements for the Insane," published in 1853. This article identifies the benefits of reading to mental patients.

In 1904, two women were breaking ground in the use of bibliotherapy. The first was E. Kathleen Jones, a library administrator at McLean Hospital (Waverly, Massachusetts). Jones became the first qualified and trained librarian to use books in the treatment of the mentally ill. Jones also served as editor of *Hospital Libraries*. Also breaking ground was Alice S. Tyler, secretary of the Iowa Library Commission. Tyler convinced the Iowa library committee to provide materials and a supervisor for state institutions. This became the start of organized library service to state institutions (Association of Hospital and Institutional Libraries, 1971). These two women significantly contributed in making bibliotherapy an important aspect of librarianship.

The term bibliotherapy was not used until 1916 when Samuel Crothers referenced a Bibliopathic Institute and referred to biblio-therapeutics as a new science: "Bibliotherapy is such a new science that it is no wonder that there are many erroneous opinions as to the actual effect which any particular book may have" (Crothers, 1916, p. 295). In a discussion about the use of literature, Crothers (1916, p. 202) commented, "Here we have a stock of thoughts in such a variety of forms that they can be used, not only for food, but for medicine." Regarding the type of books to be used during bibliotherapy, Crothers (1916) stated:

> I don't care whether a book is ancient or modern, whether it is English or German, whether it is in prose or verse, whether it is a history or a collection of essays, whether it is romantic or realistic. I only ask, "What is its therapeutic value? (p. 292)

In 1919, Elizabeth Green (a librarian) and Sidney Schwab (a neurologist) wrote "The Therapeutic Use of a Hospital Library." This article discussed the library's obligation to its readers and provided concepts of bibliotherapy which are still being used today.

Sadie P. Delaney (1938) instituted bibliotherapy at the VA Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama, in 1923. She earned an international reputation based on her work with delinquent boys and girls, the blind, and the foreign born.

In 1930, Dr. Karl Menninger published a book, entitled *The Human Mind*, a "mental hygiene book for laymen" which was used by physicians with their patients (Rubin, 1978b, p. 14). In his publication, Menniger reflected about bibliotherapy: "Our intuition and our experience tell us that books may indeed minister to a mind diseased and come to the aid of the doctor and even precede him" (1930, p. ix). Together with his brother, Dr. William Menninger, he founded the Menninger Clinic which became a center for researching and practicing bibliotherapy. Bulletins about bibliotherapy were published regularly from the Menninger Clinic.

Elizabeth Pomeroy (1937) also contributed significantly to the growth of bibliotherapy. She was one of the first to study bibliotherapy empirically. Pomeroy ascertained the reading interests of over 1500 patients in 62 VA hospitals, a sample size rarely matched today.

Louise Rosenblatt (1938) was one of the first to identify perceived benefits of bibliotherapy. She stated that prolonged contact with personalities in books may lead to increased social sensitivity; enable one to put him/herself in another's place; enable one to feel the needs, sufferings, and aspirations of others; help one to assimilate the cultural pattern by acquainting him/her with the attitudes and expectancies of his/her group; and releasing the adolescent from provincialism by extending awareness beyond his/her own family, community, and national background. Rosenblatt (1938) also acknowledged the preventive value of literature: "Literature may prevent the growth of neurotic tendencies through vicarious participation in other lives... Frequently literature is the only means by which he can discover that his own inner life reflects a common experience of others in his society" (p. 243).

Alice Bryan (1939) also identified a list of the perceived benefits of bibliotherapy: develops maturity, nourishes and sustains mental health, gives one the feeling that he or she is not the first to encounter the identified problem, permits one to see that there is more than one solution to his or her problem, helps one to see the basic motivation of people in similar situations, helps one to see values, provides facts needed to solve a problem, and encourages one to plan and execute a constructive course of action.

Sister Mary Agnes (1946) is credited as being the first to apply bibliotherapeutic techniques with children. She published the first study on bibliotherapy for socially maladjusted children. In her article, she stressed the use of bibliotherapy to aid children in overcoming their problems rather than use it to develop a particular value or character trait in children. Teachers then began to use bibliotherapy in the schools. Salup and Salup (1978, p. 5) claimed, "Bibliotherapy is compatible with certain educational goals in a developmental or preventive rather than remedial sense: education for psychological maturity, life adjustment, and character development." In 1948, Nila B. Smith (1948) also published a study in which she asked students to identify literature which had changed their thinking or their attitudes.

Caroline Shrodes' dissertation (1949), entitled *Bibliotherapy: A Theoretical and Clinical-Experimental Study*, is considered a landmark publication in the field of bibliotherapy, as she expanded the theoretical framework of the field. Shrodes described the human response to literature:

> A portrayal of a personal relationship, a conversation, a reflection of mood, a traumatic experience, an act of aggression, presented in literature may become...a symbolic equivalent of a personal relationship, a conversation, a mood, a traumatic experience...As such it must evoke, at least in part, the same affective responses as did the original experience. (as cited in Rubin, 1978b, p. 36)

In her dissertation, Shrodes identified two types of literature to consider for bibliotherapeutic use. Didactic literature (instructional and educational literature designed to facilitate a change within the individual through a more cognitive understanding of the self) and imaginative literature (dramatic presentation of human behavior through fiction, poetry, plays, and biographies). Shrodes maintained that imaginative literature has greater potential to effect change because it is more likely to produce an emotional experience necessary for effective therapy. Additionally, Shrodes' identified phases of bibliotherapy which correspond to the major phases of psychotherapy: identification, projection, abreaction and catharsis, and insight.

Shrodes continued her significant contributions to the field with a 1950 publication co-authored with Russell. They defined bibliotherapy as "a process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature—interaction which may be utilized for personality assessment, adjustment, and growth" (p. 335). According to Russell and Shrodes the definition suggests that bibliotherapy is not:

> A strange, esoteric activity but one that lies within the province of every teacher of literature in working with every child in a group. It does not assume that the teacher must be a skilled therapist...Rather, it conveys the idea that all teachers must be aware of the effects of reading upon children and must realize that, through literature, most children can be helped. (1950, p. 335)

In this publication, Russell and Shrodes (1950) identified three phases of bibliotherapy: Identification, catharsis, and insight.

Darling suggested the notion of preventive bibliotherapy (1957). "There is little difference between bibliotherapy...and teaching in the classroom and reading guidance in the library. Certainly it is mental hygiene but it lacks the basic requirement of therapy which seems to require that an illness be present to treat" (p. 295).

Ruth Tews edited the October, 1962, issue of *Library Trends*, which was devoted entirely to bibliotherapy. Many significant articles were written in this themed edition and are referenced frequently when historical aspects of bibliotherapy are cited. Authors included William Beatty who called for the need to keep accurate records, Mildred Moody who advocated bibliotherapy, and Margaret Kinney who outlined the basic characteristics needed of those who wanted to become bibliotherapists.

A "ground-breaking" book on the use of bibliotherapy in teaching and counseling was writeen by Zaccaria and Moses (1968). "Bibliotherapy is compatible with the goals of contemporary education which include, fostering development of a whole, adjusted personality able to deal with today's world" (Zaccaria & Moses, 1968, p. 245). The authors suggested that not only are there problems with other types of therapy, so, too, are there problems with bibliotherapy which may include raising additional defenses, tending to believe that merely reading materials solves all problems, rationalizing or intellectualizing problems, ignoring coping behaviors which are needed, and reinforcing fears and anxieties. In spite of potential problems, Zacharia and Moses (1968) stated that not a single study in a substantial body of research found bibliotherapy to be ineffective in a school situation.

In a 1970 article, Sclabassi reviewed the literature on bibliotherapy and classified the research into four broad professional fields: General medical (bibliotherapy applied in the medical field, by a skilled hospital librarian or by a librarian in conjunction with other medical profes-

sionals), psychiatric (bibliotherapy applied in hospitals and clinics used in conjunction with other treatment techniques), education (bibliotherapy used for various purposes and at all levels of education), and corrections (books used with violators by corrections researchers). Sclabassi also categorized bibliotherapy intervention into four levels: intellectual, social, emotional, and behavioral. Sclabassi raised two basic issues concerning the research on bibliotherapy. The first was that although the term bibliotherapy implied treatment, the technique was also utilized for diagnostic (bibliodiagnosis) and preventive (biblioprophylaxis) purposes. Distinctions between the types was not clear in the research. The second problem, she claimed, was that most of the published works were descriptive rather than experimental.

The first attempts at developing classes and programs were made by several literacy-for-healing conversationalists. In 1970, Reverend Louis Rongione of Villanova taught one of the first classes on the theory of bibliotherapy (Salup & Salup, 1978). In 1973, Arleen Hynes developed a comprehensive training program. Her 2-year training program included a minimum of 448 hours; students spent the first year as a trainee and the second as an intern (Rubin, 1979).

One of the first notable attempts at identifying appropriate materials for bibliotherapy was by Huck (1976, p. 264):

> A book may be considered as suitable for bibliotherapy if it tells an interesting story and yet has the power to help a reader (1) acquire information and knowledge about psychology and physiology of human behavior, (2) learn what it means to "know thyself," (3) find an interest outside himself, (4) relieve conscious problems in a controlled manner, (5) utilize an opportunity for identification and compensation and (6) illuminate difficulties and acquire insight into his own behavior.

One signficant publication to help bibliotherapists find relevant materials for use was a result of Dreyer's masters thesis. In 1977, Dreyer's thesis was published in book form entitled, *The Bookfinder: A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth Aged 2-15.*

The most noted and perhaps the most frequently cited contemporary conversationalist on the subject of bibliotherapy is Rhea Joyce Rubin. She has three significant publications related to bibliotherapy: *Bibliotherapy Sourcebook* (1978a), *Using Bibliotherapy* (1978b), and a journal article published in 1979. In her text, *Using Bibliotherapy*, Rubin (1978b) identified what she considered to be the one vital common characteristic of bibliotherapy: discussion of the material after reading.

Rubin (1978b) expanded Monroe's (1978) matrix for the analysis of literature to be used for bibliotherapy. To clarify the field of bibliotherapy, Rubin (1978b, 1979) categorized bibliotherapy into three types: institutional (the reading of didactic literature [usually] by individual institutionalized clients who discuss the readings with the doctor or medical team which may include a librarian), clinical (the reading of imaginative literature by clients with emotional or behavioral problems who discuss the readings with a librarian-bibliotherapist working in consultation with a doctor or a mental health worker), and developmental (the reading of both imaginative and didactic literature with individuals or groups of "normal" individuals in a crisis situation who discuss the readings with librarians, teachers, or other helping professionals to promote normal development, self-actualization or to maintain mental health. Rubin (1979) also attempted to professionalize the field of bibliotherapy by developing a multi-level certification proposal based upon intended use. The categories of use include: Institutional bibliotherapist, institutional bibliotherapist, clinical bibliotherapist, and developmental bibliotherapist.

Joni Bodart's article (1980) reviewed bibliotherapy's past as well as its present. Bodart (1980) acknowledged that bibliotherapy is not a panacea but, in conjunction with other forms of therapy, can be of great value. Bodart recommended a formal arrangement for discussion during bibliotherapy sessions. Bodart also discussed the qualifications of practicing bibliotherapists, identifying two basic qualifications: (1) possess the basic personality characteristics of any helping professional and (2) be a "book person."

In a 1980 Phi Delta Kappa fastback, Cornett and Cornett attempted to clarify the field of bibliotherapy. They said bibliotherapy has been found to have both affective and cognitive effects on readers. Cornett and Cornett (1980) stated that although bibliotherapy may be used, it is not intended for deep-seated psychological problems that call for long-range therapeutic intervention by a specialist. Similarly, casual book recommendations to friends cannot be considered bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy is a deliberate intervention with definite goals that are identified at the outset: "In other words, a need must be identified, a book must be selected specifically for the need and the particular person in need, and a presentation and follow-up plan must be designed and implemented in order for reading to be called bibliotherapy" (Cornett & Cornett, 1980, p. 10). They also developed a rating system for selecting books for use in bibliotherapy. Cornett and Cornett also clarified that for bibliotherapy to achieve its goals, the reader must experience all the stages (Shrodes and Russell, 1950): "Often the reader stops at a superficial identification with a character.

This may be the fault of the author, the condition of the reader or setting, or the methodology of the bibliotherapist" (p. 18). Cornett and Cornett (1980, p. 20) also identified steps to follow in preparing for bibliotherapy sessions, and basic qualifications (knowledge, skills, attitudes and values) for practitioners.

Mildred Tietjen (1980) conducted a survey of American Library Association accredited graduate library school programs to determine availability of library education opportunities in bibliotherapy. Only one school, Catholic University of America, offered a formal bibliotherapy course. Eight indicated that bibliotherapy was handled as a unit within a broader course; six noted that students could elect to pursue bibliotherapy through independent study or special projects and three reported offering short courses or workshops involving bibliotherapy. Tietjen also discussed the notion of preventive bibliotherapy: "Literature may offer the young reader an opportunity for identification with a model hero or heroine — it could provide the reader of any age with the guidance to pattern oneself after a person who has dealt with reality effectively" (1980, p. 1).

Another clarification article appeared in 1980. In their review of research, Rakes and Buchanan summarized the research related to the methodology used with bibliotherapy. Rakes and Buchanan (1980) suggest that effective practice involves knowledge of the methodology of the process (preventive or therapeutic), techniques of implementation (determining problems, selecting students, locate materials, record-keeping system, conducting sessions), how-tos (discussion groups, procedural issues, group strategies, individual strategies), and evaluation of the effectiveness of bibliotherapy.

The most prolific advocate of bibliotherapy during the present decade is John Pardeck (Pardeck, 1990a, 1990b, 1991; Pardeck & Pardeck, 1984, 1986), a strong advocate of a team approach to bibliotherapy, "As with any therapy, there are precautions and limitations. . . bibliotherapy...should not be viewed as a single approach to treatment but rather as an adjunct to other therapies" (Pardeck, 1990b, p. 1048). Pardeck (1990a) stated:

> Bibliotherapy is a novel, but potentially very useful...approach for helping abused children...treatment of child abuse encompasses an interagency and multidisciplinary approach that involves not only the child but also the various systems that influence the child's social functioning. Bibliotherapy should be viewed as an integral part of the total treatment process. (p. 229)

With respect to the actual process of bibliotherapy, Pardeck (1990a, p. 231) stated:

> It is imperative that the therapist guide and support the child during the cathartic experience. Involvement of the therapist is the critical element that distinguishes bibliotherapy from the normal reading process. The therapist must monitor issues such as the child's reaction to the literature, the degree of similarity between the child's own emotional experience and the problem being considered, and the emotional experiences of the child through his or her identification with the story character.

Pardeck (1990a) stated that a child must be able to identify with the victimized character. Books should reflect the child victim's familial situation and other critical circumstances as nearly as possible; similarities between the reader and the book character must be evident to the child.

Although they have changed the term from bibliotherapy to life guidance in their book, *Life Guidance Through Literature*, Lerner and Mahlendorf (1991) claimed:

> Insightful contemporary writers are keen observers of others, of their age, of their society, and of themselves...If we learn to read them well, we can benefit from their insights...experts in psychology and literature who use literature in their counseling and therapy with patients and clients help the reader learn to read well so that the reader can more fully understand works of fiction and learn from them to question his or her own life situation and its meanings. (p. vii)

Lerner and Mahlendorf continued:

> It is our emotional involvement with fictional characters that causes them to influence us with lasting motivations. By affecting us emotionally and intellectually, they [literary works] allow us to feel, give us understanding of our and others feelings, and make us more sensitive to these feelings and ourselves. In this way, we gain an emotional awareness that transforms us and gives us the motivation to change ourselves. (pp. ix-x)

When issues regarding who should practice bibliotherapy began to surface, Rudman, Gagne and Bernstein (1993) responded:

> Some feel that bibliotherapy should only be undertaken by those well versed in psychodynamics, neurosis, and psychotherapy. Others, such as ourselves, feel that it can be and is safely undertaken by those with less sophisticated expertise in human nature: teachers, librarians, doctors, lawyers, parents, and others...adults...need not and should not feel embarrassed by their inadequate backgrounds in psychology...adult guides should try to meet other obligations....knowing how and when to introduce the materials, being sufficiently familiar with the materials, and knowing each child's particular situation.

In addition to identifing step-by-step procedure for conducting bibliotherapy, Aiex (1993) also responded to the issue regarding the qualifications of bibliotherapists:

> Whether you are a classroom teacher, a librarian, or a mental health professional, be advised that bibliotherapy must be handled with great delicacy...Those who are interested, however, should possess personal stability; a genuine interest in working with others; and the ability to empathize with others without moralizing, threatening, or commanding. (p. 1)

In addition to the literacy conversationalists, two groups have been instrumental in advocating literacy conversations for healing. The American Library Association (ALA) has played a significant role in the development of bibliotherapy. In the 1930s, the ALA helped to build libraries and increase services previously provided. In 1939, bibliotherapy received official library recognition when the Hospital Division of the American Library Association appointed its first bibliotherapy committee (Rubin, 1979). Following the themed edition of *Library Trends* in 1962, the American Library Association sponsored the first workshop on bibliotherapy (Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries, 1971). Another three-day workshop was held by the American Library Association in 1964. Factors related to the advancement of the field were discussed: standard nomenclature, an educational program, and additional research (Sclabassi, 1970). During the 1966 annual conference, the ALA accepted the following definition of bibliotherapy: "The use of selected reading materials as therapeutic adjuvants in medicine and psychiatry; also: guidance in the solution of personal problems through reading" as published by *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1961, p. 212; Rubin, 1978b).

Another organization which played a major role in the advancement of bibliotherapy was the Veterans' Bureau. Following World

War I, the Veterans Bureau assumed responsibility for the veterans' hospitals and the libraries within them. Also, a great deal of research related to bibliotherapy was conducted in VA hospitals. Pomeroy's empirical study involved 62 VA hospitals. Margaret Kinney, who outlined basic characteristics needed of those who wanted to become a bibliotherapist, was the Chief Librarian of the VA Hospital. The Veterans Administration has published a variety of annotated bibliographies. A representative sample includes: *Bibliotherapy, A Bibliography*, 1900-1952 (1952), *Bibliotherapy, A Bibliography, Supplemental List*, 1955 (1955), and *We Call It Bibliotherapy*: 1900-1966 (1967).

Where Do the Conversations Go From Here?

In 1962, Tews discussed the limitations of bibliotherapy and associated research:

> One problem seems to lie in the clarification of the needs and goals of bibliotherapy and a coordination of efforts. Confusion and uncertainty tend to cloud many discussions of bibliotherapy...Another limitation should be noted: lack of well organized and controlled research projects. (p. 102)

While some advancements have been made in identifying what bibliotherapy is and is not; the waters remain muddy. Unfortunately, the realities of bibliotherapy's yesteryears still remain: enthusiasm for the use of children's literature to teach about issues without research data supporting it.

Although past research efforts remain plagued with inconsistencies, educators have begun to examine multiple uses of children's literature due to present and future contemporary issues such as appearance, popularity, divorce, suicide, rape, pregnancy, homosexuality, AIDS, prejudice, discrimination, hate crimes, drugs, alcohol, social alienation and mental illness. Multiple citations in professional journals and conference programs extoll the virtues of using literature to teach children about a variety of contemporary issues in our diverse, multicultural, and multiethnic world.

Before condemning bibliotherapy as an idea without a significant empirical research base to support it, we should reflect on statements made by conversationalists Baldwin and Cardenis. James Baldwin (1964) claimed that books taught him that the things that tormented him most were the very things that connected him with all the people

who were alive, or had ever been alive. Cardenas' reflections (1980) provide additional support for continuing literacy conversations for healing: "If those who read look back into their experiences, surely they will conclude that the printed word has affected them changed them, mellowed them. They will indeed testify to the understanding and value of bibliotherapy" (p. 3).

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Wirklichkeitswund und Wirklichkeit Suchend (Stricken By and Seeking Reality): Literacy Conversations which Restore Families, Schools and Communities

Ray Wolpow

The late psychoanalyst and survivor of the Holocaust, Victor Frankl, understood that spiritual healing is attained through one's capacity to transcend suffering by assigning ultimate meaning to that suffering (Frankl, 1962). One theme of contemporary education is that past sufferings somehow serve as the seeds of future redemption, both physical and spiritual. The implication is that through education we can learn the lessons of the Holocaust so that we need not repeat them. In so doing, those who have suffered most will be rewarded for the sacrifices they have made for the good of humanity. However, what possible spiritual meaning can be articulated to justify the systematic extermination of six million Jewish men, women and children? Promises of eternal reward and ultimate punishment do not make sense when depictions of Hell have already been experienced in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Dachau, Majdanek, Belzec, Chelmno, and the dozens of other such places of horror.

The last of these concerns is especially relevant when we consider that of the six million deaths, approximately two million were children. Domestic abuse, rape, homicide, suicide, juvenile gang violence, vehicular-related death and dismemberment, physical and sexual abuse is becoming more and more commonplace in the lives of

today's Post-Holocaust children and youth (Carlson, 1984; Governors Commission, 1993; Koss & Dinero, 1989; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Pynoos & Nader, 1990; Straus & Gelles, 1992). More importantly (and unfortunately), these children's stories most often remain untold and therefore uncontextualized (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986). Uncontextualized traumatic story can lead to feelings of guilt or a myopic sense of victimization. The German psychological term invented to describe this phenomenon is *wirklichkeitswund und wirklichkeit suchend*, stricken by and seeking reality.

According to current research, it is precisely the untold story that exacerbates the continuing damage of trauma, in turn resulting in an inability to learn to read and write (Bower, 1994, 565). Literacy teachers are not psychologists. However, we are trained to show students how to glean a personal understanding from what we read and then to write about this understanding. This paper will first provide an overview of ways that survivors of the Jewish Holocaust community have used testimonial literature and acts of literacy to contextualize the wounds of the Holocaust. Next, this paper will explore the literacies of testimony and witness as they relate to recovery from suffering. Finally, one example of an instructional paradigm utilizing the literacies of testimony and witness will be provided.

Changing Jewish Reflections on the Holocaust

The Holocaust is perceived by Jews (and by many non-Jews) as an event unequaled in human history, unmatched in the scope of its suffering. In its initial stages, Jewish reflections on the Holocaust focused primarily on Jewish death and misery. As in personal mourning, the Jewish people angrily imagined that they alone bore the brunt of Nazi victimization. Now, five decades later, Jews properly note that beyond the six million deaths were the deaths of gypsies, homosexuals, political dissidents and others, poetically described by Reverend Martin Niemoller, survivor of Dachau, in his moving reflection on scapegoating and responsibility:

> In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up. (in Peter, 1977, p. 53)

The Literacies of Testimony and Witness

One of the richest sources of personal Holocaust testimony comes from survivor, professor and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel. Speaking to a group of educators and students at Northwestern University, Wiesel (1977) asserted: "If the Greeks invented tragedy, the Romans the epistle, and the Renaissance the sonnet, our generation invented a new literature, that of testimony" (p. 19). However, immediately we are confronted by a staggering contradiction between the redemptive power of testimony and the futility of its very transmission.

How is the reader supposed to develop an understanding of a phenomenon so atrociously incomprehensible that the words themselves defy their meaning? Wiesel explains that the only hope for communication requires the use of "words against words":

> [It was] a matter of words...Language had been corrupted to the point that it had to be invented anew and purified. This time we [survivors] wrote not with words but against words. Often we told less so as to make the truth more credible. Had any one of us told the whole story, he would have been proclaimed mad...Now he [the author] remembers the past, knowing all the while that what he has to say will never be told. What he hopes to transmit can never be transmitted. All he can possibly hope to achieve is the impossibility of communication. (Wiesel, 1977, 7-8)

How does one transmit that which "can never be transmitted?" How does one communicate the impossible? The survivor definitely wants to be a teacher but is frustrated by his or her inability to do so. So in turn those of us who teach about such testimonies. We also experience the futility inherent in communication of the unspeakable. To tell without being heard is to re-experience trauma without acquiring relief. Hence it is necessary to ask: by what process can the survivor who risks "telling" be assured that he or she will be heard? No greater expression of this dynamic can be found that then the suicide of Levi after his completion of *The Drowned and the Saved* or Chelan's suicide shortly after the publication of *Gesammelte Werke* (Collected Works).

A process by which a survivor gives "testimony" to an attentive listener who "bears witness" to create a "new" story which may be given a context within a community of discourse is described by psychiatrist Dori Laub. Laub is co-founder of the Fortunaoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale; an interviewer of survivors who give testimony; a child-survivor of the Holocaust, and a psychoanalyst who treats Holocaust survivors and their children. Laub explains:

> The listener to the narrative of extreme human pain, of massive psychic trauma, faces a unique situation. In spite of the presence of ample documents, of searing artifacts and of fragmentary memoirs of anguish, he comes to look for something that is in fact nonexistent; a record that has yet to be made....Massive trauma precludes its registration....The victim's narrative....testifies to an absence, to an event that has not yet come into existence...The emergence of the narrative which is being listened to—and heard—is, therefore, the process and the place wherein the cognizance, the 'knowing' of the event is given birth to.
>
> The listener, therefore is a party to the creation of knowledge *de novo*. (Felman & Laub, 1992, 57)

The survivor participates in the personal process of "testimony" by manifesting, in words and silences, memories that have not yet been placed in the context of a current reality. The survivor of atrocity is trying to deliver his or her finely crafted letter without knowing the address or whether once delivered, it will be opened compassionately. The letter is lost because it lacks a sufficient address in current time with respect to historical context. Nonetheless, the listener can help provide an address by participating in the personal process of "witnessing." The conscious listener attempts to apprehend the meanings that the words and silences intend to encompass. When the survivor can "hear" the listener witnessing that which he or she has never experienced, a process is constructed in which a new common knowledge is created. Both can transmit and access this new story and thereby gain a restorative understanding of their worlds. This restorative quality can lead to the sense of redemption fundamental getting on with living one's life.

Binocularity and Healing Agency: The Place Where the Survivor and the Listener Meet

How might we make abstract concepts such as "hearing the witnessing" and "constructing...a new common knowledge" more concrete? Perhaps we can borrow from science the attributes of monocular and binocular vision. In the case of monocular vision, the observer who views a moving object with only one eye is provided with a very clear image. This image, however, lacks depth and can thus lead to errors in perception. With binocular vision, the observer viewing a moving object with both eyes acquires depth, however, also acquires substantial distortion. Boundary problems, manifested by the

blurring caused by the overlapping of two distinctly different singular visions requires the brain to locate images in the contexts of time, place and belief.

By analogy, binocular understanding, the overlapping of two distinctly different perceptions of the meaning of symbolic language may likewise blur the boundaries between "self" and "other," "survivor" and "listener," and "student" and "teacher." In the negotiation between the picture provided by the survivor and the picture provided by the listener lies the potential healing agency of telling and listening. Giving testimony and bearing witness requires an embrace of the "other" in ways that change both irrevocably. The pedagogy of testimony and witness provides opportunities for students and teachers to communicate with survivors of unspeakable trauma in ways which provide redemption for our educational community as a whole.

Theory Applied: A Kristallnacht Memoriam and Procession

November 9, 1998 was the 60th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the first night of violence aimed at the Jews in Germany and Austria. In remembrance of the shattered glass, suffering and murder that followed; and as a reaffirmation of the commitment of free peoples never again to permit such occurrences, the Northwest Center for Holocaust Education, in Bellingham, Washington, organized a memoriam attended by more than 350 members of the community. The literacies of testimony and witness played an important role in this event.

Survivors of the Holocaust, who lived locally, honored the memories of family and friends who were murdered by replacing a piece of glass into a memorial. As they did so, a two hundred-word testimonial, written by university students who had previously interviewed them, was read by narrators. Each testimonial was typed into the program. Following the survivors were family members, a generation younger, who wished to remember Jews, Roma and Senti, Jehovah's Witnesses, gays and lesbians, and "righteous" Christians who were also exterminated by the Nazis. They too had testimonials read as they placed a piece of broken glass into the memorial. Immediately thereafter members of the Native American community remembered family members murdered on the "Trail of Tears," a Jesuit remembered the fate of Archbishop Romero, the grandson of a Japanese American who suffered in an American Internment Camp remembered his grandfather, and a black man remembered James Byrd. Each placed a piece of glass in the memoriam while their two hundred-word testimonial was read. Once the procession had ended, the window was whole. The narrator read the following:

> Our community, like this memorial, is symbolically whole, though still scared by past bigotry and hate. The line between memory and history can be a very thin one. Tonight we can visit with those whose memories will some day be history. Let us share stories. Let us listen. It is easiest to drive away nightmares with respect for the dead and hope for the living. Let us heal. And then let us return home with hope.

Two grandmothers, one a survivor of the Holocaust, the other a Native American elder who had survived the BIA boarding schools, were the first to exchange hugs and express sympathy for each other's losses. Many hugs were then exchanged. Students left the ceremony explaining that now they knew the stories that comprised history. Programs in hand, the community went home with newly shared memories.

Conclusion

When the Holocaust is improperly taught, feelings of guilt can be evoked or a myopic sense of victimization, such as the view that Jews and people in general are forever vulnerable, can be elicited. Questions about why the Holocaust occurred may easily give way to a fatalistic view that such disasters can and will occur again. This can also be the case with the many instances of traumatic violence commonplace in our post-Holocaust generations.

However, on the flip side, the capacity to demonstrate empathy and altruism, as shown in the Kristallnacht Memoriam, is also evidenced in the Holocaust legacy and is a treasure that must be fully explored and taught. The ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness. Nothing could be more damaging to the survivor or his or her classmates. The paradigm of testimony and witness provides teachers and their students with a methodology to share "a new knowledge" which is transformative to both the victim and the listener, and hence, to the society as a whole. The paradigm of testimony and witness is a means to foster literacy conversations that restore families, schools and communities. The literacies of testimony and witness can restore hope to those wirklichkeitswund und wirklichkeit suchend, stricken by and seeking reality.

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Workplace Literacy Programs: Evaluation Research

Eunice N. Askov

Numerous models of evaluation have been proposed over the years. (For example, Brookfield, 1986, identifies the Predetermined Objectives Approach, Goal-Free Evaluation, CIPP Model of Evaluation, Kirkpatrick Hierarchy of Evaluation among others.) These models have been applied in a variety of settings including adult education. More recent models of evaluation have included the Naturalistic Evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989), also called the fourth generation evaluation, in which the concerns and issues of the stakeholders serve as the organizing structure for the evaluation. The evaluation models used in this study of workplace literacy programs included the Kirkpatrick Hierarchy (1994) used in conjunction with the Naturalistic Evaluation. In addition, strategies that companies can use to conduct their own evaluations were employed (Askov, Hoops, & Alamprese, 1997).

The researcher served as external evaluator of three projects of the National Workplace Literacy Program (NWLP) of the US Department of Education that were funded for a three-year period. Two of the projects were statewide; one was a community college that provided a variety of adult education programs. She visited each site twice per year to interview all stakeholders (management of the companies, unions, trainers, supervisors, learners, college personnel), observe classes, and troubleshoot for formative evaluation. Since she was not onsite as external evaluator, she had to rely on the colleges to collect the data related to Kirkpatrick's hierarchy. The project director of each of the NWLP projects supervised the data collection process.

Methods

The qualitative data from the interviews were entered into a Filemaker Pro database. Using the database, the researcher's assistant tallied the frequencies and categorized the responses to identify trends over time and across locations (company sites) within each project. They were also able to identify some generalizations that cut across projects. Additionally, data were gathered about each of the four levels of Kirkpatrick's evaluation hierarchy, permitting generalizations about the effectiveness of each of the three national projects. (See the Appendix for the interview protocols.)

The primary data source included interviews with stakeholders as well as other data (related to Kirkpatrick's four levels) supplied by the three NWLP projects. These interviews from the NWLP projects provide a rich data source that can provide researchers and educational practitioners, as well as business/industry and labor unions, with knowledge about not only how to evaluate workplace literacy programs but also how to design effective workforce education programs. This information is also useful to state and local policymakers as they design welfare-to-work programs.

Findings

The findings came from the analyses of the interview data that were put into the Filemaker Pro database. The database allowed the investigator and her assistant to search for key words and identify trends. The findings also resulted from the efforts of the colleges to collect data at each of the four levels of Kirkpatrick's hierarchy (1994).

The two statewide projects institutionalized the workplace literacy programs in businesses and industries at the conclusion of the grant; the community college that served as the NWLP project director did not. A coordinating state structure is therefore recommended to provide support and training.

One of the statewide projects required a progressively greater financial match from companies each year; that seemed to lead to institutionalization since by the third year the businesses or industries were providing a 75% match. Most of the companies in that statewide program did institutionalize the program after the federal funding was no longer available.

Labor unions were very heavily involved in one of the statewide projects. The project initiated the concept of peer advisors who were

workers who recruited co-workers to the workplace literacy program, developed promotional materials, and assisted the instructors on occasion with instruction. Peer advisors were successful even in non-unionized companies.

In all projects workers served with management as equals on workplace literacy advisory boards, leading to a cultural change within some work organizations. Management grew to respect the input of the workers, and workers trusted and appreciated management for its commitment to the program.

Strong curriculum development and staff training components proved to be useful and led to cohesiveness in program design. Programs using the functional context approach to instruction, where instruction in literacy skills was related to job tasks, appeared to be the strongest both in terms of company support and learner involvement.

As to the evaluation, Kirkpatrick's hierarchy proved to be useful and understandable to practitioners who were collecting the data. A full day of training by the evaluator at the beginning of the projects proved to be essential. Level 1 (reactions of all stakeholders) data were easy to collect. Level 2 (mastery of the skills taught in class) was more difficult to assess since the instructors did not readily know how to create skill assessments. Level 3 (transfer to the workplace) data were often collected by supervisor interviews. However, learners themselves proved to be the best source of information about transfer in self-reports about using their skills in the workplace. Level 4 (impact) was best measured by determining the greatest need of the company (e.g., retention of workers) and showing the impact of the program on that need.

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Appendix

Interview Protocols

College Name

Interview Guide for Partners

Date

1. Place of employment:
2. How satisfied are you with the project? Why?
3. How effective was the partnership between industry and the College?
4. Did your expectations change during the course of the project? How?
5. What were your major disappointments?
6. How did the company benefit (productivity, quality, safety, absenteeism, retention, etc.)? Examples?
7. How did the workers benefit (morale, attendance, teamwork, etc.)? Examples?
8. How cost-effective was the project?
9. How do you feel about continuing the project?
10. Has the project helped the company with public relations (newspaper articles, TV, or radio coverage, etc.)? Examples?
11. Has the project improved the company's training program? Examples?
12. What changes do you see in the near future that would change the needs of your workers for training?
13. Would you recommend this training program to your colleagues in other companies?

Other comments:

College Name

Supervisor/Training Director Interview Guide

Date

1. Place of Employment:
2. Name of Class:
3. Number of your workers who participated:
4. How satisfied were you with the class(es)? Why?
5. How did the company benefit (productivity, quality, safety, absenteeism, retention, etc.)? Examples?
6. How did the workers benefit (morale, attendance, teamwork, etc.)? Examples?
7. Has participation in the class(es) affected their chances for advancement?
8. How much did the workers talk to you about the class(es)?
9. How did the workers who participated feel about the class(es)?
10. How did the other workers feel about the class(es)?
11. How did you feel about releasing workers from the job? How did you accommodate?
12. How does this training compare with training the company has done or could do itself?
13. Would you recommend the company continue this kind of training?
14. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working with the College in offering the class(es)?
15. Other comments:

College Name

Learner Interview Guide

Date

1. Place of Employment:
2. Name of Class:
3. How satisfied were you with the class? Why?
4. What was the most important part? Least important?
5. What did you gain from the class?
6. How did the class help you with your job? Examples?

   Reading?

   Writing?

   Speaking?

   Listening?

   Math?

   Teamwork?
7. Did the class help you understand the company better? Examples?
8. Do you feel better about yourself as a worker as a result of the class?
9. Did the class prepare you for a company training program? Which one?
10. Did the class help you with getting a promotion or a better job? How?
11. How did your fellow workers feel about you taking the class?
12. Would you recommend others to take the class?
13. Did you get support from your supervisor to attend the class?
14. Do you look forward to any more classes? Where?

15. Do you do any more reading, writing, or math at work than you did before the class? Examples?

16. Do you do any more reading, writing, or math at home than you did before the class? Examples?

17. How did the class help you outside the job? Examples?

    Family?

    Community?

    Voting?

18. Other comments:

College Name

Staff Interview Guide

Date

1. How satisfied are you with the project?
2. What are the greatest satisfactions?
3. To what extent are there agreements on the goals among all stake holders?
4. What factors helped with the success of the project?
5. What factors acted as deterrents to the project?
6. What do you see as the major outcomes?
7. What are the major disappointments?
8. What was the most difficult part of the project?
9. How do you feel about your linkage with industry? Will it continue?
10. What would you change in a future project?
11. How has the college benefited from the project?
12. How much support have you had from the college?
13. How cost-effective was the project?
14. What are your plans for the future regarding this program?
15. Other comments:

Prospective English Teachers: Initial Experiences in Urban Classrooms

Chester H. Laine, Michaeline E. Laine, & Elizabeth A. Peavy

In this article we describe the reactions of prospective English teachers to initial teaching experiences in urban classrooms. We believe that the results have implications for the content and structure of teacher preparation programs.

Minorities in the United States comprise one-third of the population; in some metropolitan areas, African Americans and Hispanic Americans constitute a majority of the school-age population. Most urban schools, like the ones reflected in this study, enroll a majority of "minority" students, and very few American towns or villages will be homogeneous by the turn of the century. At the present time, minorities represent less than 12.5 percent of the nation's teaching force. The majority of prospective teachers are white females, which stands in sharp contrast to the backgrounds of the students they teach (Coballes-Vega, 1992). And the trend is not expected to change. The percentage of high school graduates entering college indicating education as their major field of study is declining. Clearly, Caucasian teachers are and will be teaching students of color.

As the instructors of these prospective English teachers, we aspire to prepare teachers who have attitudes that celebrate diversity. Among the guidelines that frame our work are those established by our professional organization, the National Council of Teachers of English. We seek to prepare teachers who (1) a recognize that all students can learn and are worthy of a teacher's attention in the English

language arts classroom, (2) desire to use the English language arts curriculum to help students become familiar with diverse peoples and cultures, and (3) respect and have enthusiasm for the individual language, dialect, bi-dialectal competence, and other language variations of each student (NCTE, 1996, p. 11).

However, many perspective teachers do not hold these attitudes. For example, when asked to describe what came to mind when hearing phrases such as "developing nation" or "emerging nation," Kissen (1989) found that prospective English teachers responded with predominately negative images. We also know that teachers often have low expectations of students who appear to be different from themselves, frequently misjudging students' language abilities (Delpit, 1995; Fraatz, 1987; Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Rose, 1989; Taylor, 1991; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

Foster (1986) argues that the major source of problems in almost all of our schools is the breakdown in communication that results from differences in interpretation. Although this communication breakdown is common in many urban schools, the same problem now exists in other settings. Educators, familiar with suburban, middle class, Caucasian students, are now working with young men and women with whom they are unfamiliar and with whom they have little in common.

Dillon (1989) points out that the actions of teachers may diminish participation among minority students and build resentment because their actions are culturally incongruent. Borich (1994) states that cultural patterns that are unfamiliar to Caucasian teachers may provide misleading signs of involvement and uninvolvement. In addition, after years of examining the classroom behaviors of both students and teachers, Bowers and Flinders (1991) provide examples of how noise levels, use of classroom space, turn-taking, and negotiating vary across race, social class, and ethnicity.

Teachers of different cultures interpret disruptive behaviors of students differently. Bowers and Flinders (1991), Dillon (1989), and Tharp and Gallimore (1989) all present arguments that different cultures react differently to nonverbal and verbal classroom management cues. Eye contact, proximity control, verbal warnings, and classroom arrangement are interpreted differently by students from different cultures.

Knowing these differences is imperative for prospective teachers. Scholars urge awareness of "cultural congruence," the ways in which

teachers alter their speech patterns, communication styles, and participation structures to resemble more closely those of the students' own culture (Lipka & Mohatt, 1998). Au and Jordan (1981) use the term "cultural appropriateness" to described the methods teachers use to work with native Hawaiian students to improve reading performance. The experience of the teacher is also a variable. In this study, we examine the perspectives of novice teachers entering urban settings. Swanson, O'Connor, and Cooney (1990) report that novice teachers tend to respond in ways that are less directive and obtrusive than their more experienced counterparts.

With this background in mind, we set out, over a two-year period (autumn of 1997 through spring of 1999), to document the perspectives and initial teaching experiences of prospective English teachers in urban classrooms.

Participants

Fifteen prospective English teachers were initially selected, the entire group in the 1997-1999 cohort group. From this group, six volunteered to participate in a more detailed study: two Caucasian women (Maxine and Karen), two Caucasian men (Holden and Steve), and two African American women (Catherine and Bonnie). They were all novice English teachers. One of the Caucasian women (Karen) was an undergraduate student at the beginning of the study, starting her senior year in college. The remaining five were older post-baccalaureate students who had pursued other careers before entering the teacher preparation program. Martha and Steve were journalists, Bonnie was a firefighter, Holden was a college teacher, and Catherine was a businesswoman.

Teacher Preparation Program

The Secondary Education Program in which these prospective English teachers are enrolled is framed by eight themes: (1) learning, (2) instruction, (3) content, (4) curriculum, (5) context, (6) professional growth and development, (7) grounded theory and knowledge, and (8) collaboration. The theme of context—that learning and teaching are inevitably embedded in multiple contexts encompassing socio-cultural, functional, structural, and temporal dimensions of school life—is most directly related to the central focus of this study: teaching in urban settings.

The five-year teacher preparation program in which these prospective English teachers were enrolled features a baccalaureate

degree in English, a baccalaureate degree in Education, and field experiences in urban Professional Practice Schools, including a year-long paid teaching internship. The prospective English teachers in this study were enrolled jointly in the Department of English and Comparative Literature and the College of Education.

The English component includes course work in linguistics, literature, and writing. The professional education component includes the study of methods, young adult literature, reading, and the impact of individual, cultural, and socioeconomic influences on student achievement. The teacher preparation program also includes seven field experiences in five urban professional practice schools. A team of public school teachers and university faculty is established in each of the five sites.

Undergraduates earn a degree from the Department of English and Comparative Literature. Post-baccalaureate students are expected to have an equivalent background and degree. During the first three years of the program, undergraduate students study primarily, although not exclusively, within the areas of general education and English. During what is typically the senior year for undergraduates, students undertake their professional studies, while completing their arts and sciences degree. This year is known as the professional year. Post-baccalaureate students begin their program with this professional year of study.

Like all prospective students in this program, the six prospective English teachers in this study completed seven field experiences, one in a college developmental classroom, and five in junior high and high school English classrooms. The final experience is a year-long internship in a high school or middle school English classroom. The data in this study were gathered while the prospective English teachers participated in these field experiences.

Setting

The research setting included classrooms and offices on the urban university campus, as well as in the urban public schools where these prospective English teachers participated in field experiences and internships.

Timeline

We gathered data beginning in January of 1998 and continuing through March 1999 when the six prospective English teachers com-

pleted their yearlong internships, the culmination of their certification program.

Data Sources/Data Gathering

To capture the voices of the novice teachers in these urban classrooms, the following data sources were used: surveys, journal entries, extant program documents, and field notes. More specifically,

- Prospective English teachers completed open-ended questionnaires in January 1998 and again in October 1998.
- Prospective English teachers' journal entries, related to the teaching of urban students, were gathered throughout the year.
- Prospective English teachers were interviewed mid-way through their yearlong internship.

Data Analysis

The survey and interview questions were adapted from questions developed by Ladson-Billings (1994). Following are the adapted questions: (1) Tell me something about your background? Describe the community where you grew up and the schools you attended? (2) Can you think of any characteristics that African American young people bring to the classroom? (3) How much of what you know about teaching African American young people did you learn from the teacher preparation program at the university? How much did you learn from actually teaching in the college developmental setting or in your public school placements? (4) How do you handle discipline? Are there special things that teachers of African American students should know about discipline? (5) If you could revamp the teacher education program at the university so that teachers would be more effective with African American students, what changes would you make? (6) How do you think that the schooling experiences of the students you teach differ from that of white students in middle class communities?

Survey and interview questions were open-ended and were analyzed using content analysis techniques established by Holsti (1969) and Viney (1983). A coding system was devised that raters used to quantify the information in the documents.

Results

After coding and sub-coding journal entries, portfolio entries, and interview and survey data, several themes emerged: (1) The value of continuous contact with students, (2) the candid nature of the urban students, (3) a focus on myself as a teacher or on the students, (4) spunk and energy, and (5) the irrelevance of coursework.

The Value of Continuous Contact with Students

The first teaching experiences for these prospective English teachers were in developmental reading, writing, and study skills classrooms in the urban, on-campus, two-year, open-access college. Each novice teacher completed a 60-clock hour experience working with underprepared college students in racially, culturally, and socio-economically diverse classes. Due to the fact that these developmental reading and writing classes were offered on the university campus at time intervals compatible with those of their own classes, these prospective English teachers were in class with their students every day.

The continuous nature of this initial teaching experience with underprepared college students permitted more meaningful relationships between novice teachers and their students. However, survey and interview results suggest that later, more traditional, field experiences in the public schools did not. Relationships were difficult to establish because of the intermittent and limited contact possible in the two 60-clock-hour field experiences that the novice teachers completed in the winter and spring quarters. Novice teachers had to leave the university campus and visit local urban schools. Due to their other university classes, usually offered in a Tuesday-Thursday sequence or a Monday-Wednesday-Friday sequence, novice teachers seldom were able to see their students on consecutive days. Moreover, the winter and spring field experiences took place in the middle and at the end of the public school year, after relationships had already been established between the master teacher and the students. One novice teacher explained that the "real relationships" were between the regular teacher and the kids: "I was just sort of thrown in halfway during the year. They [the young adults in these public school classrooms] knew that I was temporary and that my opinion did not matter in the end."

Finally, again, in the yearlong internship, when the prospective English teachers were full time teachers, they had continuous contact with their students. This final culminating experience was viewed as the most realistic and most meaningful aspect of the program.

The Candid Nature of the Urban Students

Sheets and Gay (1996) note that Caucasian students regard teaching abilities and classroom management skills as the basis for determining whether a teacher is likable and whether they should conform to classroom procedures. African American students, on the other hand, are less likely than other ethnic groups to concede to teachers' authority and directives when they feel unjustly accused or have not been given ample opportunity to state their case.

Some novice teachers, as they entered their final yearlong internship, became aware of these unique interaction styles. Holden, for example, a Caucasian who had attended urban elementary and secondary schools, taught in a predominately African American urban high school in his yearlong internship. He described his students as "demonstrative."

> I think that they're more vocal and they want their feelings to be expressed at that moment in front of everyone. Sort of like a performance. If there is a conflict with students, they want it taken care of right then, so they will raise their voices and shout and yell and try to settle any difference they have. I don't mean shout and yell in a negative way. It's just that they're very demonstrative.

Holden found this demonstrativeness helpful.

> In some ways that's what makes them easier to deal with for me. I don't have to sift through a lot of mystery. Yeah, I guess that is what I mean by demonstrative. In some ways that demonstrative nature is tied to honesty and you really get an honest take on them, like there's no mystery.

A Focus on Myself as a Teacher or on the Students

Although several novice teachers worried about their safety as they entered their first public school field experience, most simply felt out of place. One novice teacher said that she was struck by seeing "so many white teachers and so few black teachers and all of these black students." I am worried, said another, "that students will feel that I don't understand their urban outlook or life." Another was concerned about "how these black students will react to me, a white teacher." Upon entering a nearly all-black high school setting, one novice teacher explained that he was told by his school-based mentor that there was "no way for me to understand the backgrounds of my students."

Some of the prospective teachers were simply uncomfortable being among young people. Others were still facing anxiety about speaking in front of large groups of teenagers. One explained that "I am worried that they will not value education." Another explained that she wanted "respect not just because I am the authority figure." Racial, cultural, linguistic, and cultural differences were more obvious to the prospective teachers in their first field experience than in their final internship. In October of the internship year, one prospective teacher explained that "poverty and neglect are bigger issues than race." Another explained that "it doesn't really have much to do with race. I think that it is all about class."

The novice teachers in this study who focused on their students rather than on themselves had more meaningful interactions inside and outside the classroom. This was evident in their first field experience. Course evaluation data revealed that the college developmental students viewed some of the prospective teachers as "real." For example, when Holden asked them about their high school experiences and shared some of his, the students viewed him as "cool." Holden wrote, "They respected me and felt that I could be cool with them. It seems that I had a positive relationship with them."

Similarly, Karen was able to share something of herself with the college students in her first field experience. She copied drafts of papers she had written in high school and shared them with the college students she was teaching. She took some risks, revealed something of her own struggles as a writer, and helped these basic writers better understand the drafting process. In Karen's survey, she wrote "I interacted with these students by attempting to demonstrate a genuine concern and interest in their thoughts and knowledge."

Other prospective teachers kept their distance. In the developmental writing class, Martha announced, "I am the teacher and you are the student." For teachers like Martha, personal interactions with students were infrequent. These novice teachers viewed teaching as one-way communication and were often convinced that the students "just didn't get it!" Steve, another prospective teacher in this college developmental setting, was not sure how to connect with his students. In a case study of one of his students, he wrote, "I profiled one black male. There was some uneasiness between us, but I can't say if it was from race or the new student-teacher relationship." Even though Steve was with his college developmental students for the entire ten-week academic quarter, he was unable to establish the type of relationship that Holden and Karen had established. His focus was on himself rather than on his students.

Like most beginning teachers, classroom control dominated the thinking of these six novice teachers. The fact that they were in unfamiliar urban settings only served to increase their concerns. Grossman (1995) states that students from different ethnic backgrounds often come to school with dissimilar expectations and preferences for disciplinary styles because people from different cultures have their own standards of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. For example, in many cases, Caucasian teachers experience difficulty disciplining African American children because they do not "connect" culturally. The teachers do not behave as African American children expect authority figures to behave. It seems that when Caucasian teachers practice the discipline techniques they are usually taught in college, African American children often "run over them" (Baumrind, 1971; Kelley, Power, & Wimbush, 1992; Kelley, Sanchez-Hucles, & Walker, 1993; Nweke, 1994).

As novice teachers, both the Caucasian and the African American teachers in our study struggled with classroom control. However, some focused on themselves while others focused on the students. In her very first field experience, Martha, a Caucasian teacher, encountered an interpersonal barrier. She wrote: "I didn't really 'know' any students more personally than others." Catherine, on the other hand, felt that being an African American and growing up in an African American community helped her understand the interactions she observed. "I think that is probably the advantage that African American teachers have when teaching African American children. We've grown up in the community."

Catherine, an upper middle class African American teacher with teenagers in a neighboring suburban school district, is teaching in an urban high school. She explains,

> I think that the parents in middle class districts hold teachers accountable for their kids, what they learn, what they get on that test. It is not their child; it is you and what you are teaching. Because parents hold those teachers accountable, the teachers hold the kids accountable. When I go into a parent conference, I'm the same way. The few inner city parents I have seen at conferences basically want to know how's he doing, how's she doing. They're concerned if they're being good in class, you know, that their behavior is good, that kind of thing. Whereas, I think that people in upper class neighborhoods are more interested in grades. They value that grade. They know that 'As' lead to Harvard and 'Cs' do not. Urban parents want their kinds to get out of high school. If it's a 'C,' it's okay. They

just want to get them out of high school and I think that is the difference. I really do.

In another example, near the end of his preparation program, during his year-long internship in a predominately African American urban high school, Holden was able to focus on his students rather than on himself.

> One difference I see is that punishment is different for these kids. The suburban white kids, they lose a lot of privileges and they lose a lot of material things because of their behavior. 'If you do this, I'll take this away from you.' So, they're sort of conditioned at an early age and I was kind of that way. If you're gonna do something, you are going to do it to get away with it. The urban kids that I work with, a lot of them don't have that, that threat that they're going to get a lot of material goods taken away. A lot of them don't have many material things. These kids can be just as devious, but I don't think there's that sort of secretiveness of I am going to do all these things and get away with it.

Spunk, Energy and Orality

The novice teachers who established the most effective relationships often referred to the "spunk and energy" of their urban African American students. For example, during the first college developmental field experience, Bonnie, one of the African American teachers wrote: "African American students bring a special spunk into the classroom. I like spunk." Karen provided another insight when she wrote: "African American students were a lot of fun, had energy, and talent." Some prospective English teachers seemed to draw vitality from the energy of their students. Karen, for example, said,

> I felt an immediate relationship with several of the students. There were two students, one male and one female, both African American, with whom I just clicked. These two exemplify the reasons I want to teach. They brought out an energy that I really like about myself.

Later in the yearlong internships, the prospective teachers spoke of the rich oral language of the African American students. When asked if African American children bring anything unique to the classroom, Catherine, an African American teacher, exclaimed,

> Oh God, they bring a lot to the classroom. They are so verbal, so oral. I think that they are just super sensitive kids. They're really sensitive, really aware of their immediate environment. They're talkative and have a lot to say. And, that's cool. All of them are so different, but all of them have a lot to say.

Holden, a Caucasian teacher, describes a setting where he was drawn to the unique oral culture of his African American high school students.

> You know we took a field trip last week, two weeks ago, to the zoo and within five minutes, you know, the kids were singing on the bus, but not camp fire style. One side of the bus would sing. It was all black kids in the back of the bus. It was our freshman class, which is like ninety-five percent black. And, one side of the bus would sing a lyric real quick and the other side would respond to it and it would be organized in like seconds, you know, it didn't take anything at all. They sang the whole way to the zoo. It was incredible. It was a really good time.

Holden described a similar love of oral language in the classroom. When reading *Romeo and Juliet* or when writing poetry, his students begged him to allow them to get up in front of the class.

> You know, when I had them write poems, they wanted to read to the class. They didn't just want to turn them in. I know that I was shy about reading things and still am to people, but when I collected their poems and I let them read them the first thing they said was, "Are we going to do this again?" They liked that performance, getting up and presenting what they know orally.

The Irrelevance of Coursework

There was little evidence that these novice teachers perceived that college course work helped them create effective pedagogy for urban African American students. Some, when pressed in the interview, remembered course work devoted to varieties of English and Black English vernacular. Others recalled being asked to read poetry and prose written by African American authors. However, as one novice teacher explained in the fourth month of her year-long internship: "You know, you take from this class what you need, but for the most part you get it in your practical experience." Holden, near the conclusion of his yearlong internship explained "I think you either have it or

you don't, you know, and that you can't be taught how to teach in this kind of setting." He explained that most suburban teachers do not really have an understanding of urban settings and they can't expect to be taught that in a college classroom. "You can't walk into a class and say, 'Teach me about Black people.' But people expect that."

Conclusions and Implications

We believe that the results have implications for the content and structure of teacher preparation programs.

Increase the quantity and quality of field experiences.

All of the prospective teachers found the field experiences, especially the yearlong internships, to be of the greatest value, although the lack of continuity in some of the earlier field experiences was often frustrating. Coursework, in general, was perceived to be unrelated to the real work of teaching.

Have prospective teachers become involved in the communities where they will teach.

When asked how the teacher preparation program could be improved, Catherine suggested that all prospective teachers spend time in the communities where they will be teaching.

> I don't know how you would do it. Of course, any time you get to know people you can learn to appreciate them for who they are and what they bring to the table. Without that you only have what you know to go on, good, bad, or indifferent. Teachers should work in community centers with teenagers as a recreation coordinator or something that exposes them to the language, exposes them to the attitudes.

Varied and continuous experiences in urban settings will help prospective teachers grasp the complexity of the lives of the urban students they teach.

During two years of field experiences in urban settings, most of these prospective English teachers grew to focus less on themselves and more on their students. The racial differences became less obvious and issues of poverty and class became more conspicuous. As Holden asserts at the end of his interview, "Well, urban kids don't have the same resources, which is immoral. The fact that each of my kids doesn't have a computer is terrible." Like many of his fellow interns,

Holden believed that there were lower expectations as well. In general, most of these prospective teachers, by the spring of their internship year, recognized the complexity of these urban settings and the unique qualities that urban students bring to the classroom.

Through varied and continuous field experiences, prospective teachers can come to view the unique cultural qualities of urban children differently.

Many of these prospective teachers found that their notions of urban students changed as a result of their immersion in urban classrooms. Many who observed a "love of language," "spunk and energy," and "an awareness of their immediate environment" relinquished long held stereotypes. After two years in varied urban settings, these prospective teachers, who once saw only lack of self-control, now saw honesty, energy, and talent. Some even spoke of the professional vitality they drew from the energy of their students. The most talented of these prospective English teachers drew on these strengths to help them write poetry and introduce them to Shakespeare's plays. This can only be achieved through extensive field experiences in urban settings.

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Intramural Teaching: A Team Approach to Mentoring

Tara Rosselot-Durbin

> If schools became places where teachers studied their own practice together and were rewarded for doing so, future teachers would be inducted into a professional community where collegiality and experimentation were norms. In such a setting observation and conversation among persons at different career stages would expand the alternatives available to the novice and dramatize the limits of personal and local experience. Future teachers would get the message that learning from teaching was part of the job of teaching. (Feiman-Nemser and Buchman, 1985, p. 64)

As teacher education reform continues to develop, the importance of how educators train proteges remains in the forefront. Eighteen years ago, Kenneth Zeichner (1980) first called for a constructivist research approach in order to glean information about the mentoring process. He stated that such ethnographic approaches would help us build a firmer knowledge of what is learned during the student teaching experience and subsequently offer possible solutions to ease the complex transitional period of preservice teaching. This paper delineates such an approach to enhance our understanding how the conventional boundaries of mentoring dynamics can be further examined by exploring a team's mentoring interactions and conversations and juxtaposing those dynamics with what we know of the dynamics of traditionally-paired dyads.

Research has shown that our proteges are "active agents" (Lacey, 1977) in their socialization as professionals, not puppets mimicking

the cooperating teacher, and that working with an experienced teacher will help shape a beginning teacher's beliefs and practices (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1990; Staton & Hunt, 1992). We also understand that there is more to teaching than our performance in front of a class of children. Beginning teachers are emergent professionals and so must be versed in a range of teaching activities: curriculum development, staff development, school policy and new forms of collaborative relations with colleagues (Lieberman, 1989). A variety of forces shapes the neophyte teacher, thus an "ecological" (Copeland, 1982; Goodlad, 1994; Yinger & Hendricks-Lee, 1993) approach to teacher preparation has been heralded by reformers in the field. These approaches consider the systemic/holistic influence of context upon teacher learning and socialization.

Given the importance of how teacher proteges are being prepared for their changing roles as teachers, the purpose of this study was to look closely at one mentor teacher group in order to examine the intricacies of team mentoring dynamics and to determine how and what interns learn from their mentoring experience with multiple personnel as opposed to traditional mentoring dyads/triads operating with a single cooperating teacher/mentor. Practice and theory converge as this study explores how teachers are being socialized by a team approach to mentoring. Questions to guide this study include: What is the structure of the mentoring team? How does it operate? How are responsibilities and roles divided? What does the team do? What kinds of talk occur during the mentoring experience? How do the dynamics of traditional dyads differ from those of the team? What advantages/disadvantages are there to the team? What effect does this approach have specifically on proteges?

An Ecological Framework

Context and conversation are key words in the conceptualization of intern growth and learning. Acquiring high-level "working knowledge"(Yinger & Hendricks-Lee, 1993) and developing a practice that differs greatly from what we, ourselves, may have experienced as student teachers is greatly enhanced through learning opportunities that extend beyond traditional single cooperating teacher supervision. The new world of teacher preparation and socialization provides effective contexts for teacher learning which combine colleges of education with community schools and provide opportunities for doing and reflecting, collaborating with other teachers, looking closely at students and their contexts, and encouraging ecological learning – in other words, a team approach to mentoring. The cement for these concentric layers of context is the common language shared by a commu-

nity of learners. This common language allows us to talk "clearly and straightforwardly about teaching without offending the teacher" thus enabling us to "describe and demonstrate underlying principles of teaching and learning" (Little & Nelson, 1990, p. 4).

Darling-Hammond (1994) states that the professional teacher is one who learns from teaching rather than one who has finished learning how to teach, and the job of teacher education develops the capacity to inquire systematically and sensitively into the nature of learning and the effects of teaching. Professional development strategies that work in improving teacher learning and socialization into the profession share several features (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996, p. 203). They tend to be experiential, engaging teachers in concrete tasks of teaching; grounded in participants' questions, inquiry and experimentation as well as professionwide research; collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators; connected to and derived from teachers' work with their students as well as to examinations of subject matter and teaching methods; sustained and intensive—supported by modeling, coaching and problem solving around specific problems of practice; and connected to other aspects of school change. This investigation utilizes these theoretical frameworks to examine the workings of one mentoring team and unravel the dynamics that enabled them to operate as a collaborative learning unit.

A Redefinition of Teacher Education: The Sociocultural Perspective

Teacher knowledge is often tacit knowledge and a great deal of expertise about teaching resides in the heads of experienced teachers. Literature is presently focusing on the knowledge of teachers about their craft (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Feiman-Nemser, 1990), but, as now organized, schools do not provide for professional development or for the introduction of innovations in teaching practices (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). New sources of learning are extremely limited and studies of teachers of varying lengths of service show that most experienced teachers who work in isolation from peers continue to do the same thing they did when they first entered teaching 10, 15, or 20 years ago and now they find their jobs monotonous and unchallenging. Beginners develop initial skills by trial-and-error learning and begin to deplete their fund of ideas after about the fifth year of teaching (Rosenholz, 1986, p. 524).

Proposed reforms such as higher standards for entry into the field, better salaries, merit pay and career-ladder plans will not be enough. These won't change teaching practices unless we change the settings in which teachers work at the same time. "Teachers' skill development

depends heavily on collaborative support and exchange" (Rosenholz, 1986, p. 518) and teaching cannot be reformed until it is understood that schools must be a context for teaching and that context itself must be a "teaching context" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, p. 6).

The basis for this theory of ongoing teacher education is derived from the contextualist and interactionist schools of human development relating back to Vygotskian notions. Vygotsky (1978) argued that higher-order functions develop out of social interaction and that development cannot be understood by mere study of the individual. We must also examine the "external social world" in which that individual has developed. Information regarding "cultural tools and practices" is transmitted from experienced members to inexperienced members allowing growth to occur in the "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978)—a place where the learner has partially mastered the skill but can successfully employ it and internalize it with the assistance and supervision of a veteran. Our beginning teachers operate in this "zone of proximal development". An approach to teacher education that optimizes this type of "scaffolding" (Wertsch, 1979) by supporting the learner's extension of current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence provides the collaborative support and exchange that is truly teacher education reform. Social interaction with colleagues who are more expert in the use of the conceptual tools of the culture is an important "cultural amplifier" to extend the cognitive processes (Rogoff & Gardener, 1984, p. 97). Veteran teachers can thus "amplify" the apprenticeship of beginning teachers and ease their socialization into the profession through situational guidance that offers both support and challenge.

Methodology

This research incorporated qualitative methods, and emerged as a sociocultural exploration of a mentor team in the context of an innovative teacher education program. Data consisted of interviews, reflective journals, observation of teachers teaching and document analysis. Data gathering and analysis occurred simultaneously over a twelve month period. Mentors involved in this state's induction program were expected to prepare beginning teachers to satisfy the state's updated criteria for continuing education. This description offers a holistic view of how that evolved.

The team site to be studied was situated in a Paideia middle school in an urban Midwestern area. The school was involved in a university-school partnership and had been so involved for eight years. This Professional Development School (PDS) serves an 83 per-

cent minority student population and is situated in a lower socio-economic community. The College of Education lies within a large research institution, is involved in the Holmes Partnership, and has a detailed PDS structure in place. This structure consists of team teaching of some university courses by university and school faculty, weekly teaching experience in the fourth year for teaching associates in various settings, and a fifth year paid internship, within a team structure, consisting of four mentor teachers, two interns and a campus-based faculty or teacher-in-residence. For this research, I was the assigned campus-based faculty at this particular school and operated as a participant observer on the mentor team.

The primary informants were the seven mentor team members. All team members are white and two are males. All team mentor teachers have at least ten years of teaching experience. Two had not previously served as mentors and none have received any formal mentor training. I operated as a participant observer on the mentor team and interviewed and documented the conversations with teachers-in-residence about traditionally-paired dyads. These observations, as well as observations of interns' teaching and document analysis of personal reflection journals and intern preparation guidelines provided for additional triangulation of interview perspectives.

Interns requested the schools in which they were placed and many (including Damon, an intern studied in this research) returned to schools where they had previously been "teaching associates" in the fourth year of their practicum. For the fifth year of the teacher education program, they were placed in a school for one year, paid the equivalent of a substitute teacher and regarded as "the teacher" by both faculty and students from day one. This necessitated an extensive orientation program through the university and the partnering schools. All mentor participants on our particular team taught at the same grade level and all had 10-21 years of experience teaching. Throughout the school year, both interns on our team experienced a process of socialization into teaching—a process in which they became active participants. That became the focus of this exploration. I wanted to know how the team facilitated that socialization. Their stories, unearthed in initial interviews, revealed several categories of concerns: instructional concerns; management concerns; assessment and evaluative concerns (both for themselves and their students) and social/personal concerns. Analysis clarified how the interns "worked through" these challenges with the support structure of the mentor team throughout that first year of teaching. The findings in this article pertain to the two interns' case stories and all names used within the paper are pseudonyms. As Damon and Jamie (the interns) embarked

on a year of becoming teachers and eventually emerged as teachers, we team members analyzed and documented their progress.

Qualitative research methods depend upon the collection of abundant data and a systematic analysis of that data to reveal its meaning. Interviews in this study were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed. Analysis of the data was ongoing, interactive and emergent as I noted reflections; sifted through materials to identify similar phrases, relationships, patterns and themes; isolated commonalities and differences of themes and then took them out into the field on the next wave of data collection. Data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification were interwoven before, during and after data collection in parallel form (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as basis for analysis.

I used triangulation to reinforce data interpretation. The data set contains information from a variety of sources including conversations, document analysis, and observations along with reflective journals—providing a connected view of the multiple aspects of beginning teacher socialization. Member check also provided an essential component of triangulation. Fellow mentor teachers on the team and the PDS coordinator shared perspectives regarding the interns' teaching experiences. The interns themselves saw preliminary glimpses of the data and were asked to share their insights. Team participants gave feedback about my interpretations throughout the duration of the research.

Teachers-in-residence who worked with traditionally-paired mentoring dyads, and scholars at the university reviewed the data and shared additional insights. We met regularly throughout the year-long project at two-week intervals to compare the traditional dyad mentoring experience with that of the mentor team.

The Team, A Community of Learners

The data analysis process included the creation of the interns' narratives relating to their experience on the team. Following are their stories as they told them over the course of the year. Even though our interns had been prepared by the same university program, they were very different people. Their connection to the team community was not automatic, but for Jamie, the transition to teacher seemed to be seamless. Jamie was mature even beyond her 27 years and competently fielded all problems with her 7th grade class, "the Mariners," in a respectful yet nurturing manner. She shared a classroom with Ms. Able, a veteran of 14 years and commented:

> When I watch Ms. Able teach and work with the other mentors on the team, I see what teaching is all about. I tried to be a friend, then a disciplinarian, but I learned that to teach is to be a facilitator. I have watched each of my mentors teach and although their approaches are different, their goal is the same. We help our students make informed choices and it's our job to help them be informed. My role now is much different when compared to the one I entered the teaching profession with. Through growth and the support of the various personalities on the team, I have learned to look at my previous mistakes, critically reflect, and truly begin to focus on what made my teaching work. (11/13/97)

It was a team practice to script as we observed interns (several mentors used laptops for this) and to include several comments/suggestions in our notes to the interns. These notes were then copied and given to the intern and all other team members. Eight themes guided our observations/conversations, and these themes reflected the attributes of effective teachers as per the teacher education program at the university. They became a common language we used to talk about our teaching that was specific and non-judgmental. They grounded our observations in authentic language that was familiar so that we could "describe and demonstrate underlying principles of teaching and learning" (Little & Nelson, 1990, p. 4). Our common themes included: learning, instruction, content, curriculum, context, professional growth and development, grounded theory and knowledge, and collaboration. These themes correlate with Student Teacher Performance Based Licensure and Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) components of effective teaching for student teacher standards. The common theme "learning," for example, states that learning is an

> Active, goal oriented, constructive process dependent on the mental activities of the learner. Learners are seen as producers of their own knowledge, not merely consumers of information delivered to them. This constructivist view of human cognitive learning addresses various mental activities involved in human information processing. (Cincinnati Initiative for Teacher Education [CITE] Handbook, 1997, p. 3)

As Jamie discussed reflection she was talking about several opportunities. After the observation the interns typically read the scripted notes from the mentor and reflected privately about their performance prior to the debriefing. At a later time, intern and mentor had a post conference touching on highlights of the lesson, problems

and concerns. At the next team meeting, discussion and "social reflection" followed as we focused on the authentic critical activities of teaching and learning rather than abstractions and generalities. Interns also kept a reflective journal for their portfolio.

Often, at the team meetings, which were held every other Tuesday before school, the interns focused the discussion according to their areas of need or expertise. Jamie was very organized. Her evaluation and assessment of students and her implementation of reading workshop procedures enlightened our mentor team on several occasions. No teacher taught during these meetings—no individual was in charge. We negotiated topics according to our needs as a group.

Besides Jamie's presentation on the workshop approach and managing the gradebook, we heard from other team members about classroom management, portfolios, writing the curriculum vita, teacher as researcher, formative evaluation procedures (for interns), peer coaching, use of the team's language framework, scripting, pre/post evaluation conferencing, and adapting to the context of school and community. The interns contributed as "experts" in matters of pedagogy, management, and content, as did the veteran teachers. We shared from our authentic experience, and our common language enabled us to delve into the deeper meaning of "why" things worked through our reflection and discussion. We all mentored each other.

At the end of her internship, Jamie described herself in a reflective journal entry.

> I now realize how unprepared I was to take on a full load and begin teaching. I've had friends who had nightmare experiences with their cooperating teacher because their personalities clashed or the mentor teacher didn't approve of the way the mentee taught. That didn't happen here. I was given the support of a university liaison, mentors, professional practice and career teachers, as well as other interns in my same position. The professional support and leadership I received from the team was guidance that was invaluable. (4/13/98)

In an exit interview as I was leaving the field, Jamie referred to the team as a "collection of peers who are all concerned with becoming better teachers" (5/12/98).

Damon did not have the same seamless transition into teaching. One might say his threads indeed got tangled. At a team meeting early in the year the following exchange took place. At 8:09 one

Tuesday morning Mr. Newton (Damon's classroom mentor) addressed the team.

> In answer to all of your unspoken questions, I do not know where Damon is. He knew about the team meeting. We discussed it yesterday when we went over lesson plans. I am concerned about the fact that he's been late 3 days in the last week. That's a pattern that needs to stop.

Jamie's discomfort was obvious—a fellow intern was struggling she asked: "Do I need to leave?" A potential trash-talking session was avoided as two other mentor teachers got the meeting focused. Ms. Liber asked that we proceed with the scheduled topic, student assessment. "Jamie, did you bring your print out sheets for recording student work? Let's take a look at those as we'd planned." Another mentor, Ms. Able responded: "Let's proceed with the business at hand and maybe he'll arrive. We need to focus on punctuality and professionalism in our personal de-briefings with Damon." At 8:21 a rumpled Damon arrives. "I'm sorry; I forgot all about the meeting." (10/8/97).

The beginning of this example sets the tone for the mentor team as community, but it also reveals the way authentic, day-to-day personal problems of the interns were dealt with. The situation with Damon's tardiness was not an isolated incident, but the suggestion that we work it out personally with Damon as we debriefed was an acceptable measure. Jamie's discomfort was real and warranted. In a community, problems and conflicts arise and the equitable problem solving of the group adds to the cohesion of the community unit. Damon, in the beginning of his internship, had trouble connecting to peers as professionals (9/9/97). Even though he had taught in the same classroom the year before as a teaching associate and felt he had a good working relationship with at least one of the team members, Damon admitted he lacked organizational skills and personal confidence (9/9/97).

Later, Damon attested to the value of regularly reflecting on his teaching and collaboratively discussing those reflections with other colleagues.

> The regular meeting time every other Tuesday morning is so helpful, and I know I need the help. I just don't feel like a teacher. I'm stuck with that "friend versus teacher" relationship with my students and my peers. I don't feel responsible enough to be a teacher. I know I need to get organized. (10/29/97)

As a team, we made a concerted effort to get Damon to organize himself by discussing the rationale behind teacher behavior, although my first reaction was to think "he's just not trying—he needs to get serious." It's a good thing I wasn't his single cooperating teacher. Initially Damon had a hard time "doing his homework." He thought he could stand in front of the class and "wing it"—that's what being a teaching associate was like last year, but that was one day a week (10/29/97).

Damon's lesson plans and directions to the students were also abstract. His long term plans for the first quarter of language arts instruction merely stated "READ." Transitions were a problem. Damon was personal and natural outside of class, but while teaching for long periods, he developed a monotone. Class disruptions became more frequent. In an observation (9/12/97) that was fairly typical for Damon's teaching early in the year, Mr. Newton noted these questions after scripting:

1. The timing technique for free-writing may be creating a problem—is 20 minutes too long?

2. The instructions seem very abstract. Notes on the board? Examples? Student generated work? I couldn't determine the focus of the lesson. What curricular objectives did you have in mind? The students are quiet, but are they engaged and learning?

3. Is the homework connected to the lesson?

Observations and scriptings by other team members yielded similar comments, yet as Damon read and reflected, restructured and debriefed, he did not appear to become discouraged. As a team, our strategy was to focus on the rationale for clear statements of expectations, relevant homework assignments, maintaining curricular coherence and developing a teacher persona. Each of us had something to offer and Damon reacted to our comments in the spirit in which they were given.

> I began my year with a lot of uncertainty in terms of planning. My personality and lack of experience led me into the year "flying by the seat of my pants" and going without solid lesson plans. My problem was, in all honesty, I was getting away with it for awhile. But with six other team members keeping an eye on you, it's hard to "pull the wool over anyone's eyes." Plus, I had many different kinds of suggestions. The

team began to help. They knew I was in trouble, but it was never a team meeting about "Damon's incompetence." Ms. Able showed me some ways to write lesson plans that are short, but detailed. You reviewed the curricular objectives to focus my planning and we made a grid sheet to check things off. Mr. Newton cautioned me about the overuse of threats and detention, Ms. Liber taught me the value of being flexible, and Ms. Weber proposed a homework collection strategy that saves time and disruption. I am pleased with the way the team helped me deal with the losses I've had to take. I'm the rookie. But I have grown. (3/12/98)

The team took an active role in allowing me to become a better teacher. I never felt for a second that any team member was "downing" me for doing something in a way they would not have done it. I was encouraged to develop my style and use it. (4/8/98)

About Damon's growth, one team member commented:

You set a standard. You became reliable, dependable, and open to change. You taught me about perseverance and hard work. We know now what an intern can be, and we'll settle for nothing less. (Ms. Weber, 5/12/98)

Damon ended the year feeling like a teacher. In fact, by June 20th of that year he already had a job—he was a teacher! In an exit interview Damon said:

This mentoring all falls together as a team process. It was non-judgmental colleague support. Personality conflicts aren't a real issue because so many personalities work for a goal—to be better teachers. It's kind of like the intramural hockey team I play on. We discuss techniques and strategies by reviewing the events of our games. Then we work to become better players—together. Occasionally we consult a rulebook or expert on game strategy, but basically it's us helping ourselves. (5/12/98)

Conclusions and Implications for Practice

In retrospect, maybe Damon's intramural concept has some real merit. People generally participate in intramural activities because they want to. That idea of "want to" is an important concept. Our mentors were volunteers. Mentors should want to be mentors; they should not just want an extra salary boost. Are all teachers who teach

children good at teaching teachers? Current data tells us that is not the case (Little & Nelson, 1990), and unfortunately our mentors are often selected in these ways.

The team aspect of the intramural metaphor certainly fit with our mentoring procedure. We called ourselves a mentor team. We met regularly at scheduled times and focused on the needs and areas of expertise of our participants. We re-played our own practices, and had other colleagues observe so that we could improve on our shortcomings. There was no "coach" because we were all coaches—we coached each other, and on game day we supported each other. We had expectations for hard work, constructive criticism, reflection on our own practice and restructuring if necessary. We practiced together to improve the team as a whole. The rookies, as well as the veterans, had a voice and our common language helped to facilitate our plans for success. When we had a victory we celebrated together and when we lost, it was not one person's defeat, it was an opportunity for growth as a collective group. Our evaluation of our progress was formative and we dealt with each contest as it came. Improvement was our desired outcome and we were only as strong as our weakest member.

Some who had not participated on a team before needed training and support to collaborate with other team members, but as long as the "want to" was there, success was eminent. My son's football team had an expression that seems apropos: Pride, poise, persistence. The team concept works because the pride, poise and persistence of individuals combines to create motivation for modeling and learning together.

This study is by no means a prescriptive or portable answer to the problems we currently face in preparing productive student teachers. More research on the effects of mentoring is immediately necessary as states implement their own mentoring standards. This is a study of ecology, and a description of one mentor team—their conversations and their contexts. This study serves as a reminder of the human side of mentoring. It clarifies the complex and problematic side of teaching, the dynamics of the relationship between mentor and protege, and the richness of interaction that is possible through community. By inducting interns into an environment of conversation and collegiality through examination of our own practice, we are encouraging them to become professionals who value collaboration, experimentation, and inquiry through ongoing growth and learning.

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Teacher Education and the Internet: Preparing for the Technology Revolution

Jane F. Rudden, Anne L. Mallery

New technologies and their effectiveness as instructional tools have been the focus of research efforts for more than a decade. Results of these investigations have shown the positive effects of learning with multimedia technology for pre-Kindergarten children (Liu, 1996), hypermedia lessons for Kindergartners (Boone, Higgins, Notari, & Stump, 1996), and on-line communications applications for elementary students (Follansbee, Hughes, Pisha, & Stahl, 1997). Studies specific to the use of the Internet as a resource for learning with technology are rapidly outnumbering those specific to software applications. Learning with technology is an inevitable component of the 21st century educational objectives (Dede, 1998).

The Consortium for School Networking (1991), established by the National Research and Education Network (NREN), recommended the expansion of the Internet and assistance from the federal government in connecting public schools in every congressional district to Internet. This expansion was bolstered by President Clinton's push for a technology initiative that could cost the country between $40 and $100 billion over the next five years. The new technology holds promises of exciting curriculum, exploratory learning, and worldwide linkages but also places new demands on school personnel. The ubiquitous presence of computers wired for Internet access in elementary classrooms raises the issue of how to use this resource judiciously. It

speaks to the responsibility for preparing elementary teachers in the use of technology in teaching. Leu (1998) alerted educators that the Internet and other networked technologies are essential, if we hope to prepare students for the future they deserve.

> Today, we no longer live in an agrarian or industrial society, but in an informational age in which problem solving, information access, and communication is essential to success. Now and in the future, the most successful individuals will be able to access information quickly and approach literacy as a endless developmental process involving new ways of critical thinking about information as they compose, comprehend, and respond to new combinations of media. (p. 5)

The Need for the Study

Preparing teachers for the challenges of an interactive classroom environment required gathering information about the teacher; information preliminary to plunging headlong into strategies for using technology that were mere add-on's to existing methods. We first needed to know the nature of our student, the preservice teacher. The task of training preservice teachers in the benefits the Internet could bring to their practice, required a transition from a general mindset of seeing a computer as word processor, to viewing it as a resource for purposeful teaching.

A 10-year analysis of the disposition of elementary education students toward computers (Reed, Ervin, & Oughton, 1995) revealed recent majors had more prior computer experience and lower computer anxiety than those entering the program earlier in the 10-year period, and male students had higher computer anxiety than female students. In the spring of 1996, we conducted a pilot study to determine if Internet training and guided practice affect the attitudes of preservice teachers about the use of computers in the classroom, focusing on sophomore level preservice teachers (Authors, 1997). George, Hall, and Rutherford's (1977) The Stages of Concern Toward Innovation instrument was used as a pre- and posttreatment measure, with innovation defined as the Internet. A self-reporting questionnaire was used to gather information about past experiences with computers, and participants were grouped by degree of prior experience. Results revealed that only half of the participants had experience with computers prior to the project. It was also revealed that significant differences could be expected in students' attitudes toward the value of Internet as a research tool after brief (1.5 hours) instruction and guided practice. We attributed this finding to the fact that students were

taught the process at the same time it was most needed; that is, when it was directly tied to a graded class assignment in a required education course.

This article is a report of Phase II of this study, the purpose of which was to gather information about preservice teachers' concerns regarding the use of Internet in planning instruction, and to determine the relationship between/among these concerns and the following variables: learning style, academic major/option, and computer experience. Information from this study was to be used to inform the decisions of the Elementary & Early Childhood and Educational Foundations Departments regarding computer training for the student population we served. The following questions guided our inquiry:

Question 1: What are the learning characteristics of the teacher education candidates in our classes?

Question 2: Is there a relationship between and/or among the variables of learning style, major/option, and computer experience, relative to the stages of concern elementary preservice teachers hold about the use of the Internet in planning instruction?

Question #3: Does Internet instruction and guided practice offered in sophomore methods classes facilitate teacher education students' ability to use it as a resource in designing elementary instruction?

Method

Participants

Initially, there were 99 elementary and secondary education majors participating in this study. Due to some students returning incomplete surveys, the posttreatment results are based on 67 elementary and secondary education majors enrolled in the Sophomore Bloc methods classes.

Instruments. The Stages of Concern toward an Innovation (George, Hall, & Rutherford, 1977) was administered to determine levels of prior experience, and pre- and posttreatment levels of concerns toward the Internet as a planning tool (see Appendix A). Innovation was operationalized in this study as the use of the Internet as a teaching and planning resource. The survey was administered before and

after completing an assigned academic task. Reed (1990) describes the rationale for this instrument by stating:

> When people are exposed initially to an innovation, their concerns tend to be very self-oriented...Once these concerns are accommodated, they become more concerned about managing the innovation in their teaching, how the innovation will affect their students, how they might work with others in relation to the innovation, and when best to use the innovation. (p. 7)

The Stages of Concern instrument includes the seven stages identified by George, Hall, and Rutherford (1977).

- First stage is Awareness: I am not concerned about the Internet.
- Second stage is Informational: I would like to know more about the Internet.
- Third stage is Personal: How will using the Internet affect me?
- Fourth stage is Management: I seem to be spending all my time getting material ready when using the Internet.
- Fifth stage is Consequence: How is my use of the Internet affecting my students?
- Sixth stage is Collaboration: I am concerned about relating my use of the Internet with what other instructors are doing with it.
- Seventh stage is Refocusing: I have some ideas about how something might work better.

The second instrument used, Kolb Learning Style Inventory, (1981,1985), was administered only once, at the pretreatment stage (see Appendix B). The Kolb inventory is designed to assess an individual's method of learning, not the ability to learn. By rank ordering 9 sets of four words describing learning characteristics, each participant was able to determine his/her learning style using Kolb's calculation and graphic plotting procedures. The four learning styles included in the inventory are:

- Diverger: characterized by innovation and ideas; function by value clarification; goals are to be involved in important issues and to bring harmony; favorite question is why?

- Assimilator: characterized by creating concepts and models; function by thinking things through; goal is intellectual recognition; favorite question is what?

- Converger: characterized by practical application of ideas; function by factual data garnered from kinesthetic, hands-on experience; goal is to align their view of the present with future security; favorite question is how does this work?

- Accommodator: characterized by action, getting things done; function by acting and testing experience; goal is to bring action to ideas; favorite question is if?

The third instrument used was an informal demographic survey to gather information about gender, age, major, area of interest, and self-assessed level of computer experience.

Treatment. All participants attended an orientation session on how to access and navigate the Internet. A university librarian conducted this session. Instruction on how to complete the academic tasks required in this study was provided by the methods course professors.

Internet orientation and instruction included: defining the World Wide Web, showing the procedure for logging on and accessing Internet, showing how to use web browsers, explaining URL, showing where to find the subject catalog, identifying the names and foci of automatic indices (search engines), providing 30-40 minutes for participants to navigate sites independently.

Academic tasks. Following the Internet orientation, participants worked independently to complete the following tasks that required the application of the Internet instruction.

Task #1: Use the automatic indices to locate an Internet site not typically associated with language arts; for example, sports, cooking, spelunking, agriculture. Complete the following:

Site address.

What is the featured subject of this site?

Why do you think it is suitable for literacy skill development?

List three possible questions you could ask your students about the information at this site that would encourage literacy development.

Describe an activity you might conduct with your students that would incorporate the information at this site and foster the development of their literacy skills.

Task #2: Use the automatic indices to locate three different Internet sites where you would find information that could further your professional development as a teacher. Complete the following:

Site Address:

This site is a good source for professional development because:

Results

Question 1: What are the learning characteristics of the teacher education candidates in our classes?

Results of the Kolb Learning Style Inventory revealed a distribution across the four learning styles. Since some surveys were incomplete, only 60 records were recorded. There were 19 Divergers, 4 Assimilators, 10 Convergers, and 27 Accommodators. The predominance of Accommodators (45%) and Divergers (31.6%) indicates a population of preservice teachers predisposed to functioning by testing experience, innovation, and ideas. Convergers represented 16.6% of the population, and are characterized by practical application of ideas. Assimilators, interested in creating concepts and models, represented the smallest percentage of the population (6.6%).

Question 2: Is there a relationship between and/or among the variables of learning style, major/option, and computer experience, relative to the stages of concern elementary preservice teachers hold about the use of Internet in planning instruction?

Across all variables, significant mean differences among the participants at each stage of concern were shown in the areas of Awareness and Information. (Appendix C) In the area of Awareness, $p=.017$ indicates that there is a relationship among all variables (learning style, academic major, and computer experience) in terms of the participants' awareness of the uses of the Internet. That is, all students showed a significant level of concern in the awareness and information stages, compared with their levels of concern for all other stages. Awareness is the first stage of concern, and is measured by the statement; "I am not concerned about the Internet." These data indicate that the participants' concern about the Internet was high, even when responses were analyzed across all the variables. This is in contrast to

their holding onto a continued general apathy about the functions of the Internet and its relevance to teaching. In the area of Information, p=.0003 indicates a relationship among all variables in terms of the participants' need to know about the Internet. Information is the second stage of concern, and is measured by the statement; "I would like to know more about the Internet." These data indicate that the participants' desire for more information about the Internet was not diminished after factoring together the variables of learning style, academic major, and computer experience. This may be due to a high level of comfort inherent in using the technology and immediately applying the information to complete the academic tasks.

Taking the variables separately allows a look at just which one may be attributed to the changes in concern. First, learning style had a significant posttreatment effect on their concerns about managing Internet as a resource (Appendix D).

Second, academic major/option had no significant effect on the changes in levels of concern. This lack of effect was evident across all majors: elementary education only, secondary education only, and special education/reading option/science option (Appendix E).

Third, level of computer experience had a significant pretreatment effect on levels of concern between the advanced/expert and the no experience/beginner in the areas of Awareness ($F=6.3$, $p=.013$), Personal ($F=5.28$, $p=.02$), and Management ($F=11.7$, $p=.001$). Posttreatment data (Appendix F) revealed significant differences between these two levels of experience in their concern regarding Information about Internet ($F=10.86$, $p=.001$), and Management of the resource ($F=8.6$, $p=.004$).

Question 3: Does Internet instruction and guided practice offered in sophomore methods classes facilitate teacher education students' ability to use it as a resource in designing elementary instruction?

Evidence of the participants' ability to use Internet as an instructional planning resource is indicated by the majority's success in completing the academic tasks following treatment (Appendix G). The instruction was to search for a site not typically associated with language arts instruction, and incorporate the information at that site in a lesson plan suitable for developing literacy skills. The participants had the option of working independently or with a partner to complete this task. 18 sites meet the criteria; 8 sites do not because they are specific to language arts.

A typical correct response to this task follows:

> Site address:
> http://www.signature.pair.com/letters/archive/meloy.html
>
> Featured subject of this site: William Meloy, clerk for US Treasury
>
> Suitability for literacy skill development: This web site is a letter documenting Lincoln's assassination, so it could be tied in with a lesson on letter format and into a history lesson.
>
> Three possible questions you could ask your students about the information at this site that would encourage literacy development: 1) how could we change the dialect to Modern English? 2) Can you tell me how much of this letter you easily understand? 3) Why do you think English dialect has changed? Compare it to the dialect in this letter.
>
> An activity you might conduct with your students that would incorporate the information at this site and foster the development of their literacy skills: After we studied Lincoln's assassination, the students could write a letter to a family member as if they were a witness to the assassination. If desired, they could use 19th century dialect, using the web page and other documents we've viewed as a model.

A typical incorrect response to this task focused on a site that is generally associated with language arts and/or literacy skills. For example,

> Site address: http://eng.hss.cmu.edu/poetry/
>
> What is the featured subject of this site: Poetry
>
> Why do you think it is suitable for literacy skill development: Students can find reading and interpreting poems fun, while learning important literacy skills.
>
> List three possible questions you could ask your students about the information at this site that would encourage literacy development: 1) Can you find a poem that uses rhyme and repetition? 2) Can you find a poem with alliteration? Show examples. 3) Using a poem of your choice, what is the underlying theme?

Describe an activity you might conduct with your students that would incorporate the information at this site and foster the development of their literacy skills: Have the entire class agree on one poem to choose. Have students read the poem in small groups. Then have each group prepare an interpretation of the poem to share with other groups. Discuss different views as a class.

In Task #2, participants were asked to locate a minimum of three Internet sites appropriate to their professional development as teachers. There was a 100% success rate for all participants. A representative response to this task follows:

Address #1: http://www.ash.udel.edu/ash/

This is a good source for: materials and ideas for teaching K-12 (exhibit hall class project of ecosystems)

Address #2: http://www.askasia.org/

This is a good source for: wide variety of educational resources, lesson plans, maps; suitable for K-12 Asian studies curricula

Address #3: http://www.classroom.net/

This is a good source for: "homebase" to thousands of K-12 educators and students around the globe: 1) locate and use the best K-12 educational resources; 2) interact with your colleagues; 3) discover how Classroom Connect Newsletter can help save you time.

Discussion

This inquiry focused on three variables associated with incorporating technology into learning and teaching: learning style, academic major of the preservice teacher, and level of computer experience. The importance of investigating the characteristics of this population is grounded in the unavoidable presence of computers in today's elementary classrooms. These computers are generally linked into a local area network (LAN) and extended into a wide area network (WAN), commonly called the Internet. Without an understanding of how to use this resource in their teaching, we feared our preservice teachers would look at the hardware as a liability versus an asset. Seen as a liability, possible inappropriate uses could be either free time on

computer games or electronic worksheets for those who need more help, or, the worst of all, to ignore the possibilities and shove the equipment into a corner. If seen as an asset, the Internet could serve as a resource for different forms of instruction, an avenue for exploring a topic from sources spanning the globe, or an interface between learner and peers/learner and experts. Researchers stress the importance of integrating technology into classroom teaching and subject matter curricula (Bruce & Rubin, 1992; Ruopp, Pfister, Drayton, & Gail, 1993).

Before making any assumptions about how to best prepare preservice teachers to develop their instruction using the Internet as an resource, we needed to find out the nature of our audience. Past observations have taught us that computer-shy students are very adept at avoiding any demonstration of their skills. They seem to prefer leaning on their self-perceived inadequacies, rather than risk the possibility of not understanding the technical nature of the Internet. This fear of failure incapacitates their risk taking. The low risk nature of the treatment and academic tasks gave us hope that even those hiders would approach the Internet with some degree of ease and assurance.

Question #1 focused on the learning characteristics of the teacher education candidates in our classes. The results of the Kolb Learning Style Inventory showed a predominance of the Accommodator and the Diverger. This indicates a population well suited to encouraging active learning in their classrooms. Accommodators' strengths are action and getting things done. Divergers' strengths are innovation and ideas. There were also ten Convergers, characterized by hands-on learning. Teachers with these learning styles are most likely to encourage students to engage in active learning: manipulating, exploring, observing, using various sensory modalities, discussing, experimenting, and otherwise being involved in the learning process (Ryder & Hughes, 1997). Those few Assimilators (4), characterized by creating concepts and models and thinking things through, are likely to see the Internet as a resource for students to acquire information, and generate their own artifacts of learning: for example, home page development, multimedia presentations, cross-country journaling.

Question #2 focused on the relationship between/among the variables of learning style, major/option, and computer experience, relative to the stages of concern our students have about using the Internet in planning instruction. A significant relationship was revealed in the areas of Awareness and Information. Awareness is a self-oriented stage of concern, and this significant relationship can be interpreted in terms of the students having a keen sense of wanting to

know more about what the Internet can offer them. This also indicates that the instruction and tasks designed for this inquiry made them aware of the Internet and its uses for teachers. The relationship of variables relevant to the Information stage can be interpreted in terms of the students reaching a comfort level about incorporating the Internet into curriculum.

A closer look at each variable indicates that learning style had a significant effect on preservice teachers' concerns about managing the Internet as a resource. That is to say, their sense of the breadth of the Internet, as it relates to their purposes, seemed a great deal more to manage than they previously thought. Following treatment, their concerns centered on cutting down on the time it took to get their materials together, locating sites appropriate for their instructional objectives, and getting to the hands-on component of exploring the Internet sites.

Academic major/option had no significant effect on the changes in levels of concern. This may reasonably be explained by the students' characteristic open-minded approach to strategies and techniques that will help them plan and teach. This is not surprising in preservice teachers, whose nature typically runs toward enthusiasm and willingness.

Level of computer experience made a difference in levels of concern both pre- and posttreatment. Awareness was clearly of little concern to the beginner prior to treatment. This reflects a general apathy toward the Internet and lack of understanding of its uses in teaching. Their increased posttreatment scores show a heightened awareness of the role the Internet might play in their teaching. The beginner group also showed a sharp posttreatment increase in the area of Information. This is logical given the change in their Awareness. The beginner group also showed a marked difference in their concern over the Personal stage: how will using the Internet affect me? This difference can reasonably be assigned to their sudden awareness of others' expertise with this resource, and a personal aspiration to distinguish themselves as teacher candidates who are technologically savvy. The differences in concern over Managing the Internet were significant, both pre- and posttreatment, between the beginner and advanced users. Given the brief period of treatment, this difference can be reasonably explained. A beginner may have a concern about managing this resource, and the treatment did not contribute to additional experience. So, the beginner's concern cannot compare to that of a more advanced user who sees the overwhelming possibilities of the Internet. The advanced user is generally thoughtful about the time

and discernment necessary to find appropriate sites, as well as the efforts involved in modifying content to suit teaching objectives.

Question #3 focused on the effect instruction and guided practice had on preservice teachers' ability to apply this instruction. Given that 8 sites were specific to language arts, it is reasonable to presume these students did not understand the directions. The proposed plans using these sites were adequate to literacy skill instruction, but failed to meet the treatment criteria. Those eighteen sites associated with non-language arts topics did meet the criteria, and revealed little or no difficulty in modifying the site information to further a literacy skill lesson.

In summary, these preservice teacher candidates were more likely to be active learners, preferring hands-on experiences and creation of models, to assimilating and analyzing information. Their concerns about the Internet as a resource for planning instruction changed after treatment, revealing a general increase in the importance they assigned to using the Internet as a teaching tool, and the possibilities it holds for them as 21st century teachers. This was true regardless of their academic major/option. It was further shown that the treatment and guided practice were sufficient to the successful completion of the academic tasks. There was no problem reported in navigating the Internet, using the indices to narrow searches, and further narrowing in on sites within sites. Their ability to see non-language arts information as modifiable and appropriate for teaching literacy skills was very heartening. It portends a generation of teachers open to the possibilities of integrating the Internet into cross-curricular instruction.

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Appendix A

The Stages of Concern Toward Innovation
(George, Hall, & Rutherford, 1977)

DIRECTIONS: Answer as completely and truthfully as you possibly can when thinking how each of the following statements applies to your PRESENT attitude toward using the INTERNET.

Circle the number that best reflects your present attitude. The higher the number, the better the statement reflects your present attitude.

0 1	2 3 4	5 6 7
Not true of me now	Somewhat true of me now	Very true of me now

01234567	1. I am concerned about people's attitudes toward using the INTERNET.
01234567	2. I now know of several approaches for how I might go about using the INTERNET.
01234567	3. I don't even know what the INTERNET is.
01234567	4. I am concerned about not having enough time to learn about the INTERNET so that I can use it effectively.
01234567	5. I would like to help other people use the INTERNET.
01234567	6. I have very limited knowledge about the INTERNET

01234567	7. I would like to know how the INTERNET might affect me when I am trying to teach.
01234567	8. I am concerned about what my employer might expect me to know about the INTERNET and how those expectations might be in conflict with what I would like to do.
01234567	9. I am concerned about improving what I presently know about the INTERNET.
01234567	10. I would like to work with potential or present fellow workers and others who are using the INTERNET.
01234567	11. I am concerned about how the INTERNET might affect my students.
01234567	12. I would like to know who would make decisions about my using the INTERNET.
01234567	13. I would like to discuss the possibility of using the INTERNET.
01234567	14. I would like to know what resources are available if the INTERNET is to be integral to my job.
01234567	15. I am concerned about my inability to learn all there is to know about using the INTERNET effectively.
01234567	16. I would like to know how my job is supposed to change because of the INTERNET.
01234567	17. I would like to familiarize my fellow workers and my employers about the INTERNET as I learn about it and work with it more.
01234567	18. I am concerned about how the INTERNET might affect my students orclients.
01234567	19. I would like to be able to change how the INTERNET might be used as I learn more about it.
01234567	20. I do not care much about the INTERNET because my schedule prevents me from caring too much.

01234567	21. I would like to modify the use of the INTERNET in my job based on the experiences of my students and clients.
01234567	22. Although I don't care much about the INTERNET, I am concerned about it.
01234567	23. I would like to excite my students or clients about the uses of the INTERNET.
01234567	24. I am concerned about the time needed to learn about the INTERNET that will keep me away from doing what I am supposed to beoing as part of my job.
01234567	25. I would like to know what using the INTERNET would require in the immediate future.
01234567	26. I would like to coordinate my efforts in learning about the INTERNET with fellow workers.
01234567	27. I would like to have more information on the time and energy required in order to learn about the INTERNET.
01234567	28. I would like to know what other people are doing in relation to using the INTERNET.
01234567	29. At this time/ I am not interested in learning about the INTERNET.
01234567	30. I would like to determine how to supplement and enhance the use of the INTERNET.
01234567	31. I would like to use feedback from my students or clients to change the use of the INTERNET.
01234567	32. I would like to know how my job would change when I am using the INTERNET.
01234567	33. My present schedule is preventing me from learning too much about using the INTERNET.
01234567	34. I would like to know how using the INTERNET is better than the methods I presently use or plan to use when I do my job.

Appendix B

Kolb Learning-Style Inventory (Kolb, 1981, 1985)

The Learning-Style Inventory describes the way you learn and how you deal with ideas and day-to-day situations in your life. Below are 12 sentences with a choice of four endings. Rank the endings for each sentence according to how well you think each one fits with how you would go about learning something. Try to recall some recent situations where you had to learn something new, perhaps in your job. Then, using the spaces provided, rank a "4" for the sentence ending that describes how you learn best, down to a "1" for the sentence ending that seems least like the way you would learn. Be sure to rank all the endings for each sentence unit. Please do not make ties.

Example of completed sentence set:

When I learn:	4	I like to deal with my feelings	1	I like to watch and listen	2	I like to think about ideas	3	I like to be doing things
1. When I learn:		I like to deal with my feelings		I like to watch and listen		I like to think about ideas		I like to be doing things
2. I learn best when:		I trust my hunches and feelings		I listen and watch carefully		I rely on logical thinking		I work hard to get things done
3. When I am learning		I have strong feelings and reactions		I am quiet and reserved		I tend to reason things out		I am responsible about things

Continued on next page

4. I learn by		Feeling		Watching		Thinking		Doing
5. When I learn:		I am open to new experiences		I look at all sides of issues		I like to analyze things, break them down into their parts		I like to try things out
6. When I am learning		I am an intuitive person		I am an observing		I am a logical person		I am an active person
7. I learn best from:		Personal relationships		Observation		Rational theories		A chance to try out and practice
8. When I learn:		I feel personally involved in things		I take my time before acting		I like ideas and theories		I like to see results from my work
9. I learn best when:		I rely on my feelings		I rely on my observations		I rely on my ideas		I can try things out for myself
10. When I am learning:		I am an accepting person		I am a reserved person		I ama rational person		I am a responsible person
11. When I learn:		I get involved		I like to observe		I evaluate things		I like to be active
12. I learn best when:		I am receptive and open-minded		I am careful		I analyze ideas		I am practical

Appendix C

Pre-Post Paired Means Differences of All Data on Stages of Concern

	Pre-Post Means Differences	Std Deviation	Std Error	Probability
Awareness	1.447	4.837	0.591	0.017*
Information	-3.432	7.257	0.886	0.0003*
Personal	-1.104	5.527	0.675	0.106
Management	-1.402	8.406	1.027	0.176
Consequences	-0.641	5.381	0.657	0.335
Collaboration	-6.223	36.228	4.426	0.164
Refocusing	-0.820	4.631	0.565	0.151

N=67

Appendix D

Pre-post mean differences on Stages of Concern by learning style

Stages of Concern	Learning Style	Pre	F Value	P=	Post	F Value	P=
Awareness	Assimilator	3.75			9.25		
	Converger	2.5	1.92	.13	7.85	.28	.83
	Accommodator	1.88			7.68		
	Diverger	0.84			6.30		
Information	Assimilator	33.5			25.5		
	Converger	27.2	2.48	.07	23.3	.61	.61
	Accommodator	26.3			22.2		
	Diverger	24.3			21.5		
Personal	Assimilator	27			28		
	Converger	26.2	1.01	.39	25.5	1.51	.22
	Accommodator	25.8			23.4		
	Diverger	23.8			22.4		
Management	Assimilator	27.7			25.5		
	Converger	23.3	2.29	.08	21.1	2.99	.03*
	Accommodator	19.2			17.7		
	Diverger	17.4			16.4		
Consequences	Assimilator	25.9			25		
	Converger	24.5	.70	.55	23.5	.17	.91
	Accommodator	23.6			23.3		
	Diverger	22.7			22.6		
Collaboration	Assimilator	37.7			22.2		
	Converger	23.8	.8	.5	20.1	.16	.92
	Accommodator	22.7			19.8		
	Diverger	19.8			19.6		
Refocusing	Assimilator	24.7			25.7		
	Converger	24.5	.56	.64	23.1	.75	.52
	Accommodator	22.7			22.3		
	Diverger	22.2			21.6		

Assimilator (N=4) Converger (N=10) Accommodator (N=27) Diverger (N=19)

Appendix E

Pre-post means differences for Stages of Concern among academic major/option

Stages of Concern	Academic Major	Pre	F Value	Pr<F	Post	F Value	PR>F
Awareness	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	1.64 1.88 2.07	2.59	.08	10.7 6.8 6.9	2.55	.08
Information	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	24.8 24.4 26.3	.52	.59	21.2 21.8 22.2	.67	.51
Personal	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	26.1 23.1 25.1	1.01	.37	25.4 23.6 23.7	.53	.59
Management	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	22.6 16.4 20.5	1.43	.24	18.6 18 19.3	.2	.82
Consequences	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	24.3 23.5 23.6	.06	.94	22.5 23 23.3	.33	.73
Collaboration	Elem Education Sec Education Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	20 22.2 28.9	.35	.70	17.5 22.7 20.1	1.65	.20
Refocusing	Elem Education Sec Educationr Sped/ECd/Sc/Rd	23.07 23.3 23.2	.01	.99	22.5 22.7 22.6	.00	.99

Elementary Education Only (N=14) Secondary Education Only (N=9) Special Education Early Childhood, Science or Reading Option (N=43)

Appendix F

Pre-post means differences on Stages of Concern between levels of computer experience

Stages of Concern	Experience	Pre	F Value	Pr<F	Post	F Value	PR>F
Awareness	Adv/Expert	3.65	6.3	.013*	8.6	.70	.40
	None/Beginner	0.51			7.34		
Information	Adv/Expert	3.7	.04	.84	19	10.86	.001*
	None/Beginner	3.31			23.7		
Personal	Adv/Expert	22.95	5.28	.02*	23.45	.20	.65
	None/Beginner	25.91			24.12		
Management	Adv/Expert	22.46	11.7	.001*	20.34	8.6	.004*
	None/Beginner	15.1			15.4		
Consequences	Adv/Expert	25.3	1.61	.20	23.5	.01	.90
	None/Beginner	23.46			23.3		
Collaboration	Adv/Expert	20.95	.53	.46	18.65	.84	.36
	None/Beginner	28.23			20.34		
Refocusing	Adv/Expert	24.6	2.08	.15	22.6	.02	.88
	None/Beginner	22.7			22.38		

Advanced/Expert (N=20) None/Beginner (N=47)

Appendix G

Focus of Internet sites selected for Task #1

Language Arts Related	Non-Language Arts Related
Language Arts	Social Studies, Life Skills
Dr. Seuss	World Travel
Education: Kidstuff	Sports for the Disabled
Katherine Paterson	Virtual Art Room
Alphabet	Civil War
Illustrated Stories from around the World	Ball Parks/Notre Dame Stadium
Poetry	Fish
Literature and Language Arts	Alaska
	Gardening
	Holidays/An American Thanksgiving
	Betsy Ross/American Flag
	Clouds
	Black History
	Australian Rainbows
	NHL Goaltender Biographies
	Campfire Songs
	Letter on Lincoln's Assassination
	Animals

Gender and Grade Differences in Motivation to Read

Thomas Cloer, Jr., Shana Ross Dalton

With the presentation of new standards for assessment by the IRA/NCTE Joint Task Force on Assessment (1994), the language arts assessment picture began to change more than it had in many previous decades. The joint task force declared that "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). These new joint standards developed by IRA and NCTE also made clear that the consequences of assessment must be taken into consideration. "The consequences of an assessment procedure are the first, and most important, consideration in establishing the validity of the assessment" (p. 25). This brought into question much of what had been done under the guise of assessment and opened the door to a new era.

This new era will ostensibly focus as much on the emotional correlates of schooling as this century has stressed the cognitive gains. In the twenty-first century, the emotional correlates of all aspects of schooling, including assessment, in the language arts will surely be scrutinized. This paper is an attempt to study one of the most important correlates, motivation to read.

Review of Literature

In 1995, The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) was presented to assess four different perceptions by students (Henk & Melnick, 1995). The Progress Scale showed how students perceived the progress they were making in reading. The Observational Comparison Scale

assessed students' perceptions as to progress in comparison with their peers. The Social Feedback Scale gave children's perceptions of the feedback related to reading they were receiving from teachers, parents, peers, etc. The Physiological States Scale was an assessment of students' feelings during different reading situations such as oral reading. Like the earlier Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990), the Reader Self-Perception Scale had an excellent research base developed around the psychological construct of reader self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982).

Then the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling & Mazzoni, 1996) elicited, among other things, information about the value students placed on reading activities by focusing on the frequency of such tasks. This was translated to a Value Scale. Another part of this new instrument, a Self-Concept Scale, sought quantifiable information about students' self-perceived competence in reading. Gambrell et al. (1996) described in detail the development and field testing of the instrument. This included construct validity, factor analyses, reliability of subscales, and pre- and post-test reliability.

These authors avoided the problems inherent in much of the motivational research prior to Gambrell et al. by designing the instrument to be read aloud by the examiner. Reading often confounds the results so that better readers appear more motivated. The two scales, Self-Concept and Value, could be administered to a large group at one time. This instrument added to the repertoire of affective measurements for the 1990's.

The Reader Self-Perception Scale was a beginning attempt to assess self-concept as a reader. While meeting a genuine need in the assessment arena, there seemed to be a need for starting earlier. The RSPS started with norms for grade four. The Motivation to Read Profile began earlier, at second grade level, and also addressed the problem of very poor reading by having the items read orally twice. Thus the instrument designed for assessment at an earlier grade was used for this study.

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 the case for boys. Boys' attitudes toward recreational and academic reading deteriorated significantly by the fourth grade. While girls' attitudes toward academic reading did deteriorate significantly by fourth grade, they didn't appear to see recreational reading as the same endeavor.

Recent analyses of the data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (Williams, P.L., Reese, C.M., Campbell, J.R., Mazzeo, J., & Phillips, G.W., 1994) revealed that consistent with results from past assessments, "the 1994 assessment showed that across all three grades, a significantly higher percentage of female students than male students were at or above each of the three achievement levels" (p.20).

Another recent national study analyzed by Campbell, Kapinus, and Beatty (1995) pointed to the need for students to value diverse reading experiences. These 1,136 fourth graders who were representative of fourth grade students across the country did not read information books to the extent they read storybooks and magazines. Diversity in reading experiences was related to reading comprehension achievement as measured on the main reading assessments. Students who read diversely had higher average proficiency than peers with less diverse reading experiences. In this large research endeavor, more students in the top-third schools in achievement reported reading information books than in the lower-third schools. Thus, the value placed on books as a source of information was very important. Females in the study were significantly more likely to say they read books on their own time than were males.

The readers will notice that the studies cited utilize middle grades. The researchers contend that the affective correlates to language arts are invoked earlier than fourth grade. While studies have looked at differences between elementary and middle school students, these differences may start at an even earlier grade. There is obviously a need for more understanding about the importance held by emotion, motivation to read diversely, and value assigned to reading in explaining the development of life-long readers. This current study is an attempt to add some insight about these variables.

Method

The current study attempted to determine if there were significant gender and grade differences in motivation to read, at grades two and four, as measured by the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell et al., 1996). The scales of Self-Concept, Value, and Total were compared for all boys versus all girls in grades two and four respectively. There were also comparisons made for all second graders (boys and girls) versus all fourth graders (boys and girls) in addition to the gender analyses for second and fourth grades. The research question was whether or not significant grade and gender differences existed in motivation to read for second and fourth graders in public schools supplying the sample subjects.

The subjects for the study were 309 pupils from 14 classrooms in grades two and four. Three different public elementary schools from upper South Carolina participated. There were 52 second grade boys and 61 second grade girls from six classrooms. There were 103 fourth grade boys and 93 fourth grade girls from eight classrooms in the three schools. The participating teachers administered the Self-Concept and Value Scales of the Motivation to Read Profile.

Procedure

Six teachers from second grade and eight teachers from fourth grade administered the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) by reading aloud the directions and each item twice. The students marked each item on the second reading by the teacher. The researchers did all the re-coding and scoring of the instrument.

The MRP has 20 items based on a four-point scale. Some items are listed positively and some are listed negatively. The researchers recoded the items and totaled the scores of each subject. The total number of possible points for both scales combined was 80. The Self-Concept scale and Value scale had 10 items each with a total possible score of 40. The Self-Concept and Value scales were combined to give the Total score.

T-tests for independent means were used to analyze mean differences related to gender and grade.

Results

Table 1

Mean Gender Differences, Grade 2

Boys (X) N=52	Mean	Girls(Y) N=61	Mean	t=	df
Self-Concept	30.98	Self-Concept	33.43	2.37*	111
Value	31.75	Value	34.98	3.19**	111
Total	62.73	Total	68.41	3.41**	111

*p=.02

**p<.001

Table 1 gives the means for the three scales, Self-Concept, Value, and Total, included in the MRP of the males and females in grade two. T-tests for independent means showed that on all three scales the girls, even at this very early stage in the emergence of literacy, scored significantly higher.

Table 2

Mean Gender Differences, Grade 4

Boys (X) N=103	Mean N=93	Girls(Y)	Mean	t=	df
Self-Concept	30.53	Self-Concept	31.70	1.62	194
Value	30.87	Value	32.33	2.10*	194
Total	61.50	Total	63.25	1.38	194

*p=.03

Table 2 gives the means for the three scales included in the MRP of the males and females in grade four. T-tests for independent means revealed a statistically significant difference in the value placed on reading in favor of the females.

Table 3

Mean Differences in Motivation to Read, Grades 2 and 4

Grade 2 N=113	Mean	Grade 4 N=196	Mean	t=	df
Self-Concept	32.30	Self-Concept	30.77	2.44*	307
Value	33.50	Value	31.57	3.16**	307
Total	65.80	Total	62.33	3.26**	307

*p=.001

**p<.001

Table 3 gives the means for the three scales included in the MRP of all second graders versus all fourth graders. T-tests for mean differences in relation to grades two and four showed that on all three scales of the MRP the fourth graders scored significantly lower as a group than the second graders.

Discussion

These data showed that second grade boys scored significantly different and lower than second grade girls on both sub-scales of Self-Concept and Value. These data also showed that fourth grade boys scored significantly different and lower than fourth grade girls on the sub-scale of Value. These data further showed that the fourth graders in the study scored significantly different and lower than all second graders in the study on both self-concept as readers and value placed on reading. This study presents data that call for investigations as to why general reading motivation drops from grade two to grade four. What are the correlates to this statistically significant drop? Why a significant drop at such an early age? Furthermore, if motivation to read is so low this early (second grade) for boys, as is attitude toward recreational and academic reading (Cloer & Pearman, 1993), and self-concept as readers (Cloer & Ross, 1997), then early awareness as to correlates and some type of action may be in order to try to address this phenomenon.

All parties involved with literacy of our nation's children may need to recognize, address, and when necessary, change some of the activities that children encounter in school. Some current activities may need to be replaced with more mind-expanding, emotionally satisfying, and engagingly applicable activities that involve a myriad of contexts where real reading and writing of real texts for real reasons is the norm.

The main reason anyone chooses to read, whether child, adolescent, or adult, is primarily an emotional response (Smith, 1988). Therefore, if we truly want to develop effective language arts instruction for children and adolescents, then we might need to be more cognizant of and attentive to the developing emotions of our students. We might need to adjust our behavior and start working as if we understand that every teaching-learning episode has both a cognitive and an affective dimension. Students need to see purpose in what they do, and there must be enough enjoyment in the whole process to help children experience genuine fulfillment.

Conclusions

If what we do in language arts in the primary grades is related to the self-concepts of students as readers, and to the value students place on reading, we need to investigate further our methods and materials to ascertain which are positive correlates, and which are not. In order to move forward with this line of research, we will hypothesize some pedagogical areas and ways instruction might change to realize possible remedies. But, to get started in the exploration of attitudinal correlates, we must have assessment instruments that measure what we deem important.

The new affective reading instruments mentioned in this article, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990), the Reader Self-Perception Scale (Henk & Melnick, 1995), and the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell et al., 1996), have definite advantages over the reading achievement instruments now being used. Children's reading achievement results from state-mandated tests for accountability may not be affecting instruction and/or modifying teacher and student behavior positively in many states. So we might need to get serious about using instruments that measure what we see as essential to the language arts curriculum.

Listed below are just a few of the possible correlates and ways instruction might change after viewing data from these affective instruments. Teachers could use the results of these affective tests to:

1. Modify classroom oral reading practices.
2. Revise grouping techniques.
3. Assign reading material that is not too difficult.
4. Model how to give constructive feedback about reading to all students in the class and to all parents.
5. Make children more physically and mentally comfortable during the act of reading.
6. Give more frequent and concrete illustrations of progress.
7. Give opportunities to read in situations that are non-threatening: echo reading, repeated reading, choral reading, multiple-response reading, etc.
8. Model the enjoyment, appreciation, relaxation, and gratification that can be gained from reading.
9. Solicit more positive reinforcement from other students, parents, and other teachers.

10. Share enthusiasm with a particular student.
11. Strive to make reading consistently pleasurable.
12. Provide students with a rich array of engaging literature.
13. Group flexibly and prepare children well for reading.
14. Use some predictable reading material that allows for frequent use of praise.
15. Monitor body language closely to make sure positive messages are sent about reading performance.
16. Intentionally and respectfully make each child feel valuable, capable, and responsible.

Negative emotional reactions to language arts instruction can and do result in school problems that can exacerbate and even explode, especially among boys. Our nation can ill afford to lose these students to drugs, juvenile gangs, or to unfulfilled lives that never experience good literature, laugh at a short story, or taste the words of a flavor-filled poem. If we don't do more to affectively help our students savor the flavor of language arts instruction, much of the attempted cognitive cultivation of young minds might turn potential flower gardens into dying weed beds.

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