Annotated Bibliography of Research in the Teaching of English

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Introduction
The online issue of the November RTE once again contains the annual “Annotated Bibliography of Research in the Teaching of English.” An editorial team led this project: Jessica Dockter Tierney, Ann Mogush Mason, and Amy Frederick. As always, the goal of this bibliography is to select, compile, and abstract research studies that employ systematic analysis of phenomena using a variety of research methods, with priority given to research most directly related to the teaching of English language arts. Abstracted citations and those featured in the “Other Related Research” sections were published between June 2015 and May 2016.

The 27 contributors to this bibliography include scholars with diverse research interests and background experiences in PreK–16 educational settings. The contributors divided into teams of three or four members based on their areas of expertise to identify the most significant contributions to peer-reviewed research in each of the bibliography’s nine subject areas: Digital/Technology Tools; Discourse/Narrative Analysis/Cultural Difference; Literacy; Literary Response/Literature/Narrative; Media Literacy; Professional Learning/Teacher Education; Reading; Second Language Literacy; and Writing. Team members reviewed library databases and leading empirical journals to select relevant reports in each area of the bibliography. Because this bibliography is published for readers of Research in the Teaching of English, we asked contributors not to include articles from RTE, which would likely already be familiar to the audience.

The expert teams looked for major or large studies that held significant implications for teaching English language arts, as well as research that might lead to new insights into the paradigms or methodological practices within a given field. We could not include every high-quality research study conducted in the nine content areas of this bibliography over the past year; instead, the background knowledge and perceptions of the contributors worked together to construct a manageable body of important research that RTE readers might want to explore further.

This year, we have decided to do away with the tags listed at the beginning of each section, as readers can search the PDF to locate particular topics, authors, or journals of their own interest. Instead, we have asked lead contributors for each section to summarize patterns or observations from their searches within a topic area. Those statements can be found at the beginning of each section.

As in previous years, this year’s bibliography is available as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.ncte.org/journals/rte/biblios. Since 2003, NCTE has provided free access to these edited, annotated, and searchable bibliographies; please enjoy this valuable service to the RTE scholarly community.
Digital/Technology Tools

The research included in this section focuses on digital literacy research that examines technology for instructional purposes. Priority was given to studies that address pedagogy, as well as knowledge and skills related to using digital technologies to facilitate literacy learning. Specifically, digital literacy in the English language arts contexts incorporates digital writing, communication, or reading tools/apps; technology for instructional purposes, including blogs, wikis, e-books/e-reading, digital storytelling, online discussion, digital video production, podcasts, and digital portfolios; and how social networking, online feedback, and learning management systems enhance literacy instructional practices. (Maggie Struck, Lead Contributor)


Explores how adolescents participate in multimodal meaning-making practices across digital and nondigital settings in both out-of-school and in-school contexts. Investigates students’ “layering of literacies,” the myriad ways digital and nondigital practices, texts, and spaces work interdependently to support meaning-making in an urban public library and middle school setting. Reveals how students generated, evaluated, and experimented with online and offline artifacts and used multimodal texts to layer literacies and engage in situated social and academic practices. Concludes that literacy educators need to support and encourage layering literacy practices in both out-of-school and in-school settings.


Investigates the implementation of a blog-buddy system to support English language learners’ writing performance. Using a mixed-methods research design, researchers explored 60 Iranian undergraduate engineering students’ online English writing practices. Finds evidence that blog-integrated writing instruction accompanying the implementation of a blog-buddy system resulted in significant improvement of students’ writing performance. Identifies four themes that emerged from the use of blogs and blog-buddies in the second-language online writing classes: mentoring, motivation, interactivity, and monitoring/tracking progress. Suggests that using learner-centered approaches within online second-language writing classes provides opportunities for agentive learner experiences.


Traces an implementation of the Web 2.0 tool Storyboard, one of many available digital storytelling applications. Explores improvement in reading and writing, as well as perceptions of the learning experience among junior high English language learners in Greece. Based on quantitative analysis of testing data and qualitative analysis of interview data (N = 51), the results indicate that the tool is effective as both a literacy skill-builder and a motivator, increasing interest and pleasure in the writing task. While improving the language learning experience and outcomes is the primary objective of this research, the authors also cite the need for students to be adept in the use of information and communications technology, or ICT, and suggest that Storyboard offers opportunities to increase their comfort with a new, easy-to-use technology platform.


Explores the ways in which teachers and students from five secondary schools in Australia integrated digital games into the English curriculum. Introduces the pedagogical move of “turning around,” illustrating to teachers the affordances of using digital games and their supplemental texts within secondary English language arts classrooms. Draws on classroom observations and
literature in game studies and English curriculum to describe a model and heuristic for incorporating digital games in English curriculum. Suggests that pedagogical practices like “turning around” make literacy learning relevant to the physical and virtual world of secondary students.


Examines the influence of iPads to support literacy instruction, specifically the creation and distribution of multimodal texts. New literacies frameworks for guiding and interpreting research on literacy and technology were used in a qualitative study of fourth-grade participants. Finds that iPads served as an effective resource to support traditional literacy learning and facilitated the development of new literacies, including: new ways to communicate thinking; detailed writing revisions and deeper comprehension; spontaneous collaboration as a method of empowering learners; and high levels of learner interest and engagement with literacy experiences. Concludes that technology tools, and specifically the features and intuitive nature of the iPad, opened opportunities for students to engage with and acquire new literacies.


Examines constructions of self among youth in an online viewing and discussion forum focused on Korean television dramas (“DramaCrazy”). Finds that digital literacy practices in this communal “affinity space” were meaningful multicultural and global learning experiences that moved across both national and cultural borders. Draws on theories of globalization, multimodal composition, and multiculturality, and uses qualitative methodologies of ethnography, case study, and content analysis of the online discussion, eventually arriving at the notion of transcultural digital literacies, practices that “alleviate” the burdens of imposed identity expectations and borders. Concludes that these online identities tend to include layers of diverse chosen affinities, rather than adhering to a single category such as race or ethnicity, resulting in complex representations of the self while collectively building transcultural knowledge.


Argues from a sociocultural perspective that school literacy instruction limits students as developing writers and is worrisomely disconnected from their lived, out-of-school social literacy practices. This qualitative case study follows Laura, an adolescent writer of fan fiction, analyzing her public writing on FanFiction.net and transcripts from four interviews conducted over the course of several years. Finds that writing fan fiction offers access to an abstract audience, in addition to a “social” audience that interacts directly with Laura, shaping her writing through feedback and interest. Notes that the site preserves anonymity, making it easier to share with these audiences. Considers ways that successful fan fiction writers skillfully draw on generic conventions of networked writing, such as including short scenes (“one-shots”), borrowing characters and settings, and creating romantic links between characters who were not paired in the original text. Concludes that composing and sharing have become “inseparable” in online, networked writing spaces, and closes with ideas on how to implement such experiences in classrooms.


Explores the role curation plays in the development of digital and media literacy competencies of college students, and specifically their understanding of curation as a learning process for critical analysis, aggregation, and storytelling in digital culture. Utilizes Storify as a social curation tool that affords organization of online information within a timeline format, with access to social media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, and external links)
and the ability to insert text for literacy practices (directions, narratives, scope, justifications, and contexts) within the curated story. Identifies the act of curation as a literacy instructional strategy to enhance media analysis and storytelling skills, including collaborative roles in digital environments and culture. Finds evidence that student- and creation-driven pedagogies are essential when embracing curation as central to students' digital and media literacy competencies in a participatory culture.


Examines knowledge creation digital storytelling in Finland, Greece, and the United States through global sharing pedagogy, including learning engagement and mediators. Assembles a sociocultural theory in which a learner-centered approach using technology is applied for (a) knowledge and skills creation, (b) networking and collaboration, and (c) digital media competencies and literacies. Positions students as producers and consumers, critical evaluators and collaborative participants in an international social digital environment. Claims that students gained twenty-first-century skills and literacy practices in a MoViE platform developed for digital storytelling in schools, concluding that students become highly engaged through digital storytelling while producing learner-driven content utilizing digital media competencies and literacies.


Investigates how Narrative Theatre, a narrative-centered digital learning environment in which students’ writing is transformed into three-dimensional animations, supported the writing achievement of three struggling writers. Activity and self-efficacy theories were employed in a qualitative multicase study of adolescent boy writers. Illuminates the ways in which Narrative Theatre promoted interest via choice, scaffolded the writing process, and increased participants’ self-efficacy as writers. Finds evidence that the digital environment supported the literacy practices of participants and fostered positive writing experiences.


Examines the investigation of teaching, learning, and literacy issues by secondary English teachers across online platforms (i.e., blogs, microblogs, social networking sites). Uses ethnographic content analysis methods to analyze online artifacts generated over 10 months. Finds evidence of four interconnected participatory practices that reveal characteristics of teachers’ online participation: supporting teachers, seeking support, curating ideas and information, and promoting one’s own online content. Contributes to emerging understandings in the field about teachers’ professional development practices. Concludes that teachers’ participation online advances their professional development in teaching, learning, and literacy.


Looks closely at the online academic writing practices of 3 eighth-grade students referred to as “Latino emergent bilinguals.” Uses multimodal analysis to study moment-to-moment interactions video-recorded during the focal students’ composing process, with video-annotating software (ELAN) to keep track of several modes of communication at once: verbal, nonverbal, and written communication, as well as communication and movement across online spaces. Finds that students constructed texts in a nonlinear fashion, through social dialogic interaction (talking about and sharing resources, background knowledge, and writing expertise) and a cross-modal intertextual meaning-making process of “multimodal resemiotization.” Notes that
the focal students’ online writing practices were fully aligned with Common Core standards for writing, which emphasize such process approaches to writing as use of the Internet, synthesis of information from multiple sources, and collaboration with others.


Examines the influence of cross-cultural dialogue, digital storytelling, and a collaborative virtual platform (a closed Facebook group with YouTube hosting digital stories) to understand the notion of otherness on a global scale. Investigates literacy practices and what it means to be human in a qualitative case study of American and South African university course participants. Frames digital storytelling within Giroux’s border pedagogy theory. Finds evidence of technology as a means to break down barriers and develop an equitable society through curriculum that builds literacies and makes power dynamics visible. Concludes that participants communicate through difference and demystify notions of otherness across contexts in collective spaces.


Explores the instructional uses of the Web 2.0 tool VoiceThread in an elementary classroom, a middle school classroom, and a high school classroom in a southeastern US state. Collective case study design was used to analyze teachers’ perceptions and understanding of the use of VoiceThread as a digital tool and their adaptation of it with their students. Data collection included semistructured interviews, published VoiceThreads, and teacher reflections. Finds evidence of benefits (increased student engagement, authentic feedback, improved fluency and confidence, and enhanced teaching and learning experiences) and challenges (lack of familiarity with VoiceThread and time) faced by the three teachers and their students when using VoiceThread. Concludes that VoiceThread is an easily adaptable digital tool to use in all subject areas and grade levels and that it engages students in dialogic ways across digital spaces. Calls for more research to investigate how comparable Web 2.0 tools generate benefits and constraints for teachers and students.


Explores the effects of using automated essay evaluation software (PEG Writing) in a quasi-experimental study of instructional feedback for eighth-grade English language arts students. Groups of students receiving feedback on their writing from PEG in combination with teacher feedback were compared with groups of students receiving teacher feedback only (via Google Docs). Data sources included results of a writing motivation survey and two measures of final-draft writing quality, one built into the PEG system and the other a holistic writing score generated by the researchers. Findings show that teachers gave the same amount of feedback to students in both conditions, but gave proportionately more feedback on higher-level writing skills, such as idea development, to students who also received PEG feedback. Speculates that the system saved teachers’ time, leading to a shift in the quality and focus of their feedback. Concludes that such automated essay evaluation software is promising, but results are still inconclusive; while students receiving the combined feedback demonstrated increases in motivation, there were no differences in writing quality between the groups who received combined feedback and those receiving teacher feedback only.

Other Related Research

Bailey, C. (2016). Free the sheep: Improvised song and performance in and around a Minecraft

Discourse/Narrative Analysis/Cultural Difference

Because much scholarly work can be categorized as related to this section, we cast a broad net to identify articles for this list. Beginning with an exhaustive review of top journals that publish work in these areas, we identified strong articles written by diverse authors that address a wide range of topics, highlighting methodologies and epistemologies that center youth and other marginalized voices. We took note of several areas in need of stronger focus in the coming years, including research with Asian Pacific Islander children/youth, LGBTQ+ children/youth/families, narrative analysis, and out-of-school/community literacies. (Ann Mogush Mason, Lead Contributor)

Uses youth participatory action research with two after-school arts-integrated neighborhood programs to explore the assets and challenges of identity and place. Generating visual representations through PhotoVoice, participants created counternarratives demonstrating racial
and socioeconomic realities often ignored in policy and research. Analysis of multiple literacies showed youth critiquing discursive tensions in resources. Further inquiry and research activities led to learning about self, community, youth voice, and agency, highlighting the importance of collective voice in the action of saving a local library. Emphasizes youth-adult partnerships navigating social change together.


Draws from a semester-long mixed-methods multicase study examining the intersection of student identities and discourses of achievement within an English curriculum in a diverse urban middle school. Asks how student identities, languages, and literacies mediate classroom experiences, how educators respond, and what else (like youth-led participatory action research) can actively disrupt normative conceptions of literacy in curriculum, pedagogy, and research. Uses narrative analysis of interviews, field notes, and student writing to boost students’ critical meta-awareness of their identities-in-practice in the figured world of their classroom. Reframes ELA as an assemblage of discourses and practices to honor and highlight students’ multiple identities and literacies, as well as their resistance, participation, and knowledge.


Draws on research at the intersections of education and the African Diaspora to present the concept of educational diasporic practice. Uses Mills’s “The Racial Contract” and Althusser’s theory of the ideological state apparatuses through a racial lens to discuss how white supremacy has aided in the misrecognition and (re)production of black subjects as unworthy of holding the status of human. Advocates exploring the restorative and epistemological work of diasporic figures such as Chinua Achebe and Carter G. Woodson contribute to the resistance of colonial educational practices and the development of a language for global blackness in education that is humanizing and liberatory.


Examines a critical educator’s pedagogy and canon from daily observations over a 3-week unit on The Great Gatsby. Represents this single case study through interpretive frameworks of narrative discourse analysis and feminist poststructural discourse analysis. Discusses discourses of gender relations and the gender identity of hypermasculinity reaffirmed by the unexplored normalcy of the space, the teacher, and his humor, and the pedagogy surrounding the chosen text. Leaves critical educators to question classroom contradictions, how we can view pedagogy as text, and how we carry beliefs and values into literacy instruction and surrounding classroom discourses.


Using a blend of critical race theory, critical emotion studies, and critical whiteness studies, this article utilizes digital storytelling to examine the emotionality with regard to race that is entrenched in teacher education program classrooms. With three emerging themes—(1) personalization: stopping emotional distancing, (2) debunking colorblind ideology, and (3) engaging emotions: analyzing emotions to understand whiteness—teacher candidates used digital storytelling to reflect on how the engagement in racial discourse in education allowed them to deconstruct their own identities. Implications for pedagogy in teacher education include the need to question and challenge programs that promote social justice while leaving out whiteness as site of inquiry, thus providing an opening to confront the insidious nature of racism that persists within projects that aim to be socially just and culturally responsive.

Employs critical language awareness to analyze racial literacy across a yearlong case study of one white preservice teacher and her black student, including three literacy events (a teacher’s journal entry about white privilege, a literacy lesson examining race, and a debriefing session with colleagues). Demonstrates how literacy teachers’ developing awareness of race, racism, and white privilege is an important part of learning to teach. With critical literacy as a frame, demonstrates critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness as tools to analyze, critique, and reconstruct understandings about race, as well as to disrupt dominant forms of literacy.


Uses the notion of reparative reading to challenging the dominant discourses that bypass black female bodies and make them invisible, particularly in curriculum and pedagogical practices. Examines curriculum through feminist methods of writing and reflexivity to re-view Sarah Phillips (1984) and Caucasia (1999) as novels that present alternative ways of viewing black female bodies that include pleasure and possibility. Concludes that reviewing bodies as text helps construct curriculum and pedagogies that repair the minds and bodies of those marginalized by and vulnerable to the hegemonic structures of racism and gender.


Investigates the use of drama club as a culturally responsive pedagogical tool for three white teachers in an urban educational alternative outreach school’s yearlong program to validate students’ culture, to comprehend multidimensional community experiences, and to transform teaching, learning, and the classroom. Uses (auto)biographical and (auto)ethnographic methods in the forms of teachers’ stories and critical reflections on teaching and learning, and students’ journaling, essay writing, and note taking, as well as articles and editorials written for the student-made monthly school newspaper. Analyzes students’ and teachers’ stories as metaphors produced in a student-centered classroom that fostered critical consciousness and counternarrative for teaching and learning with and for disenfranchised black youth.


Reviews quantitative and qualitative media literacy studies to question whether media literacy can intervene to reduce racial, gender, and ethnic stereotypes. Examines a qualitative curricular study on violence and stereotypes in the media, analyzing writing from 60 mostly white sixth graders who grappled with how media constricts and opens ideas of self and others. Concludes with implications for longer class sessions and intergroup experiences that use stereotypes and counterstereotypes; contemporary, youth-constructed curriculum; and explicit probing of race and ethnicity.


Studies the ways six female preservice teachers of color, most of them preparing to teach in early childhood settings, made sense of and negotiated the teacher education program and their first three years of teaching. Uses critical narrative analysis to examine macro-discourses (systematic and institutional) formed within the stories collected during three series of in-depth interviews. Finds evidence of recycling and resisting dominant discourses, expressed as counternarratives.
related to racialization, normative whiteness, and multiple selves and identities. Concludes that the definitions of “good teaching” too often translate to white, monolingual, and middle-class and can be challenged by considering the diversity of perspectives teachers of color bring to teaching preparatory programs and classrooms.

Other Related Research


Kennedy-Lewis, B. L., & Murphy, A. S. (2016). Listening to “frequent flyers”: What persistently disciplined students have to say about being labeled as “bad.” *Teachers College Record*, 118(1), 1–40.


**Literacy**

In selecting our articles, we wanted to make sure we covered a range of age groups, so we looked for research in early childhood/primary, upper elementary, middle/secondary school, and adult literacy populations. Despite this attempt at balance, preschool studies, especially studies of vocabulary development in the early years, seemed to be one of the “hotter” topics. We also completed a general literature search for the past year and reviewed the prominent journals in literacy research. Literacy seems to have more blurred boundaries than some other areas, but we usually attempt to find articles that address more than one area of the language arts (e.g., not simply “reading” or “writing”). This year, we noticed that it was not possible to maintain hard boundaries between the various categories within the bibliography. For example, it is becoming more difficult to separate literacy from digital literacy or literacy with multilingual students, etc.—as well it should be! (Lori Helman, Lead Contributor)


Describes a quasi-experimental study of the effects of a comprehensive word knowledge intervention on the language and literacy skills of 118 monolingual Norwegian speakers identified as poor readers. Explores the hypothesis that teaching students word forms and meanings would support the development of decoding and linguistic comprehension. Students in treatment and control groups were matched on grade and reading comprehension level. Students in the treatment group showed significantly greater growth in measures of language and reading comprehension. Measures of decoding showed no statistically significant effects in either group. Suggests that comprehensive word knowledge instruction is useful in improving students’ language-related abilities across various learner groups.

Examines the response-to-intervention model in the middle and secondary levels by systematically observing educators delivering literacy interventions. The Writing and Reading Observational Tool was used as the observation instrument. Intervention sessions were coded and analyzed to determine the frequency, type, and appropriateness of use in students of this age. *Critical foundation knowledge and skills* was the most frequently observed primary category of intervention (representing 37.9% of intervention time), followed by reading comprehension of literary text (17.3%) and vocabulary development (8%). Categories representing less than 1% of intervention time were media literacy, silent reading, and writing narrative and persuasive text.


Provides empirical data on the types of evidence that seventh-grade students use to judge the quality of information found online, with the goal of helping teachers design instruction to support adolescents in evaluating this online information. Findings indicate a need for increased explicitness in teaching in this area. Authors provide five sets of instructional practices that will help adolescents evaluate online information: (1) encouraging students to look for information about authors and their affiliations to determine author expertise; (2) teaching students how to justify and articulate authors’ expertise; (3) scaffolding inferences about the effects of an author’s viewpoint; (4) modeling strategies for handling conflicting information; and (5) demonstrating the value of using multiple indicators of reliability regarding an author’s expertise.


Investigates the connection of infant vocabulary level to later language and literacy skills. Finds that infant vocabulary was a statistically significant predictor of later vocabulary, phonological awareness, reading accuracy, and reading comprehension. Family risk for language or literacy difficulties explained additional variances in reading but not language outcomes. Concludes that vocabulary serves as a cognitive foundation for both reading accuracy and reading comprehension, but a measure of vocabulary taken before age 2 is not a reliable predictor of future language outcomes.


Examines the feedback that athletic coaches give and considers how to adapt it for academic classes. Analyzes data from athletic competitions, examining the techniques used to compose sports arguments, and then transfers these skills to academic subjects. Recommends closer collaboration between coaches and academic teachers to increase student engagement and higher-order analytical skills, to develop shared language for these skills, and to create opportunities for explicit transfer and higher student achievement.


Studies the relationship between rhythm perception skills and individual differences in phonological and grammar abilities. Analyzes students’ standardized assessments of rhythm perception, phonological awareness, morphosyntactic competence, and nonverbal cognitive ability. Finds that children with higher phonological awareness scores were better able to discriminate complex
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Investigates the effects of a phonological awareness intervention in a response-to-intervention model on low-income preschool students’ phonological awareness skills. Finds that the intervention produced consistent gains on weekly progress monitoring of the primary outcome measure for first sound identification. Concludes that small-group intervention in a response-to-intervention framework supports early literacy instruction beyond the core curriculum.


Explores young children’s digital literacy in the home and how these literacy practices are embedded into family life and involve family members. Analyzes written observations and the practices captured using digital cameras and camcorders over one month. Finds that young children were engaged in multimedia, multimodal practices with other family members. Concludes that the emphasis should no longer be on family literacy practices but on family digital literacy.


Examines the ways that youths write, read, and critique poetry in an online affinity space. Analyzes interviews, feedback, and poetic analysis to gain insight into how teens engage with poetry. Finds that adolescents adopted an identity of poet, followed models of creative inspiration, and participated in the peer review process. Results reveal a difference between conceptualization and reality of constructive feedback. Concludes that adolescent online poetic literacy has the potential to inform teaching praxis.


Uses classroom observations guided by a task rubric to study the engagement of 6 sixth-grade students during literacy tasks. Participants included 2 high-performing, 2 average-performing, and 2 low-performing students from a Title One elementary school where 76% of students were English learners and 83% of families received free or reduced lunch. Finds that 7 in 10 of the most engaging tasks were “moderately open” or “open” and 9 in 10 of the least engaging tasks were “closed.” The most engaging tasks included aspects of authenticity, collaboration, and choice. Less-engaging tasks were too difficult, worksheet-centered, or whole-class activities. Recommends use of literacy tasks that are content-rich, include visuals and print, and invite students to interact and collaborate.


Investigates how adult literacy education can activate a potential for humanization, also called “Ubuntu,” for nurturing economic and social life. Analyzes how to keep an Ubuntu spirit alive in various learning settings with participants in adult basic education. Finds that literacy education merged with Ubuntu can improve people’s lives economically and socially. Suggests that Ubuntu is relevant in the context of adult literacy education where practitioners hope to accomplish humanistic goals.

Investigates participant-centered research techniques with young children to understand ethical research practices. Analyzes weekly classroom read-alouds of social-class-themed literature and students’ response to issues of poverty, privilege, and inequality. Results indicate that researchers need to find a balance between protecting children and reporting rich data. Recommends that researchers treat assent as an ongoing process while capturing the complexity of data and protecting students’ identities.


Examines literacy practices of middle school and high school students with moderate and severe disabilities. Finds that students spent an excessive amount of time passively engaged in reading activities (i.e., listening without the opportunity to respond) in one-to-one instructional arrangements located in self-contained classes. Active engagement in written and spoken expressive communication was underemphasized. Worksheets and picture symbols were the most often-used materials. Activities rarely occurred in the authentic setting for use of the literacy skill, or with the materials that would be used under natural circumstances.


Studies three high school boys’ literacy engagement through a case study analysis of the boys’ experiences. Highlights the multifaceted and complex nature of “reluctance” toward academic reading. Thematic findings point out that the most important consideration for the three boys’ literacy learning was their engagement with reading. All three boys felt their failure was permanent, stable, and outside their control. Offers many ideas to counter the boys’ perceptions of failure.


Seeks to operationalize a construct for academic-language proficiency, or more generalized academic language skills, that moves beyond simple academic vocabulary knowledge. Identifies this construct as core academic-language skills (CALS). Uses a CALS assessment, a standardized reading comprehension measure, an academic vocabulary test, and a word reading fluency test to identify the contribution that CALS made to 218 fourth- to sixth-grade students’ reading comprehension, with vocabulary, word reading fluency, and sociodemographic factors as covariates. Finds that CALS scores increased significantly in relation to grade level, English proficiency, and higher socioeconomic status. Concludes that understanding the constellation of skills that contribute to an expanded construct of academic language may be useful for improving instruction of conceptually and linguistically advanced academic material.


Investigates federal and local assessment tools that are used to measure and evaluate children’s literacy abilities. Analyses how assessments are used in teacher discourse and how discourse affects the identity of children. Finds that assessment data serve as a vehicle for labeling and categorizing children. Assessment data promote specific types of discourses that narrow the identity of children by categories and deficit-like talk.
Other Related Research


Peel, K. (2016). The more they read the more things they will know: Becoming word conscious. Literacy Learning: The Middle Years, 24(2), 34–42.


Literary Response/Literature/Narrative

The research on literary response and literature highlighted in this section illustrates continued and increasing scholarly interest in how historically marginalized and underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, [dis]ability, and gender/sexuality groups) are depicted in children’s and young adult literature. Additionally, studies in this section are representative of an increasing interest in the examination of culturally and linguistically diverse students’ responses to diverse texts and genres (e.g., graphic novels, hip-hop literature, and religious texts). Articles selected for inclusion in this section include a range of US and international studies with a variety of innovative methodologies for both content analysis and reader response. (Amanda Haertling Thein, Lead Contributor)

Investigates responses of three female Nigerian high school students to multimodal representations of unequal social structures in Nigeria. Uses multiple-case-study analysis to trace the students' uses of critical literacy practices as they interrogate representations of gender in textbooks and reconstruct such representations via various modalities. Discusses the importance of integrating multimodal (and typically out-of-school) literacy practices within school curricula to increase students' sense of agency, participation, and possibility in rejecting unjust social structures.


Examines second-grade students' multiple perspectives on a children's picture book both during and after text discussion, with the goal of determining whether close reading could be accomplished without teacher guidance toward interpretive consensus. Classroom transcripts, interview data, and student writing were coded for textual moves and students' public and private positions on the text. Finds that close reading was not dependent on teacher-directed communal close reading; students were engaged in multiple forms of close reading within the context of dialogic discussion and often held competing positions on the text in writing and interviews. Argues that differences in students' close readings contributed to complexity in the discussion. Questions the feasibility and desirability of communal close reading.


Examines young children's responses to two children's books from two reading events—an initial immediate response and a second guided one. Analysis of the responses was divided into three areas: book world, real world, and play world. Found that students' immediate responses were grounded in the “book world,” predominantly exploring and engaging with the world created within the book. But student responses overall showed children's ability to move across the three worlds and make connections between the reading, their understanding of books, and their personal lives.


Analyzes primary-grade students' ratings and reactions to 30 researcher-designed text passages. Finds that students most preferred stories with which they personally identified, as well as stories they regarded as “fun.” Suggests that students prefer and will engage more with culturally relevant readings.


Examines the presence of children's literature by or about Native Americans in Scholastic Reading Club book order forms over one year. Finds that there was little to no literature by Native American authors and illustrators. Books about Native Americans available in the order forms showed stereotypical misrepresentations of Native Americans.


Uses qualitative coding and statistical analysis to examine 58 princess books (picture books, fairy
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Uses prescriptive content analysis to examine the portrayal of family structures within 87 Newbery Award winners and runners-up. Compares family structures in these books with US Census data. Includes a detailed methods section. Finds incongruity between family structures in census data and textual portrayals of family structures in the selected books from the 1930s through the 1950s, and a closer match beginning in the 1960s.


Situated in the teacher-researcher tradition and set in the Galilee area of Israel, this study examines ninth-grade English-as-a-foreign-language students’ responses to a class grounded in a critical literacy approach. Among the course readings were a “Disney-fied” version of the Cinderella fairy tale (*A Dream for a Princess*) that was complemented by emancipatory picture books (*Cinder Edna* and *Piggybook*). Offers in-depth analysis of two letters composed by female students that critique gender positioning in *A Dream for a Princess*. Analysis covers topics of who benefits from conventional positioning, how students considered alternative perspectives, and how students decided to take action through a letter to the author.


Details a qualitative, critical, multicultural content analysis of 71 young adult novels depicting poverty that were published from 1996 to 2013, comparing those depictions to characterizations of poverty drawn from US Census data. Finds an overrepresentation of white characters, teen pregnancy, urban poverty, and urban crime (primarily in California and New York) and a more representative depiction of mental health challenges. Additionally, finds that while many texts depicted youth overcoming hardship through the help of friends and family, fewer depicted positive outcomes from institutional supports and resources. Offers recommendations for practice as well as exemplar texts that provide problematic and complex depictions of poverty.


Explores 10 modern picture books that depict the experiences of young diverse main characters with their names and identities in US school settings. Examination of perspectives, illustrations, and other elements reveals the presence of three common themes: negotiating the pressures to assimilate, teacher characters and the abdication of responsibility, and negotiating the fear of identity loss. Suggests that these books, meant to empower diverse children, may actually reify the existing power systems.

Uses a case study approach to examine student responses to a researcher-created class arranged around critical literacy engagements of hip-hop literature and culture. Focuses on how Sonja, who identifies as black and female, maneuvers through the class. Offers findings related to racial literacy, critical reflection, text deconstruction, power analysis, and the social construction of self. Concludes that the goal of critical education is not to encourage disengagement with hip-hop texts or resignation to mainstream representations of gender and race, but to provide space and tools to complicate understandings and find multiple interpretive possibilities.


Examines responses of 71 sixth-grade language arts students to *Coraline* and *Artemis Fowl*, novels that appear in both a traditional novel format and a graphic novel format. For the study, students read either the traditional or graphic novel format of one of the titles. Uses field notes and focus-group interviews to explore student experiences with different formats. Finds that students’ perceived the graphic novel format as offering a more enjoyable and engaging experience than the traditional format, but that students did not perceive graphic novels as worthy educational material. Contextualizes these findings by discussing ways in which graphic novels continue to be positioned negatively by teachers, college professors, and working adults in a curricular paradigm that favors traditional reading rather than multimodal reading.


Draws on fat studies scholarship to analyze how fat female protagonists are constructed and represented in eight young adult novels published from 2000 to 2013. Methods include qualitative content analysis and critical discourse analysis. Finds that these texts share a trajectory of obsession with and/or addiction to food characterized by self-loathing, binge eating, hoarding food, eating in secret, interventions, a turning point, and a transformation. Argues that this construction of addiction stigmatizes fat females and perpetuates the myth of the ideal body. Offers questions to encourage adolescent readers to critique representations of fat female protagonists.


Examines responses from 150 elementary-aged children discussing sections of the book and the movie *Matilda*. Uses the children’s responses to reflect upon adult-written critical scholarship about the role the main character plays as a hero-character. Suggests that balancing literary adult criticism with child audience interpretations and response adds to a deeper understanding of an author’s work.


Explores 16 Latter-Day Saints and Methodist youths’ experiences with complex, religious texts. Data included participant observations and 59 extensive, semistructured interviews conducted over 2 years. Constant comparative analysis revealed two primary areas of struggle that participants had with the Book of Mormon and the Bible: scriptural language and contradictions within and within scripture. Raises questions about the use of complex texts for instructional purposes and motivating youth to engage with complex texts.

Other Related Research


**Media Literacy**

*The research included in this section focuses on surveys of people’s uses of different types of media—television, news, movies, digital/social media, and games; degrees of access to media; use of instruction
in critical media literacy to analyze media representations; and the effects of media use on people’s attitudes, behavior, and learning processes. Priority was given to studies using large-scale databases to document people’s particular uses of media, and analyses of instructional methods and teacher preparation programs relevant to developing critical media literacy instruction in English language arts. The Media Literacy section focuses on media literacy instruction to foster critical response to media and survey studies on people’s media use, while the Digital/Technology Tools section focuses on effects and benefits of using digital/technology tools to support English language arts instruction; we recognize that there is some overlap between these two sections. (Richard Beach, Lead Contributor)


News is important to millennials (adults age 18–34), but they consume information in different ways than previous generations. Concerns exist that millennials do not consume news using traditional channels such as print newspapers, television news, or news sites. This report finds that millennials’ consumption of news is interwoven in continuous and mindful ways that connect news, social action, and entertainment. Data suggest that this form of discovery may widen millennials’ awareness as they are drawn in because peers recommend and contextualize news on social networks, and that they actively navigate and make choices about which sources in their social media feeds they consider to be reliable, as well as participating in news through liking, sharing, and commenting on stories. Three classifications of millennial news seekers are identified: (a) Explorers, who are younger (18–24) and actively seek news; (b) Distracted, who are 25–34, predominantly white, starting families, and more likely to bump into news; and (c) Activists, who are also older (25–34) but are more ethnically and racially diverse and actively seek out news.


Explores perceptions and habits associated with accessing news reports. Survey data indicate that 60% of participants accessed news on a daily basis. While a majority used social media to access news, only 12% expressed trust in the news and information they accessed from Facebook. People for whom trust was an important criterion were more likely to pay for and share news than people with less concern about trust; Democrats had a higher level of concern about trust than Republicans or independents. African American and Hispanic consumers expressed the importance of references to their communities as an aspect of trust. Of all participants, 85% believed in the importance of accurate, unbiased news reporting; 40% recalled an incident that involved inaccurate or one-sided reporting; 76% indicated that it was important for news to be current; and 72% thought reporting should be concise and to the point. These assessments varied by topic, with a majority of respondents positing that the use of expert sources and data was more important in reporting on domestic issues than for lifestyle news; for lifestyle and sports news, they preferred more entertaining reporting.


Examines the effects of critical media literacy instruction on adolescents’ perceptions of the desirability of sexual portrayals in the media. In two curriculum evaluation studies, students in treatment groups receiving this instruction demonstrated reduced perceptions of desirability of unrealistic sexual media messages, compared with students in control groups. Results support the hypothesis that media literacy education can diminish the influence of desirable but unrealistic sexual media messages on adolescents’ decision making concerning sex, regardless of whether it decreases their affinity for the messages.
Annotated Bibliography


Investigates whether Netlog, a popular social networking site, provides a space for democratic and diverse intimate stories. Young people's intimate citizenship has become increasingly intertwined with media cultures, particularly Western popular media cultures (e.g., music, film, and celebrity industry). Private lives move into public spaces, giving rise to new ethical dilemmas. Intimacy stories of young people are structured around creativity, anonymity, authenticity, performativity, bricolage, and intertextuality. Perceived ways of portraying intimacy and making sense of gender, sexuality, and relationships in public spaces like Netlog are intertwined with and heavily influenced by media.


Describes a survey of 1,300 thirteen- to twenty-four-year-olds regarding their daily media uses. Finds that 93% had access to mobile phones and 63% to tablets; 65% viewed digital content daily as a "stress reliever" (61%) or "mood lifter" (57%), and to obtain information about current events (60%); 91% used social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, Twitter) for an average of 5.9 hours a week; 88% used free platforms (YouTube, Vine, Twitch) for an average of 6.2 hours a week; 76% used subscription services (Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, Sling, HBO/SO, sports apps) for an average of 8.8 hours a week; and 61% used cable/satellite TV for an average of 8.2 hours a week. Participants noted that they "cannot live without" YouTube (67%), Netflix (51%), social media (48%), Facebook (27%), Instagram (15%), and Snapchat (14%). Half (52%) had installed ad blockers on their devices.


Given the need to go beyond a focus on critical analysis and media production to a focus on use of material practice in media learning, applies actor-network analysis over a 4-year period to students' digital media production in an Australian primary school to identify "moments of translation" through use of four types of building blocks: digital materials, conceptual understandings, media production, and media analysis.


Examines attitudes and perceptions of the societal impact of video games. Debated issues include: whether men predominate in gaming; portrayal of women and minorities; association between violent games and aggressive behavior; and whether games encourage positive attributes such as problem-solving skills, communication, and teamwork. Finds that nearly equal numbers of men and women played video games, but the majority of American adults believed more men played than women. Forty percent believed there was a possible link between video games and violent behavior. Women were more likely to think video-game violence and violent behavior were related. Survey participants were divided on whether video games improved teamwork and communication, and on whether minorities and women were portrayed negatively in games. Individuals who did not play video games were more likely to agree with negative perceptions, and those who did play were more likely to associate video games with positive attributes.


Reviews research on technology users' behavioral and technological addiction, amount of time spent engaging with media, family methods of managing media use, and use of media multitasking. Tweens (8- to 12-year-olds) spent almost six hours per day using media, and teens (13- to
18-year-olds) spent almost nine hours per day using media. Estimates of the degree to which American adolescents and college students reported instances of Internet addiction, such as Internet gaming disorder, ranged from 0% to 26%. With 51% of teens watching TV, 50% using social media, and 60% texting while doing homework, most teens posited that multitasking did not adversely affect the quality of their work (Common Sense Media, 2015), although analysis of heavy media multitaskers indicated that they had difficulty focusing to filter out irrelevant information (Ophir, Nass, & Wagner, 2009). Tensions between parental supervision and children’s use of media were evident, with 54% of 8- to 13-year-olds indicating that their parents checked their devices too frequently and 32% responding that they resented parents’ distracted use of their phones (AVG Technologies, 2015); parents of 8- to 17-year-olds had difficulty limiting their children’s use of media and technology (Rich, Bickham, & Shrier, 2015), although 59% of parents in another study were not concerned that their children might experience media addiction (Wartella, Rideout, Lauricella, & Connell, 2013). Adolescents still preferred face-to-face communication, with 52% indicating that social networking enhanced their relationships with others (Common Sense Media, 2012) with regard to sharing their interests and passions (Ito et al., 2010). Suggests the need for a balanced media diet acquired through adults modeling and sharing thoughtful, purposeful, focused media use (Gardner & Davis, 2013; Samuel, 2015).


Describes a survey of public library users, finding that while 65% of users, particularly low-income Americans, Hispanics, and African Americans, indicated that closing their library would adversely impact their community, their library use had declined slightly since 2012. Nearly a third (27%) said they visited libraries to use computers or access the Internet, with 60% using access for research or school work (compared with 31% in 2012) and 50% accessing their library’s website (an increase from 39% in 2010). Since 2012, more users indicated that print books and stacks should be moved to create more space for technology centers and reading/meeting rooms. High majorities of users indicated that libraries should work with schools to provide resources, offer free literacy programs, and provide users with technology training. The majority of low-income respondents, Hispanics, and African Americans indicated that use of the library helped them find employment, and most thought that libraries should provide services for recent immigrants or first-generation Americans, as well as veterans and active-duty military personnel. Of the 23% who were working with others to address community problems, 63% had visited their library in the past year and 28% had attended a meeting at the library.


Explores how critical media literacy transforms ways of engaging with media texts and expands the understanding and practice of literacy. Describes a qualitative teacher inquiry that examined how students shaped ideology of masculinity through critical analysis of media text. Finds that students enacted the idea of masculinity as lived experience instead of merely academic deconstruction, and had critical voice in social construction of discrimination.


Analyzes survey data from adolescents ages 13 to 17 to determine their use of online interactions to create friendships. Finds that 57% of teens had met a new friend through use of social media and online gameplay, with 29% noting that they had made five new friends through online interactions; only 20% had interacted with these friends face-to-face. Older teens and males were more likely to have made online friends than younger teens and females, with males more likely to make friends through video games, and females through social media sites. Three-fourths of participants had access to a smartphone; 88% texted with friends occasionally, with
55% texting daily and females texting more frequently than males; 72% interacted with friends through social media, with 23% doing so daily and 85% indicating that they used social media to know more about their friends’ lives (although 88% posited that users shared too much personal information and 40% indicated that they experienced pressure to post content designed to make a positive impression); and 64% used email, 59% used video chat, and 42% used messaging apps for interacting with friends. Results also indicated that 72% played video games, with 83% playing games with others face-to-face and 75% online; 78% played games because they served to connect them with familiar friends. Users did experience tensions in social media interactions, with 58% having unfriended or unfollowed former friends. Half of users indicated that texting was their primary choice for communicating with their closest friend, with phone calls being the second most popular option.


Seventy percent of American adults own a smartphone, which means screen sizes in which to view news content are shrinking. This research investigates whether people will engage with lengthy news articles on their phones. Analysis finds that consumers spend about twice the time, on average, with long-form news articles (1,000 words or longer) than with short-form articles. Time spent on long- and short-form content remains consistent regardless of time of day or path taken to the article (direct link, referral from external site or email). Short-form articles are more prevalent, but data suggest that both short- and long-form articles are accessed at virtually the same rate. Social media drives the largest share of traffic to news content. Facebook drives more traffic, but Twitter users spend more time with content. Twitter users are also more likely to follow breaking news and directly follow news organizations, reporters, and commentators. Findings suggest that long-form news articles have a future, as smartphone users tend to engage with and spend more time on longer stories than shorter ones.


Examines trends and changes in social media usage in the United States over a 10-year period. Nearly two-thirds of American adults (65%) use social networking sites, up from 7% a decade ago. Young adults (ages 18 to 29) are most likely to use social media (90%). Thirty-five percent of those age 65 and older now use social media, compared with 2% in 2005 and 11% in 2010. Women and men use social media at similar rates and there are no notable differences by racial or ethnic group. Higher-income households and those with at least some college are more likely to use social media. However, more than half (56%) of those living in the lowest-income households now use social media, and 2013 was the first year that more than half of those with a high school diploma or less used social media. Those who live in rural areas are less likely than those in suburban and urban communities to use social media.


Describes a survey of 415,686 K–12 students, 38,613 teachers and librarians, 4,536 administrators, 40,218 parents, and 6,623 community members regarding their uses of videos, games, online textbooks, and simulations. Finds that 68% of teachers employ online videos, an increase of 47% from 2010, with 45% of English language arts teachers in grades 6–12 employing videos; and 48% of teachers are using games, particularly in elementary grades, with 50% of teachers indicating a need for more professional development on the use of games to foster learning. Teachers in flipped or blended classes are more likely to employ online simulations. Among high school students, 46% are employing online textbooks, an increase of 53% from 2005. Lack of
home Internet access results in 35% of students accessing their school’s Internet before or after school, 24% using public libraries, and 19% using restaurant or cafés; 70% of teachers voice reluctance to assign homework requiring online access. While 50% of administrators indicate that use of digital content resources enhances students’ learning, 57% indicate that the most significant barrier to such use is lack of teacher training on how to integrate digital content within instruction.


Analyzes differences between the pedagogical media competency models and teacher education programs in Germany and the United States. In the 64 German universities and colleges of teacher education, lectures and courses can be accessed voluntarily, but only 11 offer preservice certificate programs in media instruction. The German curriculum focuses on the impact and influence of media content on audiences, media ownership, interactive media, digital instruction, and psychology of communication. Within the 163 American universities, teachers can acquire media literacy instruction in 180 master’s programs. Across all programs, 76% focus on pedagogical uses of media, with 58% of these programs focusing on educational or instructional technology related to selection and use of media texts and technology tools or designing online instruction; 12% of the programs focus on design and production of educational media, and only 2% focus on critical evaluation of media, culture, and society.


Investigates when people are likely to engage in media multitasking and when effects on media processing are likely to occur. Finds that three situational factors—television genres, dayparts, and social viewing—influence the amount of media multitasking. Participants were directly monitored and media consumption behaviors were recorded at 10-second intervals. Media multitasking was most prevalent when people watched sports or engaged in channel surfing and was less prevalent with commercials, news, and entertainment. Media multitasking was more likely in the morning and afternoon, and also occurred more when individuals watched television alone. Sports was the only genre associated with higher levels of media multitasking when people watched television with others.

**Other Related Research**


Annotated Bibliography


Professional Learning/Teacher Education

*Trends in the review included applications of critical frameworks and inquiry into issues of social justice, racism, and classism in teacher education. Studies in professional learning extended the*
research base on the effectiveness of collaboration among teachers to strengthen literacy instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Results from several studies indicate that a relationship between teacher learning and collaboration improves instruction and outcomes for all students. (Anne Ittner, Lead Contributor)


Explores how a collaborative inquiry group can support teachers as they address literacy instruction and assessment for students transitioning from grade 8 to grade 9. Vertical team teaching occurred with grade 8 and grade 9 teachers as they planned and co-taught. Specifically, teachers engaged in four stages of collaborative inquiry that focused on identifying key literacy strategies that students would need to be prepared for grade 9. In the process, teachers gained insights about the nature of elementary and secondary classrooms and attempted to build cohesive instructional and assessment strategies for the benefit of their students. All teachers involved in the case study who engaged in the stages of collaborative inquiry remarked on the importance of maintaining cross-grade relationships.


Details how mathematics and literacy teacher educators collaborated to study preservice teachers’ perspectives of disciplinary and content area literacy in a revised science and mathematics teacher education program that recently removed traditional content area literacy courses in order to better integrate literacy and methods courses. Presents a qualitative case study of seven preservice teachers in secondary mathematics, consisting of interviews and focus groups conducted after the completion of student teaching. Preservice teachers perceived writing, communication, and application of literacy-based skills as essential to mathematical literacy, but were uncertain how to integrate them into teaching, particularly for struggling learners. Participants felt that content area literacy was insufficient in addressing the variety of texts of mathematical literacy, and that mathematics methods courses were disconnected from field work experiences. Recommendations for improvements to programs of teacher education include linking course work to field placements, stronger partnerships between secondary education faculty and field work supervisors, and the use of more student-centered, constructivist approaches to integrating literacy and mathematics in course work.


Reports on the impact of a teacher professional development program focused on self-determination theory and its relationship to fifth-grade students’ autonomous motivation to read. The study used a quasi-experimental design with an experimental and control condition. The professional development work focused on teachers developing an instructional style that nurtured students’ needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (i.e., feeling connected to and accepted by others). Explores how the professional development workshop affected the autonomous motivation to read of students in participating teachers’ classrooms. Argues that these types of professional development workshops positively influence students’ overall motivation to read.


Explores results of survey data from 104 literacy coaches in one large, urban school district to identify perceptions of coaching roles and their alignment to the International Reading Association-
Annotated Bibliography

Standards for Reading Professionals. Consistent perceptions among coaches included the nature of their roles as literacy leaders who help teachers achieve effective reading and writing instruction. Coaches were less clear about how principals perceived their role. Results indicated a misalignment between the roles coaches perceived to be beneficial to teachers and students and the actual responsibilities they were given as coaches. Despite the fact that the Standards for Reading Professionals emphasize a commitment to teaching diverse populations, a majority of the coaches surveyed also felt unprepared to help teachers implement culturally responsive teaching.


Explores teacher beliefs about learning to read among 270 Spanish-speaking inservice teachers and 246 Spanish preservice education majors enrolled in online teacher preparation programs from Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, and Spain in order to discover ways Web-based training could modify existing beliefs and knowledge of emergent reading development. Repeated-measures ANOVAs of results from an attributional questionnaire before and after the online course revealed an increase in knowledge of reading development for both preservice and inservice teachers, with the preservice group demonstrating a higher degree of improvement in all components. Results from multivariate general linear modeling of course evaluation responses showed positive evaluations for all components of the training program among both groups, but inservice teachers rated components higher. Opportunities and barriers to including teacher beliefs about learning to read in online training programs are discussed.


Investigates the impact of a professional partnership between two teachers and three professors focused on implementing reading comprehension strategy instruction, including summarizing, identifying main ideas, making inferences and predictions, and analyzing texts in middle school classrooms. Includes professional development through coaching for and collaboration with the teachers. Supports the teaching of reading strategies, small-group reading instruction that targets the needs of learners, and the use of instructional coaching in efforts to improve reading comprehension.


Extends the research base on the effectiveness of literacy coaching for teachers who receive ongoing and embedded support in implementing instructional practices aimed at improving reading. In this experimental design, all teachers participated in a six-hour professional development workshop focusing on instructional approaches in guided reading. After the workshop, teachers in the treatment groups received coaching support throughout the year, while the control group worked to implement the practices without the support of a coach. Results indicate that students had significantly higher outcomes on the reading measure, Benchmark Assessment System, when their teachers received the support of a coach. Teachers also had an improved sense of self-efficacy and confidence.


Explores the Literacy in the Science Classroom Project, a 3-year program serving grade 9 teachers. The program was designed through the foundational research of professional development,
literacy in science, and minority-language education. This mixed-methods study used questionnaires, interviews with educators, and focus groups with students. Suggests that the program changed teacher beliefs and practices around language-enhanced teaching in their classrooms. Argues that ongoing professional development strengthens minority-language content-area classrooms.

Ronfeldt, M., Farmer, S. O., McQueen, K., & Grissom, J. A. (2015). Teacher collaboration in instructional teams and student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 52*, 475–514. Examines survey data from 9,000 teachers in 336 Miami-Dade County public schools to identify levels of collaboration among instructional teams. Though positive relationships between collaboration and student achievement have been suggested in several previous studies, this approach attempts to name the kinds of collaboration and the quality of collaboration that are strongly related to student achievement in reading. Argues for the significance of being a strong collaborator and working within a strong collaborative culture. Provides empirical support for the continuation and strengthening of instructional teams.

Salerno, A. S., & Kibler, A. K. (2015). Questions they ask: Considering teacher-inquiry questions posed by pre-service English teachers. *Educational Action Research, 23*, 399–415. Studies the ways preservice teachers in a 2-year secondary English cohort engaged in inquiry projects to explore questions about student learning in field work placements, as well as how to better support preservice teachers as beginning practitioner-researchers through action research. Qualitative analysis of preservice teachers’ written and oral reports, audio-recordings of interviews and class discussions, and field notes of teaching observations revealed a mismatch between the more personally comfortable types of questions preservice teachers asked their students directly and the questions about students’ academic challenges they asked for class projects. Reveals that preservice teachers were reluctant to broach difficult questions with students, and viewed their knowledge of students’ personal lives as researcher bias. Implies the important role of teacher educators in modeling how to engage in authentic inquiry that embraces difficult questions and all types of student knowledge.

Shelton, S. A., & Barnes, M. E. (2016). “Racism just isn’t an issue anymore”: Preservice teachers’ resistances to the intersections of sexuality and race. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 55*, 165–174. Presents analysis of the ways 17 preservice teachers understood race and sexuality when participating in an extracurricular English education discussion group that formed in response to the resistance to inclusion for LGBTQ youth that preservice teachers observed in their field placements in Southern secondary schools. Drawing on Queer theory, women-of-color feminism, and multiracial feminism, analysis of narratives collected from transcripts of focus-group discussions and interviews revealed that aside from Andy, a queer student of color, participants resisted race as a relevant contemporary social justice issue, and argued for the conceptual separation of race and sexuality. Discusses the importance of teaching preservice teachers to interrogate their own privilege and the presence of racism in US public schools, as well including discussions of intersectionality as part of a social justice curriculum.

van Kuijk, M. F., Deunk, M. I., Bosker, R. J., & Ritzema, E. S. (2015). Goals, data use, and instruction: The effect of a teacher professional development program on reading achievement. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 27*, 135–156. Investigates the effects of teacher participation in a professional development program focused on improving reading comprehension for second and third graders in the Netherlands. In a randomized control study, teachers in the treatment group participated in a multicomponent professional development program that focused on setting performance goals for students, applying formative assessment and data use, and learning evidence-based comprehension strategies to use with students. Data analysis compared results of reading comprehension scores among
students in treatment and control classrooms. Finds that students in classrooms where teachers participated in the professional development program had more robust reading comprehension. Argues that results should be considered by policy makers who determine funding for professional development.


Employs ethnographic perspectives to study a collaborative inquiry approach taken with four Native American and two European American teachers working in a school with a large majority of Native American students. In this yearlong inquiry group, teachers discussed the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of their students, as well as the current literacy curriculum that was in use in the school. They recognized the cultural mismatch and considered and enacted approaches for change. Through this re-envisioning of curriculum for their students, teachers gained deep understandings of instruction that positioned their students as central.


Applies a “teachers as ethnographers” framework to a study of new literacies constructed on the social media platform of Goodreads. Seventy-nine Flemish master’s degree students enrolled in the teacher training program at Ghent University participated in a collaborative composition of an autoethnographic text to detail their experiences and reflections on social reading practices. Through content analysis of this written text, the study finds that social environments such as Goodreads allow for the display of literacy practices often hidden in dominant discourses of literary reading, and support social and cultural identity construction for teachers as readers. Presents recommendations for the use of digital social platforms and social reading requirements in programs of teacher education.


Investigates the impact of professional development focused on increasing teachers’ feelings of self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This mixed-methods study is centered on an approach to professional development, Quality from Within, that begins with the inner potential of teachers. The program included working with teacher concerns, practicing authentic situations, and promoting reflection, transfer, and engagement. Examines quantitative and qualitative data from the participants. Argues that evidence supports the potential benefits of the Quality from Within approach for increasing teachers’ feelings of autonomy and self-efficacy.

Other Related Research


**Reading**

*Articles selected for the Reading portion of the 2016 RTE annotated bibliography represent a range of topics and grade levels. Final selection was determined by factors including connection to recent policy initiatives and significance of contribution to the field. For example, the articles we selected utilized novel methodological approaches (experimental design, formative experimental studies, design-based research, and Cultural Historical Activity Theory) or examined important contemporary literacy practices (collaboration, higher-order thinking, identity, and genre studies). Trends in reading research this year include an emphasis on word-level interaction with comprehension, such as phonology, morphology, and vocabulary, as well as increased emphasis on content area reading at all grade levels. (Kathryn Allen, Lead Contributor)*


Examines elementary reading response-to-intervention practices and services, and their impact on student reading achievement in schools that implemented these practices without external funding or research team assistance in multiple states during the 2011–2012 school year. Compares data from an impact sample of 146 schools with 3 or more years of response-to-intervention implementation with data from a reference sample of 100 additional schools. Describes the intensity of services provided to groups at different reading levels in impact sample schools, specifically examining the impact of interventions on the reading achievement of students slightly below grade-level reading standards. Concludes that impact sample schools provided more support to students reading below grade-level than reference sample schools,
and that the impact of reading intervention practices on student achievement outcomes varied greatly across schools. Suggests that assignment to Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention services in impact sample schools had a negative effect on comprehensive reading assessment performance for first-grade students who scored just below the Tier 1 cut point on the screening assessment.


Examines word characteristics that predict word knowledge (absence of instruction) and word learning (response to instruction) in the domain of science. Analyzes pre- and post-assessments of vocabulary knowledge data from field studies and efficacy studies of integrated science-literacy curriculum units in second- to fourth-grade classrooms. Considers the predictive value of seven word characteristics (frequency, part of speech, polysemy, length, domain specificity, morphological frequency, and concreteness) for word knowledge and word learning. Finds evidence that frequency, polysemy, and word length were predictive of word knowledge, while frequency and polysemy explained vocabulary growth over the course of instruction. Concludes that understanding which word characteristics contribute to word difficulty may be useful in the selection of words for vocabulary instruction within the domain of science.


Describes a professional development course designed to assist teachers as they learn to implement text-based discussion to improve high school students’ text comprehension. Employs qualitative data analysis to detail the knowledge, practical skills, and reflection on experience demonstrated by participants as they progressed through the 10-week course. Teachers were categorized as: investing, striving, constrained, or contesting in areas of ability to (a) understand overarching ideas, (b) select important ideas, (c) convey knowledge of the content, and (d) construct thought-provoking prompts. Findings suggest that professional development focused on text-based discussions should foster understandings that (a) text-based discussion is distinct from other ways of interacting with text, (b) disciplinary knowledge facilitates planning and discussion, (c) text-based discussion requires investigation into the subject, and d) text-based discussion takes practice.


Studies think-aloud verbal protocols in 620 students in grades 7, 9, and 11. Students were randomly assigned to read either two narrative texts or two informational texts. One text was at the student’s reading level (accessible) and one text was above reading level (challenging). Researchers analyzed for inferences, generalizations, paraphrases, verbatim text repetitions, and monitoring. Findings show several differences between adequate and poor comprehenders based on text difficulty and genre. Poor comprehenders scored lower in inference/paraphrasing and monitoring than adequate comprehenders and struggled more with informational texts than narrative texts. Adequate comprehenders made fewer inferences when reading challenging narrative texts versus accessible narrative texts, but made the same number of inferences when reading accessible or challenging informational texts.


Identifies reading strategies that middle school teachers from four disciplines (social studies, math, science, language arts) utilize while reading in their discipline and choose to embed in their teaching. Uses descriptive case study methodology, inductive strategy, and constant comparative analysis to analyze team meeting field notes, teacher and student interviews, classroom
observations, and samples of student work. Describes discipline-specific reading strategies identified and included in instruction by each participant teacher. Finds evidence that teachers emphasized both general reading strategies (e.g., making connections) and discipline-specific reading strategies. Concludes that disciplinary teachers ought to be positioned as experts in their field and, as such, supported in their exploration and discovery of disciplinary reading strategies to be embedded in their teaching.


Documents significant word knowledge growth in 240 four- and five-year-olds using book reading and book-related play. Repeated readings of two books occurred in small groups of three children. Ten Tier 2 words from each book were explicitly taught in context. Words were identified in the text and defined by the teacher, a gesture reinforcing the meaning of each word was taught, and an example of the word’s use in another context was given. Pretests and posttests were administered individually by intervention specialists. Results indicate that concrete nouns and verbs were more easily learned than abstract nouns and adjectives. Synonyms and contextual information were learned for all types of words, but functional information was learned best for concrete nouns. Gestures aided in verb learning.


Examines a middle school language arts instructional framework designed to both respond to students’ identities as readers and foster the development of reading skills. Utilizes formative experiment methodologies to understand instructional practices in an authentic classroom environment. Describes how a teacher introduced a counter-discourse about identity by both prompting students to consider who they wanted to be as readers and providing input for how they might accomplish their goals. Finds evidence of shifts in students’ perceptions about the role and importance of reading level across the school year. Concludes that the instructional framework served to disrupt students’ typical thoughts about reading in school by framing traditional approaches to instruction in terms of what students could accomplish as readers.


Uses Cultural Historical Activity Theory to frame the experience of four eighth-grade English classes reorganized to prioritize engaged reading through extended reading time, high-interest material, and student choice. Over four years, teaching moved from an individualistic to a collective focus and the system expanded to include collective activity with more fluid boundaries and distributed resources. Evolution of relationships mediated the transformation of the system as a whole, including changes in rules, spacial arrangements, and divisions of labor. Books and discourse mediated emotion and relationships in communal transformative engagement with reading. As initial goals shifted to include relational and personal consequences of engagement, rules, divisions of labor, mediating artifacts, and new goals transformed the object of the activity from teaching language arts to including issues of power and identity. This study expands collective definitions regarding literacy, in that engaged reading holds promise as a transformative act of meaning making and cultural and personal evolution.


Examines the effectiveness of a 3-week summer program designed to reduce summer setback in reading in first- through seventh-graders. Compares pre- and post-measures of oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and reading attitudes in program participants, and compares
Annotated Bibliography

measures of oral reading fluency and reading attitudes of program participants with those of nonparticipant peers. Finds evidence that participation in the summer reading program yielded significant increases in students’ oral reading fluency and reading comprehension, while nonparticipating students demonstrated a decline in oral reading fluency from spring to fall. Concludes that differentiated, evidence-based explicit reading instruction and the use of diverse, engaging reading materials contributed to participants’ growth in oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and reading attitudes.


Examines how the relation of text-reading fluency to reading comprehension changes over time. Discusses differences between text-reading fluency and word-reading fluency as they relate to reading comprehension. Finds word-reading fluency and text-reading fluency to be separable skills and seeks to explain the differences through relations among emergent literacy skills, higher-order thinking skills, and grammatical knowledge as they relate to text-reading fluency and word-reading fluency. Suggests that text-reading fluency mediates word-reading fluency and comprehension, and text-reading fluency and reading comprehension have a reciprocal relationship.


Investigates seventh graders’ processing of illustrated science text through eye-tracking methodology on both first-pass and second-pass readings. Explores comprehension of illustrated text that requires integration of verbal and graphical information. Integration of pictorial elements was determined through transitions from text to graphic and from graphic to text. Learning outcomes were measured using verbal recall, graphical recall, factual knowledge, and transfer of knowledge, considering individual characteristics of comprehension, prior knowledge, and self-concept as factors. Cluster analysis revealed eye-movement patterns leading to processing of verbal and graphical information. First-pass readings included more time spent on text and on the overall graphic, whereas during second-pass readings, readers spent more time shifting between text and graphics. Regression analysis indicates that eye-movement patterns typical of second-pass readings uniquely predict verbal and graphical recall, deeper learning, and transfer of knowledge. Eye-movement patterns from first-pass readings did not predict any of the outcome measures. Provides evidence that integrative processing of multimedia texts leading to knowledge retention and transfer is associated primarily with second-pass readings.


Examines the differences between first-grade students who began Reading Recovery in the fall and ended the year reading at grade level and students who received the intervention but did not reach grade level. Finds that strategic use of only contextual information decreased for both groups, while the combined use of graphical information with contextual information increased. Differences between the groups were identified based on how many attempts students made to decode words. Students who did not reach grade level made errors and kept reading ("single actions"), while the other group made multiple attempts to decode words, demonstrating monitoring and self-correction ("action chains"). More growth in the sophistication and flexibility of problem-solving strategies was also observed in the group that attained grade-level proficiency by the end of the year.

Aims to establish third-grade students’ reading performances on texts of varying length and levels of complexity. Utilizes multivariate statistics to determine relationships among text length, text complexity, and comprehension. Findings suggest that text length is a factor in students’ comprehension in an assessment context. Identifies semantic/word and mean sentence length as variables to consider when using second-generation readability formulas to determine text complexity, and suggests that text factors such as genre, content, and style be taken into consideration when determining text levels. Calls for research exploring how third graders in high-poverty urban schools respond to increased levels of text complexity, particularly in relation to student proficiency rankings. Emphasizes the importance of interpretation and leadership in communicating results from Common Core State Standards–aligned assessments.


Seeks to better understand how poor readers can be helped to learn the reading skills necessary to read middle school history texts through an intervention named Building Reading Interventions Designed for General Education Subjects (BRIDGES). Studies whether BRIDGES reading instruction improved knowledge of historical content and how teachers viewed the feasibility of BRIDGES instructional routines. The design-based research included three instructional cycles: (a) reading multisyllabic words, (b) teaching academic (history-focused) vocabulary, and (c) identifying cause-and-effect relations in history content. Results showed growth during the BRIDGES intervention on measures of both reading and history content knowledge. Although teachers recognized the validity of teaching students how to read history content, they were resistant to changing instructional methods to include key reading strategies.


Describes a longitudinal study examining the performance of 99 Dutch upper-elementary-grade students on measures of phoneme deletion (segmental phonology) and text-reading prosody (suprasegmental phonology) to determine their connection to reading comprehension. Individually administered assessments included a decoding task, phonological awareness tasks, and text-reading prosody assessment. Comprehension assessments were administered to the whole group by the classroom teacher and included two cloze-format tests and one informational text passage, followed by multiple-choice and true/false questions. Finds that both phonological awareness and prosody independently contributed to students’ comprehension.

Other Related Research


Annotated Bibliography


Second Language Literacy

*The section on second language literacy defines second language through a lens that centers the language use and acquisition of languages of multilingual learners of additional dominant societal languages, and defines literacy through a lens of multimodal literacies. Broadly, it attempts to include underrepresented populations, in particular adult learners with interrupted access to formal education and print literacy acquisition. Highlighted articles consider how attention to translanguaging, identities and critical literacies in curricula, pedagogies, teacher development, policies, and program designs affect opportunities for expansive language and literacy use and acquisition. (Jenna Cushing-Leubner, Lead Contributor)*

learners through retrospective think-alouds in order to dispel the common assumption that long-term English language learners have limited reading abilities, and to provide an alternative conceptualization of their linguistic background. Using a sociocultural perspective—specifically, literacy-as-social-practice—the author examined long-term English language learners’ meaning construction through biology and English language arts texts during one-on-one sessions. The participants were capable of summarizing and identifying important information, making connections to background knowledge (either to content area and/or self), and going beyond the text by providing opinions and inferences. Moreover, these students were able to recognize limitations as they vocalized difficulty with comprehension, asked themselves questions, and requested assistance from the author. The author critiques the lack of examination of nonlanguage factors that affect reading comprehension. Pedagogically, the author calls for the development of “reading stamina” by creating literacy opportunities to interact with meaningful and purposeful texts that connect with long-term English language learners’ background knowledge while building strong interpersonal relationships at schools.


Examines the use of “negotiated voice” in instruction and text production of multilingual students. Utilizes the construct of voice within a framework of interactive negotiation between the reader and writer, in which both are an amalgam of identity, awareness, subjectivity, and role, and in which the text becomes the negotiation space. Through a case study of an adult Japanese student in a teacher education course that focused on the use of literacy autobiographies, the author uses an ecological model approach to analyze the trajectory of one adult multilingual as she engages with both the classroom ecology and the pedagogical affordances of dialogic negotiation of voice. The author analyzes this trajectory across identity, role, subjectivity, awareness, and amalgamated voice. Recommendations for writing instruction of multilingual students include allowing dialogic negotiation of texts throughout the writing process that involves self-reflection on one’s own literacy development, fostering intellectual interactions with classmates around text creation, and encouraging students to utilize ecological resources outside of what the teacher provides in the classroom. Throughout, the author considers how his own biases and preconceptions played out in his interactions as the student-participant’s instructor, and how they informed his reading of her use of pedagogical affordances and her positioning and repositioning throughout her trajectory.


Considers the use of identity texts, particularly among First Nations and transnational-background youth, in relationship with identity affirmation, literacy engagement, and school achievement. Drawing on previous empirical studies, defines identity texts as describing expressions, projections, and re-creations of identity, and taking shape as multimodal texts, intended for external audiences. Argues that identity texts can be used for engagement with and attainment of literacy goals through their use as scaffolds, to activate and build background knowledge, to affirm often-marginalized social identities, and to extend learner language. Uses qualitative methods to provide and analyze numerous examples of student-created multimodal identity texts from multiple school sites. Suggests that student engagement with identity texts supports bilingual and biliteracy development, higher-order thinking and intellectual interactions, creativity and imagination, student knowledge generation, and the creation of solutions to social issues.


Explores how multilingual teens in English-dominant settings independently translanguage to make sense of school and achieve their goals. Highlights the translanguaging practices of four
transnational, multilingual teens in high school and middle school. Shows that teens’ agentive uses of translanguaging were productive in supporting students’ academic development (note-taking, independent reading, clarification of content) and connecting students to larger goals and communities beyond the classroom. Connects these practices to implications for practice in secondary schools. Suggests that teachers must begin to implement translanguaging pedagogies that encourage the development of the full range of students’ linguistic resources.


Analyzes the entrance essays of students enrolled in Spanish-as-heritage-language classes and examines their characteristics and practices using quantitative methods. Students displayed transfer from English to Spanish (code-switching, loans, calques, and lexical creations) at levels lower than 5%. Using Halliday’s lexical density scale, finds that the writing samples showed an overuse of Level 1 lexical features (92.9%), demonstrating a lack of lexical sophistication and variation. Recommends a more comprehensive approach to vocabulary teaching and a shift away from traditional techniques and pedagogy.


Uses qualitative methods and classroom observation to examine instructional practices for analyzing advertising and developing media literacy among multilingual learners of English as an additional language. A range of media and technology were used throughout a 12-lesson, 4-week unit on media literacy, with a focus on print advertising and visual imagery. Instructional strategies included cloze techniques, question generation, using critical questions to analyze ads, and collaborative writing of multimedia texts. Suggests that doing critical media literacy work with multilingual learners of English provides access to discourse communities of considerable power in contemporary society. Recommends structuring media inquiry to support students in applying the lenses of race, class, and gender to discuss both intended/unintended and explicit/ implicit messages, as well as how advertisements are received across multiple audiences and intersecting identities. Finds that time constraints, teacher discomfort with inquiry practices, ad choice, and instructor discomfort with applying critical lenses of race/class/gender can all negatively influence effectiveness.


Uses an intervention experiment to explore the reading–writing connection in second-language literacy. Middle school learners of English as a foreign language (N = 300) in South Korea were assigned to one of three treatments as part of their regular English curriculum once per week for an academic year: extensive reading, extensive writing, or extended regular instruction (control). Pretests and posttests were employed to measure change in reading comprehension and descriptive writing performance. Results indicated that all groups showed significant growth in reading comprehension and descriptive writing (except writing control) and did not differ statistically. Also, only the students with higher English proficiency experienced a significant improvement in writing performance. Suggests that an individual can learn to read by writing as well as by reading and can learn to write by reading as well as by writing, as reading and writing involve some of the same subprocesses. For writing, the reading–writing connection seems more evident for second-language learners whose language proficiency exceeds a certain linguistic threshold.

Evaluates the effects of P-SELL, a science curricular and professional development intervention for fifth-grade students with a focus on English language learners, using a randomized controlled trial design with 33 treatment and 33 control schools across three school districts in one state. The P-SELL curriculum adopts a standards-based and inquiry-oriented approach and addresses the learning needs of ELLs through use of their first language, connection of science concepts to prior knowledge, and multiple modes of representation in textual and graphical formats. Finds significant and meaningfully sized intervention effects on a researcher-developed science assessment and the state science assessment. Provides evidence that an intervention that promotes science inquiry and language development for ELLs can be scaled up, can be implemented across varied educational settings, and results in improvements for all students.

Menken, K., & Solorza, C. (2015). Principals as linchpins in bilingual education: The need for prepared school leaders. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 18*, 676–697. Compares the language ideologies and educational trajectories of school leaders who implement language policies for and against bilingual education in New York. Through a qualitative methodology, the selected leaders from elementary, middle, and high school (N = 17) provided the authors with a better understanding of the characteristics of both sets of participants. The main characteristics of leaders implementing English-only policies included: no formal academic preparation for, or understanding of, the needs of ELL students; a misperception of the development of L1 as a hindrance for academic achievement; and a misperception of bilingual learning and teaching as cost/time inefficiency. The leaders in favor of bilingual education—whose administration preparation included issues surrounding the education of emergent bilinguals—placed priority on ELLs’ needs and strengths over assessment and accountability pressures. Calls for mandatory preparation on bilingual education and bilingualism for school leaders as part of their administration licensure and further professional development.

Palmer, D. K., & Henderson, K. I. (2016). Dual language bilingual education placement practices: Educator discourses about emergent bilingual students in two program types. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 10*, 17–30. Explores the language ideologies behind placement practices in dual-language bilingual education programs and the long-term consequences of such decisions. Uses interactional sociolinguistics and critical discourse analysis to examine the discourses of teachers and administrators with regard to two dual-language strands: two-way dual language and one-way dual language. Shows deliberate and selective placement of excelling students in the two-way dual-language strand; these students were assigned “high” identities compared with the participants in the one-way dual-language strand. Highlights the need for teachers’ input during decision making in the placement and implementation process.

Park, J. Y. (2016). “He didn’t add more evidence”: Using historical graphic novels to develop language learners’ disciplinary literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 60*, 35–43. Uses ethnographic methods to analyze how seven teenaged multilingual girls in an after-school program for newcomers interacted with six historical graphic novels. Primary data included 61 transcripts of participant discussions and interviews with six participants. Primary findings showed that the girls cultivated a strong sense of historical literacy. Participants came to view history as a collection of personal accounts, signaled understanding of sourcing in historical texts, questioned (mis)representations in historical texts, grappled with epistemology and differing approaches to constructing history, and expressed empathy across group identities. Findings suggest that reading and discussing historical graphic novels resulted in the development of capacities for academic reading, along with discipline-specific historical literacy practices including citing and providing sources, inquiry into author bias, examining (mis)representations, and considering how certain interpretations of past events become legitimized as history. Argues that for recently arrived multilingual learners of English, reading historical graphic novels can
nurture disciplinary literacy by engendering an understanding that history is composed of human accounts, which fosters historical thinking.


Considers the multiple literacy practices of Karen families in school, at home, and in the context of a family ESL literacy program through a case study. Examines and highlights the literacy practices of three Karen refugee families, particularly women, in the US Midwest. Addresses the scarcity of research focusing on the displaced Karen people, whose representation in schools outside of Myanmar continues to increase. Organizes findings around four central themes: the use of memorization; a range of collective participation and communal supports to complete literacy and school tasks; a focus on developing second-language speaking skills over print literacy (including utilizing read-alouds and recitations to improve speaking skills); and an expressed interest in computer technologies and a need to use them for entertainment, as a way to access US media, and as a learning and job resource. Implications include the primacy of communal supports over individualized learning structures, as well as a need to expand and dimensionalize research involving language and literacy practices of underrepresented diaspora and refugee communities.


Investigates whether young students’ early reading abilities in their first language predict later literacy development in a second language, through a study of 87 Hong Kong students learning English who were tested annually in the first through fourth grades. Finds that Chinese word-reading fluency, rapid digit naming, and rhyme awareness at age 7 were significant concurrent and longitudinal predictors of English word reading, as well as text-level reading and writing skills across ages 7–10. Students who showed word-reading difficulties in Chinese in first grade also performed more poorly in English reading and related cognitive tasks later on, especially phonological tasks. Provides evidence for the cross-language transfer of cognitive-linguistic abilities between two distinctly different orthographies. Implies that language skills, such as phonological awareness and fluency, developed in the L1 should facilitate the learning of a new language.


Explores the literacy practices of multilingual learners of English when they were asked to create multimodal texts in the form of short videos focused on issues of sustainability and social study. Utilizes ethnographic case study and theories of materiality to analyze collaborative literacy practices in the creation of digital video texts and how materiality theories can serve as a lens to understand how multilingual learners of English engage in digital literacy activities. Youth produced the following texts: storyboards, scripts, subtitled videos, discussions about sense-making in documentary storytelling, explorations of the meanings of sustainability and social justice, and approaches to reporting information. Draws on material theory and uses video excerpts (subtitled screenshots with accompanying transcripts) to examine how people interact with different materials to engage in tasks. Challenges language and literacy educators and researchers to resist viewing language and literacy as external to human experiences, and instead to adopt an assemblage understanding of people, activities, materials, languages, and literacies. Recommends that educators embrace more abstract ideas of what counts as “literacy” and pay attention to how learners naturally use and request varying material resources to engage with literacy practices.
Worthy, J., Nuñez, I., & Espinoza, K. (2016). “Wow, I get to choose now!” Bilingualism and biliteracy development from childhood to young adulthood. Bilingual Research Journal, 39, 20–34. Follows up on an ethnographic study started 13 years ago, which explored the Spanish language maintenance of a young bilingual woman who had been enrolled in a transitional bilingual program in fifth grade. Merges the original study with new data gathered through interviews and analysis of the woman’s social media to examine the literacy practices, language ideologies, and influences that allowed her to maintain Spanish as an important means of communication. The principal influences on this maintenance were the connection between transnationalism and literacy through social media (i.e., Facebook), and the cultivation of relationships with Spanish speakers in both the United States and Mexico. Despite the prominent place of English in her social life, the participant made a conscious decision to develop Spanish language skills, which was pivotal in her maintenance of the language. The participant also displayed bilingual linguistic practices, such as code-switching and language brokering. While most of the influences on Spanish language maintenance appeared to be non-school-related, the participant was enrolled in bilingual classes in elementary school and Spanish classes in her adolescence. Calls for more nuanced and multidimensional longitudinal studies in language maintenance over time.

Other Related Research


DeCapua, A. (2016). Reaching students with limited or interrupted formal education through culturally responsive teaching. Language and Linguistics Compass, 10, 225–237.


Annotated Bibliography


Writing

*Articles selected for the Writing section of the 2016 RTE annotated bibliography represent a range of grade levels, from primary to college, and topics, from writing strategies to writing assessment, as well as both face-to-face and online instructional contexts. Three of the selected studies are national surveys focused on the writing strategies teachers implement in their classrooms, while other studies represent important qualitative research in writing classrooms related to student identities. Trends in writing research this year indicate an emphasis on argumentation and persuasive writing in response to the writing goals of the Common Core State Standards. (Jessica Dockter Tierney, Lead Contributor)*


Investigates how writing proficiency is related to students’ flexible use of narrative elements in prompt-based essays. Participants were 16-year-old high school students (*N* = 45) who received a 3-week-long training in writing essays. Each student wrote 16 essays during the training. Students’ writing proficiency was assessed at pretest and posttest. The narrativity of students’ training essays was assessed using automated text analysis tools. Finds that skilled writers were more flexible in their use of narrativity across the 16 essays, whereas less skilled writers tended to be more consistent (inflexible) in the degree to which they used narrative elements. Suggests that assessments should incorporate more than one writing task to be able to take writing flexibility into account.


Investigates how students perceived teachers’ oral screencast feedback in eight courses: five in first-year writing and three in upper-division social sciences. Reports results of a survey of all 141 students enrolled in these courses, as well as interviews of the 17 who volunteered to provide additional data. Through inductive typological analysis, finds that oral screencast feedback was perceived to be positive overall because of its role in “facework”: facilitating personal connections, encouraging transparency about grades, revealing teachers’ feelings, providing visual affirmation, and setting a conversational tone. Concludes by emphasizing how such feedback may benefit students and teachers alike.

Examines the affordances of think-aloud protocol as a diagnostic assessment tool to improve teacher assessment of writing through a study of 5 ninth- and tenth-grade teachers (2 ESL, 3 ELA) and 15 students from an urban school district. Draws on teacher interviews about current assessment practices, observation and recording of the think-aloud protocol in the moment, and follow-up interviews with the teachers. Codes data using three major themes—student traits, aspects of the writing process, and features of the written product—and examines teacher inferences to determine whether teachers identified a strength or challenge within the three themes. Finds that teachers made more inferences about student writing using the think-aloud protocol assessment and that teachers were more focused on student performance and less focused on comprehensive traits like intelligence or engagement. Reveals that think-aloud activities and assessment can help teachers uncover student writing struggles.


Reports the results of a national survey of a random sample of teachers in grades 3 and 4 (N = 157), which inquired about their use of evidence-based writing practices, their preparation to teach writing, and their beliefs about writing. Finds that teachers spent only 15 minutes a day teaching writing, while their students spent only 25 minutes a day at school writing; that teachers used a variety of evidence-based writing practices, but infrequently; and that 3 out of every 4 teachers felt teacher preparation programs provided little or no instruction on how to teach writing. A majority of teachers felt positive about teaching writing and asked students to write complex texts with relative frequency for narrative, informative, and persuasive purposes. Concludes that teachers who indicated they were better prepared and more positive about teaching writing were more likely to use evidence-based practices, spend time teaching writing, and ask their students to write more.


Explores the development of writing teacher identity in preservice teachers and how their student teaching experiences affect these identities and pedagogical decisions. Includes data on 21 preservice elementary school teachers in a teacher education program. Researchers surveyed participants at the beginning of the term, analyzed participant course work, and conducted individual interviews. Reveals that several factors affect writing teacher identity and that the participants’ identities were shaped and challenged by the disconnect between the college and K–12 school settings. Suggests the need for preservice teachers to discuss, experience, and reflect on the differences between theory/best practices and the current practice of highly structured, test-focused writing instruction.


Examines links between essay quality, text elaboration, and text cohesion. Analyzes ratings of essays written by 35 freshman students on two different prompts, before and after students had 15 additional minutes to elaborate on the original text, and before and after an expert modified the original and elaborated essays to increase cohesion. Finds that increasing text content through elaboration and improving cohesion both led to higher scores of writing quality by expert raters, and a combination of both elaboration and improved cohesion led to higher scores than increased cohesion or elaboration alone. Concludes that techniques of elaboration and cohesion should be taught as writing strategies to student writers.

Examines the relationship of dialogic formative assessment between students and teachers with the development of interim academic literacies/writing. Includes 4 lecturers and 13 first-year students in the Department of Dental Sciences at a university in postapartheid South Africa. Utilizes participatory action research to encourage collaboration in the form of formative feedback between teachers, students, and additional literacy staff. Analyzes data collected through workshops, focus groups, interviews, and student photo-presentations using activity theory and morphogenetic realist theory. Finds tensions between student and lecturer identities during the formative process, as well as institutional and contextual tensions that affect perceptions of feedback for both students and teachers.


Examines young children’s practices of argument writing during a 6-week unit that was part of a yearlong ethnographic study of “writing time” in a first-grade class. Uses feminist epistemologies to understand how children drew upon embodied knowledge to make normative claims about social justice issues. Highlights the interrelationship between features of argument, the premises of the genre, and children’s lived experiences. Finds that their social locations and resources composed an alternative rationality that young children drew upon when composing arguments. Proposes a continuum of argumentation from dominant rationality (i.e., detached, abstract, and disinterested) to alternative rationality (i.e., embodied, collaborative, experiential, and critical).


Explores how primary-grade teachers adapt writing instruction for struggling writers, with an eye toward the Common Core State Standards. Describes a survey of 125 first- through third-grade teachers selected by a stratified random sample, focusing on four areas: the teachers’ demographic information and their perceptions of the acceptability, frequency, and efficacy of 20 classroom adaptations. Finds that most teachers reported providing extra encouragement for struggling writers daily, and extra time to complete composition assignments weekly or monthly. Also finds that time constraints, more than perceived efficacy, predicted the adaptations that teachers reported using. Underlines the need to replicate the survey findings and determine additional factors that predict teachers’ classroom adaptations.


Describes a meta-analysis of 32 experimental and quasi-experimental writing intervention studies for beginning writers in the upper grades of elementary school. Finds that the most effective interventions to improve students’ writing in grades 4 to 6 were goal setting (ES = 2.03), strategy instruction (0.96), text structure instruction (0.76), feedback (0.88), and peer assistance (0.59). Grammar instruction and the process approach yielded negative results. Concludes that further research is needed on how to implement interventions effectively in elementary classrooms.


Examines how students’ writing improved during an intervention focused on developing argumentive skill through extended peer dialogues on challenging topics. Participants were 38 sixth- and seventh-grade students at one urban public middle school. Students’ individual essays were analyzed for the type of arguments used. Finds that students’ writing progressed during the intervention. Concludes that dialogic communication may facilitate the development of students’ argumentive writing.

Explores the variations between students’ and teachers’ readings of rubrics in a first-year writing program at a medium-sized state university. Describes a mixed-methods research study designed to identify discrepancies between students’ and teachers’ interpretation of rubrics and how mismatches influence the use of rubrics and affect student writing. Finds significant differences between how faculty and students applied a rubric to a sample student paper for an end-of-course assessment, and shows that instructors rated consistently while students did not. Calls for more simplified rubric language and classroom norming sessions where students rate sample papers.


Reports on the first phase of the Revisualizing Composition project, a response to Yancey’s call to investigate the ways that university students write today. Details results of a survey of 2,110 first-year students at seven institutions (completion rate: 65%), who were asked what writing they did most, what writing they valued most, and what writing technologies they deployed. Analyzes the survey responses with Fisher’s exact test and a chi-square test. Notes some significant (p ≤ 0.05) differences between genders, and identifies both conventional and flexible writing practices, such as the use of cell phones in composing academic papers. Emphasizes the social and rhetorical contexts of these practices, and encourages further inquiry into students’ writing lives, ways to update composition pedagogy, and the research benefits of network technologies.


Examines the writing lives and practices of two adolescent girls through individual case studies. Using a sociocultural lens of literacy, researchers gathered observations, interviews, and samples of school-based writing and personal writing completed outside of school. Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method and findings of the cross-case analysis revealed that both girls used personal writing as an outlet of expression to discuss their relationships with their mothers, and although the girls did not have much formal writing instruction in school, they sometimes engaged in personal writing within the school context. Reveals the need for writing instruction that engages students and connects to personal interests. Also highlights the need for educators to understand that writing is a useful means of communication and an outlet for adolescents.


Reports results of a national survey of middle school teachers (grades 6–9) from across the United States about their use of writing to support students’ learning in English language arts, social studies, and science classes. Finds that a majority of teachers applied 15 or more writing-to-learn strategies (e.g., writing short answers, note taking for reading and listening, and completing worksheets) at least once a month or more, but that teachers received minimal or no preparation on how to use writing-to-learn strategies, few teachers directly taught students how to use the assigned strategies, and the most commonly used writing-to-learn strategies did not require students to think deeply about the material. Concludes that teachers need more preparation on how to use writing-to-learn strategies, particularly those aligned with the writing goals of the Common Core State Standards.
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Investigates primary-grade teachers’ theoretical beliefs about writing instruction, and whether these beliefs are related to their self-reported classroom practices and to students’ writing outcomes. Participants included 28 elementary school teachers in one school district, and their students in grades 1 to 3 (N = 323). Teachers’ beliefs about writing instruction and their classroom practice were assessed using questionnaires, and students’ writing performance was assessed with various writing measures. Finds that the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practices varied by grade level, and that teachers’ beliefs did not predict student outcomes. Concludes that teachers are one, but not the only, contributing factor to student writing success.

Other Related Research


Farinosi, M., Lim, C., & Roll, J. (2016). Book or screen, pen or keyboard? A cross-cultural sociological analysis of writing and reading habits basing on Germany, Italy and the UK. *Telematics and Informatics*, 33, 410–421.


Stockwell, R. (2016). Creative play: Welcoming students into a community of practice in creative writing through a participatory action research project. *New Writing*, 1–12.


