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READING HORIZONS

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Effects of Active Comprehension Instruction on Attitudes and Motivation in Reading

Ruth Helen Yopp
Mariam Jean Dreher

Numerous studies have shown that training students in self-questioning enhances comprehension (Andre and Anderson, 1979; Nolte and Singer, 1985; Palincsar, 1984; Singer and Donlan, 1982; Yopp, 1987). As Singer (1978) and Yopp (1988) have argued, the process of self-questioning, or active comprehension, facilitates comprehension because it requires students to use their metacognitive capacities and activates their background knowledge. When asking and seeking answers to their own questions, students establish goals, select means to attain them, and confirm attainment of their goals. In other words, students continually monitor their own reading behavior — an essential activity if students are to learn how to learn independently (Brown, Palincsar, and Armbruster, 1984). Further, the process of generating questions necessitates the tapping of background knowledge because one must know something in order to ask a question (Miyake and Norman, 1979). Because new knowledge is acquired only when a new proposition is stored with related propositions in an existing network (Gagne, 1985), activating background knowledge is crucial to comprehension. Active comprehension allows readers to establish the link between

new and prior knowledge. An additional feature of active comprehension is that the process of generating one's own questions places the locus of control for learning in the students and allows them to satisfy their own curiosity. Singer and Donlan (1989) have asserted that this control over one's own learning is motivating and that achieving answers to one's own questions results in positive feelings.

To date, studies on active comprehension have examined only cognitive outcomes. Nolte and Singer (1985) and Yopp (1988), for example, found that fourth- and fifth-grade students who were trained in active comprehension performed better on comprehension tests of narrative passages than peers who answered teacher-posed questions. Cohen (1983) administered a standardized comprehension test to third graders before and after training in self-questioning and found significant gains for the experimental group. Palincsar (1984) included self-questioning as one component of an instructional strategy to improve the comprehension of expository passages by junior high school students. She found that students participating in this instructional condition outperformed control group students on comprehension tests. Singer and Donlan (1982) tested the short-story comprehension of high school students and found beneficial effects for students trained to generate their own questions based on story schema-general questions. Likewise, in their work with high school students, Andre and Anderson (1979) found that trained questioners outperformed untrained questioners on a test of comprehension. These findings indicate that teaching students active comprehension as a process of reading positively affects their reading performance.

Yet the affective effects of instruction are also critically important. Holmes (1960) described attitudes as "mobilizers" which determine whether a reader will undertake and persevere with a task at hand. Dreher and Singer (1986)

agreed that affective factors may set cognitive actions in motion and facilitate or hinder cognitive processes in learning from text. They have argued, along with Athey (1985) and Mathewson (1985), that affective factors are dynamically involved with the reading process and are critical to text comprehension. Indeed, Dreher and Singer (1986) found that affective factors contribute to the prediction of variance in reading comprehension even in competition with cognitive predictors.

Despite these findings, however, affect has received little attention in the research literature (Athey, 1985; Shapiro, 1992; Shapiro and White, 1991), possibly because it has been difficult to establish the precise nature of the relationship between affect and reading, or because other factors seem to account for more variance in reading performance (Athey, 1985; Dreher and Singer, 1986), or because of socio-political factors that have resulted in an emphasis on finding the best method for achieving high reading scores (Shapiro, 1992). However, Dreher (1990) has argued that "... concerns with both illiteracy and aliteracy make it clear that we must give high priority to affect in reading" (p. 23), and Mikulecky (1987) has maintained that efforts must be made to reverse the increasingly negative attitudes toward reading that children exhibit as they progress through school. Cothorn and Collins (1992) have stated that the development of positive attitudes is an important goal in teaching reading, and note that many factors contribute to the development of an attitude, including instructional strategies.

Consequently, this study examined two research questions. First, we investigated whether participating in self-questioning activities promotes a more positive attitude toward reading instruction than answering teacher-posed questions. If students are motivated by self-questioning and if finding answers to their questions results in positive feelings as Singer and Donlan (1989) have suggested, then students

should enjoy classroom activities and experiences that encourage self-questioning. We hypothesized that this positive attitude would be manifested in the comments students made about the instruction. Second, we explored whether students who participate in self-questioning instruction demonstrate a greater motivation to read by actually seeking out books that were excerpted during self-questioning training. Would their questions mobilize them to borrow more target books from the classroom and school libraries than their classmates?

Method

Subjects. The subjects were 17 girls and 16 boys from a sixth-grade classroom in a public elementary school located in a middle class neighborhood of southern California. The majority of the students were Caucasian, four were Mexican-American and two were Asian-American. Reading comprehension achievement scores from the previous spring revealed a mean national percentile of 76 on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. Scores ranged from the 15th to the 90th percentile.

Materials. The instructional materials in this study were excerpts from ten novels. These ten novels were chosen from a pool of 100 paperback novels that were placed in the classroom in which the study was conducted. The 100 novels were narrative stories that were selected for their appropriateness for upper-elementary school-aged children. They are all typically found in school libraries and included such books as *Danny Dunn*, *Scientific Detective* (Williams and Abrashkin, 1977) and *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* (Konigsburg, 1967).

Prior to the study, the teacher conducted a survey to determine which titles the students had read. From the list of books that had not been read by any of the students, 10 novels

were chosen at random from which to take excerpts. The excerpts ranged in length from 1329 to 2945 words. Multiple copies of each of the books from which excerpts were taken were added to the classroom collection. A check-out procedure had been initiated by the classroom teacher earlier in the school year, and the classroom library was easily accessible to students, who engaged in 20 minutes of sustained silent reading every day.

Design and procedure. The students were randomly assigned to the active comprehension and teacher-posed question groups. The classroom teacher examined the group assignment lists and verified that ability groups were equally represented in the two groups.

The first author was introduced to the students as a reading specialist who was going to teach them how to become better readers. She met with each group separately in an empty classroom in the school twice a week for five weeks in 40 minute sessions. Students in the active comprehension group were taught to generate their own questions throughout their reading of the literature excerpts using the phase-in/phase-out procedure described by Nolte and Singer (1985). Students in the teacher-posed question group read the same excerpts, but the teacher, rather than the students, asked the questions. Instruction for each group is described more fully below. At the conclusion of the study, students were asked to respond in writing to the question *How did you like the special reading class?* Data regarding the number and titles of books students borrowed from the class and school libraries were also obtained.

Active comprehension group. Figure 1 outlines the instruction provided to students in the active comprehension group. First, the author discussed the value of generating questions throughout reading, modeled the procedure, and

identified for the students the kinds of questions helpful for enhancing comprehension of narrative text (Beck, Omanson and McKeown, 1982). These are questions that are linked to story grammar; they focus on central story elements such as the setting, the characters, the main character's goal or problem, the character's actions toward the goal, obstacles that intervene, and the resolution. The experimenter modeled the self-questioning procedure by reading a passage aloud and stopping at appropriate points to demonstrate self-questioning.

Next, the students participated in questioning while the experimenter read a story aloud. The experimenter prompted the students by asking questions that required a question in return, such as *What would you like to know about what happens next?* and *What would you like to know about this character?* (Singer, 1978). After two of these sessions, the experimenter divided the students into groups of four or five and appointed group leaders to guide their classmates in posing questions. The students worked in these small groups for several days before they moved into the next phase of the instruction — working with partners. During the final days of the study, students worked independently, asking their own questions as they read. Previous research (Yopp, 1987) indicates that trained students do indeed internalize the questioning process and continue to use it after the instructional period ends while control group students do not spontaneously generate their own questions throughout reading. To confirm that students in the active comprehension groups were actually asking themselves questions as they worked independently, the experimenter initially had students write their own questions in the margins of their papers. Later during the independent work phase, students were individually interrupted and briefly interviewed by the experimenter about the questions they were posing.

Figure 1

Instructor
Modeling

Instructor models self-questioning during reading. Looks at title and picture, asks questions. Reads first sentence/paragraph orally. Poses questions. Continues in this manner throughout passage.

Whole group

Instructor reads orally or directs students to read title and look at picture on first page (if any). Asks students: "Does the title make you curious about anything? "What would you like to know about this story?" Calls on individual students to respond.

Instructor reads orally or directs students to read first sentence or paragraph. Asks students: "What would you like to know about what happens next?" Calls on students to respond. Praises questions, especially those that highlight story grammar structure.

Instructor proceeds through passage, eliciting questions from students in this manner. May contribute to group by generating questions.

Small group

Instructor divides students into groups of 4 or 5 students and assigns group leaders. Group leaders elicit questions from the students in their groups after reading portions of the passage silently or orally. Group leaders identify appropriate points for generating questions and praise group efforts. Leadership of group is rotated.

Pairs

Students select a partner with whom to read or teacher assigns partners. Students read short sections of the passage and ask each other questions at points in story which they deem to be appropriate.

Individuals

Students read silently and generate their own questions before, during and after reading a short passage. Questions may be recorded in writing in margins of paper. Students may be interrupted by instructor and asked to share their questions.

Teacher-posed question group. Students in the teacher-posed question group received instruction that paralleled that of the active comprehension group in all aspects except that students did not participate in question-generation activities. Prior to reading a selection, the experimenter introduced new vocabulary and briefly described the story. Then students progressed from answering teacher-posed questions as a class to answering teacher-posed questions in groups, with partners, and finally individually. The same selections were used in each group and were drawn from target books placed in the classroom library.

Results

The dependent variables in this study were 1) student comments about the special reading class and 2) number of target books borrowed from the class and school libraries. The student comments were analyzed for positive, neutral and negative statements. In addition, the length of these comments was analyzed. Because multiple measures were taken for each student, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The analysis revealed a significant difference between groups (Wilks lambda = .53, $F(5,27) = 4.78$, $p < .01$). Univariate analyses of variance were then conducted.

Student comments. The number of positive, neutral and negative responses students made to the question *How did you like the special reading class?* were determined by two independent raters who were blind to group assignment. Interrater reliability was .98. Disagreements were settled through discussion. Table 1 displays group means for number of positive, neutral and negative comments students made about the instructional experience. It can be seen that students in the active comprehension group wrote a significantly greater number of positive comments than did students in

the teacher-posed question group, $F(1,31) = 7.52, p < .01$. No significant differences were found for the number of negative comments or the number of neutral comments.

<p>Table 1 <i>Group Means for Positive, Neutral, and Negative Comments and Length of Responses</i></p>				
Group	Positive*	Neutral	Negative	Length** (in words)
Active Comprehension	1.79	.21	.37	19.53
Teacher-Posed Questions	0.86	.14	.57	9.29
<p>* The difference between the obtained means in this column was significant at the $p < .01$ level.</p>				
<p>** The difference between the obtained means in this column was significant at the $p < .001$ level.</p>				

Six sample comments are listed below, along with the scores they received. The first three comments were written by students in the active comprehension group, and the latter three were written by students in the teacher-posed question group.

It was better asking our own questions instead of having the teacher asking and student answering! I liked the reading class! (2 positive)

I enjoyed the class because I got to participate and not have to just listen to a teacher talk. I enjoyed most of the books that she brought in. I liked working in groups. (3 positive)

It was okay. (1 neutral)

Boring. (1 negative)

I liked the class because most of the stories she gave us I had never read. (1 positive)

I think the books were interesting, but I didn't like the questions. (1 positive, 1 negative)

While scoring student comments, the raters noticed that responses written by students in the active comprehension group appeared lengthier than those written by their peers. The words in each response were counted to determine whether a significant difference in length of comments did exist. In fact, a significant difference was found between groups with students in the active comprehension group writing responses twice as long as those written by students in the teacher-posed question group, $F(1, 31) = 13.41, p < .001$. Mean response lengths for each group can be found in Table 1.

Target books. No significant difference was found between the active comprehension and teacher-posed question groups for number of target books borrowed from the class and school libraries during the six-week period beginning with the initiation of the study and ending one week after the final session, $F(1, 31) = .93, p > .05$. Students in both groups borrowed few target books: the mean for the active comprehension group was .37, and the mean for the teacher-posed question group was .81.

Discussion

While no difference was found between groups in the number of target books students borrowed, significant differences were found in the type of comments students made as well as the length of their responses when they were asked how they liked the special reading class. Students who participated in the active comprehension instruction had

more to say about the experience, and what they said was positive.

Why did students in the active comprehension group generate more positive statements about the special class than those in the teacher-question group? Students in both groups left the regular classroom to meet with the experimenter for special instruction. Students in both groups interacted with peers and participated in group activities. The difference between the groups was the role that the students played in their own learning. Activities in which the teacher-posed question group participated emphasized the teacher's authority in the teaching/learning process. Students in the active comprehension group, on the other hand, moved from teacher-directed to self-directed activities. The locus of control for learning was in the students. Cothorn and Collins (1992) have stated that making a reading task personally meaningful to students will positively influence attitudes toward reading, and that one way to increase students' personal investment in the reading experience is to allow them a role in decision-making. Teaching students to ask their own questions, to read for their own purposes, gives them a role in decision-making, thus encouraging their personal involvement. The additional finding that students in the active comprehension group generated longer responses when asked what they felt about the class supports the hypothesis that they felt greater involvement in the experience. The results suggest that students in the active comprehension group learned that their ideas and opinions are important, and so they felt more confident, more involved, and were willing to expend more effort expressing their ideas and opinions.

A second explanation for the positive comments made by students in the active comprehension group is the enhanced comprehension that results from self-questioning. As noted earlier, research has demonstrated repeatedly that

students who engage in self-questioning throughout reading earn higher scores on tests of comprehension. They are more successful, and success is motivating. Thus, although we did not measure achievement, previous research suggests that students in the active comprehension group experienced more success in their reading — perhaps this contributed to more positive feelings about the class. The relationship between achievement and attitude, however, is not unidirectional. Singer and Donlan (1989) have stated that "most important for learning and retention are students' attitudes and feelings about what they are learning at the time they are learning it" (p. 92). Similarly, Dreher and Singer (1986) have argued that "affective factors... play an integral part in reading comprehension by facilitating or hindering cognitive processes in learning from text..." (p. 27). In other words, the relationship between affect and cognition is most likely one of mutual facilitation. Indeed, Mathewson's (1985) model of affect in the reading process depicts the cognitive and affective components as dynamically interactive. In spite of these positive feelings about the reading class, however, students in the active comprehension group did not borrow more target books. Perhaps the number of books borrowed is too broad a measure of reading attitudes. Consequently, although the treatment had an impact on specific verbal responses, it may not have been lengthy enough to have had an impact on the behavior measured in this study. Furthermore, perhaps the tone created in the instructional setting did not carry over to the regular classroom where the books were available.

However, we should note that students in the active comprehension group exhibited several behaviors that students in the teacher-posed question group did not. On several occasions students in the active comprehension group made spontaneous comments at the end of the class period indicating their interest in the story, such as "I wonder what happens to the boy" and "I wonder if the house is haunted." These

comments were made as the students were exiting the class and were not part of the instructional requirement to ask questions. Further, they were made to both the experimenter and to classmates. Similarly, the experimenter once overheard a student from the active comprehension group describing a target book to a student from another class; the student from the other class then borrowed the book from the school library. Additionally, a teacher from another class asked the experimenter to share her motivational strategy because students were so excited about a story that they discussed the book with her at recess. (This teacher, by the way, borrowed the book the students were discussing.) Although data on the number of target books borrowed from the libraries indicates that students did not follow up on the interest they expressed, they did demonstrate an enthusiasm for the books. No incidents such as these were observed with students in the teacher-posed question group.

Future research on the effects of active comprehension instruction on reading attitudes should incorporate systematic measurement of behaviors such as those described above. Indeed, Shapiro (1992) has called for more ecologically valid means of measuring attitudes. Since attitudes have been described as having a mobilizing effect (Holmes, 1960), measures of students' reading selections and behaviors seem to be appropriate choices for researchers examining affective dimensions of reading. Rigorous collection and analysis of the types of observational data described here might lend further support for the hypothesis that teaching students active comprehension as a process of reading positively affects attitudes and motivation in reading.

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Instruction in Elementary Reading Methods Courses: Faculty Orientations and Strategy Use

Judy Bryant
Judy M. Wedman

During the past decade reading beliefs have changed from a product orientation that included the decoding of orthographic symbols to a process orientation that involves keeping all forms of communication whole. Additionally, current research clearly demonstrates that reading strategies must go beyond the printed page (Tierney and Pearson, 1983; Rumelhart, 1985; Goodman, 1986). The pedagogy of reading has also changed from teacher directed, skill building strategies to student entered process oriented strategies (Tierney and Pearson, 1983; Rumelhart, 1985). In essence, reading beliefs and practices have been expanded to include total literacy development (Levine, 1982). Despite the preceding, many reading educators continue to use traditional lecture methods to teach process oriented strategies to elementary preservice teachers (Brazee and Kristo, 1986). Lecture methods provide ineffective models for putting these strategies into practice as they put students in passive roles, and ultimately minimize learning. In order to help preservice teachers learn to use process oriented strategies, those strategies should be used to teach reading methods courses (Schuman and Relihan, 1990). In other words, reading educators need to incorporate

instructional strategies into their own teaching that model the theory they teach (Prenn and Scanlon, 1991). This article will describe a project that sought to sample 1) the theoretical perspective preferred by elementary reading educators, and 2) instructional strategies used by elementary reading educators to teach reading methods courses.

Currently, whole language and interactive perspectives dominate the pedagogical field of literacy development. Whole language, according to Goodman (1986), is more of a philosophy than a prescribed methodology; however, it does at least strongly imply a framework for instruction. The framework weaves together the components of language — reading, writing, listening, and speaking — by actively involving learners in authentic experiences in meaningful social settings. Reading skills are not taught as ends in themselves but, rather, as facilitators of communication. Interactive models of reading stress the use of four cueing systems — syntactic, semantic, graphophonic, and schematic. Readers employ the cueing systems interactively as they read and are provided thereby with "four avenues of understanding at the same time" (May, 1990, p. 33). They use their knowledge of sentence structure, word meaning, phonics, and background knowledge simultaneously to hypothesize and infer text meaning (Rumelhart, 1985; Pearson and Johnson, 1978).

Given that the prevalent theory and practice which supports contemporary reading instruction has changed from a product model to a process model (Glazer, Searfoss, and Gentile, 1988) one might conclude that the instructional practices used to teach reading methods courses have changed also. However, reform efforts at the college level have been slow. For example, course content often lacks adequate instruction in pedagogy and application experiences (Deal and Chatman, 1989); teacher educators often do not model

effective teaching strategies (Raths and Katz, 1982); and information is delivered primarily by teacher lecture and independent reading assignments (Kelly and Farnan, 1990). Such dissonance between course content and instructional practices clearly diminishes instructional effectiveness (Stover, 1990). Recommendations for overcoming persistent instructional practices used in preservice teacher preparation courses appear in the professional literature.

One recommendation emphasizes the need for preservice teachers to learn pedagogy by experiencing it as students themselves. Smith (1983) emphasized that "the first essential component of learning is the opportunity to see how something is done. I shall call such opportunities 'demonstrations,' which in effect show a potential learner 'this is how something is done'" (p. 102). Demonstrations actively engage students in content and process, thus providing an instructional model that students can use in their own classrooms. Goodlad (1991) suggested that preservice teacher training courses should emphasize putting theory into practice rather than separating theory from practice. He further suggested that analysis of practice should precede knowledge of theory. For example, preservice teachers may experience a strategy as students themselves then use theory to analyze that experience in terms of their own learning.

Efforts to implement the above recommendation in teacher training courses are beginning to appear in literature. Courses have been designed to help students learn how to create a reading-writing classroom by using reading-writing-peer conferencing experiences within the course itself (Lehman, 1991). Lessons have been developed to help students learn inductive reasoning by using inductive teaching in the lesson delivery (Neubert and Binko, 1991). A teaching model has been used to help preservice teachers learn content and

provide a process teaching model by incorporating cooperative learning with prereading, during reading, and postreading strategies (Kelly and Farnan, 1990). It appears that some reading educators are examining ways that instructional practices can be made compatible with espoused theory. During periods of reform, reading educators expect theory and research to *inform* practice; however, it is difficult to gauge the extent to which theory and research are *applied* to practice. Therefore it is critical that snapshots be taken which reflect change in teaching practices across the nation. Do reading educators subscribe to whole language and other interactive perspectives? Are reading educators using instructional strategies which are consistent with these perspectives? In an attempt to answer these questions, the following objectives for this study were identified: 1) to examine elementary reading faculty's preferred theoretical perspectives of teaching reading, and 2) to examine elementary reading faculty's preferred instructional strategies.

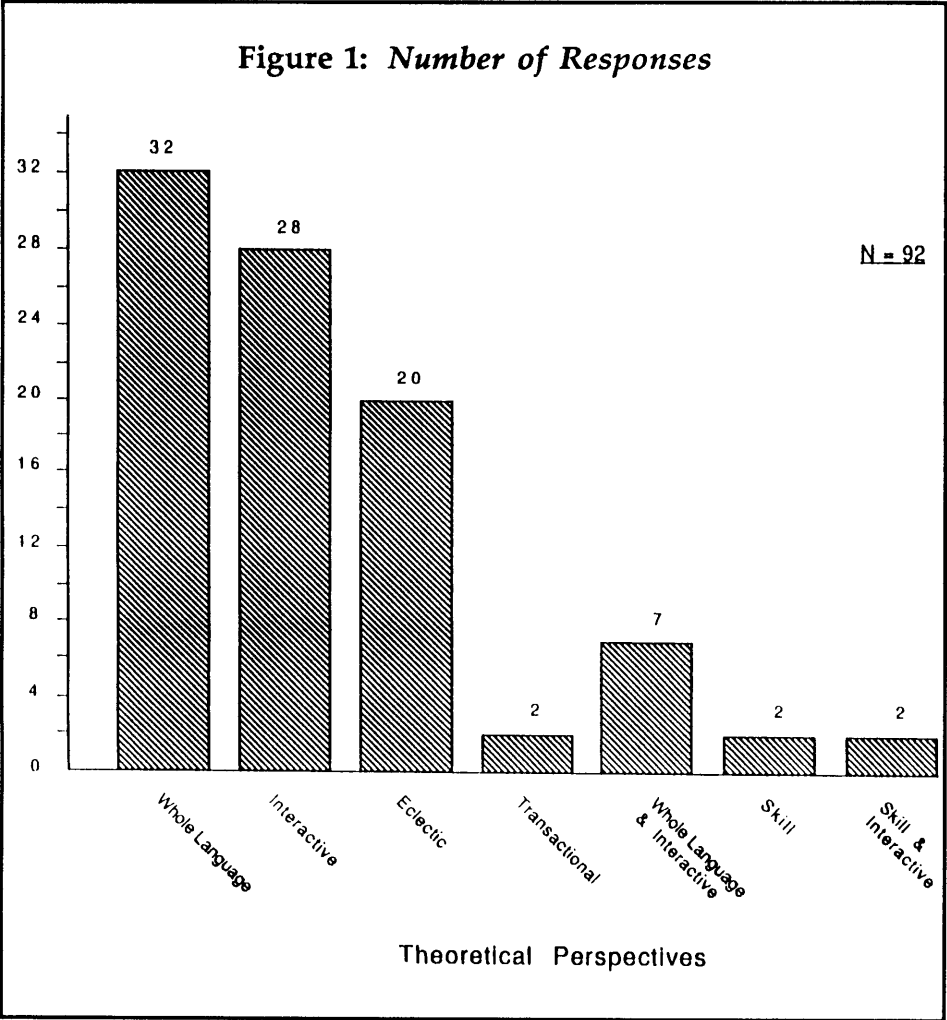
Methodology

A two-part questionnaire was developed for use in this project. Part one elicited descriptive information by asking respondents to indicate their rank, institution, number of reading methods courses they taught per semester, number of years they have spent in higher education, and percent of their time spent in research and writing. Respondents were then asked to identify in writing their personal theoretical perspective for teaching reading. They were provided examples which were representative of whole language, interactive, and skill-based orientations. Part two of the questionnaire included a list of 24 instructional strategies commonly described in current reading methods textbooks and reading journals. (See Tables for the strategies list.) Interactive, traditional, and whole language strategies were included, and space was provided for respondents to write any frequently

used strategies that had not been included. Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they used each strategy during instruction by circling the appropriate number on a 3 point Likert Scale (1= *rarely*, 2 = *occasionally*, 3 = *often*). The questionnaire was mailed to elementary reading faculty in 200 teacher training institutions including comprehensive universities, regional universities, and colleges located in each of the 50 United States. Responses were returned in a stamped envelope and anonymity for respondents preserved.

Results

Ninety-four reading faculty from 41 states returned the completed survey. Frequencies and percentages were computed based on the number of responses. Of the responding group, 44 (47 percent) taught at comprehensive universities, 25 (27 percent) at regional universities, 25 (27 percent) at colleges, and their ranks ranged from instructor to professor. Forty-seven (50 percent) indicated that they had taught in higher education for 10 years or less, and 47 (50 percent) for more than 10 years. Sixty-one (65 percent) respondents reported spending less than 20 percent of their time in research and writing, and 79 (84 percent) taught two to four classes per semester. In response to question one, *What is your philosophical perspective for teaching reading (whole language, interactive, skills, etc.)?*, seven categories emerged (see Figure 1). Thirty-two (34 percent) respondents indicated they preferred whole language, 28 (30 percent) an interactive approach, and 20 (21 percent) described themselves as eclectic. Two (2 percent) respondents advocated the transactive perspective, 7 (7 percent) preferred a combination of whole language and interactive, and 2 (2 percent) indicated a skills based preference, 2 (2 percent) identified a combined skills based and interactive preference, and 1 declined to answer the question.



In response to the survey's second request, i.e., *identify strategies you use to teach reading methods courses and how frequently you use them*, frequencies and percentages were also computed. Since the majority of respondents formed three groups — whole language, interactive, or eclectic preferences — only those groups' practices were examined in detail. Percentages were computed for each group's responses that were based on the number of teachers in the entire group who reported that they used the strategy (see Tables 1, 2, and 3).

Table 1
*Reported Use of Reading Strategies
by Whole Language Respondents (n = 32)*

Strategies	Percent of Responses		
	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
1. Assigned reading	0	9	91
2. Cooperative learning (Slavin/Johnson)	19	34	47
3. Teacher demonstration	3	31	66
4. DRA (Directed Reading Activity	44	38	19
5. Dramatization/role-playing	43	44	13
6. DRTA (Directed Reading-Thinking)	31	31	38
7. Exit slips	65	22	13
8. Guided practice	35	41	25
9. Journal writing	25	16	59
10. Lecture	28	47	25
11. Literature group discussions	34	38	28
12. Newspapers, magazines, etc.	60	28	13
13. Audio-visuals (transparencies, tapes, videos, etc.)	9	31	59
14. Pen pals	72	6	22
15. Prereading techniques	16	50	34
16. Question levels (high/low)	18	28	53
17. Questioning placement (pre, post, interspersed)	41	31	28
18. Reading aloud to students	18	25	56
19. Semantic mapping/webbing	13	38	50
20. Small group activities/projects	0	22	78
21. Peer teaching	37	34	28
22. Small group discussions	9	25	66
23. Study strategies	31	56	13
24. Theme cycles	46	32	21

Of the respondents ($n = 32$) who indicated they espoused whole language, 50 percent indicated using nine strategies "often" as follows: 1) assigned reading, 91 percent; 2) small group activities/project, 78 percent; 3) teacher demonstration, 66 percent; 4) small group discussions, 66 percent; 5) journal writing, 59 percent; 6) audio-visuals (tapes, videos, etc.), 59 percent; 7) reading aloud to students, 56 percent; 8) question levels (high/low), 53 percent; 9) semantic mapping/webbing, 50 percent. Of the respondents ($n = 28$) who indicated they preferred an interactive approach, 50 percent indicated using eight strategies "often" as follows: 1) assigned reading, 89 percent; 2)

lecture, 68 percent; 3) question levels (high/low), 64 percent; 4) teacher demonstration, 64 percent; 5) small group activities, 61 percent; 6) semantic mapping/webbing, 54 percent; 7) audio-visuals (tapes, videos, etc.), 50 percent; 8) small group discussions, 50 percent.

Table 2
*Reported Use of Reading Strategies
by Interactive Respondents (n = 28)*

Strategies	Percent of Responses		
	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
1. Assigned reading	0	11	89
2. Cooperative learning (Slavin/Johnson)	11	57	32
3. Teacher demonstration	0	36	64
4. DRA (Directed Reading Activity)	28	36	36
5. Dramatization/role-playing	50	36	14
6. DRTA (Directed Reading-Thinking)	25	43	32
7. Exit slips	74	22	4
8. Guided practice	29	46	25
9. Journal writing	18	39	43
10. Lecture	11	21	68
11. Literature group discussions	57	36	07
12. Newspapers, magazines, etc.	68	21	11
13. Audio-visuals (transparencies, tapes, videos, etc.)	14	36	50
14. Pen pals	93	4	4
15. Prereading techniques	7	46	46
16. Question levels (high/low)	4	32	64
17. Questioning placement (pre, post, interspersed)	15	37	48
18. Reading aloud to students	31	38	31
19. Semantic mapping/webbing	4	43	54
20. Small group activities/projects	4	36	61
21. Peer teaching	30	48	22
22. Small group discussions	7	43	50
23. Study strategies	32	39	29
24. Theme cycles	65	31	4

Of the respondents ($n = 20$) who indicated they preferred an eclectic approach, 50 percent reported using six strategies "often" as follows: 1) assigned reading, 85 percent; 2) question levels (high/low), 65 percent; 3) semantic mapping/webbing, 60 percent; 4) small group activities/project, 60 percent; 5)

teacher demonstration, 50 percent; 6) question placement (pre, post, etc.), 50 percent.

Table 3
*Reported Use of Reading Strategies
by Eclectic Respondents (n = 20)*

Strategies	Percent of Responses		
	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
1. Assigned reading	5	10	85
2. Cooperative learning (Slavin/Johnson)	5	50	45
3. Teacher demonstration	5	45	50
4. DRA (Directed Reading Activity)	35	35	30
5. Dramatization/role-playing	60	25	15
6. DRTA (Directed Reading-Thinking)	35	45	20
7. Exit slips	83	17	0
8. Guided practice	20	45	35
9. Journal writing	35	35	30
10. Lecture	25	40	35
11. Literature group discussions	35	40	25
12. Newspapers, magazines, etc.	40	55	5
13. Audio-visuals (transparencies, tapes, videos, etc.)	25	35	40
14. Pen pals	85	10	5
15. Prereading techniques	30	35	35
16. Question levels (high/low)	0	35	65
17. Questioning placement (pre, post, interspersed)	15	35	50
18. Reading aloud to students	10	60	30
19. Semantic mapping/webbing	10	30	60
20. Small group activities/projects	10	30	60
21. Peer teaching	35	40	25
22. Small group discussions	10	45	45
23. Study strategies	20	50	30
24. Theme cycles	45	30	25

Discussion

Current trends in reading education support the importance of students being active participants in learning and whole language and interactive perspectives provide a basis for active learner involvement. Collectively these two perspectives emphasize that the learner should build new knowledge on existing schema structures, construct personal meaning during reading experiences, and develop rational

hypotheses and inferences through interaction with text. This study indicated that many reading faculty appear to embrace theory that supports active engagement in learning; however, traditional teaching practices were also evident.

In general, results indicate that reading faculty who reported the whole language preference also reported using teaching strategies that increased learner involvement to a greater extent than did other participants. First, they reported using lecture *less* often than participants advocating the interactive and eclectic perspectives. Twenty-five percent of the whole language advocates reported using lecture often; whereas 68 percent of the interactive and 35 percent of the eclectic advocates reported using lecture often. Second, the whole language advocates appeared to provide preservice teachers with opportunities to learn in social situations by frequently using small group activities/projected (78 percent), and small group discussions (66 percent). The whole language group was the only group to report the use of journal writing (59 percent). Since journal writing provides a medium for integrating reading and writing, it is crucial that preservice teachers experience this strategy as well as understand the rationale which supports it (Schuman and Relihan, 1990). Finally, the whole language advocates indicated frequent use of reading aloud to students (56 percent). When reading educators read aloud to preservice teachers, they not only model a very powerful strategy, but they facilitate and foster love of good literature in the college classroom (Packman, 1991).

Although there were several differences in reported use of instructional strategies among the three groups, there were some similarities. Overall, assigned reading was the most frequently used instructional strategy. Traditionally, assigned readings have served as a predominant informational

delivery system (Kelly and Farnan, 1990). The practice seems to be standing the test of time in most college classrooms regardless of the instructor's philosophical perspective.

Another strategy all three groups identified as using often was teacher demonstration. If preservice teachers are to value and later use specific strategies, reading educators must model the strategies they deem important (Schuman and Relihan, 1990). In summary, results of this survey indicate a decided change in the preferred theory and strategies related to teaching reading methods courses. As noted earlier, 34 percent of the participants indicated a strong commitment to whole language, while only 2 percent advocated a skills based approach. Similar change is also evident in the elementary classroom. Smith, Rinehart, and Thomas (1991) surveyed 491 elementary schools across the United States, finding that within the past four years, four-fifths of the schools surveyed had implemented some whole language practices in the classroom. However, teachers reported a need for more information about whole language applications. Although the instructional practices used by reading educators in this survey appear to incorporate some strategies consistent with prevalent reading perspectives, traditional college teaching practices persist. First, though lecture was not identified as an instructional practice used often by whole language or eclectic advocates, 68 percent of the interactive advocates reported using it often. In addition, assigned reading and questioning were used frequently. Second, descriptive data indicated that courses dealing with literacy education (reading, language arts, children's literature) were taught separately in 75 percent of the institutions represented in the survey. Of the 32 (34 percent) respondents who advocated whole language, 23 (72 percent) reported that literacy courses were taught separately while only 9 (28 percent) indicated an integrated or combined format. Integration is a major theme within whole language philosophy, and the continued practice of fragmenting literacy

courses is inconsistent with holistic views. Literacy educators cannot expect to convey the importance of holistic, integrated literacy teaching when they do not practice it themselves (Short and Burke, 1989; Ross, 1992).

Preservice teachers learn more than theory and philosophy in their methods courses. They learn how to teach, and they tend to teach in their classrooms as they were taught (Short and Burke, 1989; Packman, 1991). If reading educators want beginning teachers to use current strategies in their teaching, they need to incorporate those strategies in their own teaching of reading methods courses (Kelly and Farnan, 1990; Packman, 1991). Much of what we learn, we learn because it has been experienced. Instructional strategies that are experienced in college classrooms have a powerful impact (Schuman and Relihan, 1990). Preservice teachers do look to their college teachers for examples, and, as we have seen in this present study, there are consistencies and inconsistencies in the messages they are receiving.

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Identifying and Educating Low-Literate Adults

Susan Davis
Sheila Diaz

Elementary school teachers are increasingly concerned about the apparent lack of interest parents exhibit in their children's schooling. Teachers are mystified when important school forms are not returned, when parents do not attend parent-teacher conferences, and when children enter school without having heard an adult read to them. Teachers often interpret these actions as a lack of parental interest in school. Actions that seem to indicate neglect, however, may really be masking an even deeper problem — parental illiteracy.

The United States government estimates that 20 percent of all Americans are illiterate. Elementary teachers have traditionally ignored this problem, believing that adult literacy is not one of their concerns. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many adults with low levels of literacy are the parents of the children in school. Although we know that schooling has an impact on young lives, children spend a maximum of nine percent of their time in the classroom (Kearns, 1993). The remaining time is spent under the supervision of parents or caretakers. The influence of illiterate parents, therefore, is substantial.

A common saying in adult literacy is that illiteracy is not hereditary, but it does run in families. One of the reasons for

the intergenerational effect of illiteracy is that homes without reading adults may send a mixed message to their children about the value of literacy. In their survey about the beliefs of parents about literacy learning, Fitzgerald, Spiegel, and Cunningham (1991) found that low literate parents seemed to think of learning to read as a school-only activity. Additionally, low literate parents did not consider the importance of modeling reading at home. This research validates what literacy educators have long believed: when children do not see adults reading in their home culture, they may perceive reading as a school activity rather than an integral part of life. Children of illiterate parents, then, often do not value literacy themselves, and the cycle of illiteracy is perpetuated.

Elementary teachers who are aware of the possibility that the parents of their students may be illiterate may be able to smooth the way between their student and the home and also provide contacts for the illiterate adults. In order for classroom teachers to be effective, however, they must understand what it means to be literate, how to identify signs of illiteracy, and how to work with illiterate parents.

Defining literacy

Literacy is not an easy term to define. Because of the complexity of the reading act, adults may successfully read difficult text for which they have a great deal of background knowledge, yet may not be able to understand letters and forms that are distributed from schools. Despite the variances in readers and texts, some states have defined literacy as being able to read at a specific grade level. According to the Illinois State Literacy Office, for example, adults must be reading at the ninth grade level to be considered literate. This definition of literacy was developed in response to research in workplace literacy which estimates that most workers read text for at least two hours per day and that text in the workplace is

usually written at a ninth to twelfth grade reading level (Diehl and Mikulecky, 1980). To be able to function well in our information society, therefore, adults need to be reading at a fairly sophisticated level.

Though many parents are able to read text that falls below the ninth grade reading level, these parents are considered functionally illiterate, or low literate. While these parents may be able to read, their limited reading skill prevents them from being able to read communications from school.

Signs of low literacy

There are several warning signs of low literacy in parents about which teachers should be aware. The signs that follow may indicate that a parent cannot read. Parents who exhibit many of these signs may be able to read but may choose not to read, so teachers should not automatically assume that these parents are illiterate. Instead, teachers should consider these signs as indicative of the *possibility* of a low level of literacy.

School forms are frequently not returned or are incorrectly filled out. Parents who rarely send back forms that are mailed home may not be able to read the forms. Although many illiterate parents have someone whom they can ask to read important notices, they may not have every communication sent by the school read to them. If they are marginal readers, they may try to fill out a school form, but may fill in incorrect information in the blanks. If they are asked to fill out a form at school, they may make excuses (e.g., "I forgot my glasses"), or they may ask to take the form home.

Parents do not respond to written communication from the teacher. Teachers know that one way to get a response

from parents is to write a note home. Teachers without access to typewriters or computers sometimes write handwritten cursive notes. If the notes are consistently unanswered, this may be a sign that the parents are having difficulty reading them. This sign does not automatically assume illiteracy, however. Some parents who are able to read typed text may not be able to read American cursive handwriting. European cursive, for example, is formed differently from American cursive. It may be very difficult for language minority parents who can read typewritten text to read American cursive writing.

Some school personnel have tried to help language minority parents by translating text into their native language. Although many parents may be able to read text in their native languages, teachers should realize that not all language minority parents are literate in their primary language.

Notes to the school are poorly written or appear to be copied. Most schools require a written note when students are absent. Notes from a parent saying the same thing each time, that seem to be laboriously copied, or that have an unusual number of errors could be a signal that the parent is not literate.

Parents report that they do not have time to read to their children. Parents who have an unusual number of excuses for not reading with their child may feel intimidated by reading situations. Of course, many parents are legitimately busy at certain times. For example, if a family member is in the hospital, the family may place reading with the children low on their priority list. Parents who understand the importance of reading to their children and still cannot find the time may not feel confident reading aloud.

Parents frequently misunderstand report cards or school calendars. Teachers may not realize that school communications, especially report cards, are very difficult for low literate parents to understand. When teachers discuss report cards with parents and find that the parents have not read or understood the information, they should consider the possibility that the parents cannot read. Similarly, if parents frequently forget early released days or days off school, they may have trouble reading the school calendar.

Children seem unable to get help with their homework. Parents of children in upper grades may have difficulty helping their children with homework, but if a young child consistently says that parents were not able to help, that might be a sign that the parents cannot read.

Parents appear overly hostile or emotional at conferences. Parents who cannot read may feel threatened by any school situation, especially one in which their ability to read may be called into question. Parents who act hostile at conferences may have other problems that are causing anger, but it also could be an indication that the parents have trouble with literacy tasks.

Parents initiate no contact with the school of any kind, even when necessary. Parents who do not make contact with the school, even to return phone calls, may be fearful of school and school personnel. Their fears may be for a variety of reasons, one of which may be that they feel defensive about their own ability to read.

At family activities, parents seem to take the role of a child. Some parents, especially young parents, may have more fun at family reading nights at school than do their children. These parents may not have ever had the

opportunity to read and write simple text before. Parents who become overly involved in simple reading tasks may be at a similar learning level as their children.

Children comment that their parents cannot read very well. Children are often matter of fact about their families. If a parent cannot read, children may tell their teacher that their mom or dad was unable to read to them because they cannot read.

How teachers can help low literate parents

Parents who cannot read may be extremely embarrassed or defensive about their lack of reading ability — especially to their child's teacher. Although it is in the best interest of the student for the parents to improve their literacy, teachers need to be cautious about directly confronting the problem. Instead, they can learn to communicate more effectively with parents about school-related information and may find opportunities to suggest literacy help for the parents.

Become sensitive to the reading needs of the parents of your students. If parents exhibit many of the signs listed above, consider the possibility that they might have a low degree of literacy.

Investigate the possibility of implementing a family reading program. Low literate parents can learn to read with their young children by programs that teach parents *how* to read to their children. For information about family literacy programs contact The National Center for Family Literacy, One Riverfront Plaza, Suite 608, Louisville KY 40202.

Write all parent communication in simple terms. Low literate parents may not be able to read or understand educational jargon. One example of this was when a parent

checked the blank that said *transportation requested* even though she had her own transportation. To help parents understand school communication, consider replacing difficult terms with more familiar words.

Terms that may be difficult

Possible replacement

Child care provided

Do you need a babysitter?

Transportation requested

Do you need a ride?

2:00 dismissal

Students go home at 2:00

Spring recess

No school

Assessment week

Testing this week

Registration

Sign up for

Vision screening

Eye test

Remediation needed in

Needs extra help in

Occupation

Job

Use alternative methods of communicating with parents. If you know that some of your parents cannot read, make routine school communication easy for them. Although each situation is different, you might try one of these ideas:

- In many families, at least one family member can read. It may be an older child or an extended family member. Try to find out who reads important messages to the family and make that person aware of any notes that need signatures from the parents.

- Instead of sending home a field trip note, call the parents and tell them that the child has a field trip coming up. Then ask them to come to the school to sign the form. When they arrive, tell them what the form says and show them where to sign.

Consider discussing literacy tutoring with low literate parents. If you have a good relationship with the parents, you can make them aware of free literacy programs in your area. A resource for finding local literacy centers is Literacy Volunteers of America, 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse NY 13214. Provide the parent with the name of the local agency, and refer them to that agency.

Work with literacy agencies to become an advocate for low literate adults. Only by educators, literacy providers, parents, and children working as a team can we begin to make the United States a place where parents and children alike can read.

Conclusion

Elementary teachers need to become aware of the complexity of adult lives, including the possibility that the parents of their students cannot read very well. By becoming informed about ways to identify low literate parents, teachers can begin to learn alternate ways to communicate with parents about their children. In their communications, teachers may even be able to encourage the low literate parents to improve their own reading, thus making a break in the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy.

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Meaningful Reading: Instruction for Children Experiencing Reading Difficulty

Carol A. Kirk

Seth, age eight, sits before the computer typing his new story. He invents words when he is not sure of the correct spelling and smiles with satisfaction. His tutor sits at a nearby table observing the process Seth goes through as he creates. She also notes spelling patterns Seth needs to learn.

Kellie and her tutor have just returned from an autumn walk around the campus. Kellie did not know the word *autumn*. She lacked a great many experiences with life and language which one might expect a nine year old to have had. Now she sits surrounded by beautiful leaves and books about autumn. She and her tutor will press the leaves to use as illustrations in the autumn book Kellie is preparing to write.

Mark, age twelve, pastel chalk in hand, ponders how to portray God in a group story he has helped write. Cory, age nine, shy and withdrawn, brings the letter he has written to Reggie Jackson for me to read. He has read a book about Jackson, and he is preparing to write an original baseball story.

Seth, Kellie, Mark and Cory are four of the children who have received instruction at the reading center of a state

university. Their learning experiences differ significantly from what one would have observed in a remedial reading setting just a few years ago because the paradigm which guides instruction in reading is shifting. The purpose of this paper is to present a holistic approach to the instruction of children with reading difficulties. After a brief overview of the traditional paradigm which has been predominant in reading education in recent years and some of the problems associated with it, I will present the holistic model which now guides instruction in the reading center, illustrating the model with entries from a tutor's diary.

Shifting paradigms in reading instruction

Traditional instruction in reading is grounded in a bottom-up model which asserts that learning occurs from part to whole. Thomas C. O'Brien (1989) suggests that this model was fueled by the industrial revolution in America. Educators developed an assembly line mentality, which assumed that readers are built like cars — part by part. If all the parts which go into a car are assembled correctly and in the prescribed order, then the final product should run well. Likewise, reading was broken down into its smallest constituent parts, phonemes. The familiar phonics approach begins with letter names and letter-sound correspondences, and progresses to the reading of stories with carefully controlled vocabularies and limited plots. Children complete numerous worksheets, practicing isolated skills in an orderly scope and sequence by filling in circles, drawing lines or writing answers requiring only a few words. "Comprehension is viewed as a product that results from a student's ability to call words and offer expected answers to questions and assignments" (Glazer, Searfoss and Gentile, 1988, p. 5). The curriculum is dictated largely by the text. The assumption is that if all the parts — sound, sight words, sentence structures — are assembled in the appropriate manner, the end product will be a good

reader. The role of the teacher, in this approach, is to teach basal material, disseminate information, oversee drills and test to see that skills are mastered.

In the bottom-up approach, meaning is viewed as linear and hierarchical with emphasis on what the reader extracts from the printed page. The assumption is that "readers understand text by analyzing the print as they move through successive levels of analysis" (Lipson and Wixson, 1991, p. 7). Yet in real reading situations, people use different strategies when they read for understanding. They sample print, picking up only as much information as they need in order to comprehend (Smith, 1985).

Many children who have received bottom-up instruction have learned to read, though whether they learned because of, or in spite of, this skill-driven approach is not altogether clear. Sadly, significant numbers of children have not learned to read or have learned very slowly. These children fall further and further behind their peers and are eventually labeled remedial or learning disabled. Some have never understood the purpose of reading. When asked why people read, they reply, "to get the words right." Some of these children are very good at getting the words right. They can read fluently and with good expression, but cannot retell or answer questions about what they have read. Others have never deciphered the decoding system with its myriad rules and exceptions. To them, reading is nonsense. The traditional program of remediation involves extensive teaching of isolated subskills and reteaching, over and over, of those skills not mastered through what some termed drill and kill. The assumption is that eventually, if skills are practiced enough, they will be mastered. In spite of repeated drill, many children have not grown appreciably toward becoming literate individuals.

For these children, the joy of reading, and the self-confidence that comes with success, have been killed.

Fortunately, recent research emerging in the fields of psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology has provided a new paradigm of language learning and given educators insight into the processes involved in reading.

New initiatives in reading instruction are focused on a top-down model which views reading as a transactive process whereby readers actively construct meaning by interacting with print (Rosenblatt, 1978). In this holistic philosophy, sometimes called whole language, ideas are more important than printed words (Glazer, et al., 1988). Language is viewed as integrated, not fragmented. Once children have developed an oral language base, language processes — reading, writing, speaking and listening — develop simultaneously as children use language in authentic contexts. The readers' prior knowledge and experience enable them to make sense of print. Meaning resides in the reader. Using language cues to search their memories and predict outcomes (Glazer, et al., 1988), readers sample the text as needed to confirm predictions and generate new hypotheses (Goodman, 1968). Since meaning is contextual, isolated drill and practice is viewed as counterproductive. Instead, instruction begins with whole units such as stories and poems and moves to specifics.

In this child-centered approach, attention is also paid to the affective dimension of learning. Learning is natural. Children are always learning when they are in a meaningful environment (Smith, 1985). "Students will learn what is personally meaningful to them" (Rhodes and Dudley-Marling, 1988, p. xii).

When a child is struggling as a reader, it is not assumed that the problem lies within. Reading professionals look beyond neurological and perceptual deficits to the environment in which the child is expected to learn. According to Lipson and Wixson (1991, p. 18), "Factors such as interest, the amount of time and effort required, willingness to take risks, or perceived competence can influence children's decisions whether to use their skills or not." Therefore, attention must be given to the physical, intellectual and social-emotional aspects of the environment. Language learning takes on a sense of purposefulness for children in an environment where reading and writing are personally meaningful and are shared in authentic and meaningful ways (Lipson and Wixson, 1991, p. 344-45). Children are not asked to sit in separated desks, be quiet and do their own work. Rather, a whole language classroom is characterized by the hum of learning (Calkins, 1986).

Within the context of this literate environment, teachers observe what children are trying to do and then give them the support they need in order to be successful. They provide blocks of time for reading and writing, allow children to make choices based on their interests, guide learning and encourage children to share.

A holistic model for remedial instruction

At The Reading Center, it is assumed that all children can learn to read. Tutors determine what each child can do and build on that foundation through developmentally appropriate experiences. Children are immersed in reading, writing and oral language every time they come.

The physical environment is inviting. When they first enter, children find areas decorated in themes which build on their interest. Teenage mutant ninja turtles border the edges of one area; basketball players leap toward hoops in another.

There are places to share books children have read, to publish original writing, and to display books which might interest the children. Computers are also available. As tutoring gets underway, the children often add decorations to the areas. This is their space, and we want them to be comfortable.

Attention is also given to the social-emotional environment. Early in the tutoring experience, the children participate in shared reading/writing experiences. As tutoring continues, children become comfortable enough to share their work with others. In place of basal readers, our shelves are filled with literature for children and adolescents. In place of workbooks and comprehension skill kits, there are spiral notebooks, paper, pens, pencils and markers. Children also visit the education library regularly, where they are encouraged to check out children's and adolescent literature to read at home.

One of the tutors' first tasks is to get to know the children and create a positive intellectual environment. The children are affirmed as valuable and interesting individuals who bring a wealth of knowledge and life experience with them. They experience success the first day and every ensuing day. Failure is not a word we use. Children are encouraged to read and write for real reasons, to take risks with reading and writing, and to discover personal reasons for reading and writing.

The children's needs drive instruction which is built on strengths. Information has been collected through on-campus assessment, parent interviews, and information supplied by schools and outside agencies. In addition, tutors gather information that is still needed to inform their decisions about instruction. As a multi-dimensional picture of the child takes form, tutors plan authentic instruction for the children which

takes into account their individual development and provides experiences that reflect the literate world. Assessment continues as an integral part of instruction.

All learning including the learning of skills occurs in a meaningful context. Visitors to the Reading Center find children engaged in a wide variety of activities. Some children dictate language experience stories to their tutors, who record them. The children read their dictated stories aloud to their tutors several times until they are familiar with all the words. They may then choose words they particularly want to learn to read. These words are added to personal word banks which become resources for skill development and references for children as they write. The tutors can also select words that exhibit spelling patterns or phonic generalizations which the children need to learn. Words can also be selected which include frequently confused letters, as well. These are but a few possibilities.

The best way to learn to read is to read (Smith, 1985). Children in the program read a wide variety of tradebooks. Daily, tutors and children read together. Children are encouraged to choose books of appropriate difficulty on topics of personal interest, and they are taught how to make good choices.

Children also read predictable books. Rhodes and Dudley-Marling (1988, p. 87) point out that "reading materials that support the prediction of certain features of text are especially valuable for readers who aren't fluent or don't use effective reading strategies." Children use their background experience and their knowledge of language to read predictable books successfully. Many such stories have been printed in Big Books which can be read and modeled to groups of children. They can also be used for strategy and skill learning in much the same way as language experience stories.

Wordless books are another excellent resource. Children create original stories which are consistent with the picture sequence. These stories, like language experience stories, may be dictated to the tutors or written by the children. Expository text also has an important place in reading instruction. Older children often experience difficulty in school because they lack reading and writing strategies required for comprehension of textbooks and the metacognitive awareness which would allow them to use strategies effectively. Their textbooks become the resources used to improve content area learning. They learn to preview text, to organize information by identifying the text patterns, and to activate and connect prior knowledge to text. They learn "fix-it" strategies which help them comprehend content-specific vocabulary, and they learn to reflect on what they have read and organize it in some framework to make it easier to remember. Expository and narrative writing are used to support learning. At the same time, the tutor can help children develop the fluency, vocabulary, and word analysis skills they need in order to become mature readers. Children also read informational books of personal interest and learn to do new things, such as build aerodynamic paper airplanes and polish stones in a rock tumbler.

Fluency develops as children engage in frequent extended periods of reading. Assisted reading strategies such as neurological impress reading, repeated reading and echoic reading are also employed in authentic contexts to improve fluency.

Writing and reading are connected as integrated language processes, as can be seen in several of the above activities. Since writers become better readers and readers become better writers (Smith, p. 1983), and since children who are experiencing difficulty with reading usually have related

difficulty with writing, they are encouraged to write a great deal. Children often write personal responses to the literature they read. Sometimes, a piece of literature becomes an invitation to write an original piece (Calkins, 1986). In addition, most children also write, illustrate and publish their own original stories which they then read and share with their peers. With the young authors' permission, these books are displayed in a hall showcase for others to read and enjoy. Another popular activity is letter writing. For example, children often write to their sports heroes and anxiously await replies. Children also engage in personal journal writing, written conversation, and dialogue journals.

When the children write, the focus is on meaning. Personal writing is not corrected, but children edit writing which will be shared with an audience after they have their ideas down as they want them. The purpose of this approach is to remove the roadblocks of spelling, punctuation and other conventions of print which have previously been emphasized over meaning, creating more concern about correctness than ideas. The tutor's role is to identify reading and writing strategies which will help the children move forward, provide models of how the strategies help them construct meaning, support children's efforts to use the strategies in context and gradually remove their support (Pearson and Gallagher, 1983). Children must be able to use the strategies independently before they can be said to have learned them.

A model of the tutoring process

Keith was eight years old when he first came to the Reading Center. He is a very bright child, but has had numerous health problems, including ear infections, for several years. Keith missed school frequently, and there were resulting gaps in his reading and writing background. He comes from an educated, active family, and his parents read to him

frequently. Reading at the primer level, Keith had fallen behind his peers by the end of first grade. There was talk of a special education referral. Keith was beginning to think there was something wrong with him.

Keith attended tutoring sessions for two semesters. Four goals were established for his tutoring: 1) develop expanded word knowledge and interactive use of the cueing systems; 2) continue to develop reading and writing processes; 3) create a positive attitude toward writing; and 4) increase reading and writing fluency. The following excerpts from his summer tutor's journal illustrate how she worked with Keith.

June 22 — we managed to get through the story "Michael Jordan." I introduced the Humming Alien strategy to Keith. It seemed difficult for him to hum the word and continue reading. He seemed insistent on getting the word. At times I think he read ahead silently and used meaning to get cues, but usually he seemed to rely on graphophonic cues.

We only had a few minutes to work on Keith's letter to Michael Jordan. He wanted to ask for a team photograph but got "hung up" on spelling please and send correctly; thus, he didn't get even one sentence written in our short time today.

This excerpt is an example of ongoing diagnosis. The emphasis on correct spelling and pronunciation in the instructional environment is interfering with reading and writing for meaning. The Humming Alien strategy helps children use the larger context as a word recognition and comprehension aid.

June 23 — we started today talking about likenesses and differences in words. I pointed out how one letter can change an entire word. We went on to talk about

the importance of word meaning. I gave examples of sentences where I have to know the correct meaning to understand the sentence. For example, the word sit has different meanings.

We read the book The Popcorn Dragon. Keith seems to be using the Humming Alien strategy better today. He seems so proud when he figures out those unknown words.

We put some finishing touches on Jordan's letter. Keith seems anxious to mail it. Hopefully, we can get it finished tomorrow. Keith was pretty good at picking out words he might need help on. I think I'll start a word bank with him tomorrow. I'll have to remember to ask him to bring his from the last tutoring session.

On this day, a strategy lesson was designed to help Keith attend to the distinctive features that make words different. Keith is quickly picking up on the cueing strategy. The book he read relates to his interest in dragons. He is experiencing success and seems motivated to write. He is also developing metacognitive awareness of his own needs.

June 30 — we read another Eric Carle book, The Hungry Caterpillar, today. I asked Keith if I should read the book to him or if he wanted to read. I was pleased that he decided we would take turns reading every other page. It would have been "less risky" for Keith to just have me read.

He read very successfully. After the reading we used flannel board pieces to do a retelling of the story. Keith loved the flannel story. I've never seen him so excited. I was worried that he might think the activity was too babyish. Keith seemed so confident as he told the story and manipulated the pieces. When Keith was done, I suggested we could use the Eric Carle books and patterns to think of ideas to do some writing. Keith seemed to freeze. I know he has the ability to write very creative stories, but he sure resists writing. I could

tell he didn't like the idea of writing a story. I assured him I would help.

Keith is willing to take risks with reading, and he is being rewarded with success. He has shown his tutor that visuals and manipulatives help him retell a story, and he is exhibiting the confidence that builds self-concept. Eric Carle's predictable books are an invitation to write, but Keith still resists writing.

July 1 — we started out today by deciding on a word for Keith's word bank. He decided on the word slam-dunkers, a word we used in the letter to Michael Jordan. For our first reading activity, I asked Keith to choose a favorite Eric Carle story he wanted to read again. He picked The Mixed Up Chameleon and The Birthday Present. It was too hard to pick just one! After reading, we did some brainstorming to come up with an idea for writing. I suggested we follow a pattern similar to Eric Carle. Keith got more tense at the idea of writing. To make it easier, I said I would do the writing. He has so many creative ideas, I want him to realize that the first writing doesn't have to be perfect. I modeled in my writing by crossing out words as ideas changed. I also underlined some words that needed a spelling check. I expressed not worrying about spelling now — we want to get our ideas down.

Keith decided on a story called "The Secret Scavenger Hunt" using the pattern found in Carle's The Birthday Present. The ideas were really flowing when it was time to stop. Keith took the book and rough draft home with him.

The word bank is successful because many of the words in it are important to Keith, not because they appear on a frequency list or are deemed important by the tutor. Rereading predictable books helps him become more fluent as the stories

and patterns become familiar. When she allows Keith to choose which books to reread, she is giving him ownership of his learning. She offers to take dictation in order to relieve the pressure of writing and allow ideas to flow. Keith's earlier journal entries show that his fine motor skills are still developing and that writing is a slow and laborious process for him. She makes the best of the situation by modeling some concepts about the writing process that she thinks Keith needs to learn.

July 7 — Keith's word for his word bank today was read. His sentence was "I can read!" We talked about doing some word sorts using the words in his bank. I showed Keith some various sorts that could be done (for example, words with "qu"). After our discussion Keith said "I could sort them according to alphabetical order." Keith seems to understand the value of the word bank. He was surprised that he remembered so many words that he had put in his word bank during the spring tutoring session.

We worked on Keith's story "The Secret Scavenger" that he had dictated to me on Thursday. I had put the story in book form after I typed the text on the computer. Keith read it without a single miscue! He seems excited about his book.

Word sorts give Keith an opportunity to develop categorizing skills and practice the words in his word bank. He is already familiar with words from his own writing and reading; thus, he can practice them with an understanding of their meaning and function in the language. Keith's almost perfect reading of his dictated story is motivating as he gains confidence in his ability to read and write well.

Keith's tutor and I concluded that he does not have a learning disability. He needed some intensive help to catch

up in school, and he needed to learn to view reading and writing as meaningful.

Keith is a good model because his tutor's diary so clearly illustrates the holistic process applied in working with children who are experiencing significant difficulty with reading. We have observed similar progress with children who have very serious reading difficulties, many of whom have been identified as having learning disabilities. Holistic strategies are used with all of the children, though specific strategies vary based on individual needs. Some children learn more slowly than others, but the children make significant progress over time.

A teacher from a local elementary school recently told me, "We love what you are doing at the Reading Center! We just can't believe how much these children can do after they've been in your program." The children are excited, too. For example, Keith's mother reports that he voluntarily reads and writes at home, and recently he spent his monthly lunch money at the book fair. Cory's mother remarked on his emergence from withdrawal as his reading improved. He recently helped a local hospital develop a menu for diabetic children. These children view themselves as readers, writers, and learners.

Conclusion

As classroom teachers move from isolated, skill-based instruction toward holistic, literature-based instruction, teachers of children with special needs may wonder how new understandings about language learning apply to their teaching. Instruction in which reading is viewed as a process of constructing meaning within a context that emphasizes the child's personal connection to text can benefit a variety of children with special needs.

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Crossing Boundaries: What Do Second-Language- Learning Theories Say To Reading and Writing Teachers of English-as-a- Second-Language Learners?

Jill Fitzgerald

Increasing presence of English-as-a-second-language (ESL) learners in United States schools creates more and more need for all teachers, including mainstream teachers, reading teachers, and other specialists, to have a firm understanding of some basic principles and beliefs about how individuals learn a second language. Teachers who have been trained in foreign-language education, bilingual education, ESL education, and related fields — such as linguistics — usually have learned about predominant second-language-learning theories and their correlated instructional implications. However, other teachers generally have very little acquaintance with the theories. Consequently, they often have lingering questions about how ESL students learn orality and literacy and about how to help ESL learners develop English orality and literacy. In this article, first, two theoretical positions are briefly discussed which shed light on learning across languages and about how languages are related. Second, two major theories are described about how a second language is learned, and

implications for ESL-literacy learning are presented along with exemplative classroom scenarios. Finally, a summary of important points for teachers is given.

Second-language/first-language learning

Two theoretical positions, supported by empirical research, help us to understand two extremely important points about second language learning. The two points are: the *way* a second language is learned is highly similar to the way a first language is learned, and *what* is learned in one language is shared in the second (Hakuta, 1986; Krashen, 1991; Snow, 1992). The first theory (Chomsky, 1980) suggests that ability to learn any language (first, second, etc.) is innate and that each of us, all over the world, has something called a "universal grammar" built into our minds to allow us to learn language. Importantly, the "universal grammar" works for any language. So generally speaking, all language learning tends to happen in the same way.

The second position is called the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) Model of how two languages are related (Cummins, 1978; 1979). It posits that a common set of proficiencies underlies both the first and second languages. That is, if you learn something in one language, it will transfer to another language. Also, using a skill or strategy in one language is pretty much the same process as in another. An important feature of the CUP Model is that major literacy skills thought to be the same in both languages have been identified, including conceptual knowledge, subject-matter knowledge, higher-order thinking skills, and reading strategies.

It is crucial that teachers of ESL students know these two theoretical positions. As a teacher of teachers, I am often asked by preservice and inservice teachers about whether ESL students learn English in some special way. On numerous

occasions classroom and reading teachers have said to me, "I'm just at a loss as to what to do to teach my ESL kids about reading and writing." When included in literacy instruction, the positions just presented imply that, on the whole, the sound literacy-instruction practices teachers already use to teach native-English speakers, can be used with ESL learners.

Second-language learning theories

There are several theories on second-language learning, two of which dominate the field today — the Monitor Model and Cognitive Theory (McLaughlin, 1984). It is important to note that a third theory, Interlanguage Theory, is perhaps the most favored by second-language researchers. However, because few practical classroom implications (for either orality or literacy) have been drawn from the theory, I will not present it here.

The Monitor Model

The most well known, and perhaps the most widely cited, theory of second-language learning is Krashen's Monitor Model (Krashen, 1977; 1981; 1982; 1985; Krashen and Terrell, 1983). The theory is very popular among United States second-language teachers (Johnson, 1992), although it has been heavily criticized by some second-language researchers and theorists, for example, because supporting data are said to be limited and/or over-interpreted, findings opposed to the theory are ignored, and the theory makes sweeping assertions (Gregg, 1984; McLaughlin, 1978; 1984; 1987; Taylor 1984).

Krashen originally developed the theory primarily to explain second-language orality learning, but he has recently said that second-language literacy develops in a similar way. The model emphasizes the whole learning setting, that is, the linkages between the learner and the environment, or the

linkages between readers and writers. According to the Monitor Model, individuals learn to acquire the new language through efforts to understand and be understood in meaningful situations (Johnson, 1992; Hatch and Hawkins, 1987; Snow, 1991).

The theory is made up of five central hypotheses: Acquisition-Learning, Monitor, Natural Order, Input, and Affective Filter. The *Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis* asserts that second-language learning occurs through two independent means. One is acquisition, which is "a subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilize in acquiring their first language" (Krashen, 1985, p. 1). Acquisition happens through meaningful interaction in a natural setting where speakers are concerned with meaning, not form of talk. The second means is learning — a "conscious process that results in knowing about language" (Krashen, 1985, p. 1). Learning occurs in situations where formal rules and feedback are used for language instruction and where error detection and correction are important. The *Monitor Hypothesis* is that the learner applies language rules to monitor or edit language before or after speaking (or presumably before or after reading or writing) (Krashen, 1982). The *Natural Order Hypothesis* is that the rules of the second language are acquired in a predictable order (Krashen, 1985). An example of a natural acquisition order is that children tend to acquire rules of spelling in predictable patterns. For example, they initially use strings of letters to represent whole sentences. The letters may not bear any identifiable relationship to the words in the sentences. Next, initial sounds of words begin to appear in the strings, and then the spaces occur between letters to mark word boundaries. The *Input Hypothesis* posits that individuals acquire language in only one way — by understanding messages, or by receiving "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1985).

We move from our current level of ability to the next level gradually by processing only a limited amount of new information (e.g., new vocabulary, new grammar rules). Two important corollaries are these. First, speech (and by extension, literacy) cannot be directly taught. Rather, orality and literacy emerge in naturally communicative settings where individuals cooperatively try to understand one another. Second, if what is heard (or written) is comprehensible and plentiful, the grammar needed for acquisition is automatically provided. That is, the rules of the second language will be acquired naturally through the communicative setting without, for example, grammar, phonics, or spelling instruction. The *Affective Filter Hypothesis* is that there is a filter which sifts emotions, motivations, and other affective features, and can act as a barrier to acquisition. For example, if the student has negative feelings about the new language and the culture associated with it, learning the new language may be harder.

In sum, Krashen believes that second-language learners use two distinct processes to learn the new language. They acquire its rules in the same way children acquire a first language — that is, in a predictable order subconsciously by receiving comprehensible input which passes by an affective filter which facilitates acquisition. Second-language learners also learn about the new language consciously through more formal means of instruction focusing on rules, feedback, and error detection and correction. Finally, a mental Monitor controls the learning.

Extrapolated ESL-literacy instruction guidelines

The main implications for ESL literacy from each of Krashen's five hypotheses are summarized along six dimensions in Table 1. They are:

- Since second-language acquisition is subconscious, error correction in English oral reading or

in writing will not help acquisition. However, teacher-correction of errors may affect conscious second-language learning. Consequently, Krashen implies that error correction should be used judiciously and only for the purpose of helping students to be aware of particular points.

- Formal rules play a limited role in second-language learning. Therefore, English grammar, phonics, and spelling rules should be taught primarily at later stages of second-language learning and only to help learners polish their speech and writing.

- Teachers cannot impose a sequence of language rules, such as spelling patterns, on learners. Therefore, "invented spelling" should be encouraged.

- Since reading and writing results from building competence via plentiful reading and writing of understandable material, phonics and other "subskills" and rules will be acquired through these natural reading/writing contexts. Consequently, more emphasis is placed on implicit rather than explicit teaching.

- Teachers should provide lots of opportunity for English reading, writing, and conversation with interested partners; optimize comprehensible input; optimize the learner's interest in the discourse by selecting interesting and/or relevant topics, such as school subject-area content; and provide opportunities for learners to manage conversation and literacy. Also, Krashen believes that reading in the second language can aid oral progress.

- The teacher can facilitate learners' high-level motivation and self confidence, while simultaneously decreasing anxiety by carefully selecting activities, promoting a "safe" classroom environment, and reflecting a positive, interested demeanor.

Table 1
Comparison of Emphases and Instructional Implications of the Monitor Model and Cognitive Theory

(Emphasis) Dimensions	Monitor Model <i>(The whole learning setting; linkages between environment and learner)</i>	Cognitive Theory <i>(The internal mental processes)</i>
1. Error correction	Use sparingly	--*
2. Place of subskills, strategies (e.g., grammar, phonics, &/or spelling rules)	Taught at later stages & only to help learners "polish"	Taught from early stage on
3. Teacher alteration of learning sequence	Can not be done	Can be done
4. Explicit vs. implicit teaching	More emphasis on implicit teaching	More emphasis on explicit teaching
5. Practice	Lots of it	Lots of it
6. Motivation	Promote a "safe" classroom environment	--*

--* *not a specific focus of the theory*

Classroom illustration. While a single illustration or two can not show implementation of all of the guidelines emanating from a second-language theory, it may reveal some of the most salient aspects and capture the flavor of what classroom ESL-literacy instruction might be like. Here is a composite scenario created to show what instruction consistent with the Monitor Model might look like.

Maria is an ESL student in Ms. Jensen's fourth-grade classroom. They are sitting in a corner of the room. Maria is one of five children in a family which arrived in the United

States from Guatemala just one month ago. Maria's family came to the United States so that her parents and the older siblings could work in a restaurant that her aunt and uncle had already established here. In Guatemala, Maria had attended school irregularly, and had begun to learn to read and write in Spanish. A shy child, she listens attentively in class, but has few friends. Though she seems to understand much of what goes on in class, she seldom speaks with anyone except Ms. Jensen, and even with Ms. Jensen, her words are few. Ms. Jensen and Maria are discussing a piece of writing that Ms. Jensen asked Maria to do last week. She told Maria that she wanted to know more about her and asked her to write about two or three most important things that Ms. Jensen should know. Maria wrote: *I gatamla. hapi hre. 4 bruthr 1 sistr. mothr fathr. wrk rastrt.*

Ms. Jensen asks Maria to read the piece to her, and then the following conversation occurs. Notice the following salient characteristics of the interchange. The "Monitor Model" column in Table 1 highlights these characteristics. First, the emphasis is on conversation about authentic text. The teacher engages Maria in writing and conversation in a casual way, for a real purpose — so that each can learn something about the other. Second, there is no error correction (see Dimension 1 in the table). Third, aspects of Spanish grammar which differ from English grammar show up as negative transfer in Maria's writing. For example, when she says she is happy here, she deletes the word *I*. In Spanish, the pronoun can be inferred from the verb and from context. The teacher is aware of this negative transfer. Notice especially that she only responds by incidentally using the word *I* in her own sentence. She believes that Maria will learn this grammatical rule when she is ready. Consequently, she does not try to explicitly teach her the rule (see Dimensions 2, 3, and 4 in Table 1). Fourth, the teacher interweaves reading and

writing with their conversation so that Maria practices literacy in a meaningful context. In this way, she also teaches implicitly rather than explicitly (see Dimensions 4 and 5 in the table). Fifth, by helping Maria to learn about her and by taking an interest in Maria's own life outside of school, the teacher shows sensitivity to Maria and opens her own personal world to her, thereby increasing the likelihood of creating a connection or bond between them. This effort could lead to increased motivation for Maria to learn (see Dimension 6 in the table).

Ms. J: Maria, tell me, do you mean "I am from Guatemala?" or do you mean "I left Guatemala?" or something else?

Maria: I from Guatemala.

Ms. J: Do you know, Maria, while we talk about what you wrote, I'm going to write something to you. Here.

Ms. J. writes and says simultaneously, "I am from the United States."

Ms. J: Can you read what I wrote?

Maria reads it.

Ms. J: Maria, you say you are happy here. What makes you happy?

M: Like you. Not 'fraid.

Ms. J. writes, "I like you too," and reads it aloud to Maria, pointing to each word.

Ms. J: Tell me, what are your brothers and sisters like? How old are they?

Maria: 20, 19, 17, 16, and 12.

Ms. J: Do they play with you?

Maria: No. They work.

Ms. J: Do you work too?

Maria: Yes.

Ms. J: What do you do at work?

Maria: I give menus.

Ms. J: *That's a big job for a little girl! I used to do that too, but I was 16 when I started. I worked in a restaurant. At first, I worked in the kitchen. Then I helped give out menus. Then I was a waitress.*

Ms. J. writes and reads, "I am married. I have one little girl and one little boy."

Ms. J: *What would you like to know about my family?*

Ms. J continues to try to engage Maria in conversation about each of their families, interjecting reading and writing.

Cognitive theory. Cognitive Theory (McLaughlin, 1987) is narrower in outlook than the Monitor Model. Whereas the Monitor Model addresses the whole learning situation and emphasizes important contexts outside of the learner (e.g., the language supplied by another person), Cognitive Theory focuses more exclusively on internal mental processes of second-language learning. Though more explicitly articulated for orality, some argue that it also applies to literacy, and some research on the theory has been done with literacy situations (McLaughlin, 1984).

Simply stated, Cognitive Theory posits that a learner acquires a second language through gradual accumulation of subskills (McLaughlin, 1987). In the theory, the term *subskills* has a special meaning. *Subskills* are procedures — for example, strategies for selecting appropriate vocabulary; grammatical rules; knowing how to open and close a fairy tale in a composition; and knowing conventions of various social settings such as greeting strangers and introducing oneself. At first, the learner has to concentrate on, and think about, the subskills — but with time, thought and concentration are not required. For example, in a hierarchy for writing setting a goal would be a higher order skill, followed by choosing a topic. Subskills would include recalling and choosing words, using

appropriate syntax, and so on (Levelt, 1978). When a component of the task becomes automatic, the learner's attention is freed to be devoted to other aspects of the task. Importantly, automaticity is achieved through practice. Additionally, as more learning happens, the learner's mental array of concepts and rules change.

Extrapolated ESL-literacy guidelines

Implications of Cognitive Theory for ESL-literacy instruction include the following.

- Educators should teach subskills, such as strategies for recognition of grammar, phonics, and spelling patterns, or how to recognize organizational patterns in text.
- Teachers can facilitate ESL learners' changing cognitions by gradually introducing higher-level thinking procedures and tasks; that is, they can alter the natural learning progression. For instance, in reading, teachers might slowly move learners into more difficult texts while increasingly asking more complex questions, such as questions about causality (e.g., "Why did the main character do that?").
- Further, teachers can enhance student progress by explicitly teaching subskills or strategies.
- Plenty of opportunity for practice is essential for automaticity.

Table 1 shows how these implications compare to the implications from the Monitor Model along four of the dimensions.

Classroom illustration. Here is an example showing how Ms. Petersen, a teacher whose beliefs are more aligned with Cognitive Theory, might interact with Maria, the ESL student depicted in the earlier classroom illustration. While a

similar assignment is given and some of the same conversation and activity take place, there are at least three pivotal modifications in the scenario. The "Cognitive Theory" column in Table 1 highlights points about these changes. First, even though Maria is in the early stages of learning English, Ms. Petersen teaches her a specific subskill, the grammar rule that the pronoun *I* must be stated (see Dimension 2 in the table). Second, by trying to teach the grammar rule, Ms. Petersen shows that she believes she can intervene in the natural order of learning grammar rules (see Dimension 3). Third, notice especially how Ms. Petersen explicitly teaches the grammar rule by showing the correct form, reading it aloud, asking Maria to repeat it, and then at the end of the lesson, summarizing the rule (see Dimension 4).

Ms. P: Maria, tell me, do you mean "I am from Guatemala?" or do you mean "I left Guatemala?" or something else?

Maria: I from Guatemala.

Ms. P: Maria, here's how we say and write that in English.

Ms. P. writes and says "I am from Guatemala."

Ms. P: Can you read what I wrote?

Maria reads it.

Ms. P: Maria, you say you are happy here. We write it like this, "I am happy here." Can you read it?

Maria reads it.

Ms. P: Maria, what makes you happy?

Maria: Like you. Not 'fraid.

Ms. P: We say and write it like this, "I like you. I am not afraid." Can you read it?

Maria reads it.

Ms. P: Tell me, what are your brothers and sisters like? How old are they?

Maria: 20, 19, 17, 16, and 12.

Ms. P: Do they play with you?

Maria: No. They work.

Ms. P: *Do you work too?*

Maria: *Yes.*

Ms. P: *What do you do at work?*

Maria: *I give menus.*

Ms. P: *That's a big job for a little girl! I used to do that too, but I was 16 when I started. I worked in a restaurant. At first, I worked in the kitchen. Then I helped give out menus. Then I was a waitress. Do you know what "waitress" means?*

Maria: *The person brings food.*

Ms. P: *Yes, that's right. Now Maria, there's something important we've talked about today that I want to make sure to say. Let's look at the sentences we wrote together again.*

Ms. P. *reads and points to the words. "I am from Guatemala. I am happy here. I like you. I am not afraid."*

Ms. P: *Do you see that each sentence has the word "I" — in English we say "I am" or "I" each time we talk about ourselves. In Spanish, you don't need the word "I" each time. In English, you do.*

Final points

What then have we gained as teachers of reading and writing from these theories of how a second language is learned? First, certain positions suggest that ESL students learn English orality and literacy in much the same way that native-English speakers learn them and that what is learned in one language will be shared in another. This understanding lays a critical foundation for teachers because it suggests that we can, on the whole, use the sound literacy-instruction practices we use with native-English speakers when we teach ESL students.

Next, second-language-learning theories do lead to some important guidelines for teaching reading and writing to ESL

learners. One guideline common to both the Monitor Model and Cognitive Theory is that abundant practice in reading and writing is extremely important. However, the instructional guidelines differ considerably from one theory to the other. The differences may be simplified by saying that the Monitor Model represents somewhat more of a top-down stance to learning, whereas Cognitive Theory represents more of a bottom-up stance. That is, Krashen takes the position that lower-level features or subskills of reading and writing will grow naturally out of meaningful encounters with text. He suggests that top-level features, such as meaning making, take precedence. On the other hand, cognitive theorists tend to suggest that the lower-or bottom-level features will add up to the higher-level meaning. Key differences in instructional manifestations of these positions are that, as compared to teachers who embrace the Monitor Model, cognitivists would appear to teach more subskills and strategies, such as grammar and phonics, and how to make grammatical decisions and figure out unknown words earlier in the learning process. They might feel the natural sequence of rule learning can be altered through teacher intervention, and might rely more on explicit or direct teaching.

How should teachers choose between theoretical positions and accompanying instructional implications? Or should teachers select instructional options from both theories and try to combine them? In making decisions, it is probably helpful to understand that the differences in instructional approaches extrapolated from the second-language theories are not unlike differences involved in contemporary debates in the literacy field in general. Many (though not all) instructional implications of the Monitor Model tend to coincide reasonably well with whole-language and process-writing approaches which emphasize the whole learning setting and linkages between readers and writers. On

the other hand, the instructional implications of Cognitive Theory seem generally more aligned with other positions which focus more on the importance of direct or explicit teaching of phonics and other skills and strategies.

In short, there is no definitive answer as to whether the instructional actions derived from the Monitor Model or from Cognitive Theory are more effective for ESL learners. Just as there is little research with native-English speakers comparing and contrasting whole-language or process-writing to other approaches, there is little research with ESL learners comparing and contrasting various reading and writing approaches. In fact, very little literacy-instruction research has been done with ESL learners.

Consequently, teachers can either choose one theory and its accompanying set of instructional implications, or they can select and meld together aspects of each theory and its implications. Teachers who feel the Monitor Model is more compatible with their own world view of learning and literacy instruction, might find texts such as *Whole Language for Second Language Learners* (Freeman and Freeman, 1992) especially useful. Teachers who find Cognitive Theory more consonant with their views might find new explicit-strategy-instruction ideas in materials such as Carrell's (1988) chapter in *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*.

My own inclination is to try to meld aspects of the two theories. Since they emphasize different features of ESL-literacy learning, I think instructional selections can be made which are coincident with strengths of each theory's emphasis. For example, the main strength of the Monitor Model is that it focuses on the social, meaning-based, reader-to-writer, teacher-to-learner, aspects of literacy. Instructional derivations from the Monitor Model, such as focusing on meaning,

providing a safe environment, and offering lots of practice in authentic situations, would seem highly likely to help ESL learners build knowledge of reader-writer linkages and the importance of reading and writing for meaning. On the other hand, the main strength of Cognitive Theory is that it focuses on the internal mental processes involved in reading and writing. Thus its associated instructional implications centering on early intervention which focuses on mental literacy skills and strategies would seem likely to help ESL learners acquire important cognitive procedures.

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Comprehending Metaphor: Using a Salient Characteristic Analysis Technique (SCAT)

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Aristotle wrote in the *Poetics* "Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else. The greatest thing by far is to be master of the metaphor" (Ross, 1952). Comprehension of metaphor and simile can be very difficult for students who are unprepared to process language at a non-literal level. This is often the case because students are typically exposed to comprehension instruction that has been directed at deriving only literal meaning from the text. On the other hand, some speakers or writers do not intend language to be interpreted literally. Students who attempt to make use of literal comprehension strategies when confronted with metaphorical language may become frustrated with their inability to construct meaning. Often a metaphorical statement makes no sense at all, or the information within the passage may seem contradictory or false. Literal level comprehension directs the reader to understand what something is, but metaphorical language makes a comparison between something and what it is not (Billow, 1975). Thus, when considering metaphor it seems critical that comprehension instruction should focus not only on literal uses of language but also on non-literal language to

enrich each reader's understanding of language (Ortony, Reynolds, and Arter, 1978).

Basal reading texts at the intermediate level offer teachers and students only token instruction on how to identify figurative or metaphorical language and do not help children construct the meaning of the metaphor. Instruction typically requires that students distinguish a metaphor from a simile. Both metaphors and similes use dissimilar terms to draw a comparison. Students are taught that a *metaphor* is a comparison which does not use *like* or *as*. Following instruction on defining metaphor and simile, students are asked to identify metaphors and similes in sentences. While this instruction may improve students' ability to identify these figurative language elements, it does not address the more pivotal task of teaching student strategies for constructing meaning from metaphor. However, these same reading basals include selections — many of which are poetry — which require metaphorical interpretations. For example, Durkin (1981) found that the number of poems in five reading basals ranged from 38 to 155 and that comprehension instruction for poetry was rarely included. Justification for this lack of instruction was based on the notion that poetry is meant to be enjoyed and that no instruction should interfere with this enjoyment. However, these same basals dedicate considerable instructional time to the comprehension of literal language, but little to developing understanding of the complex language tapestry found in poetry.

Understanding metaphor, both structurally and figuratively, is an important part of the ability necessary to comprehend a variety of texts. In current terms, comprehension is accomplished when readers relate what is known to that which is unknown (Pearson and Johnson, 1978; McNeil, 1984). This is particularly true with metaphor. The

comprehension of metaphor requires the coalescence of the known, or familiar, with the unknown or the strange. Because metaphor is often used in written and conversational language, it is essential for students to learn how to comprehend metaphor if they are to construct deeper and richer meanings in reading.

Salience imbalance hypothesis

Ortony (1979) attempted to describe the nature of metaphorical comprehension with the salience imbalance hypothesis, which is an extension of similarity theory (Tversky, 1977). The salience imbalance hypothesis states that an imbalance exists between shared characteristics of two terms in a metaphorical statement, the topic and vehicle. For example, in the metaphor, *the man's feet were ice*, the topic term (object of comparison) is *feet* and *ice* is the vehicle term (term used to describe the topic). The characteristics of the topic and vehicle terms must be identified to demonstrate the nature of the imbalance (see Figure 1).

In this example, a listing of possible characteristics of the topic, *feet*, might include toes, a heel, used to walk on, they are sometimes large or small, they might get cold or hot. For the vehicle term, *ice*, we identify that it is very cold, made of water, will melt when exposed to heat, can be slick and hard. The only shared or salient characteristic related to both the topic and vehicle terms from the metaphor presented above is *cold*. An imbalance between the topic and vehicle occurs because cold is of relative low salience, or prominence, for the topic term, *feet*, and of high salience for the vehicle term, *ice*. A metaphor is created when this directional low/high imbalance related to the salient characteristic is present. The shared characteristic must be of low salience to the topic and high salience to the vehicle. Without this salience imbalance, there could be no metaphor. Helping students recognize this

salience imbalance can provide them with an effective means for comprehending metaphor.

Figure 1
Characteristics of Topic and Vehicle Terms

	Topic	Vehicle	
	<u><i>feet</i></u>	<u><i>ice</i></u>	
High Salience	toes	cold	High Salience
	heel	water	
	walked on	melts	
	large	slick	
	small	hard	
Low Salience	hot		Low Salience
	cold		

A critical point to remember is that if the imbalance is reversed to high/low (the shared characteristic is of high salience in the topic and low salience in the vehicle) then there is no metaphor. For example, if we reverse the metaphor described above to read *the ice was a man's feet*, we would no longer have a metaphor. The shared characteristic *cold* is of high salience in the topic and low salience in the vehicle.

Ortony (1979) identified two presuppositions which must be present for the salience imbalance hypothesis to be valid. The first is that the reader must approach the metaphor with some pre-existing knowledge or schema (Rumelhart and Ortony, 1977). Secondly, the reader must be able to identify the relative salience of a shared characteristic

between the topic and vehicle terms. As mentioned earlier, the shared characteristic must be of low salience, or prominence, to the topic term and high salience to the vehicle term.

Readence, Baldwin, Martin and O'Brien (1984) provided sixth graders and adults with two words and asked subjects to list at least 10 characteristics under each word. The results of the study indicated that both groups of subjects were sensitive to the low/high relationship that existed between the sets of characteristics. In a second experiment, 24 college students were asked to select the matching characteristic of normal and reversed, or transposed, metaphors. The subjects were able to select the critical matching attribute significantly more often in the normal metaphors than in the reversed metaphors. The study concluded that a low/high relationship does exist in the interpretation of simple metaphors.

Teaching metaphorical comprehension

Strategies must be created to assist students in being able to identify the salience of shared characteristics within the topic and vehicle terms of a metaphor. Readence, Baldwin, and Rickelman (1983a) found that children who have difficulty in processing metaphors lack the knowledge of critical matching attributes. Readence, Baldwin, and Rickelman (1983b) also found that if students were taught to locate the critical attributes they were likely to comprehend the metaphor. They suggested that their results pointed to the need for specific vocabulary instruction in teaching children to comprehend metaphors. Children must be taught to identify the matching attributes of the topic and vehicle if they are to be able to identify the meaning contained within the metaphor.

Thompson (1986) developed an instructional strategy to teach metaphorical comprehension which appears to be a modification of traditional Semantic Feature Analysis (SFA). Semantic Feature Analysis is a strategy teachers have used in the past to help students learn how to identify matching characteristics between multiple words. Johnson and Pearson (1984) point out that SFA draws the reader's attention to prior knowledge (and the way it is structured) and stresses relationships between words. Anders and Bos (1986) noted that the foundation of SFA is in schema theory (Rumelhart, 1980) and the vocabulary knowledge research of Anderson and Freebody (1981).

With Thompson's strategy, students must access their prior knowledge of words to be able to identify matching characteristics, much like traditional SFA. This meets the first requirement of metaphorical comprehension as put forth by salience imbalance hypothesis. However, the SFA instructional strategy is not sensitive to the need to show the relative low/high salience of the shared characteristics. It is the identification of this salience which allows students to access the appropriate shared characteristic and construct the meaning of the metaphor. Therefore, it is evident that instructional strategies must be created to assist students in identifying the salience of shared characteristics.

Salient Characteristic Analysis Technique (SCAT)

A Salient Characteristic Analysis Technique (SCAT) was developed to assist students in comprehending metaphorical text. This technique was designed to meet both of Ortony's (1979) presuppositions of salience imbalance hypothesis. To comprehend metaphor effectively, students must use their prior knowledge in identifying characteristics of words and they must identify the low/high imbalance of a common or shared characteristic of the topic and vehicle. The SCAT

requires students to access prior word knowledge and provides graphic representation of the low/high imbalance of shared characteristics.

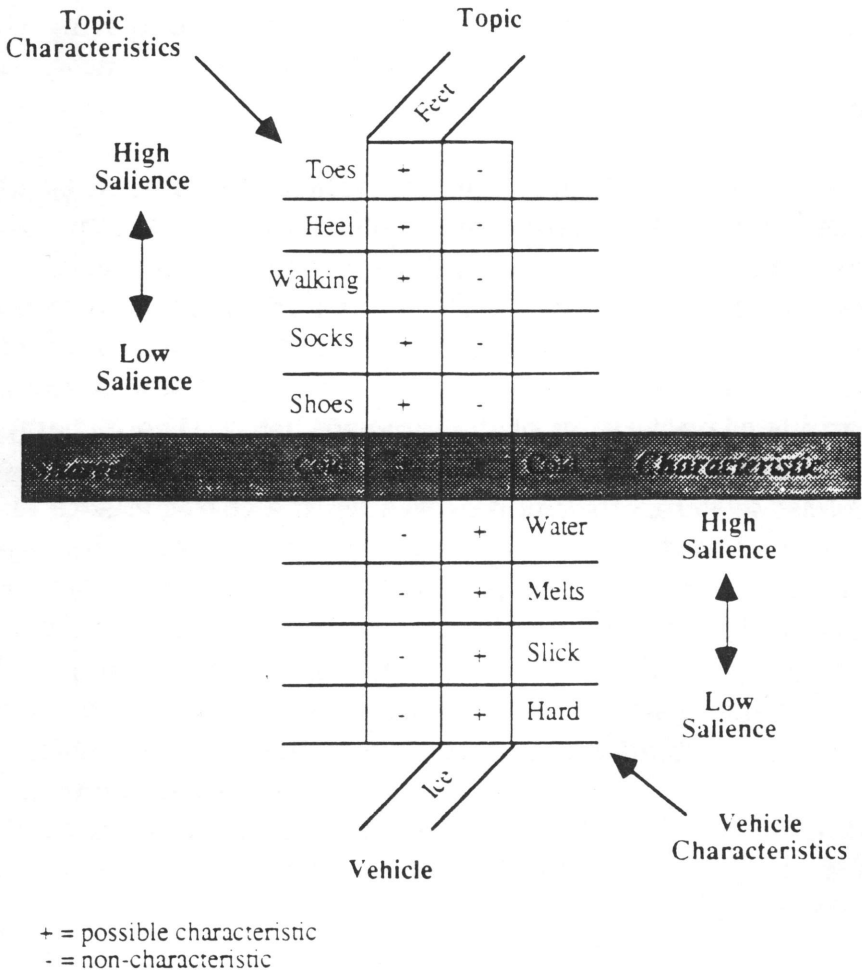
The SCAT combines the word characteristics identification strengths of an SFA strategy with the necessity to identify salience of shared characteristics within the metaphor. When comprehending metaphor, readers are only comparing characteristics of two words, the topic and vehicle, rather than multiple words.

To use SCAT, the topic and vehicle terms must be identified from the metaphor. We will use our previous metaphor, *the man's feet were ice*, as an example. In this metaphor the topic is *feet* and the vehicle is *ice*. The topic is placed at the top of the SCAT grid and the vehicle is placed at the bottom (see Figure 2). Down the top left side of the grid various characteristics of the topic are listed. These characteristics should be listed from *most salient* at the top of the grid to *least salient* in the middle. We list the characteristics of the vehicle term down the right side of the grid beginning where we left off with the characteristics of the topic. The most salient characteristic of the vehicle is listed in the middle of the grid and the least salient appears at the bottom. The reader then places a plus or minus in each box. A plus is used if the characteristic is attributable to the topic or vehicle. A minus is used if the characteristic is not attributable to the topic or vehicle. The SCAT grid may be as large or small as necessary to represent the characteristics of the topic and vehicle adequately.

As you can see in Figure 2, the shared characteristic for the topic *feet* and the vehicle *ice* is *cold*. The shared characteristic demonstrates the low/high relationship which must

exist with metaphor. *Cold* is a low salient characteristic of the topic *feet* and a high salient characteristic of the vehicle *ice*.

Figure 2
Salient Characteristic Analysis Technique (SCAT) Grid



The metaphor, *the man's feet were ice*, provides a rather simple example of how effective the SCAT is in providing

students with a visual heuristic to identify shared characteristics within a metaphor as well as the low/high relationship which must exist. It is this characteristic which makes the SCAT such a useful and effective tool in helping students develop strategies to comprehend metaphors.

Sample lesson

While the SCAT provides an effective means of teaching metaphorical comprehension, it is not intended to be used with every metaphor the students may confront. Initially, the teacher directs the construction of meaning from metaphors using the SCAT. Following teacher modeling of the SCAT, students are encouraged to experiment with the technique using metaphors from their reading and eventually internalize the technique as one strategy for constructing meaning from metaphorical statements. The following partial example of teacher modeling uses a metaphor from poetry. When using the SCAT, we do not intend to identify a single appropriate interpretation of the poem. We merely wish to provide students with a heuristic to assist them as they access prior knowledge and identify salience of characteristics prior to constructing their poetic interpretation. The SCAT is most effective in providing a visual representation of metaphorical comprehension.

Teaching modeling. *As we read, we may come across metaphorical statements authors use. To understand the metaphor we will need to identify a shared characteristic between the two terms being compared. Today I will show you one way to identify that common characteristic and how you can use this information to construct the meaning of the metaphor.*

In the past, we have discussed interpretation's of poetry written by various authors. Today I have chosen the poem "Trip" by Langston Hughes (1958) to

demonstrate a process you may use to understand metaphorical statements.

I went to San Francisco.
 I saw the bridges high
 Spun across the water
 Like cobwebs in the sky (p. 146)

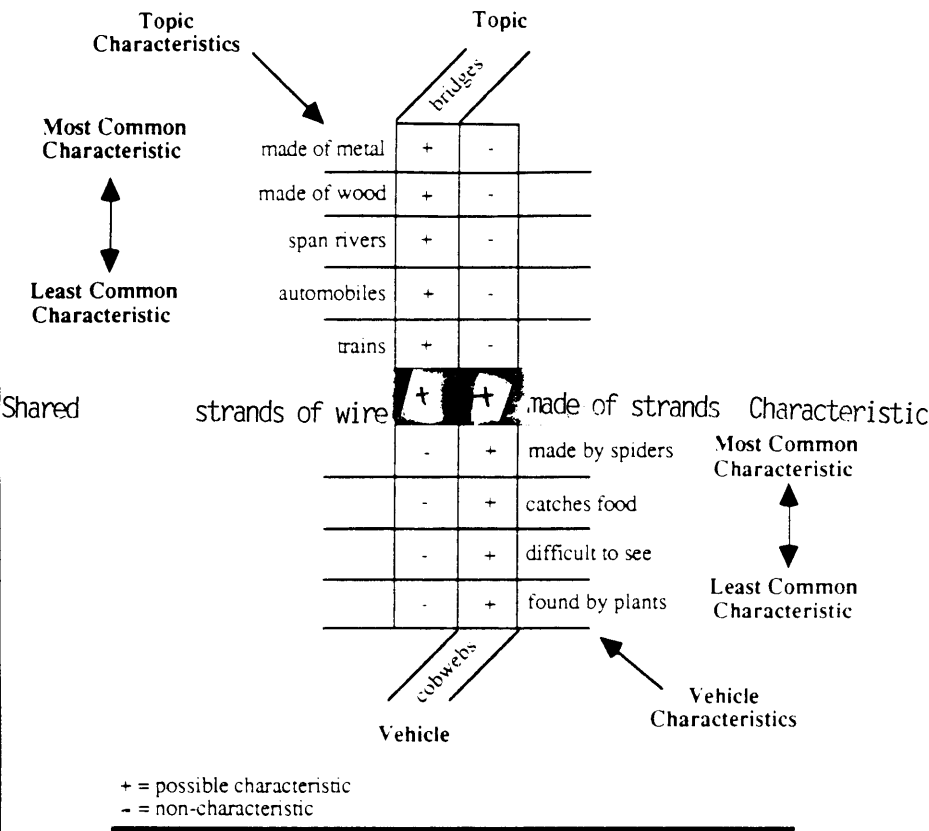
In this poem, bridges are being compared to cobwebs. Langston Hughes is not really saying that bridges are cobwebs. He draws this comparison to help us picture what he is describing.

To understand this poem we must identify a shared characteristic of bridges and cobwebs. To do this we first list the characteristics of bridges and then cobwebs. As we generate the lists we try to order characteristics from most common to least common. We will use a grid to help us visualize this process (see Figure 3). Common characteristics of bridges may include: made of metal, made of wood, span rivers, used for automobiles, used for trains, held up by strands of wires. We list these characteristics under the word bridges. Next, we identify characteristics of cobwebs. This list might include the following: made of strands, catch food, difficult to see, found in plants. The shared characteristic from these lists appears to be the crisscrossing strands that make up some bridges and most cobwebs. As we see from the grid, this is a fairly common characteristic of cobwebs and a less common characteristic of bridges. Identifying the shared characteristic helps us to visualize and construct the meaning of the metaphorical statement. In this case the author wishes us to visualize the pattern present on bridges surrounding San Francisco. This pattern is similar to the pattern present in cobwebs.

The teacher models this same procedure with a second metaphorical statement and solicits student participation in

identifying the topic and vehicle terms. Students are also invited to provide some characteristics of these terms. The teacher provides input as needed to support student participation the dialogue. In future lessons, the teacher gradually releases more responsibility (Pearson and Gallagher, 1983) to the students for constructing the meaning of the metaphor using the SCAT.

Figure 3
SCAT Grid for "Trip" Poem



Concluding thoughts

Teachers have expressed a real need to not only have their students identify figurative language, but more importantly to comprehend it. Given the amount of text students read requiring comprehension of figurative language, it is surprising that very little has been done to provide instructional strategies for teachers to use within their classrooms. This article is an attempt to provide one possibility for teachers who are concerned about teaching comprehension of figurative language.

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Professional Materials Review

Beyond words: Picture books for older readers and writers. Written by S. Benedict and L. Carlisle (Eds.). Heinemann Educational Books, Inc., 70 Court Street, Portsmouth NH 03801. ISBN: 0-435-08710-X. US\$16.00.

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Picture books are for everyone. I believed this before I read *Beyond Words: Picture Books for Older Readers and Writers*, but after reading it, I am even more convinced. The fourteen chapters in this edited book include articles by a variety of professionals, from university professors to teachers of middle school students to professional picture book authors and illustrators. The book begins with a preface and several chapters giving a rationale for using picture books with older students. It is stressed that picture books provide enjoyment, aesthetic value, information, imagery, an awareness of language, examples of form and structure, and models of innovation. Many picture books discuss mature themes and others often present interesting factual information appropriate for content area learning. In chapter two, Thomas Newkirk says our view of picture books must change. We need to consider picture books as literature, not just children's literature.

Beyond Words goes into great depth to describe why picture books should be a choice for older students. Picture

books can reacquaint students with old friends and encourage a new perception and a new depth into old ideas as well. Philosophical issues such as free will, being and nonbeing, dreaming and skepticism, and life-style choices are examples of themes found in picture books. Carlisle states that picture books provide economy in dealing with these issues so they can be studied easily and intelligently by older students.

Various chapters give practical ideas for using picture books with students. Chapter six, written by Tricia Crockett and Sara Weidhaas, two middle school students, describes steps to take when students are creating their own picture books. In chapter nine, librarian Carolyn K. Jenks gives suggestions of titles to use for teaching literary elements such as setting, theme, plot, style, point of view, and character development. Chapter ten, by Phyllis E. Brazee, deals with using picture books in science class, and Georgia Heard discusses the relationship between poetry and picture books in chapter eleven. In chapter thirteen, artist Ruth Tietjen Councell reaffirms the importance of illustrations. Middle school students certainly can learn through studying illustrations and doing their own illustrating. All of these chapters give the classroom teacher practical advice in using picture books in the classroom and the rationale needed to support and defend their use.

Other chapters give even more suggestions. Picture books can be studied as a genre and also can be used throughout the school year, mixed in with chapter books, for any topics or themes studied. Having nonfiction picture books available for use on a research report can help students write with depth and variety instead of copying the style of the encyclopedia. Students with learning disabilities may be able to use picture books to study a topic especially well, and if picture books are used liberally in the classroom anyway, they will

not feel awkward or ashamed. Even high school students can use picture books effectively. After all, many will be parents one day, and giving them a knowledge base and a love of picture books can help ensure they will read to their own children.

Beyond Words concludes with a substantial bibliography of picture books to use with older students.

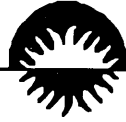
This book leaves you with a hunger for more information about using picture books in the upper grades. If its main goal is to motivate further study of picture books for older students, then it has succeeded. After reading *Beyond Words*, I especially looked forward to sharing picture books with my seventh graders. The first picture book I read to them was *Faithful Elephants* (Tsuchiya, 1988). When I heard my students gasp and saw their wide eyes, my belief was confirmed. Picture books are for everyone.



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Children's Literature

Looking For Crabs. Written and illustrated by B. Whately. Angus and Robertson Publishers, Sydney, Australia. 1993. ISBN: 0-207-17596-9. US\$12.00.

William P. Bintz, Western Kentucky University

One day a family goes looking for crabs in rock pools on the beach. Mum and Dad provide good "do's and don'ts" to the children: be really quiet, look under small rocks, don't be scary, and watch your step. Despite this advice nobody in the family finds any crabs. Mum predicts the crabs are out to lunch. Dad suspects they are on holiday in Hawaii. Little sister thinks they are on vacation at Disneyland. Her brother, the narrator in the story, believes nobody is looking hard enough. Finally, the family decides to leave the beach, not really knowing where crabs go during the holidays. They only know that there are no crabs at this beach! This simple story has many appealing characteristics. To begin with, it describes a very familiar event — a family trip to the beach. Interestingly enough, this event is seen from the perspectives of two very different groups: the family members and the crabs. The author does a very clever job of juxtaposing a family excursion to the beach with the crabs' perspective on the same event. The result is a humorous story that is thoroughly entertaining reading.

Much of the humor occurs as family members spontaneously concoct and volunteer different theories about crabs without an inkling of what everyday life is like for them. In the end, all of these theories are amusingly proven wrong by the crabs themselves. This humor is exaggerated by the fact that readers can see the crabs lurking under the water, but

none of the family members can see them at all. Thus, in an interesting and ingenious turn of events, readers in this story are privy to more information visually than the story's characters are. The author-artist creates a series of attractive illustrations based on an imaginative combination of reality and fantasy. Attractive full-color illustrations of family and beach (reality) combined with adorable crabs (fantasy) are presented against an expansive white background. These illustrations effectively contribute to the aesthetic qualities of the book, as well as the general interest and amusement of the story. Not surprisingly, *Looking For Crabs* was short-listed for the 1994 Book of the Year by The Children's Book Council of Australia. For very young readers (preschool and K-3 elementary school students), it offers sheer reading enjoyment. For older readers, it offers a potential for starting some new and interesting conversations about a wide variety of topics related to the ocean and the beach — including oceanography, sea life, crustaceans, shellfish, and family outings, among other things. This award-winning picture book from Australia is sure to delight readers of all ages.



The Mouse and the Apple. Written and illustrated by Stephen Butler. Tambourine Books, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10019. ISBN: 0-688-12810-6. 32 pp. US\$15.00.

Waiting patiently often pays off — that's the message of this good-natured, vividly illustrated story which offers an attractive updating of the old Fox and the Grapes fable. Here a series of large animals, unable to wait for a good thing or force events to happen when they wish, depart hungry, grumpy and convinced that the shiny apple in the tree is probably "rotten or sour or hard or soft," while a quiet, smiling little mouse is rewarded when a delicious apple finally falls from the tree. (JMJ)



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