READ

An Online Journal for Literacy Educators

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EDITOR'S NOTE...

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Dear Readers,

The READ Editorial Team wants to thank all who submitted a manuscript!!

We hope you enjoy reading the second issue of this journal. The theme for this issue is:
Literacy in a Multilingual Context.

The theme for the **December 2016** publication is: **Globalizing Digital Literacies**. The deadline to submit for the December publication is October 1, 2016.

Please go to the website to review submission guidelines:
https://www.shsu.edu/academics/language-literacy-and-special- populations/read-journal/

We look forward to reading your manuscript!

Sincerely,

READ Editorial Team!!

READ Journal Highlights

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Welcome to the second issue of the *READ, an Online Journal for Literacy Educators*. The theme of this issue is **Literacy in a Multilingual Context**. Such a theme can't be more relevant as our world is more interconnected than ever before. Language is the main vehicle that help us communicate and stay connected. Today, teachers need to be prepared to work with children and families from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds including children with special learning needs. As I read the articles in this issue, the recurrent theme throughout seems to emphasis the significant role teachers play as they plan and teach *all* children in today's schools.

With a focus on content curriculum and language, the first article **"Viewing Content Curriculum through the Lens of Language Acquisition: A Content Analysis"**, by Patricia Durham and Jacqueline Ingram presents an in-depth study to investigate whether literacy journals are supporting teaching content curriculum. Using a mixed method content analysis, the authors highlight the need to recognize literacy learning in the content areas as content in the language acquisition process.

Using a different approach in their article, **"A Multi-case Analyses of Pre-service and In-service Teachers Response to Coaching Techniques"**, Jennifer Stepp and Maria Peterson-Ahmad, study effective coaching models to improve instructional teaching strategies. Findings from their study suggest that only through a metacognitive process teachers develop the needed teaching strategies to teach all students. In addition, they emphasize that only by implementing the metacognitive process teachers will reflect on and learn the specific teaching strategies needed to teach multilingual students.

In their column, entitled **"*Jugar y Aprender* – Play and Learn: First Language Literacy and Parent Involvement"**, Mary Petron and Alma Vanegas-Contreras describe various games to promote the language and culture of Spanish speaking children. The authors recommend monolingual English speaking teachers to have the handout ready and involve Spanish speaking parents in their children's education.

In Laura Graves, Helen Dainty and Jane Baker's article titled, **"Dis-Alternative Stories: Disability Awareness, Teacher Preparation, and the Writing Process"**, they describe an assignment that pre-service teachers did and through reflection, they discovered the power of children's literature to change deficit perceptions on children with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELL).

In her quantitative study titled **"Sustained Effects of Participation in Imagination Library (IL)"**, Ann Harvey measures the outcomes of a program to promote language and reading in the homes of young children. The findings reveal that students enrolled in the IL program scored higher on various early literacy skills inventories than those not enrolled in the program. In conclusion, the author explains that the mission of the program is met by providing more books to young children and encouraging more emphasis on family reading time.

In his article, **"Diversity in Literature: Preparing Literacy Teachers for a Multicultural World"**, Antonio Causarano reviewed and discussed studies that support the systematic use of multicultural literature in the classroom. He also presented strategies to create a richer curriculum that fosters awareness of diversity and multiculturalism. In addition, he calls on literacy teachers to recognize the importance of providing students with multicultural literature as part of the curriculum.

Finally, Astrid Chio and Gloria Carter offer some excellent reviews of *Red Midnight* by Ben Mikaelsen and *Heart-Shaped Cookies* by David Rice, both of which present many emotional situations that will keep middle school and older readers hooked throughout the story.

I appreciate the opportunity to highlight the manuscripts featured in this issue and stay tune for the next issue in December 2016: **Globalizing Digital Literacies**.

Viewing Content Curriculum Through the Lens of Language Acquisition: A Content Analysis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether literacy journals are supporting teaching content curriculum as language acquisition. Articles from three literacy journals (N= 1648) during the years 2005-2015 were coded via mixed method content analysis. Articles with a focus on any aspect of content curriculum were initially selected. Further coding revealed articles that did not discuss forms of literacies (i.e. thinking, reading, writing, listening, and reading), articles that discussed one or more forms of literacies in relation to the content area(s), and articles that connected teaching content curriculum to language acquisition either explicitly or implicitly. The researchers support a belief that students should become fluent in the language of content as content is a language to be acquired; however findings from this study indicated that less than 1% of articles in the selected literacy journals related teaching content curriculum to language acquisition. Further research to include additional literacy journals as well as content specific journals is needed to explore the topic deeper.

Keywords: content area, content language acquisition, literacy, content analysis

Do we teach for the purpose of guiding learners to absorb facts to grow a knowledge base in and of itself, or do we teach for the purpose of guiding learners to communicate knowledge in society in and out of the classroom? Historically, content as curriculum knowledge in America emerged from the acquisition of languages. During the early 1900s when the word curriculum first entered the lexicon of American education, acquisition of knowledge paralleled the acquisition of language. From the 1892 report on Secondary School Studies, Charles Eliot outlined four main "curriculums" of study. There were Classical, Latin-Scientific, Modern Language, and Language Instruction. Each of these worked from the understanding that learning a language, be it foreign, modern, or ancient, was the vehicle learners used to apply the learning of curriculum (Pinar et. al., 2004, 70-78). Through the languages, "Teachers had to ensure continuity through each of the main subjects namely, language, science, history, and mathematics" (p. 76). Using the lens of these early theories of 'curriculum', learners were speakers of and for the curriculum using language to communicate philosophical understandings regarding the curriculum.

But alas, there is always another side

to the coin. As the word 'curriculum' was surfacing in the field of American education during the early 1900s, so too were theories about delivery of curriculum. Methods of curriculum emerged in a procedural context as education became generalized to a rapidly growing society. Hamilton (1990) claimed that, "This practical emphasis on procedure signals a shift in intellectual focus on the part of pedagogic reformers, from the ideal end-product of a classical education (the perfect orator) to classroom aids (textbooks, manuals and teaching drills)" (p. 23). Pinar et al.(2004) also reported the historical shift of curriculum away from the communicative abilities of the individual and towards becoming a vehicle to control the methods by which curriculum is taught as evidence of the increased emphasis on textbook-recitation as the main approach (p. 77).

Thus far, content curriculum has been discussed through historical perspectives as once relating to *an acquisition* of one or more languages, specifically of European, Latin, or ancient origin, as the vehicle for communicating learned knowledge. What is between those metaphorical lines is the relationship language develops between the learner and the content knowledge. In the 21st century, educators call that relationship *literacy*, or the ability to read, write, think, speak, listen, and view content for the purpose of communicating the philosophical relationship between learner and content. Haas, Durham and Williams (2015) refer to this as 'becoming fluent in the language of content' where content curriculum *is the language* acquired. By connecting content curriculum to the idea of content as language acquisition, interpretation is grounded in the individual and in how

fluent that individual is in the content language. When students are allowed to manipulate knowledge using the language of content, they become owners of this knowledge, discovering the personal connection as well as the interconnections of becoming speakers of the content, a notion somewhat returning back to the theories of classical education. By constructing meaning through the language, learners of a content discipline are expected to interact with and interpret text in its printed, visual, auditorial, and spoken form to communicate in the discourse community. This is a belief Varbelow (2013) supports as "curriculum is meaningless without the notion of communicative interpretation and interconnectedness" (p. 74).

This article will present perspectives currently supporting viewing content as language acquisitions, and sets out to answer the question of where content curriculum is in the 21st century. In what ways are we teaching content curriculum (curriculum other than the language arts) to support learners towards becoming critical consumers, users, and communicators of knowledge by learning the *language* of content? This article will try to shed light on this question by exploring how content curriculum is being advocated to educators through a content analysis of three peer-edited national literacy journals.

Content as language acquisition.

Literacy involves reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking. Gee (1989) calls these activities *social discourses* that are enacted to create situated understanding (e.g. understandings that are situational such as in science, math, social studies, etc.). Literacy

situated in the content areas then requires specialized ideas, concepts, vocabulary, and other ways of "thinking, believing, feeling, valuing, acting/doing and interacting in relation to people and things" (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007, p. 3) related to the content and specific to the situated community to which they belong (e.g. math, science, social studies, etc.). The acquisition, manipulation, and control of these discourses develops fluency in the language of content (Haas, Durham, & Williams, 2015).

In the content area of science, for example, Vygotsky (1962) related students' development of scientific concepts and scientific language to acquiring a foreign language as they require the same cognitive demands. Ideally, students of science become immersed in new science ideas while using new science language at the same time (Rincke, 2011) and identify *with* and *as* a scientist; thinking, speaking, reading, writing, and listening as a scientist would. The same could be said of any of the content areas. Wakefield (1999) looked closely at mathematics as a language noting the strong similarities between the two. Similarities such as written symbols (abstractions) representing ideas or images used to communicate, memorization of symbols and rules are required for success, meaning can change according to symbol order, encoding and decoding skills are required for meaning, translations and interpretations can offer alternative meanings, among others.

Gee (2004) has called for schools to adjust their perspective of literacy to extend past the established concentration of isolated instruction of reading and writing and towards its application to assist learners in acquiring a fluent academic language (referring to the content subject areas) through using the interconnected nature of various forms of literacy. His call for content language acquisition rests on the notion that academic language is to be considered a second language for learners- one that has its own structure and code to learn. Gee refers to the academic language as *social language* and defines this as a language that has established expectations and nuances, "[a] social language is a way of using language to enact a particular socially situated identity and carry out a particular socially situated activity. For example, there are ways of speaking and acting like a (specific type of) doctor … biologist, and so forth" (p. 14). As infants, learners begin to internalize the social language of their first language and continue to expand this knowledge during the primary grades. They will learn how to break the *social language code* as they pass through their years as well as through the interactions with language arts curriculum. By putting together the individual sounds and letters, learners will continue to bring meaning to the speaking, listening, reading, writing, and thinking aspects of that social language to become fluent producers and consumers of that language. Gee argues that academic language has this similar social language code to unlock, except rather than the sounds and letters it is the "grammatical patterns and styles of language (and their associated identities)" (p. 14).

Just as a first social language had both informal and formal guidance, learners need to be in a safe and accepting environment for them to try out, misuse, simulate, imitate, and effectively communicate with the oral and

written forms of the academic language. An academic language may carry similar characteristics of a social first language, but Gee (2004) claims that resistance to acquiring academic language fluency will occur unless the language can be situated in a meaningful context using the phrases and idiosyncrasies of that academic social language. Learners need to have meaningful authentic experiences to use the academic language. They also need to have intentional mentored instruction from those that have advanced experience in the academic language on the socially acceptable uses, terms, language patterns, and application for the academic language. Learners need to visualize and internalize what it sounds like and looks like to read, write, speak, think, and listen as an individual who owns the language. Only through these situated meanings can a learner become fluent producers and consumers of the academic language,

> When anyone is trying to speak or write, or listen or read, within a given social language [academic or content language] within a given Discourse, the crucial question becomes, What sorts of experiences (if any) --in terms of embodied practices and activities, including textual, conversational, and rhetorical ones -- has this person had that can anchor the situated meanings of the words and phrases of this social language? Otherwise, one is stuck with merely a general and verbal understanding (the sort that, unfortunately, often is re-

warded in school anyway) (Gee, 2004, p. 22).

Gee argues that classrooms need to simulate environments where learners can feel safe to speak and act like a mathematician (math), social scientist/historian (social studies), scientist (science), artist (art), kinesiology (physical education), musician (music), nurse/doctor (health), or any other content related subject area. Historically, American education once would have supported such an approach when education had a more classical stance and learners took command of the academic language. So, we once again return to our inquiry focus for this article... where are we now? In what ways are we teaching content curriculum (curriculum other than the language arts) to support learners towards becoming critical consumers, users, and communicators of knowledge by learning the *language* of content? Through a content analysis of three peer-edited national literacy journals, we try to shed light on this question by exploring how content curriculum is being advocated to educators.

Method

Content analysis, as defined by Berelson (1952), is a systematic and replicable method for creating condensed content categories from larger pieces of communication (e.g. verbal, visual, or written text) based on clearly stated rules of coding. The content analysis of written text, in this case journal articles, included both qualitative and quantitative approaches resulting in a mixed method design. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009) describe the following three typologies of

mixed method research: level of mixing (partially mixed or fully mixed), time orientation (concurrent or sequential), and emphasis of qualitative and quantitative approaches (equal status or dominant status). This study is classified as a partially mixed sequential dominant status design, noted as QUAL → quan (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009).

Procedures and sample selection.

The sample comprised three journals published between 2005-2015 that were selected for inclusion based on their relationship to literacy research and/or their focus on content area reading/literacy. The researchers developed the following qualitative criteria, enacted in a three-step process, for an article's inclusion. First, the abstracts of all of the articles from the selected journals (*N*=1648) were filtered by the two researchers for those that focused on teaching in the content areas. Next, the researchers separately identified whether each article supported teaching through one or more forms of literacies (i.e. reading, writing, speaking, listening, thinking). Finally, the articles were sifted by each of the researchers as to whether or not they connected learning in the content area(s) to language acquisition. The number of articles in each category were then quantitatively counted.

Data analysis.

Following disaggregation of the articles, the researchers compared their categorization and the respective codes as a means of inter-rater reliability. Specifically, codes for articles included those that discussed one or more content areas, but did not discuss literacy; articles that discussed literacies in relation to the content area(s); and articles that linked learning in the

content areas to language acquisition including the subcategories of manifest (i.e. directly stating the relationship of content area literacy to language acquisition) and latent (i.e. the relationship between content area literacy and language acquisition was implied and inferred from the text) content (Berg, 2008). The following excerpt from *A Framework for Supporting Scientific Language in Primary Grades* (Honig, 2010) exemplifies the manifest content analysis:

> My learning in this case was mediated by words: the language of biology determined how I organized my thinking about biology… Fluency with this language - the ability to flexibly read and write it - was necessary for me to excel in academic science settings. Science is constructed by particular routines of language, and students' access scientific ideas through language… Thus, students' success in the domain of science is necessarily linked to their fluency with this specialized discourse (p. 23).

Discussion of "the language of biology" and "fluency with this language" as well as success in science being "linked to [students'] fluency with [biology's] specialized discourse" clearly connect learning in the content area of science to acquiring a language.

An exemplar of the latent content analysis can be found in *Positioning Students in a New Lens: Art Historians, Readers, and*

Writers (Katz, 2013-14):

> In this unit, students were taking on a new identity - simultaneously positioned as art historians, readers, and writers as opposed to assuming the usual discourse of a struggling literacy student… As students engage in "talk" about the concepts and subject matter introduced, they were positioned as art historians (p.10).

Here, the author transmitted the implication that students assumed a new identity as well as a new discourse associated with that identity in the content area of art. The researchers inferred from the author's implication, that assuming the identity and discourse of an art historian would include thinking, speaking, reading, writing, and listening like an art historian, or *learning the content language* of an art historian.

Discrepancies between the researchers' categorizations were identified and resolved through deeper investigation and discussion of the abstract and, in some cases, the full article text. Descriptive analyses were used to report findings.

Results

The purpose of this inquiry was to uncover, through a content analysis, how three literacy journals published between 2005 and 2015 advocated teaching content curriculum (curriculum other than the language arts). Specifically, are the journals disseminating research supporting the teaching of content to support learners towards become critical consumers, users, and communicators of knowledge by learning the *language* of content?

Overall Journal Findings

Of the 1,648 total journal titles and abstracts reviewed, 71 articles were deemed to meet the established criteria. Of these 71 articles, five were categorized as supporting teaching content as a language to be learned. After an in depth review of these five articles, one meet the criteria of the 'manifest' category of explicitly connecting to the teaching of content as a process of language acquisition, and four were categorized as "latent" or implied and inferred that teaching content had a connection with learning a language. Additionally, 35 titles and abstracts discussed one or more forms of literacy in relation to the content area(s), and 31 titles and abstracts fit the criteria of discussing teaching one or more content areas, but did not discuss literacy approaches (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Journals reviewed.*
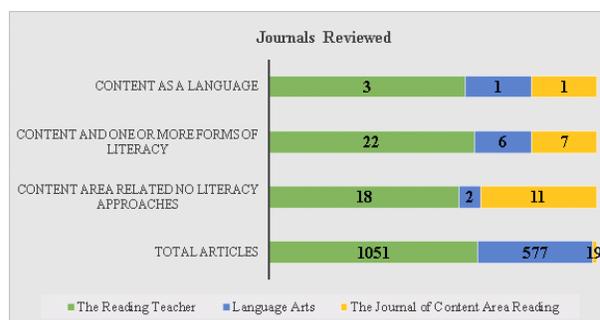
Individual Journal Findings

From the journal *The Reading Teacher*, 1,051 total titles and abstracts were reviewed with a total of 43 articles deemed to meet the criteria. Of these articles, three were categorized as supporting teaching con-

tent as a language to be learned. After in depth reviewing, one met the criteria of the 'manifest' category of explicitly connecting to the teaching of content as a process of language acquisition, and two were categorized as "latent" or implied and inferred that teaching content had a connection with learning a language. Additionally, 22 titles and abstracts discussed one or more forms of literacy in relation to the content area(s), and 18 titles and abstracts fit the criteria of discussing teaching one or more content areas, but did not discuss literacy. Of the three qualifying articles advocating content as language, Honig (2010) directly states that teaching content is teaching language acquisition. Her study focused on "the measurement and support of students' expressive fluency with scientific discourse, their ability to *use* the specialized vocabulary and language structure of science, specifically in writing"(p. 24). Honig advocated that a language rich classroom included opportunities for students to extend dialogue using the science language. For this to occur, students needed to have experiences to become fluent in the five literacies of speaking, thinking, reading, writing, and listening to science as a scientist, but they also needed to engage with the content as a scientist would. Honig's observations of classroom discourse included students discussing ideas and owning the linguistic and lexical aspects of the topic.

The two additional articles from *The Reading Teacher* supporting content as a language made a latent connection. While Honig (2010) made an explicit connection to science content as a learned language, Spencer and Guillaume (2006) had previously made connections to learning science through the acquisition

of its' vocabulary. For students to become engaged learners, they must possess the necessary vocabulary to communicate but also have opportunities to practice using the terms in meaningful situations to become part of their receptive and expressive vocabularies, "[s]ocial interaction, embedded at various points in the learning cycle, encourages exploring idea and using terms in meaningful conversations" (p. 210). Using this lens, it can be inferred and interpreted that vocabulary acquisition equates to meaningful content language.

In like manner, Soares and Wood (2010) stated that to become a young social scientist, students must be in environments which allow them to develop capacities to think, question, collaborate, and share content knowledge. It was implied that these environments should foster using the language of a social scientist to truly connect social content of the past to what is unfolding in the present, and use this connection to make social change for the future. For this to be successful, it can be interpreted that Soares and Wood advocate content as a language,"[t]he goal is for young learners to become more knowledgeable on important issues in their world and then to specifically connect their voice to critical issues… it is crucial that students be given opportunities to discuss, debate, and rewrite cultural narratives using their unique voices while becoming critically literate [in the content]" (p. 490).

When analyzing the *Language Arts* journal, 577 total titles and abstracts were reviewed with a total of nine articles deemed to meet the criteria. Of the nine articles, only

one was categorized as supporting teaching content as a language to be learned. After in depth reviewing, this article was categorized as "latent" or implied and inferred that teaching content had a connection with learning a language. Additionally, six titles and abstracts discussed one or more forms of literacy in relation to the content area(s), and two titles and abstracts fit the criteria of discussing teaching one or more content areas, but did not discuss literacy. In the article identified as having a latent connection to language acquisition, Mills, O'Keefe, Hass, and Johnson (2014) investigated collaborative inquiry enacted during citizen science projects. Rather than having students *learn about* math, science, social studies, reading, and writing, the authors proposed that students should *do* what mathematicians, scientists, social scientists, readers, and writers do. "In short, our kids learn how to read, write, and think mathematically, and they learn how to use reading, writing, and mathematics as tools for learning as young researchers in the sciences and social sciences" (p. 37), constructing rather than just consuming knowledge. Mills, et al. (2014) imply and we infer that as students assume the roles of researchers, they would be implementing the listening, speaking, thinking, reading, and writing literacies associated with science and social science, thus acquiring new languages related to these content areas.

The final journal reviewed was the *Journal of Content Area Reading*. Nineteen total titles and abstracts were reviewed with a total of 19 articles deemed to meet the criteria. Of the 19 articles, only one was categorized as supporting teaching content as a language to be learned. After in depth reviewing, this article was cate-

gorized as "latent" or implied and inferred that teaching content had a connection with learning a language. Additionally, seven titles and abstracts discussed one or more forms of literacy in relation to the content area(s), and 11 titles and abstracts fit the criteria of discussing teaching one or more content areas, but did not discuss literacy. From these articles, Katz (2013-2014) made a latent connection to teaching content as a language. She used the content of art history to design a platform for two struggling readers to improve on their reading and writing skills by taking on the role of art historians. Through the art content, these young art historians acquired a new language for 'art' as well as a new discourse community for the "talk" to be used, "both students became amateur art historians, learning a great deal about artists, art history, and "talking about art." They became participants in a new and valuable discourse" (p. 17). By combining multiple literacies, Katz designed an authentic inquiry-oriented classroom that extended out into museums and increased motivation for reading and writing through the 'talk' of art.

We set out, through a content analysis, to uncover how three literacy journals published between 2005 and 2015 advocate teaching content curriculum (curriculum other than the language arts). Out of 71 qualifying journal titles and abstracts, 49% of the articles supported teaching content with one or more forms of literacy to enhance the experience and develop content knowledge. We found that less than 1%, or one journal article explicitly and four implicitly, advocated the teaching of content to support learners

towards become critical consumers, users, and communicators of knowledge by learning the *language* of content (see Table 2).

Table 2. *Articles meeting the criteria of connecting content to the acquisition of language.*

Manifested or explicitly related to content as a language	Latent or implied and inferred connection to content as a language
Honig, S.L. (2010). A framework for supporting scientific language in primary grades. *The Reading Teacher, 64*, 23-32.	Mills, H., O'Keefe, C.H., & Johnson, S. (2014). Changing hearts, minds, and actions through collaborative inquiry. *Language Arts, 92,* 36-51.
	Katz, A. (2013-14). Positioning students in a new lens: Art historians, readers, and writers. *Journal of Content Area Reading, 10,* 7-28.
	Soares, L.B., & Wood, K. (2010). A critical literacy perspective for teaching and learning social studies. *The Reading Teacher, 63*(6), 486-494.
	Spencer, B.H., & Guillaume, A.M.(2006). Integrating curriculum through the learning cycle: Content-based reading and vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 60* (3), 206-219.

Discussion

The original focus of this inquiry was to uncover ways content curriculum (curriculum other than the language arts) is being viewed in three journals. Are they supporting practices that help learners move towards becoming critical consumers, users, and communicators of

knowledge by learning the *language* of content? Our attempts to shed light on these questions included exploring how teaching content curriculum is being advocated to educators through a content analysis of three peer-edited national literacy journals. With less than 1% of the journal articles explicitly or implicitly reporting on practices which teach content as language acquisition-- the straightforward answer is, no. These three journals are not supporting educators to use practices and theories that move the learner towards becoming critical consumers, users, and communicators of knowledge by learning the *language* of content.

With that said, of the less than 1%, we did find that this approach to teaching content as a language is being practiced in all five articles. Earlier in this article, we discussed Gee's (2004) theory that content language acquisition rests on the notion that academic language is to be considered a second language for learners- one that has its own structure and code to learn. To highlight this, both Honig (2010) and Spencer and Guillaume (2006) used their research to support such a claim as they both studied student's ability to *use* vocabulary acquisition and the structure of the academic language. Additionally, Gee (2004) claimed that resistance to acquiring academic language fluency will occur unless the language can be situated in a meaningful content using the phrases and idiosyncrasies of that academic social language. Again, while all five articles support these claims, we will use Katz (2013-2014) to highlight this as her study of inquiry-oriented classrooms allowed students to have a discourse

community for the "talk" of art. As mentioned earlier, Haas, Durham, & Williams, 2015) stated that acquisition, manipulation, and control of these discourses develops fluency in the language of content which is also supported in these articles. Finally, Gee argues that classrooms need to simulate environments where learners can feel safe to speak and act like a mathematician (math), social scientist/historian (social studies), scientist (science), artist (art), kinesiology (physical education), musician (music), nurse/doctor (health), or any other content related subject area. These articles supported this claim by engaging their students to become scientists, social scientists, and art historians.

We earlier defined content language acquisition as the ability to read, write, think, speak, listen, and view content for the purpose of communicating fluently the philosophical relationship between learner and content. While only five articles were found that made such a clear connection to this interpretation, the additional findings of the content analysis supports that this may be in practice, but not stating it as content language acquisition. There were 71 articles (49%) that met the criteria of using one or more forms of literacy with content learning. We can say, based on these numbers, that nearly half of the articles relating to teaching content curriculum for these three journals are disseminating research that supports combining content learning with multiple forms of literacies. Whether or not this approach is for the purpose of fluently communicating the philosophical relationship between learner and content could not be clarified in this analysis. What is very important to address is that while these articles

are advocating for the connection of multiple literacies and content knowledge, the criteria we used to categorize these articles initially indicated that this type of research is still disconnected from the language acquisition process of content learning, or the notion that there is a unique and separate social language structure that needs to be implicitly addressed for learners to truly become fluent in the language of content.

Conclusion and future implications.

This article set out to present various perspectives currently supporting viewing content as language acquisitions. We feel confident that our attempt to advance awareness for content language acquisition and how content curriculum is being advocated to educators has been fulfilled. Educators and researchers are indeed moving toward recognizing literacy learning in the content areas as content language acquisition, albeit somewhat slower than anticipated and not as explicitly; at least in the journals that were chosen for this investigation. With that said, this study only looked at three of the many literacy and language arts journals available and did not investigate content specific journals for math, science, social studies, etc. We propose further content analyses of additional language arts and literacy journals in order to broaden the scope to get a richer perspective of how journals are advocating teaching content curriculum. Content specific journals should be explored as they might contain a plethora of studies and articles that make a direct connection between learning in the content areas as language acquisition, per-

haps broadening the search to include 'multiliteracies'. These content specific journals could be the housing agent for research being conducted on content language acquisition. Further analysis looking into the audience for these articles on content language acquisition or content literacy would be beneficial. Do they favor secondary or elementary educators? We realize that a high school science teacher is less likely to subscribe to *The Reading Teacher*, a journal whose readership is typically preK-6 teachers, reading teachers, and/or English teachers, than they would be to read *Science Education*. In either of these research scenarios, it is evident that more collaboration between practitioners and researchers needs to occur to help extend theories such as those proposed by Gee (2004) and Haas, Durham, & Williams (2015) to develop academic or content language fluency in the classroom.

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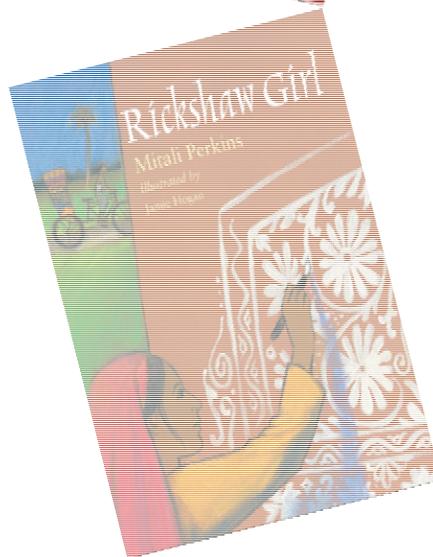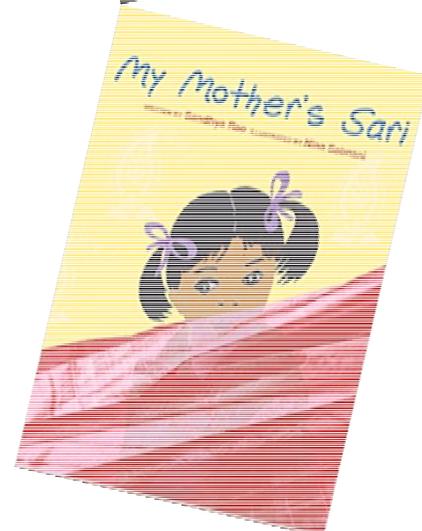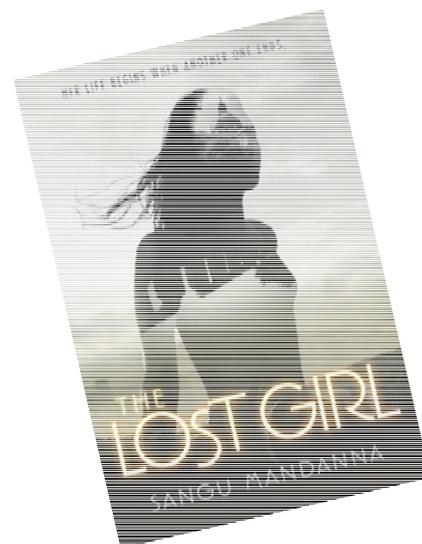
A Multi-Case Analyses of Pre-service and In-service Teachers Response to Coaching Techniques

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Abstract

This multi-case analysis investigates two separate studies that involve pre-service and in-service teachers. These studies aimed to seek effective coaching models to improve instructional teaching strategies. Data in both studies were triangulated to find common and emerging themes, validating the efficacy of coaching and the improvement of teaching practices. While there are many formats of providing high-quality coaching experiences to both pre-service and in-service teachers, this study utilized after-action review and instructional coaching methods. These studies examined opportunities in which both pre-service and in-service teachers were able to rethink teaching practices to trigger change in instructional practice by igniting a metacognitive process. It is through a metacognitive process that teachers refine past, present and future teaching strategies.

Key Words: after-action review, in-service teacher, instructional coaching, on-going professional development, reflective teaching, pre-service teacher

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, placed an emphasis on teacher quality, bringing the quest to accurately assess and improve education to the forefront (USDOE, 2011a). Improving teacher preparation programs is a common goal in American schools, as there is a growing need for teachers who can work effectively with students who have disabilities (Beare, Marshall, Torgerson, Tracz & Chiero, 2012), and meet the needs of diverse learners. This has emphasized the need for both pre-service and in-service to fully understand the content they teach, and the ability to refine their teaching approaches by reflecting on their teaching practices

Demand for heightened test scores over the past decade, have prompted professional development models to be at the forefront as an agent for initiating change in teacher pedagogy as a means to increase students outcomes. With an abundance of professional development models emerging in the United States, particularly with the push for teacher accountability, the United States public education system (federal, state, local)

have employed "coaches" as the active ingredient to encourage change in teacher pedagogy.

Coaching can be applied in various types of professional development models with both pre-service and in-service teachers to enhance the quality of education students receive in the classroom. Joyce and Showers (1981 & 1996) define coaches as 'master' educators who provide teachers with individualized guidance repeatedly over a period of several weeks, months, or even years.   According to researchers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Guskey & Huberman, 1995; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Joyce & Showers, 2002) who have discussed the need for reform in educational professional development models, there is a need to move away from 'brief' workshops and/or experiences, to more specific types of professional development models. However, it is relatively rare that pre-service and in-service teachers in the U.S. have access to such aforementioned professional development involvement (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009).

Increased Training and Professional Development

High quality professional development such as coaching is intended to provide opportunities of intensive learning and should take place for both pre-service and in-service teachers. By using a reflective teaching model with pre-service teachers, future educators are prepared for reflective professional development. It is through the reflection process that both pre-service and in-service teachers can refine current teaching practices.

Pre-service Teachers

The shortage of well-qualified special education teachers has been described as severe, chronic, and pervasive, and efforts to increase numbers of qualified special education teachers have largely been ineffective in the past two decades (Boe & Cook, 2006; McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). In combination with drastic reductions in school-based funding and growth in class sizes, special educators may seek balance between the demands of high stakes testing and accountability. Many school districts find it difficult to fill positions that require special education certification (Payne, 2005; Ashby, 2012). Continuing explanation of factors with possible influence on teacher shortage and attrition include absence of certification, adequate yearly progress (AYP), and novice teachers.

The ability to meet these heightened expectations for teacher performance is developed through strong preparation in pre-service special education teacher programs. Novice special educators with robust pre-service classroom preparation are more likely to remain in the field as opposed to those who do not have these types of experiences (Connelly & Graham, 2009). Preparation that encourages instructional change requires not only awareness of context and teaching practices but also an understanding of the varying contexts involved in the construction and appropriation of knowledge (Collet, 2012). This preparation also has the potential to heighten initial effectiveness and increase the likelihood of novice teachers staying on the job long enough to become more experienced and effective (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

When teachers new to the field leave before developing a solid repertoire of research-based teaching practices, students are exposed to a "continual parade of ineffective teachers" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 9).

Specialized instruction is designed to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities, particularly students with learning disabilities (LD) in the area of reading and Woolfolk-Hoy and Spero (2005) suggest that pre-service preparation experiences are key to the development of teacher efficacy (teachers' confidence in producing positive student learning) (Gao & Mager, 2011; King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). Multiple qualitative studies have discovered that individualization for students with reading disabilities "…was not widely reported" (Scruggs, Mastroperi, & McDuffie, 2007, p. 273). For pre-service teachers to gain proficiency or to successfully perform a task, they must first develop the requisite skills to successfully complete the task and possess confidence to effectively use these skills (Burton and Pace, n.d.). In general, teachers with a higher sense of self-efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have greater commitment to teaching, and are more likely to continue teaching (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1984; Hall, Burley, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1992; Coladarci, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; Trentham, Silvern, & Brogdon, 1985; Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1991; Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982).

It is possible that once pre-service teachers have increased knowledge of effective specialized instructional strategies and practices for students with disabilities, and feel increased confident in their teaching, their levels of self-efficacy levels will increase. However, as Forlin and Chambers (2011) pointed out, it is necessary for university teacher preparation programs to provide the skills and strategies to teach students with disabilities in the area of reading effectively. The extent to which beginning educators feel prepared to teach students with reading or other related disabilities impacts the quality and quantity of instruction that students are likely to receive (King-Sears, Carran, Dammann, & Arter, 2012; Dieker, Hynes, Hughes, & Smith, 2008; Lee, Patterson, & Vega, 2011). Therefore, it is imperative that programs deliver quality opportunities for preparation methods and development to adequately prepare pre-service special education teachers (Garland, 2012).

In-service Teachers

Professional development opportunities for teachers tend to lend themselves to one-day workshops on various topics that do not specifically relate to the teachers' classroom contexts or curriculum (Griffith, Ruan, Stepp, & Kimmel, 2014). The current research suggests that teacher professional development should be job-embedded, ongoing, and directly related to the challenges teachers face in daily classroom instruction (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007). As professional development models emerge it is important to understand key components that lead to successful ongoing professional development. Professional development models, either one-shot or ongoing, have a very similar goal to increase teachers' content knowledge and encourage best practices in the classroom. Joyce & Showers (1996) iden-

tify five kinds of professional development experiences: (1) theory, (2) demonstration, (3) practice, (4) feedback, and (5) in-class coaching that have contributed to the foundation of professional development models in education. Desimone's (2009) model has five core features of effective professional development echoing that of Joyce and Showers. Desimone's five features include content focus, collective participation, active learning, duration, and coherence (see Figure 1).
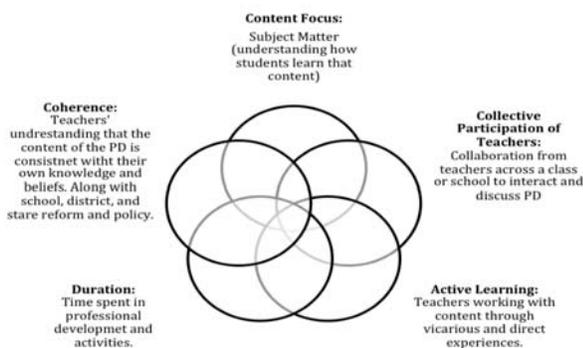

Figure 1. Five Features of Desimone's Effective Professional Development.

The uniqueness of Desimone's five features allows teachers the time to focus on content and gain understanding into how students learn the content. The features allow teachers the opportunity to collectively participate with other colleagues through active learning. It is through active learning that teachers have vicarious and direct experiences with content. Vicarious experiences might include watching videos of expert teachers. Direct experiences incorporate discussion, classroom coaching, and reviewing student work embedded within and drawn from the classroom experience. Professional development that incorporates active learning is context specific and related to classroom instruction.

Professional Development Models

Creating high quality professional development models based on Desimones' (2009) five core features of effective professional development and the five key professional development experiences identified by Joyce and Showers (1996) suggest that the models have direct experiences to incorporate discussion, classroom coaching, and reviewing of student work (Griffith et al., 2014). In order to create an environment of high quality professional development, one must understand that teaching is a cognitive process. McVee, Dunsmore, and Gavelek (2005) explain that schema and other cognitive processes build on the knowledge one gains through social interactions to become embodied actions. For example, when an instructional coach works with a teacher it is a form of social interaction, and the new knowledge that is developed is manifested in the form of higher-level instruction. McVee et al. (2005) also suggest that knowledge is situated in the transaction between world and individual, and that the transactions are mediated by culturally and socially enacted practices. Therefore, professional development models that promote high preforming classrooms highlight the importance of cognitive process.

Vygotsky's general law of cultural development explains that schemas emerge from the social interactions between an individual and his or her environment (Vygotsky, 1978), employing that we function on two levels first at the social level and then at the individual level. Harré (Callucci, DeVoogt Van Lare, Yoon, & Boatright, 2010) drawing

on Vygotsky's theory developed a conceptual framework for how individuals develop through a social process. This process has been elaborated on and identified as Vygotsky Space through the works of various researchers (Callucci, et.al , 2010, McVee, Dunsmore & Gavelek, 2005). Vygotsky Space is a non-linear process of learning that may occur in any of the four quadrants identified by Callucci et al. (2010) and McVee et al. (2005). The four quadrants of Vygotsky Space are conventionalization (setting), appropriation (actions), transformation (private), and publication (new learning) (Callucci et al., 2010). The quadrants represent the space where individuals construct knowledge through social and internal experiences. Therefore, high quality professional development models need to allow for scaffolding between the four quadrants in order for individuals to cultivate growth.

Theories on Teaching Practice
Self-Efficacy

Bandura's research (1986, 1997) denoted self-efficacy as the concerns and judgments of how well one executed courses of action required when confronting prospective situations. Self-efficacy, developed through experience, includes experiences of mastering a task, social persuasion (where others tell an individual that he/she is good at something), identification with another seen as competent in the area, as well as the variable emotional and physiological state of the individual (Klassen, 2004). A teacher's self-efficacy is defined as a belief or judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or

unmotivated (Armor, et al., 1976). It is defined as one's feelings of personal competence for teaching in a classroom in which all students, regardless of ability, are educated together in common educational contexts (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001).

Beliefs and personal attitudes shape who teachers are as individuals and the types of decisions they make in the classroom. On a daily basis, teachers' attitudes influence a school's social environmental factors (Kaufman & Ring, 2011). Teachers' senses of efficacy have been connected to student outcomes such as achievement, motivation, and students' own sense of efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988; Armor, et al., 1976; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992;). Teachers' belief of efficacy is also related to their behavior in the classroom. Efficacy affects the effort they invest in teaching, the goals set, and levels of aspiration. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy tend to exhibit greater levels of planning and organization, are more open to new ideas, and more willing to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of students (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977; Guskey, 1988; Allinder, 1994). Beliefs in personal efficacy influence teachers' persistence when things do not go smoothly and their resilience when faced with setbacks.

An expectation of efficacy is the individual's conviction that he or she can orchestrate the necessary actions to perform a given task, while the outcome expectancy is the in-

dividual's estimation of the likely consequences of performing that task at the expected level of competence (Bandura, 1986). Educators who have high self-efficacy beliefs are educators who strongly believe their instructional actions will lead to desired educational outcomes for the learning of students with disabilities (King-Sears, Carran, Dammann, & Arter, 2012). Novice teachers are more likely to view students with disabilities in a negative manner and perceive them as less likely to achieve high educational standards than their experienced counterparts (Mariano-Lapidus, 2013).

Woolfolk-Hoy and Spero (2005) suggest that pre-service preparation experiences are key to the development of teacher efficacy, that is, teachers' confidence in producing positive student learning (Gao & Mager, 2011). For individuals to gain proficiency or to perform a task, they must first develop the requisite skills to successfully complete the task and possess confidence to effectively use these skills (Burton and Pace, 2009). Teachers with a higher sense of self-efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have greater commitment to teaching, and are more likely to continue teaching (Allinder, 1994; Guskey, 1984; Hall, Burley, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1992; Coladarci, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; Trentham, Silvern, & Brogdon, 1985; Burley, Hall, Villeme, & Brockmeier, 1991; Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982). It is possible that once pre-service teachers have increased knowledge of specialized instructional practices, explicit instruction while teaching students in combination with mentor coaching (after-action review), and increase their confidence in teaching, their levels of self-efficacy levels will increase. Forlin and Chambers

(2011) reiterate the fact that it is absolutely necessary for university teacher preparation programs to provide the skills and strategies that enhance personal efficacy and enable pre-service special educators to instruct students with disabilities more effectively.

Coaching and the Vygotsky space.

Vygotsky's general law of cultural development explains that schemas emerge from the social interactions between an individual and his environment (Vygotsky, 1979), employing that we function on two levels, first at the social level and then at the individual level. Drawing on Vygotsky's theory, Harré (cited in Callucci et.al., 2010) developed a conceptual framework for how individuals develop through a social process. This process has been elaborated on and identified as Vygotsky Space through the works of various researchers (Callucci et.al., 2010, & McVee et.at. 2005). Vygotsky Space is a non-linear process of learning that may occur in any of the four quadrants of Vygotsky Space (Callucci et.al. 2010 & McVee et.al.,2005). The four quadrants of Vygotsky Space are conventionalization (setting), appropriation (actions), transformation (private), and publication (new learning) (Callucci et al., 2010). The quadrants represent the space where individuals construct knowledge through social and internal experiences (See Figure 2).
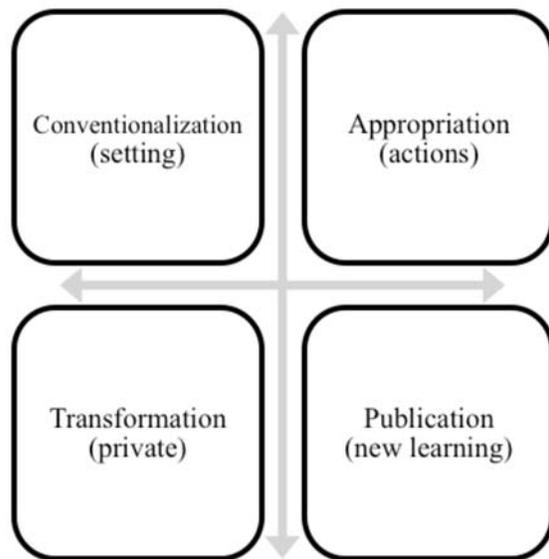
Figure 2. Vygotsky Space. (Note: Adapted from McVee et.al , 2005)

Instructional coaching is a social interaction that allows individual schemes to emerge through the environment. The techniques used by the instructional coaches of this study (i.e., collaboration, relationship building, active coaching cycles, digital technologies, and reflective questioning) are discussed in relation to Vygotsky's Space. Instructional coaches use collaboration to create a team learning community. The team learning community is the foundation for all coaching experiences because coaching is a partnership between both the coach and the teacher. It is through collaboration that the coach creates a safe environment (conventionalization) for teachers to develop and strengthen their individual schemata about teaching. Coaches establish collaboration by building relationships with the teachers. The relationships set boundaries and expectations for coaching cycles. This also aids in the establishment of safe learning environments. Collaboration and relationships are the foundational blocks for successful coaching sessions.

When the coach has established a safe learning environment he or she can begin the coaching cycles. The coaching cycles are established so that the teacher has an active role in the process. One of the four quadrants of Vygotsky's Space is appropriation (actions). This quadrant is what allows the individual to be actively involved on both the social level and the individual level of schema building. Through coaching cycles the coach and teacher work together to address best teaching practices. An active coaching cycle begins with a "pre-conference". During the pre-conference the coaching lesson is outlined with the roles and responsibilities of both the coach and teacher identified, and what and how the lesson will be taught delineated. The coaching lesson is then taught by either the teacher, coach, or by co-teaching. Regardless of who is teaching, both the teacher and coach have action related responsibilities during the lesson (see Table 1). It is through action that an individual can grow on both social and individual levels (transformation and publication). The active coaching cycles provide this opportunity for teacher growth.

Table 1. *Action Related Responsibilities for an Effective Coach When Observing a Lesson*

Observation	Coach observes the teacher teaching and highlights areas of the lesson to discuss with the teacher.
Demonstration	Coach teachers a lesson using specific teaching strategies and the teacher observes and takes notes for discussion during the follow-up.
Co-Teaching	The coach and teacher both share a role in teaching the lesson.

Using digital technologies throughout a coaching cycle can also provide a mechanism for coaches to discuss teaching pedagogy with teachers. Audio and/or video recordings place the coach and teacher back into the lesson that was taught. By using digital technologies in this capacity both the coach and teacher are able to identify areas of the lesson that they would like to expand on or refine. Reviewing a video or listening to an audio recording takes place during the follow-up conference, the final step in a coaching cycle. During this follow-up, coaches used reflective questioning to generate a thinking process for the teacher that demonstrated both transformational (private) and publication (new learning) quadrants of Vygotsky Space. Based on the techniques used in the coaching cycles, teachers exposed to high quality coaching models are given the opportunity to learn on

both the social and individual levels and among all four quadrants of Vygotsky's Space.

Coaching As An Agent of Change

Many contributors in coaching may influence the final outcome of coaching and its correlation to a teacher's ability to implement new teaching strategies and increase student outcomes. As students construct knowledge, so do teachers. Therefore, coaches have to be aware of the construction of knowledge in order to provide the rich coaching experience for teachers to transform their teaching practices. Various types of coaching such as after-action review and instructional coaching are used to implement improved teaching practices at both early childhood and secondary levels.

After-Action Review

After action review consists of a professional conversation discussing success as well as areas of needed improvement for future performance. It can be used to further develop pre-service special education experiences by developing an early disposition of collaboration and continuous improvement, and to enable individual reflection on teaching experiences and to understand why interim objectives were or were not accomplished. After-action review also encourages pre-service special education teachers to understand what lessons can be drawn from their past experiences, and how to evaluate these lessons to improve performance (Baird, Holland, & Deacon, 1999; Britton & Anderson, 2010).

Ellis and Davidi (2005) emphasized

three functions that after-action reviews serve: self-explanation, data verification, and feedback (see Figure 3). After-action review is an effective tool for increasing learners' self-efficacy; the rationale being that it helped learners make sense of their past behavior by creating valid cognitive models of reasons for whether their performance was successful (Ellis, Mendel, & Nir, 2006). Thus, after- action review may also boost self-efficacy by fostering appraisals of performance for novice teachers. Additionally, after-action review assists learners in identifying more internal and specific causes of behavior, which lead to a greater sense of control and accountability, and a more accurate model of their performance (Ellis, et al., 2006).

Figure 3. Three major functions of after-action review.

According to Collet (2012), instructional change required not only awareness of content and practices, but also more importantly, an understanding of the contexts involved in the construction and appropriation of knowledge. These experiences enabled pre-service teacher candidates to apply the knowledge they have learned in the college classroom in the context of real-world classrooms, thereby solidifying and deepening their understanding and skills in the teaching profession as well as providing contextualized professional development, creating opportunities of the construction of beliefs and prac-

tices to be grounded in teaching experiences (Collet, 2012; Britton & Anderson, 2010).

After-action review can supplement what pre-service teachers learn in pedagogical based classes in a meaningful way. As pre-service special education teachers are challenged to view how their actions influence student outcomes, teacher preparation programs need to afford ample opportunities to practice skills and understand the consequences of their actions through reflection, conversations, and consideration of multiple viewpoints (Brent, Wheatly, & Thomson, 1996; I'Anson, Rodrigues, & Wilson, 2003; Miller, 2009). For after-action review to be the most effective, goals need to be clarified to ensure understanding and to minimize the gap between where pre-service special education teachers start and the ending goal (Hattie, 2012). Therefore, it is important for a pre-service teacher to be cognizant of what he or she already knows in order to articulate what he or she wants to learn. The effectiveness of the coaching program or after-action review is modulated by the clarity of the shared vision, the way individuals in the program experience change, and the quality of communication within the coaching relationship (Reinke, Sprick, & Knight, 2009).

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaches are placed in schools to construct leadership roles and to provide on-site, collaborative professional development addressing teachers' math, science, reading/writing knowledge, pedagogy, and curriculum in an effort to enhance instruction and improve student achievement (Campbell & Melkus, 2011). Therefore, ini-

tiating a metacognitive process for teachers is necessary to determine how curriculum and teaching strategies fit into their teaching styles. Also, teachers have to determine what is best practice for the current students they have in their classroom. Coaches have three important roles in order to carry out their work: (1) build a relationship, (2) have an adequate knowledge of content, and (3) act as a catalyst to initiate the metacognitive process of refining past, present, and future teaching strategies in teachers (Fisher, Frey, Nelson, 2012; & Elish-Piper, L'Allier, 2010).

With these three identified roles come many challenges for the coach that have not been addressed by literature (Callucci et al., 2010). If educators are to sustain a process of refining past, present, and future teaching strategies through a professional development model of instructional coaching three main targets are to be identified as the focus of the coaching. These include the support of leadership, focus on teacher knowledge, and implementation of new teaching strategies in the classroom. The coach reinforces this focus by applying technique, duration, and expertise of content. However, in order for instructional coaching to continue successfully in schools, there must be more research done that investigates several components limited in the findings of current coaching studies.

Changes can occur when coaching is used with teachers and schools, but the lack of investigation on specific coaching techniques and guidelines makes it difficult to pin point the link between coaching professional development models and teacher/student outcomes (Callucci et al., 2010). Marsh et al. (2010) did

find a small significant relationship between a coach's routine and duration and teacher/student growth in their study of coaches. Nowak (2003) states that coaching provides the additional support needed for teachers to implement various programs or practices. Nowak's idea of coaching is complemented by Poglinco, Bach, Hovde, Rosenblum, Saunders, and Supovitz (2003) who provide a good summary of coaching. Poglinco et al. (2003, pg 38) summarize coaching in the following way: "Coaching provides ongoing consistent support for the implementation of instruction components. It is nonthreatening and supportive-not evaluative."

Methodology
Study 1: Pre-service Teachers

This study utilized an exploratory mixed-methods design due to qualitative and quantitative data being collected simultaneously. Participants included eight (N=8) pre-service teachers. A pre- and post- data measure was completed titled the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), (also referred to as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale) (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001) by each participant and measured pre-service special education teachers' sense of self-efficacy. All participants had the opportunity to teach lesson on 5 separate occasions and were observed on their frequency of providing opportunities to respond within the virtual classroom environment. Types of opportunities to respond that were tallied in terms of frequency are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. *Types of Opportunities to Respond Collected Within the Virtual Classroom*

Academic	1. Questions verbatim from the lesson plan 2. Yes/no (close-ended) 3. Original (teacher made)
Management	
Behavioral	

Participants met with the researcher (coach) upon completion of each teaching session for immediate after-action review. The researcher spoke specifically on observations of opportunities to respond that were provided during the session and focused on observable areas of strength and weakness, specifically opportunities to respond and how further opportunities to respond could be conducted in future teaching sessions. Participants took information learned from each after-action review session with the researcher (coach) and were observed during subsequent sessions in the virtual teaching environment to see if the information was applied in their teaching practices.

Study 2: In-service Teachers

Instructional coaches used specific techniques to meet the objective of this professional development model. The coaches defined their techniques as flexible, but purposeful. They set up their coaching relationships as partnerships, because collaboration between the coach and team are key elements to having successful coaching sessions. Before a coach can begin to initiate a process of change, the coach has to establish a relationship with the faculty. They do this by gaining respect through active coaching cycles in which everyone has a role in the process. The active coaching cycles consist of observations, demonstration, and co-teaching lessons that lead to reflective conversations.

Although the coach's goal is to establish healthy professional relationships, they face challenges in the process. The identified challenges for these coaches were time, coaching objective, non-responsive teachers, and inconsistent roles. Time played a role in how much time the coach got to spend in follow-up conversations, when they would be able to set up a coaching cycle, and how the active coaching cycle would be carried out. Time is valuable to both parties, and coaches had to work to stay focused on coaching objectives. Staying focused on an objective became a challenge for coaches when they had to re-direct conversations or follow the lead of the teacher instead of staying on course. Not only did coaches face challenges with time and coaching objectives, but with non-responsive teachers as well. Non-responsive teachers were identified as resistant teachers who pushed against the instructional process. These teachers were consistently described as saying they do not need help, or they understood the new strategy they are being asked to use. They may have participated in team meetings, but not in one-on-one coaching cycles, which created a challenge for the coach in order to meet the teacher's goals. Non-responsive teachers are often the ones that need the most help, and the coach has to take any opportunity to build a relationship with

the teacher. In conjunction with the other three challenges coaches deal with is the challenge of inconsistent roles between the coaches and the agency or district. Because building administration has some authority over the instructional coaches, it is difficult to always fulfill the obligations set by the agency/district and building administration.

Each challenge faced by the coach was addressed by either support from administration or colleagues, critical conversations, and/or progress monitoring data. The coaches used their resources to address and conquer challenges. They indicated that by having support from their administration and colleagues they were able to have critical conversations to address concerns and issues with teachers. One way the coaches were able to address challenges was through discussion of data. Progress monitoring data were used as confirming and disconfirming information for instruction. Challenges emerged on a regular basis, but with options for addressing them the coaches felt they could face each challenge more effectively.

Through coaching techniques, the coach was able to provide teachers with the opportunity to rethink their teaching practices. The way coaches allowed teachers to do this was through reflection time and open-ended questions. Reflection time came from coaches allowing teachers to truly self-reflect on what and how teaching was occurring in the classroom. This happened because the coach asked the teacher open-ended questions to scaffold them through the reflection process. This reflection process impacted future instruction by motivating teachers to try new teaching strategies.

The process of rethinking impacted fu-ture teaching strategies by creating teachers who self-reflected on their own, establishing life learners, and igniting educational conversations throughout a building. Self-reflection was established through coach and teacher reflective discussion resulting in a personal perspective on teaching. By self-reflecting, teachers long to learn new strategies to form the best teaching practices they can for their students. Besides self-reflecting and being life learners, rethinking increased motivational educational experiences with teachers. The educational conversations changed the language used between the coach and teacher and teams of teachers. Instructional coaching is a process that includes several aspects, but when used effectively can have a significant impact on teaching.

Summary of Findings
Study 1: Pre-service Teachers

After action review was utilized with pre-service special education teachers to develop a disposition of collaboration and continuous improvement early, to reflect upon teaching experiences, and to understand why interim objectives were or were not accomplished (Baird, Holland, & Deacon, 1999; Britton & Anderson, 2010). Data collected from after-action review included conversation related to how to better incorporate opportunities to respond into their teaching. Data was coded using NVivo qualitative analysis software to investigate word frequency and for common themes among participants. 22% of coded data revealed that participants were focusing on specific things to change during their subsequent TeachLivE™ sessions, specific to

individualized student needs and teaching practices. 4% of participant responses discussed how they felt specifically in regards to things they wanted to do differently in regards to self-awareness as a teacher or in regards to teaching practices during their sessions (see Table 3).

Table 3
Pre-service Participant Responses Post- After-Action Review

Participant reflections on specific things to change:	*"Really started to see what each student was doing while we were discussing and I noticed things that they would do when I was speaking to them specifically"* *"I can see and feel the progress I am making in my responses to the students"*
Participant comments in regards to self-awareness:	*"I still have a feeling of missing something during the delivery of my lecture"* *"I was afraid if students asked questions that I could not answer I wouldn't know what to do"*

This qualitative data suggests that participants were deliberate in thinking about how to discuss and change their teaching practices in regards to delivery, content and classroom management practices. This also gleans light into the effectiveness of after-action review as participants continued to gain confidence, delivery of teaching the lesson, and their connection to each student over the course of the study.

SPSS quantitative analyses of pre- and post- *Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale* data were deemed inconclusive due to the small sample size (.08%) however, through triangulation of all data collectively (see Figure 4), major themes appeared in regards to the effectiveness of after-action review. 100% of participants N=8) rated themselves more efficacious in their teaching practices between pre- and post- scales. 50% of participants (N=4) made an overall increase in providing original types of opportunities to respond between the first and last virtual teaching session combined with after-action review. Coded qualitative data found that 17.43% of self-reflections stated positive words and phrases that were specific to teaching change and individualized student characteristics, while 21.81% coded specific teaching practices to change over the course of the virtual teaching sessions.
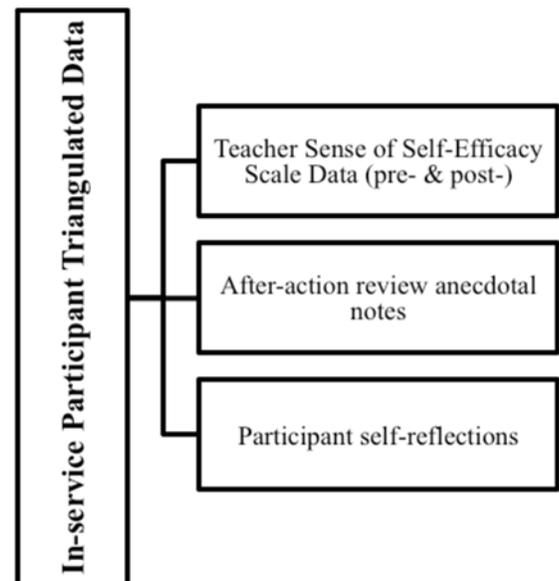

Figure 4. Pre-service participants triangulated data for analysis

This triangulation of data suggests

that all participants began to become mindful throughout each virtual teaching classroom session and really identify individual student characteristics, delineate self-teaching practices, and listen to feedback provided during each after-action review session. Through this data triangulation, it is expected that participants would continue to grow in terms of pedagogical teaching practices and self-efficacy should the continuation or replication of this study occur (see Figure 4).

Study 2- In-Service Professional Development (teachers and instructional coaches)

The participants involved in the five coaching relationships of this multi-case study were instructional coaches and teachers who came from two educational settings implementing coaching as an on-site professional development model. The two educational settings consisted of one public school district and one Head Start agency. The theoretical proposition method was used in data analysis, including specific practices of pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis to analyze the study evidence. Upon analysis of the data for each research question, patterns emerged which led to over-arching techniques/themes. Four data sources (interviews, reflection journals, observed coaching cycles, and teacher surveys) were collected. The interviews, journal prompts, observed coaching cycles, and the teacher surveys were triangulated between each research question (See Tables 3 & 4 for triangulated coaching analysis between the techniques/ themes).

Instructional coaches used specific techniques to meet the objective of this professional development model. The coaches defined their

techniques as flexible, but purposeful. They set up their coaching relationships as partnerships, because collaboration between the coach and team are key elements to having successful coaching sessions. Before a coach can begin to initiate a process of change, the coach has to establish a relationship with the faculty. They do this by gaining respect through active coaching cycles in which everyone has a role in the process. The active coaching cycles consist of observations, demonstration, and co-teaching lessons that lead to reflective conversations.

Although the coach's goal is to establish healthy professional relationships, they face challenges in the process. The identified challenges for these coaches were time, coaching objective, non-responsive teachers, and inconsistent roles. Time played a role in how much time the coach got to spend in follow-up conversations, when they would be able to set up a coaching cycle, and how the active coaching cycle would be carried out. Time is valuable to both parties, and coaches had to work to stay focused on coaching objectives. Staying focused on an objective became a challenge for coaches when they had to re-direct conversations or follow the lead of the teacher instead of staying on course. Not only did coaches face challenges with time and coaching objectives, but with non-responsive teachers as well.

Table 3. *Triangulated Coaching Analysis; In-service Participants*

Research Question/ Technique-Theme		Interviews	Observations	Reflective Coaching Journal	Teacher Survey
What coaching techniques do coaches use in various educational settings and why?					
	Collaboration	X			
	Relationship Building	X	X	X	X
	Instructional Rounds	X	X	X	
	Active Coaching Cycles	X	X	X	
	Digital Technologies	X	X	X	
	Reflective Questioning	X	X	X	
What challenges do coaches face?					
	Time	X	X	X	
	Distractions	X	X	X	
	Non-responsive Teachers	X		X	
	Inconsistent Role	X		X	
How do coaches address the identified challenges?					
	Support	X		X	
	Critical Conversation	X	X	X	
	Progress Monitoring Data	X	X	X	
What opportunities do coaches give teachers in order to rethink their teaching experience?					
	Reflection Time	X	X	X	X
	Open-ended Questions	X	X	X	
How does rethinking impact future teaching experiences?					
	Self-Reflective	X	X	X	X
	Life Learner	X		X	
	Educational Conversation	X	X		X

Table 4. *Themes Noted Between Participants*

Research Question	Techniques/Theme
What coaching techniques do coaches use in various education settings and why?	• Collaboration • Relationship Building • Instructional Rounds • Active Coaching Cycles • Digital Technologies • Reflective Questioning
What challenges do coaches face and why?	• Time • Distractions • Non Responsive Teachers • Inconsistent Role
How do coaches address the identified challenges?	• Support • Critical Conversation • Progress Monitoring Data
What opportunities do coaches give teachers in order to rethink their teaching experience?	• Reflection Time • Open-Ended Questions
How does rethinking impact future teaching experiences?	• Self-Reflective • Life Learner • Educational Conversation

Non-responsive teachers were identified as resistant teachers who pushed against the instructional process. These teachers were consistently described as saying they do not need help, or they understood the new strategy they are being asked to use. They may have participated in team meetings, but not in one-on-one coaching cycles, which created a challenge for the coach in order to meet the teacher's goals. Non-responsive teachers are often the ones that need the most help, and the coach has to take any opportunity to build a relationship with the teacher. In conjunction with the other three challenges coach's deal with is the challenge of inconsistent roles between the coaches and the agency or district. Because building administration has some authority over the instructional coaches, it is difficult to always fulfill the obligations set by the agency/district and building administration.

Each challenge faced by the coach was addressed by either support from administration or colleagues, critical conversations, and/or progress monitoring data. The coaches used their resources to address and conquer challenges. They indicated that by having support from their administration and colleagues they were able to have critical conversations to address concerns and issues with teachers. One way the coaches were able to address challenges was through discussion of data. Progress monitoring data were used as confirming and disconfirming information for instruction. Challenges emerged on a regular basis, but with options for addressing them the coaches felt they could face each challenge more effectively.

Through coaching techniques, the coach was able to provide teachers with the opportunity to rethink their teaching practices. The way coaches allowed teachers to do this was through reflection time and open-ended questions. Reflection time came from coaches allowing teachers to truly self-reflect on what and how teaching was occurring in the classroom. This happened because the coach asked the teacher open-ended questions to scaffold them through the reflection process. This reflection process impacted future instruction by motivating teachers to try new teaching strategies.

The process of rethinking impacted future teaching strategies by creating teachers who self-reflected on their own, establishing life learners, and igniting educational conversations throughout a building. Self-reflection was established through coach and teacher reflective discussion resulting in a personal perspective on teaching. By self-reflecting, teachers long to learn new strategies to form the best teaching practices they can for their students. Besides self-reflecting and being life learners, rethinking increased motivational educational experiences with teachers. The educational conversations changed the language used between the coach and teacher and teams of teachers. Instructional coaching is a process that includes several aspects, but when used effectively can have a significant impact on teaching.

Discussion

Pre-service special education teachers can benefit from coaching support during the process of improving teaching practices and after-action review can supplement what what they are learning in pedagogy classes in a mean-

ingful way. As pre-service special education teachers are challenged to view how their actions influence student outcomes, teacher preparation programs need to afford pre-service special education teachers ample opportunities to practice skills and understand the consequences of their actions through reflection, conversations, and consideration of multiple viewpoints (Brent, Wheatly, & Thomson, 1996; I'Anson, Rodrigues, & Wilson, 2003; Miller, 2009). For after-action review to be the most effective, goals need to be clarified to ensure understanding and to minimize the gap between where pre-service special education teachers start and the ending goal (Hattie, 2012). Therefore, it is important for a pre-service teacher to be cognizant of what he or she already knows in order to articulate what he or she wants to learn. The effectiveness of the coaching program or after-action review is modulated by the clarity of the shared vision, the way individuals in the program experience change, and the quality of communication within the coaching relationship (Reinke, Sprick, & Knight, 2009).

Coaching by the way of providing after-action review is indeed an effective tool that allows for increased reflection beyond current thinking processes and knowledge bases and allows for deliberation of varying pedagogical practices within a classroom. By providing individualized experiences and working on specific learning strategies that will enhance and promote effective teaching practices in a classroom such as specific teaching practices or classroom management strategies, educators are preparing teachers

who will be able to more effectively serve students in special education.

Pre-service teachers should develop a foundation for reflective teaching prior to becoming an in-service teacher. On going professional development models are means to this process. The models are called to change teacher practice and increase teacher knowledge with the hopes of increasing student outcomes. Joyce and Showers (1981) described the potential of coaching as a vehicle to transfer knowledge and skills learned by teachers in professional development into classroom practice. It is through a metacognitive process that coaches can initiate change in teacher practice through new knowledge.

Flavell (1979) defines metacognition as knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them, e.g., the learning-relevant properties of information or data. Flavell (1979) continues to define metacognition as the active monitoring and consequent regulation and orchestration of process in relation to the cognitive objects or units they bear, usually in the service of some concrete goal or objective. Therefore, metacognition is using self-regulatory monitoring during the cognitive state of constructing knowledge. As knowledge is constructed we (if given the skills/strategies) self-regulate to problem solve, to comprehend, and to communicate with one another.

The instructional coach provides teachers with opportunities to construct new knowledge by planning for reflection time and asking open-ended questions. Cognitive coaching identified by Matsumura et. al. (2009) supports the professional development of teachers

through a process of reflection. Instructional coaching, in this form, intends to create the types of sustained, instructionally focused collaborative interactions in schools that research and theory suggest are most effective for improving instructional quality.

It was through the reflection time that coaches guided teachers in self-regulating to problem solve or refine current teaching practices. During the reflection time, coaches used open-ended questioning to ignite an active monitoring of the teachers' own cognitive process as to why teaching strategies were used and how they impacted student outcomes. The open-ended questions also allowed the teachers to think through their own teaching practice, and how they would refine that practice to increase student outcomes. Coaches used specific questions to ignite this process. The questions coaches used were

- *Tell me what your expectations were for this coaching lesson?*
- *How do you feel/think the lesson went?*
- *What would you do differently?*
- *How can you apply this to your teaching?*
- *How are you feeling about the assessment data?*
- *What would you like help with as we move forward?*

According to Neuman and Wright (2009), the role of the coach is to be balanced and should sustain and facilitate a reflective teaching process. Reflection time embedded with open-ended questions was the foundation for the refining of teacher practice. It was

the reflection process that allowed the teachers to grow on an individual level, because coaching is an active process that creates learning opportunities for the teacher. As the teachers gained new knowledge about new teaching strategies, they expressed the desire to implement the strategies without hesitation. Implementing new teaching strategies impacted the way teachers approached new teaching experiences. Reflection gave the teachers the time to think about how they would use the new strategies to teach content skills and what would be needed to meet the needs of their students. Without reflection time and guided questions from an instructional coach, teachers may miss out on the opportunity to self-regulate teaching strategies used in their classrooms and provide best teaching practices for their students.

There is a proposed link between metacognition and instructional coaching, with instructional coaching being a link to sustain reflective teaching, and the implementation of new teaching strategies that meet the needs of students. Beyond being simply a link, the data in this study identified instructional coaching as the link that ignites metacognition in teacher practice.

The identified coaching techniques in this study describe an action-related process from both the coach and teacher. It is through this process that the coach begins to guide teachers through reflections to refine their teaching practices, which can address individualized learning differences in the classroom. One of the many learning differences teachers address are multilingual students. Multilingual students are unique and require specific instruction, which requires teachers having a strong toolbox in

which to teach from. It is through such coaching techniques that teachers can identify specific differences and continually refine teaching practices to meet the needs of the students they serve. Therefore, as a teacher begins to refine a teaching practice by self-regulating instruction, he/she displays motivation to change current practice by differentiation in instruction. By igniting a metacognitive process through coaching, both pre-service and in-service teachers have the ability to be agents of change in the classroom to address challenges they will incur in the classroom.

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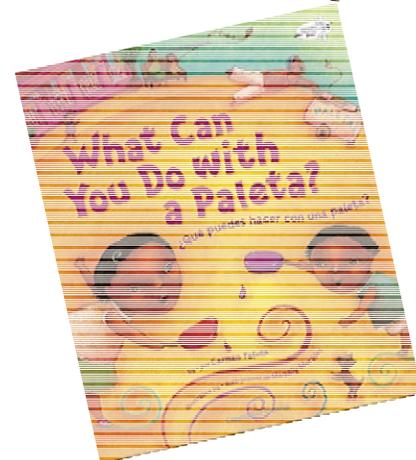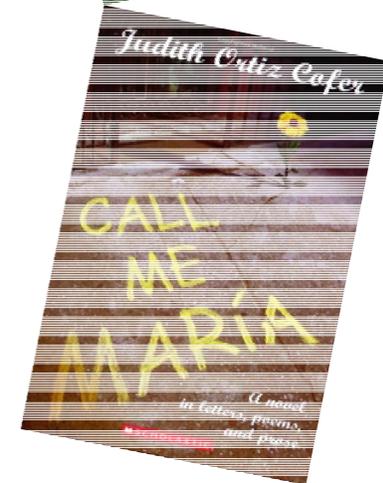
Dis-Alternative Stories: Disability Awareness, Teacher Preparation, and the Writing Process

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Abstract

Quality children's literature may facilitate the development of positive self-images for students with disabilities, for English language learners (ELL), and help with the development of acceptance and awareness among peers. This article describes the outcomes of a writing assignment in a teacher education course in which 35 undergraduate preservice teachers, studying special education or ELL, were challenged to rewrite familiar stories with disability or language-sensitive slants. Though this process was originally developed for students majoring in special education, the reading class was expanded to include students studying how to teach English language learners. Approximately 5 out of 35 students were ELL majors. These innovative stories were coined dis-alternative stories. An emphasis was placed on the writing process as the undergraduates moved through stages of the writing workshop while integrating positive attributes of specific disabilities or language issues for ELLs within the main characters of their stories. The preservice teachers' post-assignment reflections indicated their growth and awareness in three categories: the power of children's literature to change disabil-ity/ELL perceptions and increase acceptance, the value of writing workshop, and the empowerment and agency they felt as change agents.

Keywords: children's literature, disability awareness, English language learners, teacher agency, teacher preparation, writer's workshop

Students with disabilities need opportunities to see themselves in a positive light. Through accurate, realistic representations of disability, children's literature can facilitate changes in students' self-images. Wopperer (2011) stated, "Literature portraying characters with disabilities can help children and young adults develop the habit of reading for pleasure about characters like themselves, and it can support the development of personal power by portraying these characters as strong and believable" (p. 28). This mantra is also applicable to students who are English language learners as being a minority presents similar acceptance challenges. Additionally, accurate representations of disability in children's literature may develop other students' awareness, understanding, and ac-

ceptance of their peers with disabilities (Prater, Dyches, & Johnstun, 2006). Quality children's texts can serve as models to typically developing peers for how to interact with and understand the challenges of students with disabilities and those who have a language barrier.

This article describes an inventive writing task assigned to undergraduate preservice teachers enrolled in a special education literacy methods course. These disability-sensitive innovations on familiar stories are here called *dis-alternative stories*. The dis-alternative story assignment achieved many goals:

- To engage preservice teachers in critical examination of the representations of children with disabilities or language barriers in children's literature;
- To increase preservice teachers' empathy, critical consumption, and social awareness of disability representations;
- To engage preservice teachers in the writing process and writing workshop practice; and
- To unite preservice teachers' knowledge of disability with knowledge of effective teaching practices.

Before a description of the dis-alternative story assignment, a review of the power for children's literature to promote social change is needed.

Children's Literature and Social Change

Heffernan (2004) stated, "Instead of simply recording life events, critically literate readers and writers use text to get something done in the world" (p. viii). Children's literature may serve as a vehicle for social change by highlighting and shaping the relationships between individuals and social structures. Litera-

cy, both reading and writing, can be used as a tool to promote social change.

Characterization of individuals with special needs can either confirm biases or eliminate negative perceptions (Prater, Dyches & Johnstun, 2006; Williams, Inkster & Blaska, 2005). For example, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Littledale, 1980) may create or perpetuate inaccurate or negative images of little people with the portrayals of the characters Dopey, Sleepy and Bashful. But *My Friend with Autism* (Bishop, 2011) and *My Best Friend Will* (Lowell & Tuchel, 2005) promote awareness, understanding, and tolerance toward those who are different. By focusing on common experiences, both of these texts highlight similarities and explain differences between the two narrators and their friends with disabilities.

Stereotypes in children's literature can promote a misperception of reality for young minds. In reviews of texts that included characters with dyslexia and specific learning disabilities (LD), Altieri (2008) and Prater (2003) found most characters were portrayed as having low self-esteem and cognitive deficits. Characters with LD were often depicted with behavior issues, in non-inclusive classrooms, and as victims of teasing or bullying (Prater, 2003). In a review of children's books with characters with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Leininger, Dyches, Prater, Heath, and Bascom (2010) criticized seven out of seventeen bibliotherapy books due to static character development and negative depictions. These negative depictions could influence or reinforce readers' misperceptions toward individuals with OCD.

Diversity education may lead to acceptance of individuals with differences in the classroom. Maich and Belcher (2015) suggested practical guidelines for using children's picture books to promote acceptance of students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). These guidelines include 1) selecting picture books that depict contexts both in and out of school for acceptance and social awareness, 2) selecting picture books that inform peers about ASD without creating stereotypes, and 3) considering the books' pictorial representations and literary value. Maich and Blecher encouraged using picture books in the classroom to promote awareness and understanding for students with ASD among their peers. In this manner, children's literature is used to build awareness, understanding, and acceptance of others.

Bland and Gann (2013) also suggested evaluation guidelines for choosing inclusive picture books. They recommended choosing picture books that offer realistic and accurate portrayals of disability. Such depictions would not focus solely on a disability but rather present characters as well-rounded people. Further, Bland and Gann recommended that inclusive picture books portray multidimensional characters in typical everyday interactions honestly, positively, and respectfully.

Altieri (2008) also noted that educators choose high-quality fictional literature that portrays characters with special needs respectfully and inclusively. Interactions should be positive between the characters with and without special needs. Person-first language, which identifies the person as a person with a disability rather than a disabled person, is also desirable. According to *The Arc* (2014), "People with disabilities are—first and foremost—people who have individual abilities, interests, and needs" (para.1). Phrasing reflects attitudes and may create prejudice when a diagnostic term precedes and therefore defines a person. Contrary to disability-first language, person-first language helps prevent generalizations that may lead to stereotypes.

Gillanders, Castro and Franco (2014) discussed using culturally relevant books or units for English language learners when introducing and encouraging new vocabulary. Rewriting a familiar story and making the character an ELL may allow the child to identify with characters.

Composing Dis-Alternative Stories in a Literacy for Special Populations Methods Course

For the purpose of this article, *dis-alternative stories* are defined as familiar stories rewritten to include characters with disabilities or language barriers. A dis-alternative story project was assigned to undergraduate preservice teachers in a READ course titled: *Literacy for Special Populations.* Using a writer's workshop format, these preservice teachers reimagined familiar children's stories and composed *dis-alternative stories* by integrating characteristics of either language or disability in one or more characters. The primary purposes of the assignment were for undergraduate preservice teachers to apply knowledge of disabilities/language barriers and promote inclusion through children's literature. Another purpose was for them to experience writing workshop practices, including teacher demonstration, guided writing,

and independent writing, with the idea that these preservice teachers would apply these practices in their future classrooms.

First, the literacy class discussed the familiar story, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (Marshall, 1988). In groups, the preservice teachers analyzed the characters and story elements. The class then listened to the instructor read a mentor text, *Rolling Along with Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (Meyers, 1999), which is a dis-alternative story that features Baby Bear using a wheelchair. Throughout his house, Baby Bear uses assistive technologies that enable him to participate in everyday activities. Baby Bear befriends Goldilocks and explains to her how he uses his wheelchair and how physical therapy helps him gain strength. In class discussion, the preservice teachers compared the original story with the dis-alternative mentor text. They identified how the mentor text could be used to promote awareness, understanding, and acceptance of individuals with physical disabilities.

A writing workshop begins with teacher-led mini-lessons that directly teach the stylistic and conventional aspects of writing. Mini-lessons are followed by independent writing, peer revision, peer editing, and publishing/sharing (Roe & Ross, 2006). Using writer's workshop format, the undergraduate preservice teachers developed, drafted, and revised their dis-alternative stories. First, individual preservice teachers decided which familiar children's stories they were going to rewrite. Then each wrote a brief summary of the proposed dis-alternative story, including the title, main idea, characters, areas of need to be integrated into a character or characters, and possible resulting

modifications to the story. Preservice teachers shared their summaries in cooperative conferencing groups and generated and discussed further ideas (see Figure 1). As a group, the class discussed each proposal, providing additional feedback.

Hare always boasts of his speed abilities. Tortoise accepts a challenge to race Hare (other animals laugh) but is warned by his friend Frog to bring his inhaler and listen to his body to know if he needs a break. As the race begins, Tortoise pushes himself hard but Hare quickly takes a large lead. Tortoise begins to feel tired so he takes a break next to a tree where Frog is sitting (knows he needs to rest when tired). Hare looks back to see Tortoise resting and decides to take a nap before crossing the finish line. Tortoise begins to feel well again and continues his race. Hare wakes moments before Tortoise crosses the finish line. (other animals cheer).

Figure 1: **Summary Example for Tortoise and the Hare**

According to Essley, Rief, and Rocci (2008), storyboards "show students a clear path to text" (p. 11). Storyboards visually organize story elements; they trace the story's main events and signal the necessity for transitions. In class, the preservice teachers sketched and captioned events on sticky notes, which allowed the construction of storyboards with multiple sequence possibilities. Using the storyboards, the class conferred in small groups. Essley et al referred to these brainstorming, conferencing, and feedback

sessions using storyboards as telling-boards: "Using telling-boards as a visual focus for this group writing process, each writer tells his or her story and then shares it while listeners point out what they liked, ask questions, and offer suggestions" (Essley et al, 2008, p. 25). The listeners provided critical feedback to help improve each other's dis-alternative stories. As the preservice teachers progressed through the writing process and developed their ideas, they referred back to their manipulative storyboards (see figure 2).
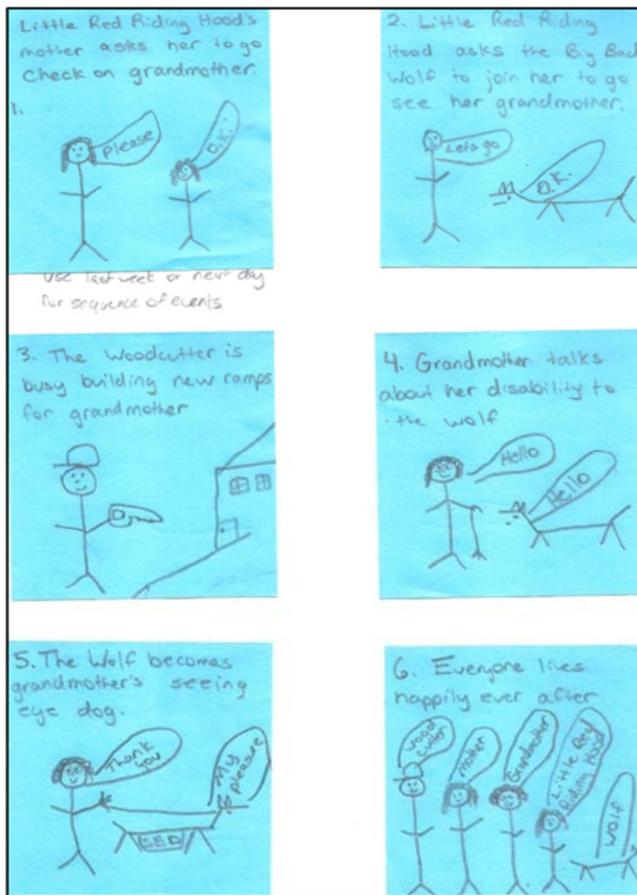
Figure 2: Sticky Note Storyboard Example for Peer Feedback

The preservice teachers shared their first drafts in one-on-one peer conference groups.

Peer conferencing enabled writers to identify what needed changing, "to tell what was good about the writing, and to get ideas and suggestions about the writing" (Roe & Ross, 2006, p. 321). The author read his/her story while the listener completed a response sheet detailing the following information: something I remember; something I did not expect or surprised me; a question I have or something that confused me; and a direct text-to-text connection to something I learned in my education courses (see Table 1). This response sheet was adapted from a critical reading response sheet developed by Heffernan (2004). The preservice teachers shared their stories in two separate one-on-one conference groups; this permitted multiple feedback opportunities.

Table 1: Peer Conference Response Sheet

Something I remember:	Something I did not expect or surprised
A question I have or something that confused me:	Text-to-text connection to something I learned in my courses:

*Adapted from Heffernan (2004)

After some revision, the preservice teachers were given two more opportunities for feedback. To be sure they were presenting positive views of area of need, the writers were directed to share only those portions of their stories that they felt needed more critical evaluation. This was especially important

since a primary goal of the assignment was to build awareness, understanding, and acceptance of individuals with disabilities/language barriers. One-to-one peer conferencing was utilized in much the same manner as previously discussed. Additionally, peer conferencing was used to identify editing issues related to grammar, punctuation, and style. The final edited dis-alternative stories were read aloud to the class in the author's chair and submitted to the professor.

Promoting Social Awareness with Dis-Alternative Stories

According to McLaughlin and DeVoogd (2004), critical literacy theory exposes the questionable features of texts, features such as the marginalization or the discounting of characters. By presenting alternative points of view and alternative voices in literature, critical literacy theorists assert that writers challenge readers' usual views and perspectives. In writing her dis-alternative story for *The Three Little Pigs*, Sarah chose to focus on the strength of each of the three little pigs. Keith, the youngest pig always wore a purple hat and red shoes and loved being outside in nature. Kevin, the middle brother, had trouble standing still and was active in sports. The oldest brother, Karl used a wheelchair and spent most of his time indoors studying. Karl was very smart; in fact his brothers called him "Pig Genius" and "Konald Krump." When the pigs' mother told the three brothers it was time to build their own homes she requested, Sarah wrote, "No matter what their houses looked like, they could be painted with flowers, the school mascot, or look like the Trump Towers in New York, she wanted them to all be wheelchair ac-

cessible and side by side." The three brothers followed their mother's request and used their skills to combat and defeat the big bad wolf. Each developed character dispelled helpless stereotypes for individuals with autism, ADHD and orthopedic disabilities. The pig brothers were self-sufficient yet relied on each other during difficult times. Readers can easily relate to the characters of this dis-alternative story.

Katie, another preservice teacher, rewrote *The Story of Ferdinand* (Leaf, 1964). In her dis-alternative story, she described Ferdinand as enjoying school especially science. The other cows and bulls did not know Ferdinand well because instead of playing with them during recess Ferdinand chose to sit and study flowers. Catalina, Ferdinand's friend, asked Ferdinand to help the other cows study for the science test on plants and flowers. When Ferdinand shared his passions with his classmates, they celebrated Ferdinand's unique gifts and qualities. With the school social setting, Katie was able to model social change within a community of learners toward a student with autism.

Two preservice students rewrote the familiar story, *Little Red Riding Hood* (Hyman, 1983). In one story, Little Red Riding Hood used a wheelchair and became stuck in the mud on her way to Grandmother's house. Jeremy, the wolf, came to her rescue. Jeremy explained he had no friends because of his appearance and all the children ran from him because they were scared. Little Red Riding Hood and Jeremy became close friends and helped each other to meet other friends. In the other story, Me-

gan's child came from Nicaragua to be closer to her Abuela (grandmother). In her story the lumberjack is bi-lingual and helps teach Poco Rojo (Little Red Riding Hood) English so she can speak the same language as the wolf.

Aleta rewrote the *Little Mermaid*. In her story the mermaid was from Denmark, arriving on the shores of Florida. She included both English and Danish words into the story such as: castle-slot; shoes-sko; Flounder-Skrubbe; and friendship- venskab!

Another rewrite was of the Ugly Duckling and entitled the Foreign Ducky. In this story Raj encounters other ducklings who are just like him, or so he thinks until he tries to communicate with them. Tommy, another duckling, is bi-lingual and teaches Raj all about the language and food in this new land.

Providing a positive representation of the characters, the writers were able to build understanding and acceptance for others. They also created opportunities for readers to relate to the story's characters by describing their everyday experiences and challenges.

Preservice Teachers' Perceptions of the Dis-Alternative Story Assignment

At the end of the course, the preservice teachers were asked to respond to four questions regarding the dis-alternative story assignment via an open-ended, online questionnaire. Participation in the questionnaire was optional and no identifying information was obtained. The questions included:

1. How has this assignment impacted your awareness, understanding, and acceptance of disabilities?
2. How will this assignment shape the ways

you choose or use children's literature in your own classroom?
3. How does this assignment influence the way you will implement the writing process in your own classroom?
4. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the dis-alternative story assignment or about representations of disability in children's literature?

Six undergraduate preservice teachers answered the on-line questionnaire and their responses were sorted into three general categories. These categories include: power of children's literature, writing workshop application, and teacher agency.

Power of Children's Literature

A common theme among respondents was the idea that children's literature in general, and dis-alternative stories in particular, have extraordinary opportunity to change disability perceptions and increase acceptance. One preservice teacher discussed the power children's literature has to impact social change:

> This assignment made me think of the lessons and virtues that literature can help me instill in my students to make them better individuals now and in the future.

In contrast, another respondent lamented the lack of positive representations of disability in children's literature:

> I think that there is a need for more books aimed towards children regarding disabilities. Literature that looks

at the characteristics and aspects of a disability, but also emphasizes the strengths of the individual is hard to find.

One respondent commented specifically on the power of the dis-alternative story to promote peer acceptance:

>I believe that if a teacher or another adult were to read these rewritten stories to a class it would promote overall peer acceptance, and it might also help the adult have a better understanding of how to be accepting and aware of the students/individuals they come into contact with.

One of the primary purposes of the dis-alternative story assignment was the promotion of inclusive attitudes through children's literature. By their questionnaire responses, the pre-service teachers indicated that they understand and appreciate the power of children's literature to impact change.

Writing Workshop Application

It was hypothesized that participation in the writing workshop format would prompt pre-service teachers to value the implementation of similar practices in their future classrooms. Comments from the respondents supported this hypothesis.

>The writers' workshops we used helped me make my story the best it could be. I will probably use writers' workshops with my future students to help with their writing. I also liked how we had multiple peer reviews.

I would love to give my students the same opportunity to have ownership in their writing. I will let my students work in an environment that does not restrict them so that their writing can flourish.

A few respondents discussed the peer conferencing aspect of writing workshop:

>This assignment made me aware of how important revisiting written components of text is and being open to suggestions and comments from outside sources. Working with students to create their own stories is not a one day task and should be carefully thought out and implemented in the classroom.

>I like the process of several peer revisions before turning in a complete written assignment. This allows for a final product that has been read by multiple eyes with multiple backgrounds.

The role of creativity in writing was also discussed:

>I hope to promote reading in my future classroom, but I also hope to promote creativity. I think that creative writing is a really important aspect to a child's education that sometimes goes overlooked. Through creative writing, such as this assignment, students are more apt to enjoy the writing process and practice it more fre-

quently.

Furthermore, this assignment has shown me that it's important to push students in their creativity; students can be encouraged to write about any and every uniqueness that people have. The old school storybooks don't include people who are different in any way. I want my students to know they can break the mold in their writing.

It is apparent the preservice teachers valued opportunities for creativity for both themselves and their future students.

Teacher Agency

Perhaps the most satisfying comments were those that indicated the preservice teachers felt empowered or inspired to enact change in their classrooms.

I think it showed me that I can shape a story into whatever I want to use it for. I can add disabilities and themes of acceptance and understanding to the already existing stories.

I think that this assignment showed me that we are capable as teachers of adapting and rewriting a text to make it include aspects of disability.

I loved this assignment and it made me aware of how easily I can incorporate such components of awareness and acceptance in my classroom.

The preservice teachers' sense of agency and empowerment upon completion of the dis-alternative story assignment will no doubt extend to their work with children with special needs.

Conclusion

According to McLaughlin and DeVoogd (2004), "When we examine alternative perspectives, we explore the viewpoints of different characters in a story or different people in a real-life situation" (p. 49). Dis-alternative stories present alternative, disability/language-sensitive perspectives and viewpoints. The preservice teachers who wrote these stories gained experience and confidence in successful writing instruction methods. Likewise, the dis-alternative story assignment spurred the undergraduate preservice teachers to advocate for their future students. Dis-alternative stories have the power to impact social change in both the readers and the writers.

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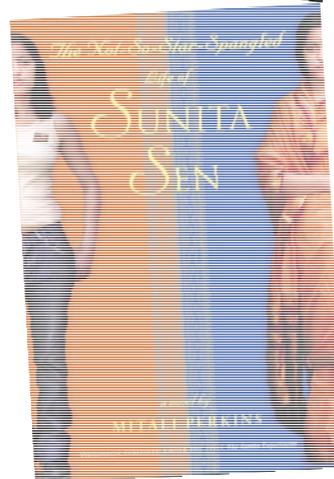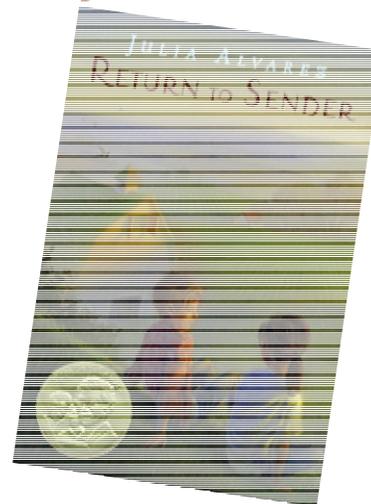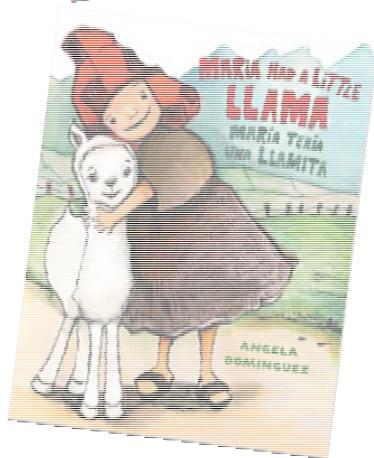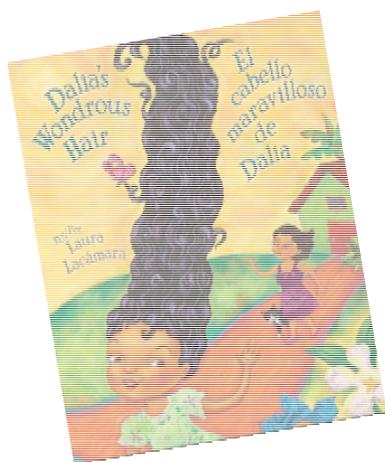
Sustained Effects of Participation in Imagination Library

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Abstract

The Imagination Library (IL), an organization which promoted literacy by mailing high-quality, age-appropriate picture books to newborns each month until they were five years old. Parents enrolled the children in the program and responded to annual surveys about family literacy practices. According to the self-reported results of the surveys, parents read aloud more often to their children after receiving the books in the mail. The school effects of this additional time with exposure to books were tested by this researcher. First graders were grouped by their enrollment in the IL program. Two groups of 15 students were chosen randomly from the total group of 80 first graders; a group which participated in the IL program, and a group that did not participate in the program. The first grade Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test was used to measure these specific competencies: letter naming, phoneme segmentation fluency, nonsense word fluency, and oral reading fluency, which included speed, accuracy, and comprehensions of the main idea. Fourteen sets of test scores were compared to find the difference between the mean scores of the two groups. Using an analysis of variance with a = .10, the mean scores of the IL students were found to be higher, but not significantly higher, on all the subtests except two. The grade level competency pass rate was also compared for the two groups. The IL pass rate for grade-level requirements was 72 percent while the pass rate for non-IL students was 55 percent.

Key words: emergent literacy, DIBELS scores for Southwest NM, first grade readers.

The goal of the Grant County, New Mexico, Imagination Library has been to deliver high-quality, age-appropriate books monthly to homes of local children from birth to age five and thereby promote experiences with language and reading. Children's exposure to as many as 60 books was intended to establish school readiness. Any parent was able to enroll a child in the program by supplying a mailing address and pledging to read to the child. The program was governed and funded locally while receiving administrative support from the national Dolly Parton IL Program. A parent survey, crafted locally with a template from the National Center for Education Statistics about reading frequency and behavior, served to evaluate the program. To this point, no vehicle to measure school effects of the IL program existed. This research served as an additional measure of the program's vision, which is to promote school readiness by increasing family literacy time.

Low reading scores have been resistant to school improvement in the state.

The 2014 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the U.S. Reading Report Card, reports that Grade 4 of New Mexico Reading scores have remained well below the national average for 20 years despite continued efforts to improve them. According to the New Mexico Public Education Department (2014),

> In 2013, the average score of fourth-grade students in New Mexico was 206. This was lower than the average score of 221 for public school students in the nation. The average score of 206 for students in New Mexico in 2013 was not significantly different from their average score, 208, in 2011 and was lower than their average score of 211 in 1992. (p. 1)

Encouraging family literacy activities is an avenue that has yet to be explored. Therefore, it is helpful for policy makers to measure gains made from these efforts and to track their effect on reading scores as pre-school students progress to elementary school.

Literature Review

The connection between reading aloud to young children and their success in school has been validated for several decades (Moerk, 1985; Pellegrini, 1990). Parents who read to their children are supporting and fostering their language development (Bus, van Ijzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995) and their early reading development (Haden, Reese, & Fivush, 1996). During book reading, parents have opportunities to explore the patterns that occur in written language with their children. "Familiarity with written language patterns allows children to develop print awareness by knowing what to expect when they begin reading on their own" (Sell, Imig, & Samiei, 2014, p. 2).

Dialogic Reading, a technique developed by Grover Whitehurst (1994) emphasizing interactive reading with parents and children, has been successful in preparing low-income preschoolers to become readers. The fundamental reading technique in dialogic reading is the PEER sequence. A short interaction between a child and the parent occurs at every turn of the picture-book page. The parent: Prompts the child to comment on the book; Evaluates the child's comment; Expands the child's comment by paraphrasing and elaborating; and Repeats the prompt to make sure the child has learned from the elaboration (Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angell, Smith, & Fischel, 1994). The intervention of dialogic reading produced a significant difference in the scores of preschoolers taking the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised over those students who had not experienced the intervention practice (Institute of Educational Sciences, Work Works Clearinghouse, 2014).

An optimal time exists for early childhood interventions because of the developmental plasticity of the brain. Children who are at greatest risk tend to show positive gains in many areas of development as a result of interventions at this stage of development. (Camilli, Vargas, & Isaacs, 2007; Janus & Duku, 2007; Son & Morrison, 2010). "Previous research indicates that greater parent-child reading practices predict greater receptive vocabulary, understanding of story and print concepts, and pre-literacy skills among low-income children" (Bracken & Fischel, 2008, p. 51).

If books are available in the home, parents are more likely to participate in reading time with their child (Ridzi, Sylvia, & Singh, 2011). According to a 20-year University of Nevada study by Evans, Kelly, Sfkora, and Trefman (2010), the number of books in the home predicted the level of education of a child more accurately than did the educational level of the parents. "Children of lesser educated parents benefited the most from having books in the home" (Evans, Kelly, Sfkora, & Trefman, 2010, p. 1).

Parents who have enrolled in IL seemingly become more sensitive to the benefits of having a home library. Survey data from Michigan show that family ownership of books increased 54 percent (from 69 to106 average number of books) during the time children participated in IL while IL books only constituted 16 percent of family book ownership (Lelle, 2011).

Local parent surveys from the past four years suggested a continuing trend that parents spent more time reading to their children after they were enrolled in the IL program than before they were enrolled. The 2013 Grant County Parent Survey produced this information: "the Likert Scale analysis of question 1 revealed that before entering the program, the average family read to their child only three or four times a week with a scaled score of 3.4. After entering the program, the average family read to their child once a day with a scaled score of 4.21 according to question 2" (Harvey, 2014, p. 5).

By interpreting the results of questions 1 and 2, a marked change in family literacy behavior is noted. The parents who read more than once a day rose from 24 percent to 43 percent. The number of parents who never read to their children shrank from 2.0 percent to zero. This is consistent with the 2012 survey results, which reported that daily reading rose from 46 percent to 78 percent, while the parents who seldom read to their children dropped from 9.3 to zero. In both years, the percentage of parents who read more than once a day almost doubled. The value of this change in behavior is validated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which advises that children be read to every day for 20 minutes (Policy Statement on School Readiness, NAEYC, 2014). By the age of five, the child will have listened to stories for 600 hours. This activity equips children with a vocabulary and a depth of background knowledge that prepares them for success in school.

Low reading scores from the children of New Mexico have been a cause for alarm for the educational policy makers of the state. Despite the state's per-pupil expenditure of $9,683 and pupil-teacher ratio of 14.7 teachers for each student, New Mexico's NAEP scores only rank higher than the District of Columbia and are comparable to those of California, Alaska, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Demographics may be a contributing factor since the New Mexican students are comprised of a large portion of English Language Learners (NM Public Education Department, 2014). Over half of the states' students qualify for free and reduced lunch. The achievement gap, which seems to be decreasing, still produces average scores for minorities that are 23 points lower than white average scores. Free and reduced school lunch stu-

dents score 27 points lower than students who were not eligible for free and reduced lunch.

While many literacy improvement programs are limited to implementing change in instruction in the schools, few entertain the objective of influencing the family literacy practices of preschoolers. Increased instructional time at home has the potential to raise literacy rates.

Evidence in the literature demonstrated that encouraging family literacy positively affected school achievement. A recent study by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, which was controlled for socio-economic factors, found that four- to five-year-olds who were read to three to five time per week had a reading ability equal to children who were six months older and were read to less often. A longitudinal study reviewed the literacy scores of over 4000 students from age four to age eleven. The study showed that reading to children six to seven days a week puts them almost a year ahead of their peers who had not read with their parents.   (Kalb, & van Ours, 2013).

Similar research was conducted recently in Shelby County, TN, which tested the sustained effects of students who were exposed to early storybook reading by comparing second grade reading scores. In a study by the Books from Birth program, 170 students who received books were compared to 164 students who did not. Those students who received books had higher second grade reading scores on the Istation Early Reading measure. The scores were significantly higher on vocabulary and reading comprehension when alpha was set at .02. The study controlled for socio-economic status, gender, mobility, and attendance rates (Sell, Imig,

& Samiei, 2014). There was no difference between the spelling scores of the two groups. Higher vocabulary and comprehension scores with lower spelling scores would be expected because frequent reading offers vocabulary words within the context of a story, providing a scaffold for deciphering the meaning of unfamiliar words. If adults discuss the illustrations or help the child identify with the characters, the child is exposed to even more new vocabulary words (Sell, Imig, & Samiei, 2014).

For over a decade, Middleton, Ohio, schools have produced literacy scores ranked in the bottom seven percent of the schools. Despite offering after-school tutoring and enrichment programs, the school administrators had neglected to concentrate on early childhood literacy until 2008. The IL program was initiated to fill this gap. In order to test the early effects of the program, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy (KRA-L) which was administered to entering kindergarteners was used to compare the scores of two groups. The IL group was made up of 69 students whose parents indicated that they had participated in the program. The average score for this group was 17.88 versus an average score of 17.16 for the 535 non-participating students. Thus, the IL students had a 4.2 percent better performance than the non-participating group (Gorton, 2010). The following year's test produced stronger results in favor of the IL group. The IL students scored an average of 18.8 (19 is adequate) on the 29-point test. These IL scores were 15 percent higher than the average score of those not participating which was 16.34 (Gorton,

2011).

The Tennessee Board of Regents conducted a web-based survey of 150 teachers who evaluated 320 entry-level kindergarteners divided into groups of those who had participated in the IL program and those who had not. A five-point rating scale was used to measure overall learning preparedness including reading, thinking, listening, and social skills. "Teachers were asked to consider all students in each group as a whole, and compare the students to those in previous classes" (Tennessee Board of Regents, 2008b, p. 2). While the study was not controlled for other preschool experiences, the results produced higher scores for the IL group over the four measures. The Reading Skills subtest showed the biggest gains, where IL students scored .86 points higher on a scale of 5.

TBR Study (Tennessee Board of Regents, 2008b)	IL	Non-IL	Difference
Reading Skills	3.47	2.61	.86
Speaking Skills	3.40	2.79	.61
Thinking Skills	3.46	2.73	.73
Social Skills	3.31	2.80	.51

Results

Using an analysis of variance with a = .10 (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1982, p. 251), the mean scores of the IL group were higher, but not significantly higher, than the non- IL group in all of the 14 subtests but two: the beginning of the year Phonemic Segmentation Fluency subtest, and the end of the year Oral Reading Retelling subtest.

The largest gains of the IL participants over the non-IL participants appeared in the end of year Nonsense Fluency tests. The Nonsense Word Fluency 1 subtest produced an $F = 2.418$ with a critical value of 2.66 and the Nonsense Word Fluency 2 subtest produced an $F = 2.453$ and a critical value of 2.66. In order to score high on this test, the student must be able to match sounds to symbols and blend letter patterns that they have not encountered before. Another subtest which produced a much higher score for the IL participants over the non-IL participants was the middle of the year Oral Reading Accuracy subtest with an $F = 1.93$ and critical value of 2.66.

Students read a passage aloud for one minute. Errors are counted when words are omitted or substituted. A hesitation of more than three seconds is also scored as an error. Words self-corrected within three seconds are scored as accurate. The number of correct words per minute is then calculated as the oral reading fluency score (DIBELS Description, 2015). The results suggest that IL participants are better oral readers.

The grade-level competency pass rate was also compared for the two groups. The IL pass rate for grade-level requirements was 72 percent while the pass rate for non-IL students was 55 percent.

Discussion

The first grade DIBELS test, which was routinely administered to all students, was used as a measure of reading readiness

for the purpose of this study. Fifteen students were randomly selected from the group which participated in the IL and 15 students were also randomly selected from the group which did not participate in the IL program. The random student scores were selected from a group of 80 age-group peers. Subtests which were administered several times during the school year were: Letter Naming, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency which measured speed, accuracy, and comprehension of the main idea. Using an analysis of variance with a = .10 (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1982, p.251), the mean scores of 14 sets of test scores from the IL group and the non-IL group were compared. Of these, the IL group's mean scores were higher, but not significantly higher, on all but two of the subtests.

The grade level competency pass rate was also compared for the two groups. The pass rate was investigated to mark the progress of the group toward the state goal of reading on grade level by the end of third grade.

Population of the study

The Southwest New Mexico area served by this project was rural, with 7.4 people per square mile having an average per-capita annual income of $21,726. Sixty-nine percent of the area students are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch and 73 percent identified themselves as having Latino origins, according to the New Mexico Standard Based Assessment report. Therefore, rural poverty is the pervasive element of this minority population, with six percent of the population composed of children under the age of five. Literacy remains to be a challenge in this area because 69 percent of parents with children under age six have less than a

high school diploma and are economically poor. "The population of fourth grade students with a below proficient reading level is 79 percent" (Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy, 2014, p. 1).

The assessment instrument

The DIBELS tests are a set of procedures and measures researched by the University of Oregon for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. Used regularly to monitor early literacy skills, the tests are individually administered for one minute (Good & Kaminski, 2015).

The Letter Naming Fluency subtest assessed the speed of letter naming and was administered only during the beginning of the year. The alternate-form reliability was 0.92 while the criterion-related validity was 0.72 (Bakerson, & Gotherberg, 2006).

The Phoneme Segmentation Fluency subtest measured the child's skill in breaking words into individual phonemes. Alternate-form reliability was 0.88 while the criterion-related validity when compared with the Woodcock Johnson Battery (WJB) was 0.73.

The Nonsense Word Fluency subtest had an alternate-form reliability of 0.88 and a criterion-related validity (WJB) of 0.54 and addressed the child's ability with sound-symbol knowledge by measuring phonic decoding skills.

Oral passage reading rate and accuracy was measured by the Oral Reading Fluency subtest. Comprehension of the main idea was measured by the Oral Reading Retelling Fluency subtest. These tests have an alternate-form reliability of 0.68 with a criterion-

related validity (WJB) of 0.72. Bakerson and Gotherbery (2006) reported that DIBELS measured the construct of early literacy and is an instrument with moderate validity and reliability.

Limitation of the study

Student scores were taken from five different classrooms. The individual teachers in each classroom administered the tests. Although the teachers were trained to be objective examiners during a professional development conference, a difference between methods might have influenced the outcome. While the study was controlled for mobility, it was not controlled for socio-economic effects, age, or gender differences.

The sample size of 15 students studied in the research was relatively small.   Therefore, alpha was set at .10. This study was not controlled for pre-school attendance or Response-to-Invention (RtI) activities. The result of this sample group represents an isolated, rural Latino population and therefore might not be generalized to the whole population.

Conclusion and Future Study

The IL students scored higher, but not significantly higher, in 12 of the 14 subtests used in the study. The pass rate for grade-level requirements was 72 percent while the pass rate for non-IL students was 55 percent. The IL effect was large enough to be called substantively important and positive. These findings, while not conclusive, suggest that IL students were better able to specifically match sounds to symbols of print and were better able to read orally than students who had not been enrolled in the program.

By the end of the first grade, IL students

scored higher than the non-IL participating students on the majority of the DIBELS subtests measuring early literacy skills. Since a portion of the first grade class received six weeks of additional instruction by starting school in July, the results which proved not to be statistically significant were not surprising. Low-achieving students were identified in an early screening and received extra instruction as a result of the RtI. The study did not control for the extra instruction or other measures of RtI. Additional research is needed to control for the influences of RtI. Given the consistently higher scores of the IL group, it is evident that the IL program fulfills its mission by providing more books to young children and encouraging more emphasis on family reading time. Additionally, the efforts made by the IL program to support the early vocabulary development and pre-literacy skills of infants, toddlers, and young children pay dividends that may extend well beyond kindergarten entry into reading development across the first years of elementary school. Continued efforts for funding the IL should be embraced by the community and policy makers.

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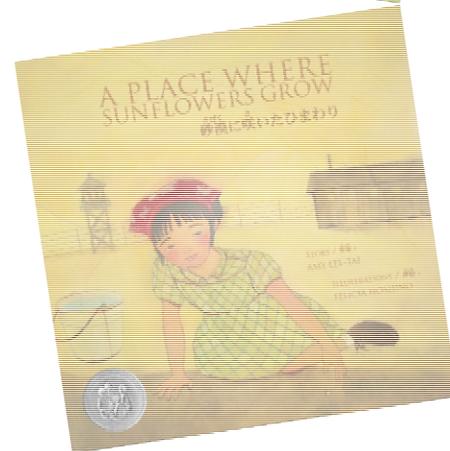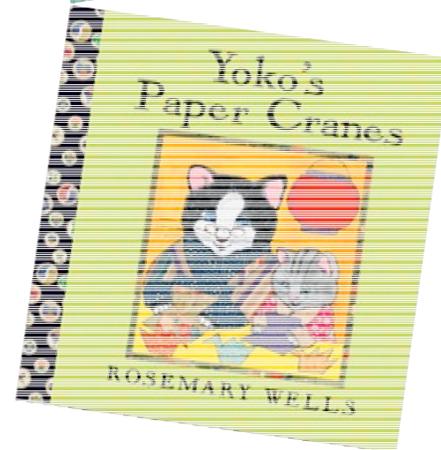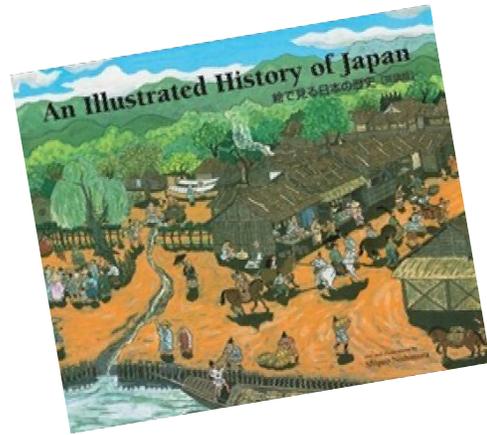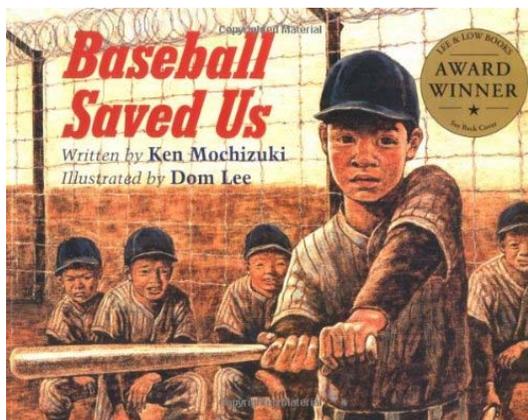
Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for IL first grade DIBELS subtests compared to non-IL first grade DIBELS subtest

Tests	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Letter Naming				
Beginning of the Year IL	15	50	15.13	21-70
Beginning of the Year No IL	15	47	6.11	38-58
Phonemic Segmentation Fluency				
Beginning of the Year IL	15	45.53	9.12	31-61
Beginning of the Year No IL	15	47.2	7.93	33-64
Nonsense Word Fluency 1				
Beginning of the Year IL	15	46.8	25.96	13-93
Beginning of the Year No IL	15	38.06	15.21	16-71
Middle of the Year IL	15	83.47	36.63	33-143
Middle of the Year No IL	15	70.33	28.70	22-109
End of the Year IL	15	99.6	35.03	47-143
End of the Year No IL	15	90.86	25.77	60-143
Nonsense Word Fluency 2				
Beginning of the Year IL	15	7.86	11.16	0-30
Beginning of the Year No IL	15	7.26	6.74	0-24
Middle of the Year IL	15	26.46	14.28	4-50
Middle of the Year No IL	15	21.53	10.99	5-38
End of the Year IL	15	33.67	13.29	14-50
End of the Year No IL	15	30.4	10.30	15-50
Oral Reading Fluency 1				
Middle of the Year IL	15	47.26	34.92	14-121
Middle of the Year No IL	15	42.8	26.91	12-93
End of the Year IL	15	72.06	32.84	31-131
End of the Year No IL	15	66.06	25.52	22-115
Oral Reading Accuracy 2				
Middle of the Year IL	15	87.33	10.73	64-99
Middle of the Year No IL	15	86.6	13.18	50-99
End of the Year IL	15	96.13	3.52	89-100

Table 2

ANOVA for scores from first grade students enrolled in IL and non- IL

Subtest	*F*	*Fcv*
Beginning of the Year		
Letter Naming	0.247	2.66
Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	0.786	2.66
Nonsense Word Fluency 1	0.125	2.66
Nonsense Word Fluency 2	0.683	2.66
Middle of the Year		
Nonsense Word Fluency 1	0.195	2.66
Nonsense Word Fluency 2	0.067	2.66
Oral Reading Fluency 1	0.02	2.66
Oral Reading Accuracy 2	1.93	2.66
Oral Reading Retell 3	0.78	2.66
End of the Year IL		
Nonsense Word Fluency 1	2.418	2.66
Nonsense Word Fluency 2	2.453	2.66
Oral Reading Fluency 1	0.047	2.66
Oral Reading Accuracy 2	0.80	2.66
Oral Reading Retell 3	1.62	2.66

*p<.10   **p<.05
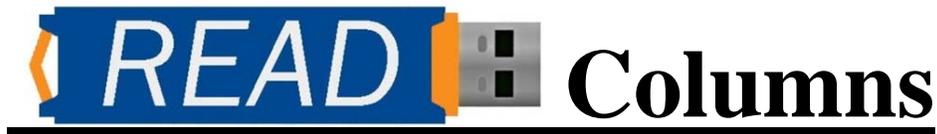
READ Columns

Jugar y Aprender-Play and Learn: First Language Literacy and Parent Involvement

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According to the National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition (2015), in the 2011-12 school year, there were 4,472,563 English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. schools, making up 9 percent of all students in grades pre-k through 12. The most common language spoken by ELLs is Spanish, representing 80 % of the total number (National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition, 2015). In Texas, 15 % of K-12 students are ELLs and over 90% are Spanish speakers (Ruiz Soto, Hooker & Batalova, 2015). Despite growing numbers of Spanish speaking children, the shortage of bilingual teachers remains acute (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). This means that many Spanish speaking children are in classrooms with monolingual English speaking teachers who cannot provide extensive literacy instruction in the first language (L1).

L1 literacy plays a positive role in the development of second language literacy (Thomas & Collier, 1998). Reese, Garnier, Gallimore & Goldenberg (2000) found that the existence of emergent literacy skills in Spanish at the kindergarten level were a "significant predictor of English reading ability eight years later" (p. 655). The transfer of literacy skills from L1 to L2 in young children is well-documented. (Feinauer, Hall-Kenyon & Davidson, 2013; August, Calderon & Carlo, 2000). For example, Feinauer, Hall-Kenyon and Davidson (2013) found that both unconstrained literacy skills (eg. comprehension and vocabulary) and constrained literacy skills (eg. letter knowledge and phonological awareness) transferred from L1 to L2. Findings such as these support Cummins's Transfer Theory which states, "Academic proficiency transfers across languages such that students who have developed literacy in their first language will tend to make stronger progress in acquiring literacy in their second language" (Cummins, 2000, p. 173). Clearly, promoting literacy development in Spanish ultimately promotes literacy development in English.

There are steps that monolingual English speaking teachers can take to promote literacy development in Spanish. First, creating an atmosphere in the classroom that is welcoming to other languages is critical so that schooling is not viewed as only involving

English. Teachers can request books in Spanish and provide opportunities for ELLs to read the texts in the classroom. These books could also be sent home. Teachers can focus on letter/sound correspondences that are similar in both languages (Greybeck, Rueter & Petrón, 2011). However, there is little that a monolingual teacher can do to provide important literacy experiences in the native language like storytelling or literacy-related games which critical for young children. Parents can provide those sorts of experiences (Reese & Gallimore, 2000). Many Spanish speaking parents are willing to help, but cannot because literacy tasks are sent home in a language which the parents do not speak or read.

Involving parents in their children's education fosters academic success (Hill & Taylor 2004; Henderson & Berla, 1994). Hill and Craft (2003) stated, "Parental involvement in school assists young students in obtaining the necessary academic competencies for succeeding in school," (p. 74). Parental involvement includes assisting children with homework or supplemental learning activities at home (Hill & Taylor, 2004). The limited research that exists on parental involvement and ELLs urges educators to consider cultural relevance when engaging with parents (Panferov, 2010). Helping Spanish speaking parents turn common family activities into literacy experiences with their children may help teachers make a connection between school and home in culturally relevant ways. Auerbach (1989) stated,

> As parents contribute to the development of the home language and culture, they build the foundation for their children's academic achievement, positive self-

concept, and appreciation for their multicultural heritage. By valuing and building on parents' strengths, the status of those strengths is enhanced (p. 178).

Latino parents have much to offer by providing the Spanish literacy experiences that monolingual English speaking teachers cannot.

In order to help monolingual English speaking teachers solicit the help of Spanish speaking parents in promoting first language literacy, a handout in Spanish of culturally relevant literacy games and activities for young children is provided. This handout can be given to Spanish speaking parents at back to school nights or as part of a parent newsletter. It serves to open an important line of communication between teachers and parents in language that Spanish speaking parents understand. The games and activities on the handout are described in English below.

> *Lotería* - Bingo
> *Lotería* is a traditional Latino game similar to Bingo which has words and pictures rather than numbers. This game is modified so that the person calling the cards emphasizes the beginning sound of the words and asks the children what the beginning letter or sound is.
> *Dichos* - Proverbs
> *Dichos* are to be an important source of moral lessons and wisdom in Latino culture. Having parents share *dichos* with their children continues this tradition. They are often metaphorical and children need to decipher figura-

tive language to understand them. They also can help develop vocabulary in Spanish.

Contar la historia de la familia con fotos - Family photo storytelling

In *historia de la familia,* parents use family photos to tell stories about the people and events portrayed. Children will be exposed to new vocabulary and sequencing of events.

Veo, veo – I Spy

Veo, veo is a variation of I Spy that uses letters or sounds as clues. It is fun for children and can be played anywhere. For example, in the supermarket, the parents ask children to identify objects they see that begin with a particular sound or letter.

Bebeleche - Hopscotch

Bebeleche is exactly like hopscotch. However, letters of the alphabet can be used rather than numbers. Children can call out the letters as they land on them.

Novelas – Soap operas

Many Latino families watch *novelas* in the evenings. In this activity, the parents ask the children to describe characters or retell the story during commercials. This will also contribute to vocabulary development and sense of story.

Parents are children's first teachers and Spanish speaking parents are no exception. They are the guardians of the language and culture. Since L1 literacy is critical to academic success, monolingual English speaking teachers need to take steps to harness the linguistic talent of Spanish speaking parents. This can be done by providing parents with ideas to unite common, activities

with literacy experiences in culturally relevant ways.

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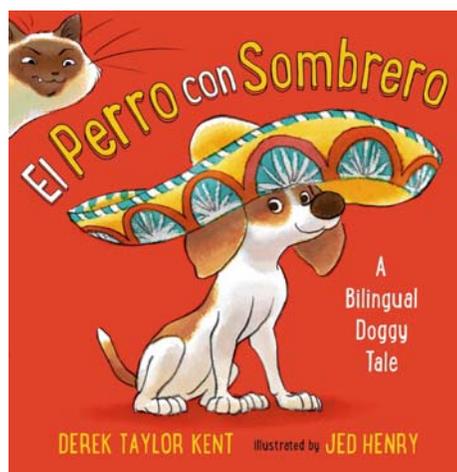
Jugar y Aprender

Los padres son los primeros maestros

Los padres son los primeros maestros de los niños. No se debe de esperar hasta que los niños empiecen a asistir a la escuela para empezar a aprender. Hay muchas actividades que los padres pueden hacer en casa para ayudarles con la lecto-escritura. El desarrollo de la lectoescritura en español contribuye al aprendizaje de la lectoescritura en inglés.

Lotería con propósito

Para hacer este juego educativo la persona que anuncia cada tarjeta, puede hacerlo de tal manera "El melón," y se les pregunta a los niños, "¿Con qué sonido empieza la palabra melón?"

Dichos

Los dichos son una fuente importante de la sabiduría de nuestra cultura.

Compartir refranes les beneficia a los niños porque continúa la tradición. Los niños tienen que descifrar el significado de cada uno.   También es una manera de desarrollar el vocabulario del niño. Por ejemplo, "Camarón que se duerme, se lo lleva la corriente" o "Entre el dicho y el hecho, hay gran trecho."

Contar la historia de la familia con fotos

Los padres sacan fotos de la familia y eventos importantes. Les cuentan la historia de la familia a los niños. Además, los niños desarrollan el orden de eventos en un cuento.

Veo, veo

Jugando veo, veo es muy divertido y se puede jugarlo en cualquier lugar. Por ejemplo, en el supermercado, los padres les dicen a los niños, "Veo, veo un objeto que empieza con el sonido "p." Las respuestas posibles serán plátano o pollo o pepino etcétera.

Bebeleche

Bebeleche es un juego en cual los niños se pueden divertir y a la vez aprender sus letras. En vez de dibujar los cuadros con números, los pueden hacer con letras. Cuando los niños brincan en los cuadros tienen que anunciar las letras.

Novelas

Casi a todas las familias hispanas les gustan las novelas. Durante los anuncios, los padres les piden a los niños que describan los personajes de la novela. Los padres pueden extender la descripción con palabras más complejas como el villano o el protagonista.

Diversity in Literature: Preparing Literacy Teachers for a Multicultural World

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Abstract

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by 2023, 50 percent of the student population will be children with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Iwai, 2015).　Furthermore, 10 percent of the school population in the U.S. is currently identified as having a disability that affects their ability to perform in the classroom (O'Leary, 2011).　The reality is that teachers and literacy teachers in particular are faced with the difficult task of teaching a more diverse student population than ever before.　The literature review analyzed and discussed in the present article examines studies that support the systematic use of multicultural literature in the classroom. Also, the author suggests strategies to create a curriculum that fosters awareness of diversity and multiculturalism through literature as a way to enrich literacy instruction in the classroom.

Keywords: Multicultural Literature; Literacy; Multicultural Curriculum

The world is becoming a complex network of cultures, languages, races and ethnicities. People are moving from their places of origin to new countries for better education and job opportunities (Clark, 2013).　This phenomenon is bringing changes in the way teachers are designing curriculum to support students who are linguistically and culturally diverse.　In many instances, teachers are using books or literacy material that does not accommodate the needs of students who do not belong to the mainstream culture (Clark, 2013).　Literacy teachers, in particular, need to broaden their knowledge and understanding how to infuse quality literature in their curriculum to help students who are culturally and linguistically diverse to acquire effective literacy skills across the curriculum (Comber, 2011).

Research suggests that diversity in literacy supports students to better understand others and themselves (Comber, 2011).　Students who are exposed to quality literature improve their literacy skills in the classroom and helps students to feel included in the lesson and the school. Teachers of literacy must provide the appropriate classroom environment for learning to occur. Multicultural literature can be the key to unlock the door for learning to read and write in a diverse world

by enhancing motivation in students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (Shen, 2011).

Rosenblatt (1995) explained that literature as the power to help students to experience ideas and concepts in a more concrete mode. Rosenblatt (1995) maintained that literature helps students to critically analyze ideas in light of their background and culture as literate individuals. Rosenblatt (1995) also claimed that literature is crucial to lead students to delve into new experiences that open to a diverse understanding of reality and the world.

This paper reviewed and discussed studies that support the systematic use of multicultural literature in the classroom. Also, the author suggested strategies to create a curriculum that fosters awareness of diversity and multiculturalism through literature as a way to enrich literacy instruction in the classroom. Literacy curriculum in the 21st century must become culturally and linguistically sensitive to the needs of a growing diverse student population in U.S. schools. Therefore, literacy teachers need to acquire and develop the ability to teach literacy by using quality multicultural literature across the curriculum. It is not enough to teach our students the skills for reading but also and more importantly to teach students how to critically make sound choices on the literacy material they will access to prepare them for a complex reality in the 21st century (Gormley & McDermott, 2014).

The Need for Multicultural Literature

An extensive part of a student's education is placed on literacy, more specifically the necessary skills for reading and writing. It is important that students acquire strategies and skills in order to become active readers and writers. Harvey and Goudvis (2007) defined active readers as individuals who interact with the text in an active, analytical and strategic way to extract meaning from the text. Multicultural literature can serve as a mirror for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, to allow them to see themselves in the text and make deeper connections with it. At the same time, multicultural literature can become a window for other students to experience new ways to look at the world as a rich and complex place.

Lopez (2011) maintained that students who are culturally and linguistically diverse lack access to diverse texts and quality literature in the classroom. Lopez (2011) argued that many students who do not belong to the white main stream culture lack motivation to read and acquire robust literacy skills that will prepare them to compete for jobs and careers in a complex society at the dawn of the 21st century. Lopez (2011) suggested incorporating multicultural literature in the classroom to provide students who are culturally and linguistically diverse equal opportunities to acquire a rich literacy curriculum via quality books and other print or non-print material.

Multicultural literature is a paramount conceptual and pedagogical tool when teaching students about diversity. It is a powerful way to challenge the status quo of society and have the potential to create a collaborative communal understanding (Nieto, 2013). Nieto (2013) pointed out opportunities for students to explore connections with people

from different cultural, social and economic situations may only be possible through the multicultural literature they experience in the classroom or school library. Therefore, it is very important for teachers to be aware of the texts they use in the classroom and how they use quality literature to teach about other cultures and diversity.

Maniatis (2010) claimed that children who engage in multicultural readings and critical analysis of texts develop a more systematic and profound awareness for diversity. Maniatis (2010) also claimed that teachers play an important role in this process. Teachers must make multicultural books interesting, exciting and relevant for their students by designing a multicultural curriculum that supports students' curiosity and critical inquiry for diversity around them. In turn, teachers must allow students to make connections with the self, the text and the other in a process of dynamic learning.

Suh and Samuel (2011) stated the importance of multicultural literature as an inclusive process in the classroom and the community where students live and interact. They called for a multicultural model that uses quality literature to help students become critical participants of a complex and a diverse society. O'Hara and Pritchard (2008) placed great significance on providing students ways in which they can interact with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The scholars argue that teachers must provide students with the opportunity to delve into the language of diversity and how language represents people from diverse cultures, ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Cozbar (2013) called for an in depth analysis of language in multicultural books.

This is due to the worldview that language is a rhetorical and narrative process. Cozbar (2103) contended that language is a core component of human experience. Symbols in language in the forms of words and image such as pictures or any kind of illustration create and define the symbolic meaning we find in books. Cozbar (2103) explained that language as a system of meaning making constructs and defines the reality we live in. Language is a container of meaning and experience. Cozbar (2013) concluded the analysis on the symbolic power of language by pointing out that it permeates the perception of diversity in students. Critical analysis of language and representation is paramount to support students' critical understanding of diversity.

Teachers Providing the Environment

Teachers can be just as important as parents when it comes to influencing their students. Teachers have the opportunity to help students become global citizens in the 21st century. Nieto (2013) wrote, "Sociocultural mediation is important because literacy is not just about learning to decode; rather, it is a social practice that cannot be separated from the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts in which it takes place" (p.16). Teachers have the ethical and moral responsibility to support students' critical understanding of diversity from the complex perspective of politics, culture and language. If students are supported in making critical choices on the multicultural books to read, they become the main conduit of a sociocultural and sociopolitical mediation among

diversity in a complex society.

One crucial aspect of multicultural literature in the classroom is to help teachers be aware of their own prejudices and biases and to reduce them to teach critical understating of diversity to their students with ethics and professional demeanor. Lopez (2011) claimed, "Teachers who embrace the belief that schools are important in creating a socially just society must teach in culturally relevant ways that take into consideration how all students experience the curriculum" (p.75). Teachers need to know the classroom dynamics from a cultural, linguistic and ethnic/racial perspective and be able to navigate the curriculum around them. Teachers need to know what the students believe and their cultural and linguistic trajectories. Multicultural literature must help students take a step forward to see beyond their cultural and linguistic boundaries to become agents of change in a diverse and complex society.

One crucial aspect of multicultural literature and the curriculum is the preparation of teachers to teach for diversity. The vast majority of teachers in schools are white, middle class with a monoculture background (Jones, 2011). Teachers who come from a dominant white culture are not always aware of what it is like not to be white in school, and how that can affect one's educational experience. According to Jones (2011), these teachers need to become aware and understand the challenges of being a person of color or a person that does not belong to the mainstream white culture. In a critical discussion of Sleeter's analysis of white pre-service teachers, Jimenez (2014) pointed out that the teachers did not recognize the amount of racial inequality that existed in schools with a

high degree of diversity. As Jimenez (2014) explained, some white teachers have stereotypical views about low expectations for students of color in relation to their literacy achievement and reading engagement. In turn, they have a color blind approach to literacy education and multicultural literature in particular.

O'Hara and Pritchard (2008) discussed changes that can be made to reduce a colorblind approach to literacy education in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. O'Hara and Pritchard (2008) presented a model of e-portfolio that teachers must complete where artifacts, evidence, and reflections show grow in diversity and commitment to serve a diverse student population. The e-portfolio is a demonstration that teachers are aware of diversity and teach a culturally appropriate curriculum that meets students' needs. According to O'Hara and Pritchard, this is just one of the different tools we can use to help teachers become aware of diversity in teaching across the curriculum to help students become literate in a complex society.

Multicultural literature is an important tool that must be used effectively by teachers. In order to do so, teachers need to be aware of their own shortcomings, especially when it comes to diversity and cultural knowledge (Szecsi et.al, 2010). Teachers need to be more willing to open their minds to the possibility that what they think and know about others might be wrong or not aligned with their philosophy of education and worldview. In a study carried out with teacher candidates, Szecsi et al. (2010) found that these preserv-

ice teachers had a limited knowledge of diverse cultures along with some stereotypes and misconceptions. The majority of preservice teachers in the study were not aware that their biases prevented them from looking at the curriculum from a more diverse and inclusive perspective.

Strategies for Teaching Multicultural Literature

Connecting with the text

Teachers who use multicultural literature in the classroom need to provide a balance between giving students background information about the text and gradually releasing responsibility to the students to critically analyze the text. Scaffolding in the form of providing support and modeling throughout the reading and analysis of the text provide students a fertile ground to connect with the text and to contextualize its content and meaning at a deeper level of learning (Colby & Lyon, 2004).

When students are not familiar with a culture and its complex web of meanings, the teacher must provide culture sensitive material to create a background for the story. Community resources, artifacts, and visual media are effective tools to scaffolding students in entering in a critical conversation with the text. Also, an interdisciplinary approach to multicultural literature is another effective way to supporting students' ability to see the other in literature (Colby & Lyon, 2004). Teachers can introduce the music, drama, and the folklore related to the text to socially, culturally and historically front the deeper meaning of the language that captures the multicultural experience embedded in the text.

Students in a classroom where literature comes alive are encouraged to explore their own biases and go beyond their comfortable intellectual and cultural boundaries. Students are empowered to reach out and collaborate with others in their classroom and to see that different thoughts, beliefs, and viewpoints are part of the diverse landscape in the 21st century. As Rosenblatt (1995) contended, the literary work becomes the locus of shared experiences where students critically respond to the text. In this context, the teacher support students' analysis of the text by using thought provoking questions to enhance students' connections to the literature and to lay out the foundations of a culture sensitive curriculum in the classroom (Dietrich & Ralph, 1995).

Dismantling Prejudice

Multicultural literature helps students to confront their own prejudice by an in depth self-reflection on the language and content of the text read. Teachers should make sound choice to align the text to the curriculum and the content of instruction. Dietrich and Ralph (1995) strongly advocated for teachers to find the right text to begin the process to reflect back to what prejudice can do to us. They reminded us that an exclusionary culture in literacy can potentially lead us to obscure important contributions from non-mainstream authors. They also reminded us that important works of literature can become the blueprint of a systematic and critical discussion on what it means to be diverse in the US. The responsibility of the teacher is to provide guided instruction and activities that show students how to respond to text and reflect on their own beliefs and biases.

Multicultural literature is the locus

where students can see their own biases and prejudice via a vicarious experience (Rosenblatt, 1995). It is crucial that teachers help students see how prejudice is often deeply rooted in a sociocultural and sociohistorical process in a community. Teachers can unfold and critically analyze this condition by using multicultural literature to see the trajectories of prejudice and biases in the community where students live and interact. In turn, multicultural literature help students become aware and understand the complexity of issues related to cultures in society.

Conclusion

The world in which we live and interact as educators has become a complex place, a kaleidoscope of cultures and languages where diversity is not the exception but the norm. It is important that our schools recognize these changing cultural and linguistic landscapes to help teachers support students in the 21st century. Multicultural literature is one important avenue towards diversity. However, teachers need to recognize its importance and find ways to infuse the curriculum with diversity. As Rosenblatt (1995) put it,

> In a turbulent age, our schools and colleges must prepare the student to meet unprecedented and unpredictable problems. He [She] needs to understand himself [herself]; he [she] needs to work harmonious relationships with other people. He [she] must achieve a philosophy, an inner center from which to view in perspective the shifting society about him [her]…Any knowledge about human kind and society that school can give him [her] should be assimilated into

the stream of his [her] actual life. (p. 3)

The focus of future research should be on how students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds feel about the literature and texts they are reading in U.S. schools. This line of research could give new insights to the way teachers think about their classroom and the way they choose quality literature for their students to meet the diversity needs of the 21st century K-12 schools in the U.S.

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READ Book Reviews
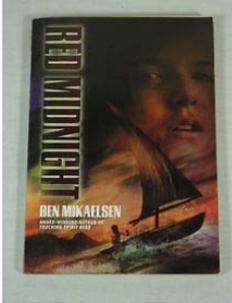
Red Midnight

Written by Ben Mikaelsen. HarperCollins Publisher, 2002, 224 pages, ISBN 978-0380805617

Reviewed by Astrid Chio, 8th Grade, ELAR, Spring Branch ISD, Houston, TX.

During a time of political conflict in Guatemala, Santiago, age 12, and his baby sister, Angelina, age 4, must flee after guerrilla soldiers viciously murder their family and destroy their village. They are able to escape towards their uncle's home where he tells them to take his canoe and head to the United States. Santiago and Angelina begin their journey towards the United States carrying little supplies. The journey they take proves to be difficult facing many dangerous situations, but Santiago is determined to keep him and his baby sister alive. Ben Mikaelsen writes a fictional story filled with adventure and emotional situations that will keep middle school and older readers hooked throughout the story. The descriptions he uses will help readers be part of the adventure. In a time when people are seeking refuge from political unrest and close-minded societies, readers will surely understand the desire to escape to a place where people are treated more humanely. A place where you can have a better life. A place where you can live without fear. A place where your dreams can come true.
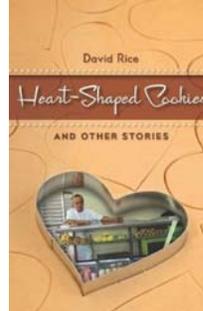
Heart-Shaped Cookies

Written by David Rice. Bilingual Press, 2011, 152 pages, ISBN 978-1-931010-79-5

Reviewed by Gloria Carter, 9th and 12th English I and IV, Trinity ISD, Trinity, TX.

"For show and tell, I took a bomb to school. My fourth-grade teacher said we could bring anything we wanted, and it was just lying around the garage for years doing nothing but rusting" (Rice, 2011, p.119). David Rice relates how taking a malfunctioning bomb to school produced unexpectedly humorous results while evoking a serious response from readers connected to the consequences of war.

Drawing on a cast of unforgettable characters and events, successful author Rice entertains readers by threading humor throughout vignettes presented in flash fiction, short story, and play formats. Readers will be engaged, but his writing may especially appeal to young adult males—a sometimes-difficult population of readers to capture. Although Rice represents his Mexican cultural background in his stories, he addresses many serious themes confronting young people today, such as the fallout of a divorce, unreasonable parental expectations, making moral choices, and facing the death of loved ones.
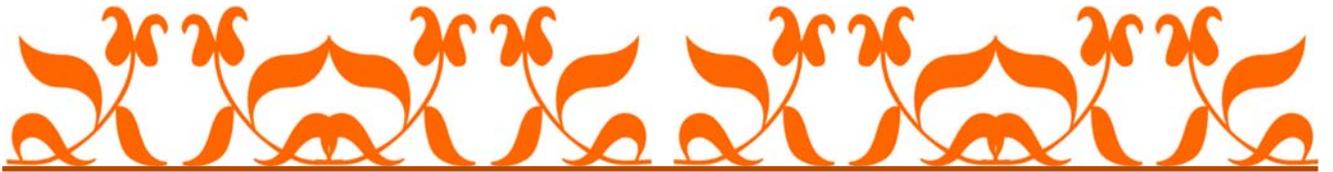
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