Annotated Bibliography of Research in the Teaching of English

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Please note that this year begins a transition in the way RTE publishes the annotated bibliography. To accommodate an almost 30% increase in the size of the bibliography, we have published only the annotated entries in the print edition. The bibliography also lists, without annotation, a number of additional studies under each category. The full bibliography, with annotated and additional entries, is available online in a pdf version (http://www.ncte.org/journals/rte/issues/v44-2). Note: Only journal articles have been abstracted; books are listed only under “other related research.”

Digital/Technology Tools for Literacy Instruction

Identifies Minnesota citizens’ uses of the free eFolio that includes a range of purposes related to being students, educators, and workers. Users shift from an initial experimental stage of simply compiling material to a stage of using it as a living document to represent themselves to particular audiences.

Analyses two 10th-grade classes’ use of a commercial game story tool, Aurora Toolset, combined with ScriptEase to create interactive game stories. Students created complex stories with little instruction; there were no gender difference effects on story complexity.


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Documents how and when technology was integrated into reading instruction and learning within three second-grade classrooms over a period of two years. During year one, teachers were interviewed and observed. During year two, teachers were involved in year-long professional development that supported them with resources (including laptops for their classrooms) as well as integration expertise via a district technology coordinator. The OTELL (Observing Technology Enhanced Literacy Learning) instrument was created and used during the second year of the study to document teacher and student use of technologies across five components of effective reading instruction (prereading, reading, responding, exploring, and applying). Results of the study revealed that post-intervention, technology was used in reading instruction and learning 39% of the time. Students used technology the most during the application stage. Teachers used technology most frequently during prereading through presenting mini-lessons to their students.


Analyzes factors shaping 270 18- to 26-year-olds’ Internet uses. Finds that level of education and access to cultural capital/resources relates to higher “capital-enhancing” activities. Also finds that skill difference is a major factor related to the types of online activities employed. Suggests that a “second-level digital divide” exists within young adults related to class background and skills.


Provides snapshots of digital practices in two middle-level classrooms within low socioeconomic suburbs in Australia during one school term. Ethnographic research techniques were used to investigate (1) teachers’ pedagogical approaches to using digital literacy practices with low-income students; (2) students’ access to digital technologies at home and at school; and (3) how home literate practices compared to the practices valued in school. Results underscore the need to disrupt teachers’ deficit views of these students’ home digital literacies so that school practices can be built upon the knowledges and literacies students already have.


Analyzes conflicts that arose when adolescents’ uses of popular culture differed from adults’ uses in order to better understand how these conflicts can provide shared opportunities for learning and reflection. This cross-case analysis utilized transactional theory to examine three underachieving adolescents’ uses of popular culture and how their literate practices were shaped by educators’ (two teachers, one librarian) expectations inside and outside of school contexts. Findings suggest that adult-youth conflict over popular culture can provide both adolescents and educators opportunities for educational growth.


Engages in 20 different projects involving a three-year qualitative analysis of California participants ages 10 to 30 in community, school, and home contexts to determine how participants are using digital media to engage in social communication. Identifies three genres of participation: hanging out—friendship-driven uses of various Internet literacies designed to cope with lack of access or mobility to maintain continuous “hypersocial” interaction with peers; messing around—experimentation with online media use and production (for example, revising their social networking profiles); and seeking out—interest-driven engagement in more focused use of particular digital media, often through tapping into and sharing expertise in knowledge
networks or communities (for example, gaming, fanfiction, or anime production communities), involving specialized expertise. Receiving positive feedback from members of these networks or communities was highly valued as reifying insider membership. Concludes that this active online participation represents a major institutional shift towards social interaction and peer-based learning that should be supported by educators and parents to foster shifts from only friendship-driven to more interest-driven digital media use, as opposed to imposing institutional monitoring and constraints.


Analyzes the uses of Video Viewing Task (VVT) for teacher viewing and reflection on video excerpts of teaching reading comprehension through reciprocal teaching and questioning the author. Use of VVT fosters teachers’ enhanced, evolving understanding of the uses of these instructional techniques.


Analyzes fifth and sixth graders’ descriptions of videogames they brought into a classroom organized around a critical inquiry approach. Students noted deceptive promotion techniques employed by videogame companies, the gender stereotyping in games, and the need to share their critiques with peers. Students then responded on an “educational game” designed to focus on issues of water pollution. Students attempted to trick the game to obtain “correct answers.” While the game fostered discussion of issues, they were also critical of the lack of opportunities for role-playing and variation in playing the game, raising questions about the effectiveness of “educational games” in the classroom.


Analyzes adolescents’ social networking practices and online identity constructions. Finds that younger adolescents construct more elaborate, stylistic profiles than older adolescents, who prefer a focus on building relationships with peers; adolescents also construct hierarchies of “friends” reflecting the challenges of maintaining privacy on often highly public sites.


Reports on two studies investigating reader stance, navigation, and response in expository hypertext. Studied adult subjects’ recall and essay writing tasks when prompted to adopt either an efferent or aesthetic stance when reading a 36-node expository hypertext. Results of the study indicate that prompts can be designed to induce readers to adopt more efferent or aesthetic stances. Suggests that navigation has an important role in online literacy transactions and that usability of online materials may be enhanced by accounting for reader variables such as stance in the design of interface elements.


Examines the influence of 350 students’ and 40 teachers’ participation in spoken-word activities using video-conferencing tools designed to provide feedback compared to non-participating
students in similar/same schools. Finds improved attendance; motivation for learning; increased retention, particularly for ELL students; improved state standardized writing test scores; and enhanced self-esteem and communication.


Examines the relationships between social class and 25 Australian 15-year-olds' technology uses. Finds that class differences and related habitus influences acceptance or rejection of certain digital technology use and content to a greater degree than a digital divide.


Presents the findings of a study in which 41 reluctant readers, ages 8–11, in three schools in Australia, read both traditional print books and electronic talking books (ETBs) as part of home reading. Each student's reading attitude was measured using the ERAS (McKenna & Kear, 1990), and semi-structured interviews were conducted to learn about their reading behaviors and attitudes. In addition, parents completed a survey designed to tap perceptions and also completed interviews. Students reported that they liked the ETBs and read more during the 10-week period. Parents, although largely favorable, had some concerns about whether ETBs provided real reading.


Compares fourth-grade students who did (experimental) or did not (control) develop computer games associated with their literacy instruction. Finds that experimental students scored significantly higher on a standardized literacy test possibly due to how the games enhance retention, contrasting information, use of digital resource, editing, and question-asking.


Reports on two studies that investigated the relationship between children's texting behaviour, their knowledge of text abbreviations and their school attainment in written language skills. In Study One, 11- to 12-year-old children reported their texting behavior and translated a standard English sentence into a text message and vice versa. In Study Two, children's performance on writing measures was examined more specifically, spelling proficiency was also assessed, and KS2 Writing scores were obtained. Positive correlations between spelling ability and performance on the translation exercise were found, and group-based comparisons based on the children's writing scores also showed that good writing attainment was associated with greater use of texting abbreviations (textisms), although the direction of this association is not clear. Overall, these findings suggest that children's knowledge of textisms is not associated with poor written language outcomes for children in this age range.


Examines the social interactions about shared readings and forum exchanges on a Drupal site in four first-year composition courses. Found that while students engaged in productive discussions in which they had ownership, they often lacked the time and experience to establish their ethos or reputations; that while students read posts, they may not necessarily respond to those posts; and that they had difficulty referencing each other’s online identities, challenges that may have been addressed with clearer guidelines and incentives for discussion.

Compares discourse functions and politeness strategies employed in graduate students’ synchronous versus asynchronous computer-mediated discussions. Synchronous discussions involved more information seeking, information providing, and social comments than asynchronous. Asynchronous discussions involved more discussion generating, experience sharing, idea explanation, and self-evaluation functions than synchronous discussions. Use of politeness strategies was equivalent in both contexts; these strategies occurred more often in given evaluation or managing conversations.


Analyzes the process of multimedia integration in English language classrooms equipped with interactive whiteboard (IWB) technology, and offers insights into the theoretical underpinnings of multimedia use in language learning from the perspective of cognitive learning theory. The data are drawn from a qualitative study carried out as part of a PhD research program at Lancaster University (UK). The researcher discusses some perceived pedagogical benefits of adopting a multimedia-oriented approach in the IWB-based classroom, poses a variety of potential problems related to the use of multimedia resources in the language classroom in question, and addresses the pedagogical implications of the research.


Compares three different sixth-grade language arts/social studies classes studying the *Aeneid* in preparation for a role-playing game in which two classes engaged in online review games while a third control class did not. Finds that students in the two classes did better on their final tests and essay scores than students in the control class.


Examined 223 preservice teachers’ work and reflections over a five-year period to determine their ability to integrate technology into the planning based on the NETS standards. Eighty-five percent did integrate technology; while 50% of the work and reflections demonstrates uses in terms of creativity, innovation, communication, collaboration, and information literacy, few employed technology to foster critical thinking or problem solving.


Examines evidence from classroom research to analyze the nature of multimodal literacy. Presents examples of students’ engagement in multimodal literacy to demonstrate how classroom literacy practices can incorporate the practices of talking, listening, reading, and writing together with processing the modes of written text, image, sound, and movement in print and digital texts. Presents a rationale for the work against the backdrop of the proliferation of multimodal literacy amidst the continuation of the print-focused national policy and testing.

Examines whether game elements could be used in tandem with Problem Based Learning (PBL) in a multi-user digital learning environment (Anytown) to improve the achievement of elementary students on standardized writing assessments. This study utilized a quasi-experimental, pretest-posttest comparison design involving 44 fourth graders in two intact classrooms within one school. Results from this study indicate that in the classroom where the Anytown curriculum was used, there were (1) statistically significant decreases in the time the teacher spent answering procedural and directional questions, (2) increases in voluntary student writing, and (3) improved achievement scores on writing tasks.


Contrasts EFL first-year college students who received feedback on their errors using an online annotator versus those who received paper-based feedback. Finds that students receiving online feedback performed significantly better on recognizing errors than students receiving paper-based feedback.

Other Related Research:


MARTTUNEN, M. J., & LAURINEN, L. I. (2009). Secondary school students’ collaboration...
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Discourse/Cultural Analysis


Examines the induction experiences of new teachers of color in urban high-minority schools as they negotiate challenges about cultural identifications. Draws from cross-case analysis of case studies of new teachers of color on the theme of responses to sociocultural challenges. Complicates conception of cultural match currently dominating policy and research rhetoric about teachers of color. Highlights a new form of “practice shock” that the novices of color experienced when students of color questioned the teachers’ cultural identifications.


Offers a critical discourse analysis of the term “generation 1.5,” used to describe students born outside the U.S. and receiving part or most of their formal education in the U.S. Assumes that power relations guide naming practices and finds that the use of “generation 1.5” reveals a monocultural and monolingual ideology through discourses of demographic, linguistic, and academic partiality. Argues that such an ideology neglects racism as a key issue in students’ lived experiences. Concludes with pedagogical suggestions for ESL, basic writing, and freshman composition courses on college campuses.


Explores epistemic tensions within an Indigenous teacher preparation program where students question Western systems for creating, producing, reproducing, and valuing knowledge. Grounds argument in a rich understanding of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Advocates for an approach to training Indigenous teachers that recognizes the power of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, considers diverse knowledge systems equally, and equips teachers to make connections between various schooling practices and knowledge systems.

Draws on ethnographic data from a study of urban children learning to write through teacher-led conferences and focuses on the writing and speech of Tionna, a prolific speaker and writer in a first-grade classroom who commonly employs patterns of African American Language (AAL). Argues that methods of teaching writing through what “sounds right” ignore children’s sociocultural and situational variations and construe the voices of students’ lives as problematic and in need of fixing. Given increased pressure to focus on “the basics,” authors call for increased knowledge of children’s language variations and an alternative pedagogy of “communicative flexibility,” not “right writing.”


Provides a framework for redesigning and transforming learning ecologies organized around the cultural historical notion of “re-mediation” for students from non-dominant communities. Two cases are used to illustrate key concepts of re-mediation including historicizing education and sociocritical literacies.


Draws on ethnographic research to examine issues and tensions of a hip-hop-centered classroom pedagogy at an urban high school. Details how the articulation of personal narratives within a hip-hop-centered English literature course produced a practice of “wounded healing.” Reveals the way sharing stories of suffering was a form of release and relief for themselves and others.


Draws from research conducted in multiple sites. Identifies importance of “representin’” as a shared sense of identity and responsibility based on membership in a socially constructed community. Argues “representin’” is a valuable disposition to be developed by teachers. Highlights that using urban youth culture as a “fund of knowledge” in teacher education may improve teaching practices and learning outcomes for urban youth of color.


Analyzes 11- to 14-year-old Black males’ literacy practices related to how they perceive themselves as “cool kids” and the symbolic aspects of enacting masculinities. Finds that popular culture and language serve to mediate identity construction of coolness, suggesting the need to value these literacies in schooling.


Examines Walter Dean Myers’s (2000) The Blues of Flats Brown to explore the discourses and rhetorics of African American Language with the purpose of informing classroom practices in children’s literary education. (Re)imagines educational issues tied to literacy, subjugation, reading, voice, and agency through a wide range of scholarship using multidisciplinary theories including African American literacy, literature, and cultural politics. Examines how literacy and language work in multiracial contexts where discrimination and subjugation occur. Analyzes the major discourse strategies such as the Great Migration and fugitive slave narratives, the use of the blues and spirituals for narrative writing, and the use of the trickster as central to text organization and character development. Argues for approaches to reading instruction that center on students’ cultural rhetorics.
KYNARD, C. (2008). Writing while Black: The colour line, Black discourses and assessment in the institutionalization of writing instruction. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 7*(2), 4–34. Analyzes three student essays for a high-stakes, college-level writing exam at the end of a first-year writing course. Demonstrates that students who overtly employ Black rhetorical discourses and arguments in an essay about White imperialism were commonly penalized and their writing determined non-academic. Applies the term Institutional Freshman English (IFE) to describe the political impact of the institutionalization of freshman composition courses in English departments. Concludes that institutional writing assessments and programs serve to target, penalize, and doom to failure working-class students of color.


OIKONOMIDOY, E. (2009). The multilayered character of newcomers’ academic identities: Somali female high-school students in a U.S. school. *Globalisation, Societies & Education, 7*(1), 23–39. Draws from a qualitative study with female refugee high school students from Somalia in the U.S. Provides a window to understanding the multilayered character of newcomer students’ academic identity construction. Suggests students’ micro-level processes of creating spaces for belonging at school are linked to their macro-level extra-educational connections at the societal and global levels. Emphasizes the global-socio-cultural contexts of education.

PRINS, E., & TOSO, B. W. (2008). Defining and measuring parenting for educational success: A critical discourse analysis of the parent education profile. *American Educational Research Journal, 45*(3), 555–596. Examines how the Parent Education Profile (PEP), an instrument used to rate parents’ support for children’s literacy development, constructs the ideal parent, asserts assumptions about parenting and education, and manifests ideological effects. Employs critical discourse analysis to determine how the PEP scale privileges certain parental roles and literacy practices, particularly given power inequities due to the economic, racial/ethnic, and education backgrounds of family literacy participants. Finds that discourses of science, responsibility, resources, and parent involvement rank and normalize parenting according to a middle-class and predominantly White model. Argues that such assessment tools promote deficit views of parents, particularly poor women and women of color.


TRAINOR, J. S. (2008). The emotioned power of racism: An ethnographic portrait of an all-White high school. *College Composition and Communication, 60*(1), 82–112. Studies how white students’ attitudes toward race in an all-white public high school are constructed through the rhetorical structures of multicultural curricula and the cultural practices of literacy. Argues against prevailing views of racism as rooted in the desire to protect white privilege, but suggests instead that racist discourses function persuasively to connect racist ideas
to nonracist beliefs and feelings. Articulates a theory of “emotioned” positions which are learned in school and draws attention to the affective implications of racist discourses.


Adapts an activity model design to examine ethnographic data on girls’ play with Disney princess dolls during writing workshop in a kindergarten classroom. Suggests that toys are literacy artifacts with anticipated, gendered identities to be read, performed, and consumed as well as written, produced, and revised in a play/writing nexus. Analyzes how girls in the “Disney Princess Players” alter character roles through the toys to improvise and produce empowered identity positions as well as gain status among peers. Argues that such literacy play is a power-laden site with the means for the reproduction and revision of sedimented identities.

**Other Related Research:**


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**Literacy**


Investigates the actual and potential roles of secondary literacy coaches using both descriptive and qualitative data from 443 potential participants. One hundred forty-seven responses are received to the forced-choice and open-ended web survey based on Standards for Middle and High School Literacy Coaches (IRA, 2006). Describes results relating to educational background, coaching preparation, role definitions, and responsibilities: collaborator, coach, and evaluator. Presents additional aspects of the coaches’ personal attributes and advice for designers of professional development.


Uses the Individualizing Student Instruction (ISI) classroom observation and coding system that incorporates video observation and coding to provide a multidimensional picture of the classroom environment at each student’s level of participation. Illustrates that children within the same classroom have very different learning opportunities, that instruction occurs through interactions among teachers and students, and that the impact of this instruction depends on children’s language and literacy skills. Utilizes control and experimental groups to document early literacy experiences and measures individual students’ time and engagement with each task/concept. Examines whether children in ISI intervention classrooms receive recommended
amounts of instruction based on their language and literacy skills, and whether receiving these recommended amounts and types of instruction contribute to greater literacy growth as compared to children receiving instruction that is not specifically individualized. Finds that instruction which is (a) intentionally planned to accommodate individual student differences, (b) relies on careful assessment of student skills, and (c) responds to each student’s changing status (cognitive, behavioral, social-emotional) is more effective than instruction that is more globally constructed.

LYNCH, J. (2009). Print literacy engagement of parents from low-income backgrounds: Implications for adult and family literacy programs. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*(6), 509–521. Investigates the out-of-school literacy practices of 38 randomly selected low-income parents with four-year-old children in the Head Start program. Examines the reading and writing activities of parents from urban, rural, and migrant settings through a print literacy questionnaire given at an oral interview. Finds that all parents use reading and writing in their daily lives in activities such as reading communications from preschool, reading store advertisements, and writing names or labels. Notes some differences in engagement activities between migrant parents and other geographical groups, with migrants reporting fewer reading engagement activities. Recommends that adult literacy programs build on reading and writing activities that are already being used by parents, and that preschool communications with parents may be a valuable way to build adult literacy engagement.

MUI, S. & ANDERSON, J. (2008). At home with the Johars: Another look at family literacy. *The Reading Teacher, 62*(3), 234–243. Frames the conception of family literacy as a social practice via a first-grade Indo-Canadian student’s extended family enacting hybridized forms of literacy in the home. Demonstrates that family members actively support and extend rich literacy experiences by utilizing semi-structured play for the young participant with her siblings and cousins involving three languages. Highlights that dramatic and board game play is goal- and concept-oriented, often relying on literacy to construct shared understandings among family members and nannies. Uses multiple data sources from all members to gather information that was then coded by idea units. Confirms previous research that educators must expand their conceptions and definitions of “literacy” and “family” to more accurately involve family members in the shared literacy education of learners.

POWELL, D. R., DIAMOND, K. E., BOJCZYK, K. E. & GERDE, H. K. (2008). Head Start teachers’ perspectives on early literacy. *Journal of Literacy Research, 40*(4), 422–460. Examines 148 Head Start teachers’ perspectives on early literacy instruction through 29 focus group sessions. Finds that these preschool teachers are generally supportive of literacy goals in the curriculum, but that perspectives vary about whether social-emotional goals are a requisite to literacy learning, whether literacy learning is a requisite to social-emotional learning, or if the two grow concurrently. Finds that many teachers in the study have a very limited view of literacy as learning the letters of the alphabet. Teachers often see their role as providing literacy materials for students to use when they are ready. Recommends that continued focus be placed on creating more responsive professional development opportunities for preschool teachers that extend their existing ideas about early literacy.

(3) Mediocre (28%), and (4) Low overall quality (17%). Finds that children from low-income families are more likely to be placed in low overall quality classrooms, and students from middle to high-income families are more likely to be placed in high overall quality classrooms. Also finds that privatization is not currently an effective solution because private first grades are less likely to be in the highest-quality groups. Recommends improving educational outcomes for all students by providing teachers professional development based on strong research evidence as well as public policy designed to support teachers who work in challenging circumstances.


Engages 100 urban high school youth in “photovoice” methods to move them away from a perception of English and composition courses as irrelevant to their lives. This “Through Students’ Eyes” (TSE) project leads participants to take photos and react in writing to images of social concern within their lives, and thus links life to school and back again. Uses a “photowalk” and cameras to address three critical questions that, in turn, guide the personalized peer and teacher work during voluntary Saturday writing sessions. Provides a positive link between school and community, and has extended how teachers consider the cultural context of urban youths’ lives within their instruction. Illustrates theories of multimodal literacy so teachers can build literacy practices, curricula, and pedagogies on student-centered processes.

Other Related Research


KNELLER, S. A., & BOYD, M. P. (2008). “We were slow; it was challenging” and “It was hard not to make knots”: Crocheting as a literacy event in a second grade classroom community. *Early Childhood Educational Journal, 36*(2), 135–147.


SCHMIDT, R., & THOMAS, P. L. (2008). *If we are scripted, are we literate?* New York: Springer.


Literary Response/Literature/Narrative


Examines 25 preservice elementary teachers’ conceptions of reader response theory and their perceptions and use of that theory in designing lessons for actual use in teaching. Finds a variation in their understanding of the theory: that while their pupils did not perceive responding to literature as familiar, pupils were highly engaging, and that reader-response can be related to critical thinking.


Analyzes artists’ uses of visual representations in Caldecott award-winning literature. Three findings emerged from the analysis: (a) image types cut across time, culture, and artists’ rendering; (b) images embody stable representations of culture; and (c) images tend to render visual binaries and invite oppositional readings. Implications are discussed for developing and using a theory for the close reading of visual imagery in children’s literature.


Reviews and synthesizes decades of textual and response research regarding African American literature. Relying on the selective tradition as theoretical base, analysis reveals three dominant themes in research: literature as contested terrain, literature as cultural artifact, and literature as art.


Conducts a content analysis of 530 *English Journal* articles on the teaching of poetry from 1912–2005 in terms of type of article (“theory, research, background, principles, lesson plan, and creative”) and pedagogical orientation (“teacher-centered, student-centered, text-centered, reader-oriented, and other”). A large number of the articles employed a formalist perspective on authoritative, close analysis of language use and the selection of “great” poets. An equally large number of articles adopted an alternative populist perspective celebrating how poetry expresses popular culture and the use of students’ own poetry writing, noting the limitations of a formalist close reading and the traditional poetry canon as not serving to engage students’ interest in poetry, leading to the need to demystify poetry instruction.


Analyzes an elementary teacher addition of multicultural literature to her curriculum. Finds that the teacher’s ideologies about race shaped classroom discourse in ways that normalized Whiteness despite her expressed desire to challenge stereotypes.


Studies the importance of autobiography and personal testimony in the construction of refugee identities in children’s books. Discusses the validating role of these texts as educative tools in classroom contexts.

Examines the effects of self-questioning on 15- to 16-year-old-students’ interpretation and appreciation of short stories through two experiments, both of which included peer group literature discussions. Results indicated that unguided self-questioning had a positive effect on appreciation when compared to teacher-made questions and guided self-questioning, and a main effect on interpretation in both guided and unguided self-questioning conditions. Avid readers generally benefited more from unguided self-questioning than did less avid readers. Concludes that authentic student-generated questions can benefit story interpretation and appreciation.


Analyzes the uses of oral narratives in middle-school students’ discussions of literature. Finds that oral narratives employed by both teachers and students served to stimulate and extend responses to literature through building dialogic, intertextual connections between texts and/or experiences.


Analyzes 205 young adult novels written between 1999 and 2007 employing multiple narrative perspectives. Analysis of features in these novels finds that 55% employed alternating sections/chapters; 88%, shifts in voice/time through use of font change, character names, or times/dates/places; 21%, alternating point of view; 37%, alternating past/present tenses; and 47%, different modes/text types. Analysis of types of these novels finds that 12% involved one event told from multiple perspectives; 29%, one story from multiple perspectives; 24%, multiple stories told by multiple characters; 21%, stories told at different points in time; and 14%, two parallel stories about different time periods. Questionnaires/interviews with teen readers, teachers, librarians, and editors attribute the popularity of these books to the increased diversity in society; the need for multiple perspectives and voices addressing the difficulties facing teens; and the use of non-linear, fragmented narratives in the media. Suggests the need for literature instruction to focus on characters’ conflicting beliefs/perspectives.


Content analysis of a list of recent award-winning, widely read, and popular young adult literature revealed: (1) the majority of these titles were realistic fiction, and (2) they lacked multicultural characters; only 20% of the books were “multicultural.” Most books (85%) addressed the theme of finding oneself; about half employed first person point-of-view; 81% employed chronological narratives. Bullying emerged as a significant new topic. The authors suggest that young adult books have shifted their focus from social issues to social conditions of teenagers.


Studies 18 third graders’ responses to fantasy novels through book club discussions and independent reading activities evident in a range of written responses. Uses of response journals, charts, maps, and compositions led to enhanced understanding of fantasy genre features.
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Teachers’ uses of revoicing and articulation of generalizations in discussions fostered further knowledge of genre features.


Analyzes how three first graders used literature response journals to negotiate their first chapter book read aloud. Describes how students relied on different strategies and focused on different facets of the story world as they wrote and drew in their journals. Argues that the strategies used by the three first graders hold great potential to support meaning making in a complex text world.


Analyzes the influence of adopting an aesthetic versus efferent stance on adult readers’ responses to a 36-node expository hypertext determined by a recall and essay writing task. Readers adopting an aesthetic stance formulated higher levels of interpretation and focused more on the invited reading path than did readers adopting an efferent stance. The node size also influences navigation of links and may interact with stance.


Compares the text genres represented in two widely used basal reader series (grades 1–6) with the 2009 NAEP framework’s guidelines for informational text types. Results indicated that 40% of the selections in both series were nonfiction text, and that of those, 50% were expository and 33% were literary nonfiction, indicating that the exposure to informational text is less than recommended by NAEP.


Results from the 2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts indicate a rise in the rate at which adults read literature and the absolute number of literary readers. Young adults as a group demonstrate the biggest increase and the fastest rate of increase; among cultural groups, the biggest rate of increase was for Hispanic Americans. The overall increase is particularly noteworthy after the sharp declines in reading of literature in the two most recent ten-year survey periods from 1982–1992, and 1992–2002.


Employed fourth-grade students as co-researchers in a teacher research longitudinal study to reflect on changes in their reading engagement. Finds that involving students as co-researchers enhances their participation and the quality of their reflections on their reading engagement.


Focuses on “discussions about text” as conversations wherein participants ask and answer questions from each other to construct meaning, and “dialogic identity” as a capacity to promote collaboration to aid students in sustaining their inquiries of text to investigate the use of exploratory talk in promoting dialogic identities among fourth graders. Makes use of Mercer’s framework to analyze discussion transcripts. Asserts that discussions helped students to see and consider themselves as dialogic participants.

Conducts a content analysis of second-grade students’ responses to five picture books presented by a teacher during separate read alouds, in which the children were asked to “speculate” on what occurred between page turns. Children responded in at least seven ways: speculating on character actions, creating dialogue, creating thoughts and feelings of characters, talking about possible changes of setting, speculating on passage of time, discussing changing reader’s perspective, and observations about genre changes. Children also initiated unprompted speculations about what happened between page turns. Draws implications for higher-order thinking and literary expertise.


Reports on preschool students’ rich classroom experiences when provided with repeated read-aloud experiences of high-quality children’s literature and text-related props. Finds that students’ text interactions, which took the form of pretend play, contained rich peer interactions and the use of sophisticated language both of which often took meaning-making beyond the texts.

**Other Related Research:**


Media-Information Literacy/Media use


Analyzes 18 seventh-grade ESL students’ interpretations of advertising as mediated through semiotic communications. Students’ constructions of advertising images reflected their particular cultural perspectives and life experiences, strong uses of multimodal resources, and adoption of critical literacies. Suggests the need for more inclusion of multimodal materials in textbooks for ESL students.


Analyzes 21 preservice teachers’ and 11 fifth-grade students’ responses to eight ads in terms of response to semiotic elements and adoption of critical stances. The preservice teachers were more likely to identify different discourses operating in the ads than the fifth graders and preferred ads portraying positive images of children and lifestyles. They were also less critical of ads than the fifth graders because they identified with the portrayed scenes while the fifth graders noted uses of persuasive strategies. Suggests the need for media-literacy teaching education focusing on critical discomfort with positive images of consumerism.


Surveys 1,906 University of Florida undergraduates’ perceptions of their college and local community newspapers’ credibility. Finds a moderate correlation ($r = .28$) between college and community newspaper credibility. Student interest in news content is a statistically significant predictor of credibility for both college and local newspapers. Parental encouragement to read newspapers and exposure to reading a newspaper are strong predictors of perceived credibility.


Tracks a group of urban Chicago students using surveys, observations, and interviews over two years, beginning in sixth grade, to determine how their participation with digital media production on the Digital Youth Network leads to enhanced engagement in production and sharing of digital media. Preliminary analysis indicated that over time students report a wider variety of technology tool use and fluency than a Silicon Valley comparison group with high home access; participation in after-school projects resulted in higher production and engagement rates than non-participating students; individuals develop different technological interests (for example, games versus design versus communications).


Compares the effects of instruction designed to reduce the influence of media violence on treatment and control groups of 156 fourth and fifth graders, with the treatment group receiving an additional cognitive activity. Children in the treatment groups were less likely to display aggressive tendencies than children in the control group, tendencies evident over time.

Observed 476 participants in six cities using smart keyboards and collector software to capture their media use for two days. Participants in all age groups average 8.5 hours of TV viewing, including 72 minutes a day of ads/promo; few people were viewing TV using the Internet (an average of 2 minutes a day). DVR owners were more likely to employ playback than live viewing. In terms of time, computer use ranked second, followed by radio and then print media.


Surveyed 2,030 United States people ages 12 and up in 2008 on their media use. Eighty percent use the Internet an average of 17 hours a week with use declining by age group; 80% have broadband connections. The highest use involved playing video games and listening to online radio; 44% posts photos online. Fifty-two percent indicate that the Internet is important for maintaining social relationships; 15% are members of online communities. Internet users devote more time in clubs or volunteering than non-users. While 28% of adults indicate that their children are spending too much time online, a growing number indicate that children are spending about the right amount of time. Participants read online newspapers 53 minutes a week; while 22% stopped their subscriptions to print news/magazines, 61% indicate that they would miss their print version if it were not available.


Analyzes data from 355 young adults to determine the influence of exposure to media/game violence, personality, and family environment on aggression. Finds that personality and family physical abuse are significant predictors of aggression, while media exposure is not.


Analyzes 300,000 Twitter users’ usage patterns during May 2009. Finds that the most active users—the top 10%—account for 90% of all tweets compared to 10% of social networking sites contributing 30% of content; half of users tweet less than once every two months. Eighty percent of users follow or have at least one follower, compared to 60% of social network members. While males consist of 45% of all users, they have 15% more followers than females. A male user is twice as likely to follow another male as a female and 40% more likely to be followed by a male than a female; a female user is 25% more likely to follow a male than a female.


Analyzes adult uses of mobile devices (79% in 2007) to find that 39% are active users. Identified five types of users within that 39%: “Mobile Newbies” (8%), who are learning to use devices; “Media Movers,” (7%) who employ devices to access information and participate on social networking sites; “Digital Collaborators” (8%), who use devices to collaborate with others; “Roving Nodes” (9%), who employ Twitter, Facebook, and Flickr to engage in creative media production; and “Ambivalent Networkers” (7%), who make heavy use of devices but resist the constant, instructive connection.

Analyzes potential trends and challenges for the next five years. Finds that current collaborative environments and online communication tools have widespread use, although filtering of and lack of computer access remain challenges. Future subsequent developments include use of mobiles and cloud computing, while long-term developments involve use of smart objects and the personal web for development of personal learning networks. Issues of assessment of new media/collaboration and district filtering policies remain major challenges; recommends increased focus on information literacy, visual literacy, and technological literacy instruction.

KNOBLOCH-WESTERWICK, S., HASTELL, M. R., & ROSSMANN, M. (2009). Coping or escaping?: Effects of life dissatisfaction on selective exposure. *Communication Research, 36*(2), 207–228. Examines 287 German undergraduates’ motivations for selection of magazine articles related to personal satisfaction levels. Students with low satisfaction with college or career options had increased interest in reading about college/careers. Students with personal, emotional issues did not choose to read about these issues. Suggests that people with deep problems avoid reading about these issues, while people with less difficult problems seek out information to address these issues.

KNOBLOCH-WESTERWICK, S., & MENG, J. (2009). Looking the other way: Selective exposure to attitude-consistent and counterattitudinal political information. *Communication Research, 36*(3), 426–448. Examines online article choices based on clicking article headlines for 156 undergraduates based on their attitudes on certain issues. Participants were 36% more likely to select those article topics that were consistent with their attitudes. When they selected article topics contrary to their attitudes, they were then more likely to seek out articles consistent with their attitudes. Participants with stronger political interests, party affiliation, and conservative political views were more likely to select topics with opposing viewpoints. Suggests that readers select articles that only reinforce their political attitudes.


MOKHTARI, K., REICHARD, C. A., & GARDNER, A. (2009). The impact of Internet and television use on the reading habits and practices of college students. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*(7), 609–619. Employs time-diary surveys of 539 undergraduates to determine their reading and viewing/online practices. Students devoted more mean hours per day to the Internet (2.47 hours) than academic reading (2.17 hours), television viewing (1.93 hours), or recreational reading (1.14 hours). Students report engaging in other tasks while using the Internet (87%), watching television (50%), and engaging in recreational reading (42%) or academic reading (37%). Eighty-four percent of students report enjoying the Internet “quite a lot” or “very much” compared to reading for academic purposes (16%), recreational reading (70%), or watching television (52%). Time for reading for academic purposes was significantly correlated with declines in the time...
for recreational reading, watching television, and using the Internet; time devoted to watching television was significantly correlated with declines in time for recreational and academic reading, but not for Internet use. Time for Internet use was not significantly correlated with declines in time for recreational or academic reading or viewing television.


Analyzes instances of portrayals of print literacy in top ten viewed programs for children ages 2–5. Finds few instances of print literacy, a lack of gender/racial balance related to print use, and few positive messages about print literacy.


Analyzes 12- to 24-year-olds’ media use. Finds that they own an average of eight devices, often conduct five different activities as they view TV, and have an average of 123 social-networking friends. Their tool use is designed primarily for social sharing with peers given the preference for shared versus solitary viewing of TV content. Viewing is often limited to an average of five preferred channels and six websites. TV ads and online review of brands have a strong influence on their brand decisions.


Surveys adolescents’ media use to find that they view more TV, up 6% in the past five years; spend an average of 11 hours and 32 minutes online per month browsing the Internet, less than the average for adults of 29 hours and 15 minutes, possibly due to lack of online exposure during the school day; and devote 35% less time viewing online videos than young adults. They also are more likely to recall online TV show ads than regular TV ads and are 44% more likely to recall ads they like. Fifty percent use an audio-only mp3 player each day; 25% read a newspaper; and, while 35% have access to a DVR, they prefer live TV. Half of all teenagers use an audio-only mp3 player each day, while one in four watch video on an mp3 player. Eighty-three percent of U.S. mobile teens use text-messaging, sending or receiving an average of 2,899 text messages per month, an increase of 566% in just two years; 66% prefer text-messaging to calling. Thirty-two percent prefer going to the movie theater to view movies compared to DVDs (24%), renting online (7%), or movies-on-demand (5%). They are the highest demographic group for viewing movies, an annual average of 31.4 movies (compared to the average of 25.3 for all groups), preferring comedies (85%), action/adventure (80%), sci-fi (52%), and suspense/mystery (51%). Eighty-three percent have at least one gaming console in their home, using it an average of 25 minutes per day in 2008 (41 minutes for males and 8 minutes for females). Advertisers spent $240 million for ads in 14 teen magazines in 2008 with apparel and beauty ads being the top two product areas. Preferred TV shows and websites are similar to adult preferences, suggesting that teen and adult media uses are not all that dissimilar.


Analyzes 9- to 11-year-old African American children’s media use. Finds that gifted children view less television and formulate more active reasoning about favorite shows than non-gifted children, who adopt more reactive responses and more daily media use. Few students use print media; most report little parental involvement with their media use. High achievement students are less likely to have computers, televisions, and videogames in their bedrooms. Suggests the need to foster more active reasoning responses in both school and home.
ROMER, D., JAMIESON, K. H., & PASEK, J. (2009). Building social capital in young people: The role of mass media and life outlook. Political Communication, 26(1), 65–83. Surveys 1,800 14- to 22-year-olds to determine the influence of media use on development of social capital/civic engagement. More pessimistic young people who are less involved in civic activity are more likely to prefer low-cognitive-demand media content; heavy, but not moderate, viewing time is inversely related to social trust and civic enhancement. Increased civic activity enhances trust by increasing book reading and reducing heavy TV use.

TAYLOR, P. (Ed.). (2009). Growing old in America: Expectations vs. reality. Pew Research Center. Retrieved June 30, 2009 from http://pewsocialtrends.org/pubs/736/getting-old-in-america Compares young and elderly adults’ Internet and cell phone use. Finds that 75% of 18- to 30-year-olds are online daily versus 40% of 60- to 74-year-olds and 16% of adults over 70. While 64% of 18- to 30-year-olds use cell phones for most or all of their calls and 85% engage in texting, only 6% of adults over 65 use cell phones for most or all of their calls and only 11% use texting.

Other Related Research:


Professional Development/Teacher Education Related to English/Language Arts


Examines how a humanities team engages in professional conversation to refine and implement a literacy and inquiry tool in an Asian studies curriculum. Drawing on socio-cultural perspectives of teacher learning, this case study investigates the ways this community of practice discusses their understandings of contexts, curriculum, and classroom practice to implement the literacy and inquiry tool.


Based primarily on two case studies drawn from a decade-long study of U.S. and South African teachers, this article documents teachers’ development of generative knowledge and illustrates how they drew on that knowledge in thinking about students and teaching.


Describes perceptions of high and low implementers of content literacy instruction in the context
Annotated Bibliography

of a year-long professional development program using a teacher efficacy framework. Sixteen content area teachers (one reading, four science, four English/language arts, five mathematics, and two social studies) participated in two interviews each. Although both high and low implementers perceived content literacy positively, teachers who embraced content literacy and implemented literacy techniques at high levels tended to exhibit higher general, personal, and collective teacher efficacy. Low implementers exhibited lower levels of efficacy for literacy teaching.


Analyzes the design and evaluation of an online tool for building preservice teachers' writing assessment skills. Participants received scaffolded practice in assessing students' writing samples, including feedback that allowed them access to expert assessments, along with both teacher and peer rationales for their ratings. Study showed that participants improved both in their ability to accurately assess student writing using an analytic approach and in their self-efficacy for assessing student writing.


Explores observable value orientations in literature and history classrooms of nine experienced secondary teachers from three public high schools in the Athens, Greece, metropolitan area. Through case studies using observation and interview data, the study investigates how teachers infuse their values (e.g., educational ideals, conceptions of what it means to be an educated person) into instruction. Conceptions of the subject matter, the process of making meaning, and processes of value communication were examined. Most participants avoided imposing predetermined values or their version of truth on their students and avoided involving themselves overtly in the process of value communication. Teachers seemed to search for a balance in defending the humanistic tradition and enabling a critical/multi-perspective development of students' values. Subject matter differences were also identified.


Conducts a longitudinal, cross-disciplinary study of teachers' experiences with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process in Georgia with analysis centered on discourse related to the notion of performance. Performance for the participants was about measuring up to NBPTS standards as well as the goals and expectations they set for themselves, their students, and their families. Poststructuralist perspectives offer ways to theorize performance, offering an explanation for how teacher performances are enabled and limited by socio-cultural expectations of what it means to be a “teacher.” Demonstrates that the National Board Certification process can affect how “teacher” gets performed by providing an alternative script that can potentially empower individuals who may not dance to the beat of today's educational climate of testing and accountability.


Presents a four-year qualitative case study investigating the meaning-making of two students in a graduate course focused on literacy and culture and their subsequent entrance into the classroom to teach primary-grade students. Uses Bourdieu's constructs of habitus, field, and capital to better understand when, where, and why teachers take up critical literacy practices across time and context. Argues that teacher education pedagogy is merely a point of contact and a point of departure for learners and that nuanced, long-term readings of teacher education
students’ improvisations of habitus reveal the interplay between their formal learning and their personal, social, political, and other formal educational experiences.


Self-study report about literacy instruction in an elementary preservice program. Examines the views and practices of preservice faculty and graduates during their first three years of teaching. The new teachers reported learning many things from their preservice program, including the importance of engaging learners, strategies for developing an inclusive class community, the names of high-quality works of children’s literature, and a variety of general teaching strategies. However, the new teachers struggled with program planning, desired more direct instruction on developing a literacy program, and wanted closer links between theory and practice. Describes revisions in courses and instruction in light of these findings.


Investigates the integration of new literacies and technologies in a 15-week graduate course for K–12 inservice and preservice teachers in literacy specialist programs. Investigators included the course designer and instructors. Students completed digital projects using PowerPoint, WebQuests, Dreamweaver, and iMovie. Qualitative data analysis of projects and reflections lead to discussion of three themes from a new literacies perspective: shared problem-solving and distributed learning, design and multimodal redesign of texts, and literacy/technology as transactional processes. Suggests that the learning environment, approach to learning, knowledge about multimodal text design, and stance toward literacy and technology may be more important than the technologies that teachers use.


Determines the influence of systematic staff development on changes in both teacher literacy instruction and student performance data in a Vermont elementary school over a seven-year period. Finds that teachers made marked changes in their instruction in terms of use of sustained silent reading, use of a more balanced literary program, and increased focus on assessment. Finds little change in student performance based on state and Reading First assessments. Raises questions related to continuous improvement models/teacher performance assessment based on incommensurate relationship between standardized test scores and local teacher practices.


Reports on nine independent studies of pre-post comparisons of instruction by National Writing Project teachers versus non-NWP teachers on seven measures of students’ writing performances. On 35 (56%) of 63 contrasts, students of NWP teachers had significantly higher writing, particularly in the areas of content, structure, stance, and conventions. There were no instances of comparison group students outperforming students of NWP teachers. The consistency across studies suggests the value of teacher participation in the NWP.

Examines the impact of professional development on teacher knowledge and quality of early language and literacy practices in center- and home-based care settings. Participants from 291 sites (177 centers; 114 home-based) in four cities were randomly selected into three treatments: 3-credit course in early language and literacy; same course plus ongoing coaching; and a control group. Analysis of covariance indicated no significant differences between groups on teacher knowledge. Statistically significant improvements were identified in language and literacy practices for teachers who received coursework plus coaching, with substantial effect sizes for both center- and home-based providers. Coursework alone had negligible effects on improvements in quality practices.


Analyzes data gathered from semi-structured focus-groups composed of 41 primary-grade teachers across five schools in a high-poverty urban district that participated in a two-year literacy-reform initiative to understand teachers’ views about professional development that supports change. Results showed that teachers viewed the change process from two stances: as learners and as change agents. Three conditions supported their professional growth: professional development embedded in school and classroom contexts, professional development focused on limited and clearly defined learning goals, and on-demand access to time and resources. Changes that occurred did so in three phases: movement from curriculum-centered to student-centered practices, increased collaboration, and requests for policy changes via teacher autonomy and advocacy for students.


Analyzes 82 empirical investigations on teacher preparation for reading instruction. Notes that in recent years reading teacher preparation programs have been relatively successful in changing prospective teachers’ knowledge and beliefs, and a smaller number of studies documents that under certain conditions pedagogical knowledge influenced actual teaching practice. Suggests that university teaching practices that benefit applications of pedagogical knowledge provide explicit explanations and examples, demonstrations of practices, and opportunities for guided practice of teaching strategies in practicum settings with pupils. Analysis builds on more general teacher education research reviews by identifying contributions and limitations of reading teacher education research and providing recommendations for future research.


Investigates the decision making of a high school English teacher during her student teaching in an Applied Communications teaching assignment that comprised students in the lowest tier of a four-track senior English curriculum. Analysis revealed that the course served as a “contact zone” for a set of competing interests: the teacher’s stated beliefs about effective teaching based on her experiences as a student, the curriculum, the student-centered pedagogy advocated by the university, and students’ beliefs about the curriculum. Concludes with a consideration of both the purpose of vocational English classes and the preparation that novice teachers receive to teach them.


Examines how secondary English teachers serving as mentors for preservice English teachers developed their pedagogical content knowledge of literature discussions through participating...
in a cross-institutional teacher educator network. Documents how the joint creation of dialogic space provided a context within which the mentor teachers expanded their understandings of discussions from disparate kinds of classroom talk to a dialogic view of literature-based discussion involving the interaction of reader, text, and multiple worldviews.


Uses the methodological practice of “elicitation” within a teacher action research framework to draw out the life histories/stories that teachers bring to their professional development with new media/technologies. Suggests that elicitation is a useful tool to actively engage teachers to examine their own (changing) literacy formations including (any) tensions between commitment and resistance, thus contributing to teachers developing a “scholarship of practice.”

Other Related Research:


**Reading**


Investigates the connection between the fluency and comprehension skills of 171 second- to tenth-grade students to see if speed and accuracy of reading is a good predictor of students’ higher-level comprehension skills. Measures comprehension using a critical reading inventory with three dimensions: text-based, inference, and critical response. Attempts to distinguish readers who can recall information from the text and those who can think about it. Finds that
fully one third of the fluent and “strong” readers struggled with higher-level comprehension of grade-level materials. Suggests that for many students in the sample fluency does not necessarily or automatically flow toward comprehension. Recommends that fluency and comprehension not be partitioned during instruction or assessment, but rather be treated as interactive and intertwined processes.


Reports a survey of librarians’ reactions to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) report, Reading at Risk. Using census data, the NEA concluded that there has been a drastic decline in literary reading that is most sharply pronounced in the youngest group surveyed. Using a Delphi study, 11 youth library professionals and educators responded to survey questions probing whether digital media impact leisure time reading for both adults and adolescents, whether reading is at risk, and whether the decline in literary reading foreshadows erosion in cultural and civic participation. Respondents indicated that the NEA study overgeneralized the results of reading literature to the reading of all books, noted that the NEA conclusion that media use competes with reading was not supported by other research, and posited that readers are reading media and webpages in addition to print reading and, hence, are reading differently, but are not at risk.


Describes a three-year longitudinal study focusing on creating systemic instructional change, conducted with approximately 2,000 elementary-aged students in six schools in a low-income, ethnic minority community in New Zealand. Argues that research with populations associated with low levels of literacy achievement needs to take into account growth over the long term, and factor in the effects of summer loss. Leaders in the extended intervention effort include school personnel, government agencies, and researchers who collaborate to raise reading comprehension through critical discussions of achievement data, linking research to practice, and addressing the specific linguistic and cultural characteristics of pupils. Finds increased rates of literacy achievement that were variable but sustained over three years. The growth model analysis reveals a step-like pattern that plateaus over the summer and shows rapid progress over the school months. Illuminates the need for research to be grounded in contextualized problem solving of local communities and to build cohesive frameworks that connect professional learning communities, research-practice collaborations, and contextualized problem solving.


Examines the role of prosody, or expressive features in reading, and its relationship to the development of later comprehension in reading. Measures growth in fluency (including prosodic features) and comprehension of 92 first-grade students over the course of three academic years. Investigates pauses within and between sentences and after phrases, and pitch features including the use of adult-like intonation contours. Finds that fewer pausal intrusions in first grade are associated with development of adult-like intonation contours in second grade. Decreases in pausal intrusions between first and second grade, and early acquisition of adult-like intonation predict better comprehension later. Concludes that prosody plays an important role in reading development and highlights the need to examine the changing relationships of various oral reading skills using longitudinal studies.

Explores the extent to which middle and secondary teachers use strategies to support struggling readers. Data from 2,400 minutes of direct classroom observation and interviews of secondary content-area teachers in two schools in Virginia revealed that explicit reading comprehension instruction was not a significant way in which teachers assisted struggling readers. In order to provide struggling readers with necessary content information, teachers relied on several compensatory strategies including didactic instruction, multiple presentations of information through multiple modalities, alternate sources of texts, and heterogeneous grouping. Implications about secondary content-area teachers’ understanding of the benefits of reading comprehension instruction and about teachers’ instructional priorities and responsibilities are discussed.


Documents and describes coaching conversations between literacy coaches and teachers in elementary schools that were seeing gains in students' reading achievement. Participants were drawn from literacy coaches in 24 Reading First schools in Minnesota. Detailed notes of the coaching conversations were transcribed and analyzed for common patterns. Patterns show that coaches used the protocols recommended in their professional development to collect data on instruction and to structure their coaching conversations and used data from specific lessons to give concrete examples to draw the teachers' attention to crucial elements of the lessons. Indicates the difficulty that teachers face in promoting simultaneous reading development among multiple proficiency levels and suggests the need for renewed research efforts focused on current instructional alternatives to traditional ability groups, as well as the experience of struggling readers within them.


Investigates the practice of heterogeneous grouping for reading and literacy instruction using an interactional analysis focused on the least proficient readers in two mixed-ability group contexts. Findings indicate that struggling readers in heterogeneous groups may encounter the same problems often associated with their placement in homogeneous ability groups. Mixed-ability groups were characterized by pervasive interactional differentiation, which for some students may lead to the kind of stigmatizing effects thought to result from long-term participation in low-ability groups. Further, low-ability students in the heterogeneous groups read less and were interrupted more often than the other students. Findings point to the difficulty that teachers face in promoting simultaneous reading development among multiple proficiency levels. It also suggests the need for renewed research efforts focused on current instructional alternatives to traditional ability groups, as well as the experience of struggling readers within them.


Provides a critical review of 82 empirical, peer-reviewed investigations in the area of reading teacher preparation from 1990–2006 and identifies the best ways to prepare future teachers. Analyzes the questions and methodologies used by researchers, includes descriptions of participants, data sources, and analysis strategies, and summarizes patterns and trends across sets of studies. Describes how studies were conducted by teacher educators (instructors) at their own institutions, were limited to the time frame of a one-semester preservice teacher (PT) education course, and used a constructivist perspective when crafting their research questions and designing the studies. Findings indicate that studies focused on understanding PTs’ beliefs about reading (49%) and reading instruction (28%), and teachers’ topical knowledge and reflective reasoning (21%). Nearly half the studies (44%) focused on instructors teaching PTs how to teach reading using explicit instruction, modeling, and demonstration. These instructors also taught
PTs how to collect and analyze student data and use it to inform instruction. Concluded that longitudinal studies are needed to examine teaching across a variety of settings and situations.

SLAVIN, R.E., CHEUN, A., GROFF, C., & LAKE, C. (2008). Effective reading programs for middle and high schools: A best-evidence synthesis. *Reading Research Quarterly, 43*(3), 290–322. Reviews 33 studies with randomized or matched controls on the achievement outcomes of four approaches to improving the reading of middle and high school students: (1) reading curricula, (2) mixed-method models (methods that combine large-and small-group instruction with computer activities), (3) computer-assisted instruction, and (4) instructional-process programs (methods that focus on providing teachers with extensive professional development to implement specific instructional methods). No studies of reading curricula met the inclusion criteria and effects of supplementary computer-assisted instruction were small. Concludes that programs designed to change daily teaching practices have substantially greater research support than those focused on curriculum or technology alone.

**Other Related Research:**


**Second Language Literacy**


Presents a case study of a Korean-American ESL student with a focus on writer identity. Used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of selected written work and spoken events, an ethnographic analysis of classroom events, and a thematic analysis of the participant’s descriptions of her writer identity and influences. Presents a new view of writer-identity issues that replaces assumptions of deficit with the notion of student in conflict—conflict in terms of different lived experiences, discourses, identities, philosophies, and language uses. Offers a thorough section of implications for teaching including how to address conflict related to sociopolitical ideology.


Compares two years of data documenting the instructional reading level growth of Latino/Latina English learners and their monolingual English-speaking peers in primary-grade English immersion classrooms. Participants include 122 first-, second-, and third-grade students with 67 being English learners. Assesses students’ graded passage reading, sight word reading, phonological awareness, phonics knowledge, passage comprehension, and fluency. Finds the instructional reading level growth pattern for English learners to be similar to that of monolingual English speakers. Also finds differences in the word- and sound-level reading subprocesses of English learners, who demonstrate a steep learning curve over the course of first grade, primarily due to the development of phonological awareness. While comprehension and fluency results were similar between English learners and native English speakers, the study also notes that this may be because primary-grade reading passages do not generally involve complex concepts.


Examines cognitive process in which Canadian grade 11 students reflect about language (metalinguistic activity) in the context of group interaction among balanced bilingual learners composing in English, which is their second language. Draws on sociocultural theory to justify the collaborative task as a means for eliciting metalinguistic activity. Analyzes turns with metalinguistic activity across the following categories: explicit metalinguistic comments, speech actions with implicit metalinguistic activity, and reformulations with explicit/implicit metalinguistic activity. Presents frequencies and percentages of the different types of oral interaction in the group with metalinguistic activity emerging from 53.9% to 70.8% of the oral production, with this activity being both implicit and explicit. Argues for examining further the nature of the
knowledge representations underlying implicit metalinguistic activity and exploring its role in language learning.


Demonstrates and describes through multiple measures the significant correlation between ELL students’ sight word acquisition and oral language proficiency scores and the effect of varying levels of English proficiency on sight word acquisition rates. The 43 second-grade L1 Hmong-speaking participants received ELL services at their urban schools wherein the research confirmed the dual necessity of all teachers to ensure that instructional time focuses on both language development and reading skills instruction. Suggests differentiation of instructional activities that is considerate of each student’s language proficiency and the necessity of careful selection of words that inform comprehension of reading materials.


Reports findings from a 12-week literacy project in which parents of second- through fifth-grade students learned reading strategies in Spanish, practiced them with a child, and together presented their learning to the group. Literacy strategies include think-alouds, K-W-L, concept mapping, preview-view-review, and cubing. Follows 10 mothers who participated regularly in the project, analyzing their writing from a reflective journal. Finds improved writing skills in the adults, including greater use of academic vocabulary, parents and children working more as a team, and a more positive attitude toward literacy activities.


Describes a study that draws on sixth-grade Latino/Latina bilingual students’ linguistic resources and translation experiences outside of class to help them recognize the extent to which they were already capable of shifting voices for different audiences and how these translating skills apply to academic writing assignments. Develops and implements a set of curricular activities that leverage the idea that translation involves shifting one’s voice in order to address a specific audience, and that shifts in voice involve not just a language change, but also changes in grammar, intonation, and vocabulary. Examines students’ multiple writing assignments addressing a similar topic that are intended for different audiences. Finds that instruction that builds on background linguistic strengths supports students’ use of sentence structure, tone, and vocabulary in their writing as appropriate to its unique audience.


Examines the contributions of working memory capacity, first language comprehension, and second language reading comprehension in Spanish. Involved 73 native English speaking college students. Included measures of language experience, counting span task, English reading comprehension, and Spanish reading comprehension. Predicts that with experience working memory capacity differences are eliminated, that ability independently influences second-language reading comprehension, and that individuals with high working memory capacity benefit more from experience. Found through descriptive statistics, correlations, and regression analyses that working memory was mediated by native language comprehension and that domain experience remains a separable but significant predictor of Spanish comprehension.

Annotated Bibliography

Analyze in depth the ways that three Sudanese refugee youths transform traditional storytelling forms as they adjust to life in the U.S. Provides an overview of the journeys of the “Lost Boys of Sudan” as well as the traditional forms of storytelling they bring with them to the U.S. Uses ethnographic methods for data collection including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and artifact collection. Findings highlight that participants value traditional storytelling and maintaining a sense of Sudanese identity, as well as the importance of becoming educated in the U.S. Outlines how sharing their personal stories can provide refugee students with a meaningful context to engage in literacy and second-language learning.


Integrates multiple methods with sociocultural and ecology of language frameworks to identify how family, community, educational practices, and legislation may influence development in young emergent bilinguals. Twelve four- and five-year-old participants with Spanish as their first language and English as their second in an urban setting demonstrated developed knowledge and metalinguistic awareness about print in both languages, communicative practices in families, and the intergenerational learning. Proposes an expanded heuristic for teachers and researchers about linguistic and cultural spaces that impact children’s biliteracy development in bilingual environments.


Explores parent-teacher relationships through a qualitative study aimed to address the academic needs of Sudanese refugee children. Analyzed interviews with Sudanese parents, their children and their English as a Second Language teachers. Found themes related to cultural differences and practices, parents’ roles and expectations, home-school relationships, and teacher expectations and practices. Found that Sudanese parents were eager to collaborate with teachers to educate their children in more culturally relevant ways and that this can support literacy development within the classroom learning context.

Other Related Research:


Writing


Investigates the effects of rubric-referenced self-assessment on students’ self-efficacy for writing. Students in the treatment group read a model story or essay, generated a list of qualities of an effective story or essay, received a written rubric, and used the rubric to self-assess their first drafts. The comparison group did not receive a rubric. Finds that all students’ self-efficacy increased, regardless of condition. However, girls’ self-efficacy was related to short-term rubric use.


Summarizes NAEP writing assessment data from 1971 to 2007 to identify changes in writing instruction and achievement. Finds that in 2007, only 31% of grade 8 and 23% of grade 12 students were rated as “proficient.” From 1971 to 1996, there were minimal to no gains in writing or reading; from 1998 to 2007 there were significant gains in writing at grades 8 and 12, but achievement gaps between Whites and Black/Hispanic students remained. From 1988 to 1998 there were increases in the reported amount of writing, but then the amount leveled off up to 2004, as reflected in a small but significant drop in the amount of time 8th-grade teachers report they devote to writing instruction, possibly due to an increased focus on reading skill instruction. Students report little extended writing; in 1998, 40% of 12th graders “never” or “hardly ever” wrote papers of three or more pages. In 2007, 60% of 8th- and 12th-grade students report making changes in their writing to address errors; 30% to 40% report writing more than one draft. Between 2002 and 2007, 8th-grade students report a reduction in the use of drafting/revising processes, while 12th graders report an increase in the use of these processes. Eighth-grade teachers report a significant reduction from 2002 to 2007 in asking students to write more than one draft, possibly due increased focus on preparation for high stakes composition assessments. While 12th-grade students report an increased use of computers for writing drafts and revising between 2002 and 2007, 8th-grade students report a significant decline in the use of computers for drafting/revising possibly due to the use of paper-pencil state writing assessments. In 2002, 78% of grade 8 and 79% of grade 12 teachers received professional development experiences...
related to reading and writing instruction. However, in 2002, while 83% of grade 8 teachers perceived their state standards as supporting effective instruction, only 50% perceived state assessments as valid measures of students’ abilities and 62% believed that preparing for assessments consumed too much of their instructional time. Suggests that high-stakes assessments have had an influence on writing instruction.


Analyzes informed consent documents in 22 oncology encounters between physicians and patients related to formulation of purpose, benefits, and risks associated with consent to participate in clinical trials. Identifies a tension between the influence of bioethics and professional medical ethics on rhetorical aspects of requests for consent.


Reports a survey study about primary classroom instructional practices in writing. Finds that most of the participating teachers took an eclectic approach to writing instruction, combining elements from two of the most common methods for teaching writing: process writing and skills instruction. In addition, almost all teachers reported using most of the practices surveyed, but there was considerable variability between teachers in how often they applied each practice.


Examines whether Cognitive Self-Regulation Instruction (CSRI) results in long-term benefits, not only for text quality, but also for students’ motivation and self-efficacy for writing. Compares students who had received CSRI half a year previously with students who had not received strategy instruction. Finds that both quality and process effects of CSRI are enduring. Students in the CSRI-condition tended to spend more time planning, produced better texts, and were less likely to make negative statements about their own ability.


Compares two samples (students with learning disabilities [LD], and typically achieving students) of sixth-grade Spanish primary students on coordination of writing processes measured by online or direct retrospection techniques and writing products. Finds that students with LD spent more time on the task, but this generally included more interruptions and less involvement in editing, revising, reading, or changing the text. Shows no differences between the two groups with regard to the planning process. As for the modulation variables of writing, students with LD displayed less self-knowledge and self-regulation in composition writing, with higher writing self-efficacy beliefs than typical students.


Examines the effects of self-monitoring on students’ writing. Four fourth-grade students with learning disabilities monitored both the quantity and the quality of their writing, by using a checklist. Finds that the students’ writing quantity increased. For three of the four students the quality of writing also increased. Students and teachers enjoyed the intervention.

Focuses on a writing-to-learn approach to biology, in which students wrote explanations of biology concepts for different audiences: teacher, younger students, peers, or parents. Examines the impact of audience on students’ understanding of biology concepts. Finds that students writing for peers or younger students performed better on conceptual questions. The findings support the use of authentic audiences.


Analyzes the types of prompts and criteria employed in 41 state and national direct writing assessments. Finds wide disparities across different state assessments in assumed notions of writing proficiency/quality in terms of a focus on genre types versus persuasive writing, as well as disparities between state and national assessments, raising questions as to the validity of generalizations on a national basis about students’ writing abilities.


Examines the effects of a secondary academic intervention, embedded in the context of a positive behavior support model, on the writing of second-grade students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorder and writing problems. Students were taught how to plan and draft a story using the self-regulated strategy development model. Finds lasting improvements in story completeness, length, and quality for all students. Students and teachers rated the intervention favorably, with some indicating that the intervention exceeded their expectations.


Analyzes potential benefits in undergraduate classes for 45 “givers” who reviewed anonymous papers but received no peer feedback and 46 “receivers” who received feedback but did not review peers’ writing. Analysis of pre-post gains indicated that the “givers” made more significant gains during a semester than did the “receivers,” with low-ability “giver” writers making higher gains than high-ability “givers.” Suggests the value of having students provide peer feedback.


Reports a survey study among 361 high school teachers in the United States about the way they teach writing. The writing practices in three disciplines were examined: language arts, social studies, and science. Finds that most writing assignments involve writing without composing (short answers, worksheets, and lists) and/or writing to understand reading material (responding to reading and writing summaries). These assignments require little analysis, interpretation, or actual writing. Most high school teachers did apply evidence-based practices, but they used these practices infrequently. Furthermore, teachers were not positive about the quality of the preparation they received to teach writing from the colleges and universities they attended. Concludes that the quality of writing instruction in high school needs to be improved.

Annotates the influence of GED tutoring strategy instruction on three African American adults’ persuasive writing over time. Finds consistent gains in writing quality suggesting the value of strategy instruction for adult literacy learners.


Examines the online cognitive activities and the reading and writing activities employed by 15-year-old students while performing two writing-to-learn tasks (summarizing and synthesizing) under think aloud conditions. Task effects on students’ processing activities, as well as the relationship between processing and the quality of their written products were examined. Finds that students tend not to monitor their comprehension during reading. During writing they tend to paraphrase sentences. Concludes that secondary school students lack the (meta)cognitive processes for making strategic use of reading and writing.


Examines secondary school students’ composing processes and metacognitive understanding in classroom settings. Children were observed during text production, and subsequently interviewed, using stimulated recall. Finds five composing patterns: brief pausers, flow writers, sustained pausers, rapid switchers, and stop starters. Low-achievers were more likely to be flow writers, showing longer bursts of writing, than high-achievers. Also finds that students were well aware of their own composing processes.


Examines whether discourse knowledge about various forms of writing predicted young developing writers’ (grade 2 and grade 4) story writing performance once four writing and three nonwriting variables were controlled. Also examines whether grade 4 students possessed more discourse knowledge than grade 2 students. Finds that five aspects of discourse knowledge together made a unique and significant contribution to the prediction of story quality, length, and vocabulary diversity beyond the seven control variables. In addition, older students possessed greater knowledge about the role of substantive processes, motivation, and abilities in writing.


Analyzes the use of a shared writing assessment of one-semester first-year composition students’ writing across five different universities using a common rubric. Finds that students in all schools demonstrated significant increases during the semester at all universities, with students at more selective institutions scoring higher. In addition to institution, course grade and courses taught by full-time versus adjunct faculty were positively related to higher scores on the post essays. Gender, SAT verbal scores, number of class assignments, and number of drafts written in class were not significantly related to scores. Suggests the value of cross-institutional assistants using a shared rubric to ascertain the factors influencing students’ writing improvement.

Examines differences in written feedback on student writings between peers and instructors. Analyzes comments on 29 different feedback features. Finds that peers and instructors provide as many critical comments, and are as likely to point out problems and solutions. Peers provide more praise than instructors. Concludes that peer feedback is fairly similar to instructor feedback, both in quality and quantity.


Describes the use of an online-assessment program, iMOAT, for determining valid student placements in first-year composition courses at Louisiana State University, designed to challenge placement decisions based on ACT writing test scores. Students submit online essays based on reading 8–10 articles about a subject; essays are then scored by expert readers who achieved relatively high levels of agreement. Finds relatively low correlations between these essays and ACT writing scores and that placements based on ACT writing scores often require student reassignments. Suggests the value of making placement decisions according to students’ self-submitted essays.


Reports of the development and validation of a Writing Dispositions Scale (WDS), a self-report instrument for identifying the critical affective stances towards writing. Survey data were collected from 854 elementary and middle school students. Analyses indicated that an 11-item WDS had sufficient internal and content reliability and validity. Finds that writing dispositions are related to three affective stances: confidence, persistence, and passion toward writing.


Explores how fourth-grade students learn to collaborate on creative writing projects, in the context of a “learning community.” Analyzes the interaction and dialogues taking place as peers worked together on writing a story that later would be transformed into a multimedia product. Finds that students’ collaborative activities reflect processes related to central sociocultural concepts, such as: co-construction, intertextuality, collaborative creativity, and the use of knowledge transformation strategies.


Reports a meta-analysis of single subject design writing intervention studies. Eighty-eight single subject design studies were located where it was possible to calculate an effect size. An average effect size was calculated for treatments that were tested in four or more studies, using a similar outcome measure in each study. Finds nine writing treatments that were supported as effective: strategy instruction for planning/drafting, teaching grammar and usage, goal setting for productivity, strategy instruction for editing, writing with a word processor, reinforcing specific writing outcomes, use of prewriting activities, teaching sentence construction skills, and strategy instruction for paragraph writing.


Compares the effects of instruction in a general and a genre-specific strategy as well as procedures for employing strategies for planning and writing stories to 64 third-grade students; a control group of 63 third-grade students received traditional skill-based story instruction. Students receiving the strategy instruction generated longer, higher-quality stories than did students in the control group; their strategy instruction also transferred to writing personal experience narratives.

Analyzes 72 physicians’ forensic letters identifying instances of children’s maltreatment in terms of the rhetorical ability to proffer judgements of evidence of maltreatment without charging child abuse, as well as the use of boundary-crossing strategies associated with addressing both medical, legal, and family worlds. Finds that the uses of evaluative adjectives and adverbs served to invite alternative interpretations of their medical judgments.


Analyses pause time patterns in writing in relation to characteristics of the written text. Fourth-grade children and adults wrote a narrative and an expository text, by hand. Handwriting movements were recorded using a computer-controlled tablet. Finds that pause time duration differs between narrative and expository texts. Both children and adults take more time to plan at higher syntactic levels, and they pause longer before writing main clauses than before writing subordinate clauses. Suggests that the time writers take to decide on how to express their ideas depends on grammatical and functional aspects of clauses.


Addresses the issue of whether general knowledge taught in first-year composition (FYC) about academic genres prepares students for writing of specialized academic genres in future courses and whether students can transfer generalized knowledge to these courses. Analyzes 23 FYC teachers’ assignments in a large, public Midwestern university, interview and survey data, and students’ first and last papers. Finds that highly specific FYC assignments, for example, observation writing, involve little reflection on the process or principles of writing observations that may foster transfer to observational writing in specific disciplines. Similarly, finds that the general “argument paper” bears little relationship to specific argumentative writing in specific disciplines. Students perceived little relationship between FYC writing assignments and current or future writing in other courses. Study of one FYC course linked to biology indicated difficulties in that students were not actually working in biology. Suggests the need to focus FYC not on learning to write, but on learning about writing in the university.


Examines the effects of SRSD (self-regulated strategy development) writing instruction on the writings of sixth-grade students in Canada. SRSD-instruction was compared to the CHAIR procedure for writing opinion essays. In the CHAIR procedure students learn to substantiate their opinion by using arguments (which were compared to the legs of a chair). Finds that children in the SRSD-condition learned to write more clearly and in a more organized fashion at a faster rate than children in the comparison condition.

**Other Related Research:**


