Annotated Bibliography of Research in the Teaching of English

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Introduction

Since 2003, RTE has published the annual “Annotated Bibliography of Research in the Teaching of English,” and we are proud to share these curated and annotated citations once again. The goal of the annual bibliography is to offer a synthesis of the research published in the area of English language arts within the past year that may be of interest to RTE readers. Abstracted citations and those featured in the “Other Related Research” sections were published, either in print or online, between June 2019 and June 2020. The bibliography is divided into nine subject-area sections. A three-person team of scholars with diverse research interests and background experiences in preK–16 educational settings reviewed and selected the manuscripts for each section using library databases and leading empirical journals. Each team abstracted significant contributions to the body of peer-reviewed studies that addressed the current research questions and concerns in their topic area.

Works listed in the “Other Related Research” sections include additional important research studies relevant to the topic area, position papers from leading organizations, or comprehensive handbooks. The listings are selective; we make no attempt to include all research that appeared in the period under review.

The topic area sections of the bibliography are:

- Digital/Technology Tools
- Inclusive Literacy Instruction/Special Education
- Literacy
- Literary Response/Literature
- Media Literacy
- Professional Development/Teacher Education
- Reading
- Second Language Literacy
- Social Justice/Critical Approaches
- Writing

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Digital/Technology Tools

This section focuses on digital literacy research that explores technology and online platforms for instructional purposes. Studies examine the use of online literacy learning platforms and instructional implications; online reading, writing, and feedback tools; and technology for instructional purposes, including coding, e-books/e-reading, digital storytelling, online discussion, digital video production, podcasts, and digital portfolios. In light of the current public health crisis and increased demand for remote learning, priority was given to studies that address teaching and learning in online settings, as well as pedagogy, knowledge, and skills needed to use digital technologies to facilitate literacy learning. (Candance Doerr-Stevens, lead contributor)


Reviews the findings of three studies that used web-based tools to address issues of climate change with English language arts preservice teachers. Illustrates teacher educators’ use of digital artifacts, virtual tour–building, field trips, video composition, and navigation of immersive websites as digital practices for critical understandings around climate change. Finds that opportunities for spontaneous dialogue as well as deliberate curation and composition of digital texts promoted preservice personal connection to the issue of climate change, as well as alignment with relevant theories, rationales, and digital resources for addressing climate change in ELA classrooms. Recommends an increased focus on critical digital literacy practices for engaging pupils in understanding climate through media-rich, connected learning approaches that center students’ needs or interests.


Theorizes participatory video as a method of inquiry into the embodied literate practices of first-year college students as they traverse various contexts. Implements feminist pedagogies and decolonizing approaches of educational research within a 4-year longitudinal study to examine the video diaries and video literacy narratives of first-year writing students. Considers how two women of color used the camera rhetorically to redress racist incidents from their literacy histories and to protect themselves from the gaze of white audiences by using digital avatars. Argues that participatory video as a method (1) provides student participants and collaborators with the opportunity to communicate their experiences as writers of color by embodying the video, and (2) holds the researcher accountable for their positionality, power, and privilege in the process of creating knowledge about literacy and embodiment.


Analyzes a web-based collaborative reading annotation system (WCRAS) with gamification mechanisms to motivate fifth-grade Taiwanese students’ (N = 55) annotation behaviors and improve students’ reading comprehension performance. Describes a quasi-experimental study designed to evaluate the effects of the experimental and control groups, respectively, using WCRAS with and without gamification mechanisms to support students’ annotation of digital readings. Shows that the experimental group made significantly more annotations across almost all types of reading annotations and response annotations, and had a significantly higher degree of immersive experience and social interaction than the control group. Cautions that a difference in reading comprehension performance between the two groups was not found. Concludes that gamified WCRAS can enhance the quantity of annotations in comparison with non-gamified WCRAS, as well as enhancing the quality of collaborative annotations. Suggests
further studies to promote both annotation quality and connection between reading achievement and gamification mechanisms.


Explores adolescents’ behavioral engagement and reading comprehension in a digital literacy platform designed using the Universal Design for Learning framework. Examines behavioral engagement with text-based activities of middle-school students (*N* = 315) in remedial reading classes who used the platform for 1 hour per week for an academic year. Concludes that higher levels of engagement with the platform were not associated with improved reading comprehension in the overall sample. Finds an interaction effect that indicates that students with lower reading comprehension skills are likely to benefit from the use of text-to-speech functions to access complex texts and from completing more reading-related activities. Encourages educators to consider using digital literacy platforms and text-to-speech tools to support students with low reading comprehension skills.


Argues that the unprecedented health crisis of COVID-19 has positioned K–12 public education on the front lines of preparing informed and active citizens, and explores how integration of social media as part of remote education plans can help. Summarizes insights from literature reviews of over a decade of research and recent case studies on the benefits of teaching with social media in K–12 education. Identifies three affordances of social media—fostering active learning, community building, and civic participation—and provides instructional guidelines for use of social media in conjunction with conventional learning management systems. Cautions that social media are driven by advertising influences that seek to draw users’ attention to sell products, not to educate. Suggests that educators protect students’ attention and privacy, and weigh their options and goals before making pedagogical decisions on social media platforms for classroom use.


Describes the effect of reading medium (print or screen) on children’s reading comprehension and metacomprehension. Extends previous studies of adults’ metacomprehension in print and digital contexts, comparing the reading comprehension and metacomprehension of fifth-grade students (*N* = 38) who read texts in paper and digital formats. Finds that students understood texts when reading on paper rather than online. Suggests that students are metacognitively unaware of the effect of the medium on text comprehension. Argues for sharing results with teachers and students to guide choices of reading medium.


Documents experimentation with multimodal instruction to support introductory activities that helped adolescent readers develop meaningful relationships with challenging texts. Analyzes data from 100 students in an eighth-grade English language arts class to show how they used virtual reality headsets, augmented reality–capable smartphones, tablets, desktop computers, online scavenger hunts, and print-based texts as an introduction to William Shakespeare’s life and works. Suggests that literacy engagement is characterized by immersion, collaboration, and modernization of content.

Evaluates the extent to which literacy skills (reading fluency, written spelling, and reading comprehension), together with nonverbal reasoning, prior knowledge, and gender, are related to students’ online research and comprehension (ORC) performance. Measures ORC skills of 426 sixth graders using a Finnish adaptation of the Online Research and Comprehension Assessment. Finds that ORC skills were divided into six highly correlated factors which the researchers combined to create a common ORC factor for analysis. Documents that, together, predictor variables explained 57% of the variance in ORC. Suggests that reading comprehension, along with gender, was the strongest predictor for ORC performance, and reading fluency and written spelling explained ORC variance over and above reading comprehension. Concludes that striving readers are likely to struggle online.


Examines how 12th-grade ELA students read and interacted with a digital textbook accessed via Chromebooks. Seeks to challenge persistent myths about young people’s affinity for digital tools by investigating the factors that condition or limit the ways students interact with and respond to digital web-based texts. Reports on a qualitative study analyzing written documents from 21 participants and stimulated-recall interviews with 6 participants. Finds that three factors can restrict student uptake of digital features of texts: classroom routines, the tools used in teaching and learning reading, and the beliefs students hold about the practice of school-based reading. Concludes that students see digital textual resources as significant, yet must be guided to engage with these features in meaningful ways. Suggests that explicit instruction be implemented to include teaching on digital texts.


Investigates learning in four classes totaling 129 students, where information and the processing of information were either fragmented or congruous. Identifies fragmented reading as the experience of being interrupted in one’s reading by the intrusion of competing media and surroundings. Details results of a study that examined information (congruous and fragmented) and information processing (congruous and fragmented). Finds four effects: (1) significant differences in the reading comprehension and attention scores of the four student groups; (2) significant influence of reading processing (congruous vs. fragmented) on reading comprehension results; (3) an interaction between genders and reading conditions—that is, girls exhibited higher reading attention than boys when using fragmented reading materials; and (4) a relationship among different levels of reading engagement and reading skills—that is, readers with medium-level reading engagement achieved high reading scores regardless of their reading conditions. Concludes that fragmented information processing is increasingly common in and out of the classroom.


Analyzes survey results from 6,005 students and focus group data from 96 students across six secondary schools in Singapore to examine adolescents’ print and digital reading habits. Finds that adolescents prefer print but move toward more online reading as they get older. Argues that adolescents’ online reading habits are reflective of their print preferences and behavior with physical books. Suggests that consideration of the print or technology medium matters for motivation of adolescent reading.

Explores how upper-elementary students developed language resources to design digital comics with emotional, ethical, and aesthetic meanings. Reports results of a study that utilized multisite qualitative research techniques and multimodal appraisal analysis to examine how 68 students ages 8–10 communicated attitudinal meanings in multimodal, digital composition. Finds that students negotiated meanings beyond film, television, and other online texts, and the comic medium facilitated the use of multimodal attitudinal expression. Argues for explicit teaching of the appraisal framework to develop students’ conscious control of attitudinal meanings in multimodal composition.


Analyzes survey (N = 804) and interview (n = 23) data to explore texts, strategies, and methods used by adolescents in grades 7–12 to read digitally. Mobilizes theories of reader response, online reading comprehension, and digital reading. Proposes a framework of connected reading to conceptualize readers’ interactions with digital texts through encountering, evaluating, and engaging. Argues for the necessity of reframing how adolescents are taught to comprehend and interact with a variety of digital texts (e.g., webpages, e-books, multimedia, social media). Urges educators to explicitly talk with students about social practices involved in digital reading and to develop procedures for using digital reading devices.


Examines relationships between elements of K–12 online classes and achievement outcomes. Employs hierarchical linear modeling and content analysis methods to compare outcomes for 919 students enrolled in eight online high school English language and literature courses. Finds better learning outcomes at the student level when students took courses for non-credit-recovery purposes and logged in more frequently and for more time. Concludes that the inclusion of project-based learning and higher-level knowledge activities produced better student achievement outcomes. Argues for educator and researcher collaborations to analyze the design of course outcomes and to determine modifications to improve student achievement outcomes.

**Other Related Research**


Annotated Bibliography


Inclusive Literacy Instruction/Special Education

The research in this section represents a range of scholarly interests, and diverse methodological and theoretical approaches. A number of studies explore practices and outcomes at the intersection of general and special education. Some critical work scrutinizes core assumptions about literacy remediation within and outside of special education, noting that these can perpetuate inequities, especially for students of color. Other topics in this section include multiliteracies, social and emotional learning, early literacy instruction, and neurodiversity. Rounding out this section are articles that examine dyslexia programming and conceptualizations of dyslexia. (Anne Crampton, lead contributor)


Describes a framework used with preservice special education teachers to support understanding of the intersections of race, gender, and language. Reviews the history of African American English (AAE) in schools, including the Ann Arbor, Michigan, case (1978) in which African American students were wrongly placed in special education because of their use of AAE, as well as the Ebonics debate centered in Oakland, California, in the mid-1990s. Cites research about the ongoing over-assignment of African American male students in special education to argue that a lack of knowledge about AAE keeps inequities in place, especially for African American males. Presses programs to require a stronger grounding in the historic and sociocultural issues about AAE to prepare special education teachers to disrupt erroneous early identification and prolonged placement in special education.
Drewry, R. J., Cumming-Potvin, W., & Maor, D. (2019). New approaches to literacy problems: Multiliteracies and inclusive pedagogies. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 44*(11), 61–78. Explores a sixth-grade student’s experience in a multimodal literacy intervention which included the use of iMovie and audiobooks. Describes an intervention designed to connect the student’s successful and rewarding home literacy using technology for artistic production and communication with written school literacies, which the student viewed as challenging. Breaks multiliteracy practices into four stages: situated practice, scaffolding, critical literacy, and collaboration. Details the use of qualitative methods to trace the development of literacy skills and engagement in the multimodal program as compared with traditional literacy instruction. Finds improvement in academic literacy learning and suggests that teachers expand views of traditional literacy methods to match interests and needs of today’s youth.

Garwood, J. (2020). Reader self-perceptions of secondary students with and at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Special Education, 53*(4), 206–215. Examines reader self-perceptions of secondary students with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (E/BD). Describes survey data from 152 students with or at risk for E/BD, who reported more distressing emotions as they read, and lower self-worth when comparing their reading abilities to those of their peers without disabilities. Finds internalizing behaviors to be negatively associated with students’ reader self-perceptions, especially for female students with E/BD and students of color with E/BD, who had lower self-perceptions about their reading abilities than males and white students. Advocates for the importance of asking secondary students to self-assess their feelings about the act of reading. Offers suggestions about using information from students to design reading interventions, and concludes by summarizing several supportive intervention strategies for struggling readers.

Gauvreau, A. N. (2019). Using “snack talk” to support social communication in inclusive preschool classrooms. *Young Exceptional Children, 22*(4), 187–197. Builds on existing frameworks for inclusive early education in which literacy instruction is embedded in free play, small group, and circle times. Identifies mealtime as an underutilized opportunity to develop language skills, social skills, and relationships in inclusionary settings. Shares instructional methods for use during mealtime, including establishing routines, especially the use of visuals ("snack talk" cards) to stimulate discussion and the cultivation of positive membership through social communication. Presents guidelines for teachers and aligns snack-time literacies with recommended practice from the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Gross, K. (2020). Visual arts content literacy: A partnership between art educators and special educators. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 52*(3), 157–165. Examines the importance of art teachers emphasizing textual and content-based literacy, noting that art teachers have many students in their classrooms with IEPs or 504 plans who need support in written and oral communication. Stresses that content area reading is essential for students to respond to oral questions about visual artwork, as well as to describe their processes with their own work using academic language. Argues that special educators and visual art educators need to work together to support content literacy at all stages of art-making instruction: planning, enacting, and completion. Provides a “how to” for art teachers to incorporate inclusive literacy instruction in visual arts and offers model activities for a printmaking unit.

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Extends and replicates previous research showing the effectiveness of Early Literacy Skills Builder (ELSB) instruction for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities. Describes a yearlong study involving 80 students with moderate to severe disabilities served in 16 schools: one group of students who received an ELSB intervention, and a control group who received a mixture of packaged and teacher-made curricula already in place with the participating special education teachers. Based on data from literacy assessments conducted at five points throughout the school year, finds that students who received ELSB benefitted from the curriculum and outperformed their peers in the control group. Supports the use of comprehensive emergent literacy instruction for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities when services are provided in the general education classroom.


Seeks to center students in an isolated secondary special education setting by disrupting deficit labels and applying the term *neuroqueer* as a positive descriptor for authentic literacy expressions. Analyzes responses of two students, labeled as significantly dis/abled, during six interactions with picture books whose characters mirrored their lives. Challenges what is commonly considered literacy instruction and who is typically considered literate by validating neuroqueer responses to literature such as hand flapping, yelling, or body repositioning. Argues that students who are considered significantly dis/abled should have literacy experiences beyond basic skills and opportunities to react to literature. Finds that teachers’ presumption of student competence was essential for embracing the students’ countersocial reactions and embodied inventions as valid literacy practices.


Explores connections between challenging behaviors and early literacy skills by examining 337 kindergartners’ changes in growth across common measures in early literacy from fall to spring in an academic year. Reports data assessing skills such as word attack, letter sound fluency, and phonological awareness, alongside observed changes in challenging behaviors categorized as inattentive/hyperactive, defiant/aggressive, and mood/affect. Finds that the greatest literacy growth occurred with a decrease in aggression accompanied by an elevation in mood and affect, and that literacy growth rates for students with increasing challenging behaviors—particularly inattention/hyperactivity—were lower than for other groups. Suggests the importance of teachers integrating behavior and literacy skills and intentionally pairing social and emotional learning awareness with literacy instruction.


Assesses the cost-effectiveness of a 3-year dyslexia literacy intervention pilot project based on a multitiered systems of support (MTSS) framework. Examines the use of universal screening procedures, K–2 students’ literacy skills, and the projected cost reduction of special education services within six districts: one urban, one suburban, and four rural. Draws on qualitative and quantitative data, such as student outcomes from the Dynamic Indicators for Basic Early Literacy Skills Next (DIBELS Next) as well as other curriculum-based measures, to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs. Determines projected cost savings based on student outcome data and the lack of needed Tier III supports, noting the cost difference between Tier II and Tier III interventions. Suggests that schools will reduce the need for Tier III supports, and therefore reduce associated costs, by conducting universal screenings to identify students with dyslexia.
indicators and enrolling them in a research-based literacy intervention program, in addition to employing highly qualified teachers and engaging in program evaluation methods.


Describes literacy instruction delivered via a team-teaching model by a special education teacher and a general teacher in a fourth-grade dual-language program situated in a linguistically, academically, racially, and economically diverse urban classroom. Captures complexities across competing and overlapping aspects of instructional methods embedded in inclusive education, special education, and general education pedagogies. Suggests an eclectic approach to literacy which combines both explicit instructional and constructivist approaches to literacy, including immediate feedback, modeling, and repetition, as well as culturally responsive teaching, student-directed learning, and scaffolding based on students’ zones of proximal development. Offers several suggestions for teachers and teacher educators, such as engaging in scholarship that draws on multiple traditions and incorporating a range of instructional methods within teacher preparation programs.


Examines the relationship between the proportion of preschool students with disabilities in 75 inclusive preschool settings and the overall literacy achievement of all students. Reports fall and spring assessment data in three areas—language, print-concept knowledge, and alphabet knowledge—from 215 preschool students with disabilities and 301 students without disabilities. Finds that a higher number of students with disabilities within an inclusive preschool setting was not detrimental and indeed had no effect on the literacy achievement of students without disabilities. Offers guidelines for preschool inclusion policies aligned with this research.


Uses personal narrative to describe how Anglocentric and Eurocentric views of learning to read perpetuate misunderstandings and possible mislabeling of dyslexia and reading disability in non-English speakers. Provides a multidimensional framework of orthographic complexity to assist in the expansion of theories of learning to read across writing system variations. Reminds readers that the global population does not necessarily speak English or European languages, highlighting how the roles of phonemic awareness and fluency differ across language systems. Advocates for an end to overgeneralization of reading research to nonalphabetic written language systems, and a reframing of language frameworks that perpetuate orthographic hierarchies.


Presents an ethnographic case study of three 9-year-old males diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) with high interest in playing the online multiplayer game *Minecraft*. Participants also included three teachers who provided social and technical support for students while they played the game. Draws from video and audio recordings of the students, semistructured interviews with the teachers, and researcher observations. Finds an increase in student interactions with other players in both text and speech through the game. Offers insight and suggestions about how multiplayer games might be used to support students’ social interactions with other students with ASD. Notes that the case study is consistent with other research in finding that high-interest/motivational activities such as a multiplayer game can increase social interactions.
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with other students. Argues that while affinity groups have often been used with the intention of increasing interactions between ASD with nondisabled peers, the use of Minecraft is novel and deserves further investigation.


Traces the origins and evolution of response to intervention (RTI) approaches to reading instruction through a critical race framework. Notes that after wide adoption over 20 years, RTI has not improved reading achievement for students of color, nor has its implementation diminished disproportionate representation of students of color in special education. Discusses how reading research in general has been damaging to students of color, pointing to multiple large-scale federally funded studies that reinforced dominant deficit narratives about students of color, especially African American students, and explains how this research has been roundly discredited even as it is still cited. Argues that since the assessments used in RTI come from this same discredited research, special and general education teachers pursuing racial equity must critically question the “scientific” and “nationally normed” reading assessments they use to place students into different tiers. Suggests that lack of teacher fidelity is not the reason for the failure of RTI programs, and urges researchers and teachers to respond to social, cultural, economic, and other environmental factors as part of any effort to improve reading achievement.


Reviews current neuroscience research on dyslexia, including key limitations of this research, and places it alongside websites that aim to inform the general public about dyslexia. FINDS that the majority of these accessible sites draw on brain research in simplistic and often misleading ways. Speculates that invoking the brain is good for business, and that pointing to a medical or biological location for the disorder seems satisfyingly authoritative in contrast to viewing dyslexia as a complex variation in reading proficiency. Calls for more collaboration across learning disciplines, with the hope that special education teachers and teacher education can learn from neuroscience research without medicalizing and simplifying dyslexia, in order to better support students with knowledge of dyslexia and how educational context, literacy practices, social interaction, and other factors have an impact on reading proficiency and learning.

Other Related Research


**Literacy**

The studies in this section span a wide range of topics, from family engagement to community literacy, highlighting culturally sustaining pedagogical practices for middle and high school students—specifically students of color—to disrupt deficit mindsets. Other studies focus on interventions, vocabulary, educators’ knowledge, and collaboration in the literacy classroom. The variety of studies reflects the expansive definition of literacy. (Keitha-Gail Martin-Kerr, lead contributor)


Explores a kindergarten teacher’s approach to making learning visible to families and caregivers over one year via the app Seesaw. Describes the use of photos with captions, photos with audio recording, and videos of teacher-student interactions as a means to invite families and caregivers to engage in early literacy learning processes alongside their children. Emphasizes the potential of showing families and caregivers documentation as learning is taking place—the process—rather than only documenting the end result of learning.


Considers the integration of culturally sustaining pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning in a seventh-grade language arts spoken-word poetry unit. Reports on a 9-week case study employing audio recordings, field notes, participant observations, artifacts of student work and teacher reflections, pre- and post-surveys of student poetry interest, and semistructured interviews with classroom teachers and students. Focuses on three participants who, without expectation or direction, chose to write about their dis/abilities or medical conditions. Finds that culturally sustaining pedagogy enabled more visibility for students’ identities while UDL concealed students’ differentiated needs, enabling students to take charge of how they were positioned. Suggests that teacher preparation should include ways to integrate practices rather than viewing literacy as self-contained.
DeJaynes, T., & Curmi-Hall, C. (2019). Transforming school hallways through critical inquiry: Multimodal literacies for civic engagement. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 63*(3), 299–309. Examines the research and activism of a team of five 10th graders at a small public school involved in a collaborative youth participatory action research project studying women of color in the media. Utilizes the sociocultural view of literacies as situated and diverse meaning-making experiences. Describes how data from classroom observations, teacher journals, focus groups, academic conversations, semistructured interviews, and artifacts such as student self-reflections and final products were collaboratively analyzed by teacher-researchers and students in conversations about their work. Finds that students’ multimodal exhibits in the school hallway repurposed that space and centered students, providing them with a broad audience with which to share their research. Recommends providing students with opportunities to discuss inequities and engage with personal experiences and identities to provide counterstories and allow for public dialogue about systems of oppression.

Deroo, M. R., & Watson, V. W. M. (2020). “Air I breathe”: Songwriting as literacy practices of remembrance. *Journal of Literacy Research, 52*(2), 158–179. Details the multiliteracy practices of two Black adolescent girls sharing original songs about loss within the context of an after-school integrated literacy and music program. Analyzes eight public sharing events, original lyrics, journal writing, recordings in sound studios, and one focus group interview. Conceptualizes “literacy practices of remembrance” that move beyond typical private Western mourning rituals to enable youth and communities of color to experience meaning-making about loss in a communal setting. Describes the public sharing of loss as involving three socially situated stances: continuing community narratives across time, artistic and cultural expression, and mutual sharing of loss. Argues for the inclusion of topics such as loss and death in school settings, ongoing and multiple processing opportunities about topics important to youth, use of multimodal approaches, and provision of a variety of sharing venues.

Elleman, A. M., Oslund, E. L., Griffin, N. M., & Myers, K. E. (2019). A review of middle school vocabulary interventions: Five research-based recommendations for practice. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 50*(4), 477–492. Reviews research on the impact of middle school vocabulary interventions aimed at improving vocabulary reading comprehension for students in grades 6–8, excluding studies focused solely on multilingual learners. Discusses themes observed across 17 studies, such as the use of intentional and varied vocabulary instruction embedded in content area reading, including an instructional focus on target words within authentic texts. Notes the importance of engaging students in active participation and collaboration as part of middle school vocabulary interventions. Finds that vocabulary interventions led to increases in vocabulary knowledge, content knowledge, and content reading comprehension, but not in overall reading comprehension.

Jones, J. (2019). Critical literacy, community, and change among women of color adult literacy learners. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2019*(164), 49–58. Explores the transformative work of Woman Reading for Education, Affinity, & Development (WREAD), a reading discussion group. Describes the group as grounded in critical literacy, dialogic structure, relationship building, and culturally relevant literacy experiences; as building opportunities for women of color adult literacy learners to be empowered in the face of hegemonic systems of oppression that marginalize them; and as cultivating critical collective consciousness and action-orientation. Recognizes how adult education has shifted from education for liberation to outcomes-focused workforce preparation. Distinguishes the WREAD model as one that builds potential for the future, engenders healing and growth through relational interactions, and values the members’ experiences and knowledges beyond simple outcomes.

Examines how inquiry-based community literacy and language mapping, together with critical literacy units of study, provide a sociocultural and community-centered approach to literacy teaching and learning. Recognizes that teachers often overlook the everyday literacies that are present in their school communities, hold deficit understandings of community literacies, and have a narrow definition of literacy. Finds that use of community mapping data, the intentional process of documenting physical and social resources in a community, to develop critical literacy-based units expanded teacher understandings of students' lived literacies, broadened their understanding of literacy, and guided them to more relevant and authentic instructional practices.


Details how middle and high school students engaged in “moments of possibility” to develop college-bound identities through multimodal literacy experiences during three summer interactive workshops delivered through culturally relevant instruction. Describes how, as part of a larger 2-year ethnography, researchers collaboratively analyzed curricular planning notes, curricular materials, ethnographic field notes of workshops, reflective memos from each workshop, and more than 65 multimodal student-created artifacts. Finds that opportunities exist, through sociocultural learning and culturally relevant instructional practices, for high school teachers to incorporate moments of possibility in literacy experiences that support students as they break down barriers to college readiness and form college-going identities.


Assesses the effectiveness of systematic tiered intervention at 14 elementary schools. Follows the progress of three groups of second graders (*N* = 541) referred to as “difficult to remediate” based on the fall benchmark. Describes interventions moving from (1) peer-mediated learning, pairing struggling readers with stronger readers, to (2) Reading Mastery for students not progressing with peer-mediated learning, to (3) direct instruction of phonemic awareness, alphabetic understanding, decoding skills, and fluency. Shows that students who participated in the three-tiered intervention demonstrated statistically significant growth in reading fluency based on Dynamic Indicators for Basic Early Literacy Skills scores.


Reports on a quasi-experimental study of early literacy development in two public kindergarten classrooms with a total of 62 students, each assigned to one of three conditions: “regular” literacy practices (control group), structured literacy activities embedded in storytelling, or structured literacy activities embedded in digital storytelling. Focuses on three phases—pretest, intervention, and posttest—assessing the impact of the intervention by comparing pretest and posttest data. Describes the use of storytelling and digital storytelling literacy-based activities during the intervention for the experimental groups. Finds a statistically significant improvement in literacy and digital literacy skills for both experimental groups, with no statistical difference between the two experimental groups. Emphasizes the potential of storytelling activities for early literacy development.

Explores the collaboration between teachers and librarians as they support adolescents’ literacy and literature learning. Draws on semistructured interviews with 25 Australian high school librarians to understand how often teachers and librarians collaborate, what that collaboration entails, and what librarians consider to be successful collaboration with teachers. Identifies 11 characteristics of strong teacher-librarian collaborations, but concludes that these collaborations are not typical. Describes barriers to successful collaboration, including resources, school size, administrative support, teacher and librarian roles and responsibilities, quality of relationships, and time. Finds that, in successful collaborations, librarians take on multiple roles, often guided by the teacher; notes that teachers are less willing to be guided by librarians.


Investigates students’ participation and family engagement in early literacy activities in unconventional spaces. Describes how the authors transformed three laundromats in low-income areas to include literacy-related play, studied alongside a control group of three other laundromats that were not transformed. Draws on observation, survey, and interview data, showing a dramatic increase in literacy activities among young children where the laundromats were transformed, in comparison with children at the control laundromats. Argues that the children benefited from access to print, a sense of community with families, and access to a librarian who engaged in sustained literacy activities with them and made these activities observable by families.


Examines early educators’ literacy content knowledge and their emergent literacy classroom practices. Queries three hypotheses: (1) educators’ content knowledge must reach a certain threshold before demonstrating a positive association with practice; (2) educators’ knowledge is only positively associated with practice until a certain plateau is reached; and (3) educators’ knowledge is positively and consistently associated with practice, regardless of knowledge level. Uses an adaptation of the Moats’ (1994) knowledge survey data and classroom observations gathered over the course of 1 year to measure 437 educators’ content knowledge and coded literacy practices with regard to quantity and quality. Indicates a positive linear association between educators’ content knowledge and literacy practices, supporting the third hypothesis.


Investigates the challenges teachers and coaches faced in implementing comprehension instruction in an urban school over a period of 2 years with 36 participants. Describes how university researchers conducted a needs assessment, provided literacy coaching, and studied the effectiveness of the professional development in changing teachers’ instructional practices. Finds that teachers improved their knowledge of effective comprehension instruction, but some teachers encountered challenges in getting students to apply the strategy to their own reading because students did not have texts to read for independent practice. Implies that teachers need more than professional development to succeed; they need resources, supportive and engaging leadership, and help fitting all the pieces together in the classroom.

Other Related Research


**Literary Response/Literature**

Research on literature and literary response featured in this year’s annotated bibliography focuses on critical sociocultural and political analysis of children’s and young adult literature, as well as classroom studies of instructional practices that disrupt students’ assumptions and develop students’ critical consciousness. Topics include representations of refugee experiences, race and bullying, and sexuality and consent; students’ responses to textual depictions of Muslim characters and contexts, transgender and ambiguously gendered characters, immigration issues, and branded young adult literature; and teachers’ approaches to controversial literature, LGBTQ literature, and literature about trauma and grief. (Amanda Haertling Thein, lead contributor)


Describes how reading and discussing a young adult novel about sexual assault in a book study course supported one undergraduate student in developing critical literacy about rape culture. Uses ethnographic and case study methods to analyze field notes from book study meetings, participant journal entries, and a transcript from a semistructured interview with the participant. Pinpoints personal and cultural resources the participant brought to the experience, as well as critical stances and social practices she developed. Finds that the young adult novel provided leverage for critical conversations about rape culture, and illustrates the value of young adult literature for engaging college students in discussion of complex social issues.


Explores Latinx elementary students’ discussions about and responses to six picturebooks focused on immigration. Describes how both open and axial coding were used to examine teacher field notes, read-aloud transcriptions, student blog posts, and interview data through a critical literacy lens. Finds four prominent themes in the students’ discussions: (a) understanding “illegal,” (b) legal papers, (c) crossing borders, and (d) separation and sadness. Further suggests that the students demonstrated complex knowledge and understanding of the immigration process, often disputing commonplace assumptions and misconceptions. Concludes that students’ discussions included rich understandings of how immigration policies and practices influenced immigrant family structures, which enabled them to consider multiple perspectives on the issue of immigration.
Annotated Bibliography


Examines preservice teachers’ criteria for selecting and using picturebooks to teach mathematical concepts. Draws on deductive qualitative coding of written lesson reflections and recorded focus-group interviews, revealing that preservice teachers relied on six resources for selecting picture books to teach mathematical concepts—(a) the mathematical concept to be taught, (b) the university instructor, (c) other available resources, (d) the clinical instructor, (e) their knowledge of the author, and/or (f) colleagues—and did not tend to assess the quality of the books. Recommends that teacher educators model ways to assess and select quality picturebooks. Additionally, recommends that preservice teachers explain how they selected their picturebooks and their analysis of their selected picturebooks as part of their lesson plans.


Reviews and synthesizes scholarship at the intersection of reader response theory and place-conscious pedagogy. Uses methods of integrative literature review and conventional content analysis to analyze 78 sources. Outlines a conceptual and methodological framework that centers placemaking in the lives of child readers both in and out of classrooms, and recommends an expanded conceptualization of context in reader-response scholarship and pedagogy.


Examines one high school English teacher’s instructional aims and classroom practices as she taught young adult literature with Muslim characters. Uses a qualitative inductive methodological approach to analyze semistructured interviews with the participant, the participant’s reflections, and 10 classroom observations. Finds that the teacher’s goals for equity and justice often conflicted with her practices, which valued safety over conflict. Recommends teacher education focused on conceptualizing teachers as partners in learning who experience cognitive dissonance along with their students, rather than as experts who experience little conflict.


Analyzes representations of Middle Eastern Muslims in award-winning picturebooks. Finds that most authors wrote from an outsider perspective and portrayed (a) antiquated times and practices, and (b) war-stricken countries and dangerous journeys. Concludes that most books were not individually problematic, but the pattern of narrow representation across books warranted critical attention. Highlights books in the data set that contrasted with this pattern. Discusses issues of partial representation and overrepresentation with implications for the classroom.


Examines middle school language arts classroom libraries and the way they are used by teachers to promote reading. Analyzes interviews with 17 teachers about their intended purpose for their libraries, organization and selection of materials, and perceptions of student reactions, as well as physical observations of the libraries using a checklist protocol and a random sample of available titles. Identifies a wide variety of organization and check-out procedures, and of book genres represented in the collections. Describes teachers as expressing purposeful intents in building their library collections but facing challenges in acquiring titles—both books in general and specifically desired titles. Further reports that the majority of teachers offered multiple planned opportunities for students to read and share books during class time. Suggests that more research be conducted into how social and school factors affect classroom library creation and use.

Presents the responses of six preservice and inservice middle and secondary educators who read challenged or banned young adult literature. Analyzes data through the frame of figured worlds. Finds that responses portrayed figured worlds about youth, “appropriate” literature, and how youth should access controversial literature. Discusses figured worlds as shaping youth access to what teachers might consider “controversial.” Suggests ways to deconstruct figured worlds to promote greater access to a broader range of literature in the classroom.


Investigates kindergarten children’s talk about gender during picturebook read-alouds involving texts with ambiguously gendered characters and texts where gender norms were intentionally questioned. Uses qualitative methods to examine how students talked about human characters versus nonhuman characters such as anthropomorphized animals and celestial bodies. Finds that in both cases, students relied on normative constructions of gender marked by color, physical features, and characters’ actions. Encourages read-aloud practices that challenge students’ thinking about gender identity.


Examines four educators’ experiences of sharing picturebooks about grief and engaging in open-ended discussion with elementary and adult audiences. Draws on semistructured interviews to explore participants’ personal responses to the picturebooks they taught and challenges related to sharing the books. Pinpoints complexities around why, when, and how educators share books about grief. Suggests that while educators may feel discomfort with grief, engaging with grief acknowledges trauma that students may bring to the classroom.


Describes responses from United States and Lithuanian English teachers to *Between Shades of Gray* by Ruta Sepetys that were gathered through a blogging project. Uses a theoretical frame involving difficult knowledge, empathy, and positioning to analyze the data. Finds empathetic reader positionalities in responses that sought to express humility, pose complex and purposeful questions, and build contextual knowledge. Discusses the pedagogical possibilities of empathetic reading. Argues that empathetic reading has the potential to avoid the pitfalls associated with exercises such as role-play and close reading.

Sulzer, M. (2020). Border crossing from literature to young adult literature: A critical comparative content analysis of *Enrique’s journey* (original version) and *Enrique’s journey* (adapted for youth). *The ALAN Review, 47*(2), 12–24.

Examines a nonfiction text about a young boy’s difficult journey from Honduras to the United States, *Enrique’s journey*, alongside its youth adaptation (i.e., the young reader’s version), using critical comparative content analysis. Finds that unlike adaptations that simplify and sanitize complex issues for a youth audience, the youth adaptation of *Enrique’s Journey* maintains depth and nuance while presenting the story in a substantially different form. Suggests that the availability of both general market nonfiction and high-quality youth adaptations can provide teachers with pedagogical opportunities to reach a wider range of readers.

Reviews 45 children’s books published since 2013 featuring characters with refugee backgrounds. Establishes an analytic frame by drawing on tenets of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Finds two main categories of stories: making a journey and making a new life. Finds that most books depicted making a journey through universal, individual, and symbolic characteristics, and that only nine books depicted making a new life. Discusses implications for interrogating texts, building text sets, igniting discussions, and inviting firsthand stories.


Investigates the intersections of bullying and racism depicted in children’s literature published from 1997 to 2017. Uses critical content analysis grounded in critical race theory to identify in six texts both racial microaggressions as instances of daily racism and macroaggressions that highlight institutional racism. Finds that texts that highlight the intersections of bullying and racism encompass three themes: (a) transitions to new places, (b) naming and describing racism, and (c) counternarratives. Argues that books that depict bullying and racism can be used as a springboard for conversations about important issues, but notes that books should be selected carefully to ensure that they use an antideficit approach to depicting diverse characters. Concludes that more texts are needed that both accurately depict bullying based on racism and incorporate an antideficit approach.

**Other Related Research**


Spiering, J., & Kedley, K. (2019). “You can’t go back to holding hands”: Reading Judy Blume’s *Forever* in the #MeToo era. *Study and Scrutiny: Research in Young Adult Literature, 3*(2), 1–19.


### Media Literacy

The research in this section examines uses of certain types of media (television, videos, news, advertisements, social media, etc.); attitudes toward media use and media literacy instruction; media representations of various groups and issues; effects of critical media literacy instruction on users’ actions and attitudes; preparing preservice teachers to teach media literacy; and methods for researching the use of media production tools to engage students in multimodal media productions. Priority was given to studies using large-scale databases to document particular uses of media. (Richard Beach, lead contributor)


Analyzes a media literacy project with elementary school students that combined environmental education with media analysis and production. This case study documents a class of first graders collaborating with fourth- and fifth-grade students to evaluate snack-food packaging. Students were guided to question media texts (public service announcements and food packages) and then design their food packaging to reduce waste and contribute to environmental sustainability. The use of the design phases of implementation and assessment contributed to the successful combination of environmental education with media literacy, even at the elementary level.


Explores the responses of eighth-grade English language arts students when taught to apply rhetorical analysis and critical media literacy to political memes. Using action research, investigators engaged 56 African American students in three classes for 2 weeks. Data collection included observational notes and student artifacts (a graphic organizer and a one-page rhetorical analysis) that were coded with the four most common phrases that emerged from student writing. The researchers conclude that political memes can be meaningful material for academic study, and a rhetorical analysis can align well with critical media literacy.

Reports on the impact of instruction in critical analysis of stereotypical media representations of Blacks and Latinos on college students’ attitudes. Students in four course sections were randomly assigned to receive one of two interventions—instruction in critical analysis of racial “other” versus more interactive instruction involving analysis of racial stereotypes—while those in a different class section served as a control group. In the sample 83% of students identified as White, 10% as Latino, and 6% as Black/African American. Analysis of attitudes six weeks before, right after, and six weeks after the instruction found an increase in positive attitudes toward Blacks and Latinos among both intervention groups, with the stereotype intervention resulting in higher degrees of change; there was no change for control-group students’ attitudes. Results suggest the value of instruction about stereotypical media representations of race.


Examines the effects of three instructional methods used with Dutch lower-educated youth ages 16 to 26 on their civic competence related to news media literacy, political efficacy, and political knowledge. Students in all treatment groups studied news media literacy and politics. Students in the first group created videos representing examples of fake news (n = 11); students in the second group only viewed the videos created by the first group (n = 41), but did not create videos; students in the third group only completed the instruction (n = 49). Results indicated that students who created videos demonstrated the highest levels of political efficacy and acquired political knowledge. There was also a decrease in news media literacy after participation in the program, mainly for students who only viewed videos or did not view videos, possibly because awareness of their limitations in evaluating news content made them less skeptical about the news production process. This suggests the value of actively engaging students in video production for critiquing fake news.


Summarizes Pew Research Center survey reports related to use of online news. Americans increasingly preferred to access their news online (34% in 2018, up from 28% in 2016); 37% preferred to access local news through local television channels, with 82% noting that the quality of a channel’s website was critical to their choice of channel. Employment for digital news broadcasting increased by 6,100 jobs (or 82%) between 2008 and 2018, but this increase did not offset a loss of 33,000 newspaper jobs (25%); job losses have also occurred among digital-only news outlets. A fifth (20%) of Americans obtained their news often through social media, with 42% accessing Facebook for news. At the same time, 57% expected that news on social media would be largely inaccurate, leading half to change how they obtained news from social media or to stop using a news source they perceived as inaccurate.


Investigates the ability of adults in India and the United States to recognize false information. Concludes that adults in the United States and India were better able to distinguish between fake news and mainstream news headlines after a brief treatment that encouraged skepticism. Researchers labeled this a “media literacy” intervention, yet the treatment only involved viewing 6–10 tips on Facebook or WhatsApp. Results suggested that respondents increased their ability
to distinguish between false stories and mainstream news after reading the tips and then rating the believability of about a dozen news headlines. The authors argue in favor of adopting critical media literacy instruction, suggesting that this instruction encourages skepticism and makes people less vulnerable to false information.


Presents a case study analysis of a 12th-grade student production of a 10-minute video in response to reading *Into the Wild* in a literature circle. An interview with the student about his production practices/direction was coded for three types of literacy practices that shape the value of video production for enhancing participation in literature circles: *textual engagement*, which involved the student’s high level of engagement with *Into the Wild* as an incentive to create his video; *increased reading appetite*, which involved incentives to read other related books; and *literature as social interaction*, which related to working with peers to transform the text into a video based on similarities between himself and the person in the text. Findings suggest the value of generating videos to enhance engagement in literature circles.


Examines the thoughts, practices, and experiences of 1,000 Australian youth ages 8–16 regarding their interactions with news. In collaboration with *Crinkling News*, Australia’s only national newspaper for youth, researchers contracted one of the country’s largest online survey companies to administer their questionnaire. After conducting the survey and publishing a report about their findings, they organized a 2-day event with 35 Australian youth to examine the findings. The young people collaborated with journalists and others to make recommendations published in an action plan and presented at a public event with politicians, activists, and media representatives. Findings indicate that most Australian youth do not feel confident in their ability to distinguish fake news from real news. The authors recommend compulsory media literacy education that includes critical analysis of social media, including more news literacy and a broader range of academic fields such as economics, sociology, computer science, and journalism.


Reviews an international action research project conducted within several European countries to bring media literacy and intercultural education to secondary students. Promoted by the University of Florence (Italy), this five-nation study involved 15 teachers and 141 students ages 15–18 years. The intervention lasted 5 months and covered six instructional units that addressed media analysis and production related to media representation, propaganda, racism, violence in video games and movies, fake news, migration, and diversity. Each of these learning scenarios involved student media production, in which students created posters, videos, video game designs, digital stories, and radio podcasts. Researchers found increases in teachers’ learning about how to teach media literacy and intercultural understandings. Findings suggest the need for more support in the form of professional development, increased “action-oriented” training on media and intercultural education, more involvement of school leaders, bottom-up strategies to include students in the designing process, and national curricula designed by experts.


Details results of a survey of 1,600 US 8- to 18-year-olds on media use from 2015 to 2019. Reports that 8- to 12-year-olds spent an average of 4 hours and 45 minutes daily on screen media,
while 13- to 18-year-olds averaged 7 hours and 22 minutes. Time spent viewing online videos doubled between 2015 and 2019 to an average of 1 hour a day for both groups, while time spent viewing television programs declined by half an hour; the amount of time devoted to the use of social media remained the same, at about 1 hour and 10 minutes daily. Adolescents from higher-income homes used screen media an average of 4 hours daily, while adolescents from lower-income homes averaged 5 hours and 49 minutes; 64% of teens in higher-income homes used computers for completing homework, versus 51% of those in lower-income homes. Only 10% of all participants enjoyed creating digital art, music, or games “a lot”; 70% of males versus 23% of females enjoyed gaming “a lot”; 73% of females versus 59% of males enjoyed listening to music “a lot”; 50% of females versus 32% of males enjoyed using social media “a lot.” These data suggest the need for schools to address the digital divide, and the need for increased instructional and research attention to solo viewing of online videos.


Evaluates the content and quality of university students’ questions about a media text, based on pre- and post-surveys taken before and after attending a media literacy class. A total of 72 students generated 704 questions before and after participating in one of two different media literacy courses at the same university. Researchers assessed critical thinking about media by comparing the concepts and complexity of the questions students wrote after viewing a TV commercial, before and after taking the media literacy class. Researchers created innovative codebooks for evaluating the questions, including seven codes for concept features and five codes about the complexity of thinking. After completing the course, students asked more high-level, complex questions about production techniques demonstrating their increased skill in detecting how media is constructed; more relational questions about the interconnections between concepts; more questions about media representations that critiqued social justice issues; and fewer noncritical questions.


Posits the need to develop ethnographic research tools that reflect a shift from a focus on media literacy to transmedia literacy related to adolescents’ active consumption and production of media texts. Examines the effectiveness of the use of a set of tools, including a questionnaire about adolescents’ media use and production, a series of workshops in which researchers observed participants engaged in responding to and producing media texts, and interviews with participants about their transmedia practices. Demonstrates the value of the use of these ethnographic research methods to provide a valid understanding of transmedia practices within these workshop contexts.


Analyzes 185 online survey responses from K–12 teachers who attended a four-unit university critical media literacy course while earning their teaching credential and/or master’s degree. The questionnaire included 10 quantitative questions and 2 open-ended questions about whether and how the respondents were teaching critical media literacy to their students. Researchers compared responses between elementary and secondary teachers, secondary content subject areas, and inservice and preservice teachers. Inservice teachers reported teaching more critical media literacy than preservice teachers, and elementary teachers reported similar levels of student engagement as secondary teachers. Results suggest that critical media literacy increased engagement in learning and encouraged more critical thinking. Despite a lack of support and resources, many teachers expressed a desire to teach more critical media literacy.

Compares survey data for over a million US 8th, 10th, and 12th graders’ use of digital media versus older legacy media over time. Contrasts data for 12th graders from 1967 to 2016 and 8th and 10th graders from 1991 to 2016. Finds that 12th graders in 2016 spent an average of 6 hours online a day, twice as much time as 12th graders spent online in 2006. In the late 1970s, 60% of 12th graders engaged in the daily reading of a book or magazine, compared with 16% in 2016. In the early 1990s, 33% of 10th graders reported reading newspapers daily, while only 2% did so by 2016. There was also a 1-hour decline in the time 8th graders spent viewing television from 1991 to 2016. In the late 1970s, 64% of 12th graders attended movies a few times a month, while in 2016, only 44% did so. These results document pronounced shifts from the use of legacy media to digital media across these decades, shifts that were relatively consistent across race/ethnicity, class, and gender.


Reviews the history of media literacy instruction in the United Kingdom, beginning with the Communications Act of 2003 that required critical media literacy instruction. Analyzes the reduction in critical media analysis instruction due to political pressures and market-based ideologies that contributed to defunding and redefining media literacy instruction based on a functional view of technology absent any critical stance toward media. Media literacy became defined as education for e-safety and e-inclusion related to increased digital participation, and ultimately market data research for stakeholders. Researchers assert that the abandonment of media literacy in the United Kingdom has effectively extinguished all critical aspects, leaving only a “cultural policy that is effectively dead.”

Other Related Research


Annotated Bibliography


Professional Development/Teacher Education

This section includes selections from the literature in the areas of preservice teacher education, graduate teacher education, coaching, mentoring of new teachers, and large-scale professional development (PD) initiatives in ELA/literacy education. This year produced a large body of literature in these areas of the field, including two notable special issues from high-profile journals. Trends included studies on the development and support of literacy coaches, large-scale studies and meta-analyses of teacher preparation programs, critical perspectives on issues of social and racial justice in teacher education, pivoting to online teaching during the COVID pandemic, and inquiries into teacher education pedagogical practices on the topics of vocabulary, morphology, and language teaching. Abstracted articles represent the range of research methodologies, scope, and topics in the literature from this year. (Lisa Ortmann, lead contributor)


Describes how an instructional team co-constructed their understanding of effective vocabulary instruction through a responsive professional development (PD) model. Defines responsive PD as designed around the goals of a teacher team, flexible to respond to participants’ needs, and constantly revised to help move teachers toward their goals. Uses discourse analysis strategies to analyze interviews and transcripts from professional learning community (PLC) meetings with three 5th-grade teachers and their instructional coach. Finds that teachers’ thinking about vocabulary instruction shifted through iterative discussions occurring across the responsive PD sessions. Indicates the importance of opportunities to implement strategies amid ongoing discussions and the power of providing teachers with collaborative opportunities that are aligned with their own goals.

Explores how several successful educators from the same graduate initial licensure program developed beliefs and practices around literacy instruction from their internship year through their seventh year of teaching. Draws on survey and interview data to develop cases and uses cross-case analysis to identify common positive influences on educators' development: seeking knowledgeable others, knowing their students, and autonomy. Recognizes the complexity of teacher growth and the importance of examining the beliefs behind effective practices.


Reviews 15 high-quality studies reporting the effects of educator PD on preschool children's phonological awareness (PA) outcomes. Effect sizes varied considerably, with only four studies achieving medium, large, or very large effects. Characteristics of PD from each study were described in terms of active learning, coherence, collective participation, duration, content focus, and professional developer expertise. Studies with larger effect sizes were linked to follow up on PD in smaller groups and cover more PA content. Recommendations include focusing on explicit PA instruction and incorporating writing, as well as ensuring that the PD model fits the context.


Describes the case of three high school English teachers engaged in a month-long cycle of lesson study. Analyzes discussion transcripts, emails, shared documents, and field notes focused on teacher learning. Finds that the collaborative nature of learning allowed teachers to share knowledge and extend their practice, while the observational nature of learning allowed teachers to seek clarification, focus on student thinking, and reflect. Suggests that opportunities to observe and collaboratively reflect on practice can strengthen research-based instructional practices and promote student collaboration and engagement.


Explores 31 preservice teachers’ understandings of literacy and Indigeneity in an Elementary ELA methods course in the context of 2015 British Columbia K-9 curriculum legislation that focused on integrating Indigenous perspectives into ELA. Through the use of grounded theory analysis methods of pre/post learning event reflective writing assignments, the researcher found that preservice teachers broadened their conceptions of literacy, shifted from uncertainty to emerging confidence, and developed a plan of action for their future classrooms. Discusses the role of literacy teacher education in reconciliation, and the efficacy of using the discipline of language arts as a lens for integration of Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing.


Uses meta-analysis to calculate effect sizes of PD on student outcomes from 28 studies selected through a comprehensive review of over 40 years of literature. Average effect of teacher PD on students’ reading outcomes was moderate. Moderator analyses did not find study design, PD characteristics, or participant characteristics to significantly influence the PD’s effects on student reading. Implications for research suggest more attention to teacher learning in the study design.

Employs a meta-analysis to examine the impact of PD programs with a focus on academic language across subject areas. Considers how teachers’ cognition and teaching practices change based on elements of PD. Researchers conclude small to medium positive effects of PD with confidence. Results could help education leaders and administrators provide evidence that PD in academic language across subject areas is worthwhile.


Applies North’s (2006) framework of tensions and contradictions in social justice education to Grossman et al.’s (2009) framework of pedagogies of professional preparation in order to study the relationship between social justice and practice-based teacher education goals and approaches. Crosswalk analysis of qualitative data from two teacher-educators and 14 novice K–6 teachers collected during a teaching event focused on text-based discussions inside interactive read-alouds revealed that social justice teacher education remained theoretical and not successfully integrated into practice. Teacher candidates did not name or identify social justice teaching practices, nor were they observed to enact them, and when teacher educators presented social justice pedagogies, they did so through intellectual study, rather than practice-based study. The authors discuss implications for practice-based approaches to social justice teacher education, and call for further research into the relationship between teacher educators’ pedagogies and teacher candidates’ practices.


The six articles in this special issue respond to the call from Rogers (2017) to make use of the CITE-ITEL database of literature on preservice teacher education, as well as to address the noticeable gap in preservice teacher-related publications in the journal since the 2000 special issue of the same topic. Published in the special issue reporting on research syntheses of the 650 curated articles in the CITE-ITEL database, and detailing findings in six areas of preservice teacher education research. Highlights the ways research in the past 20 years has pushed traditional notions of literacy instruction and of literacy teacher preparation and offers future directions for research in the field. Concludes with two “Insights” essays from Lysaker and Handsfield and Bomer and Maloch, who offer commentary on the literature reviews presented, as well as opportunities and barriers to literacy reform from within the university teacher education programs.


Describes a study employing mixed-methods strategies to examine the change in graduate students’ self-efficacy beliefs related to their leadership competencies before and after a literacy leadership internship. Quantitative analysis of survey data was used to create subgroups of high and low growth during the 15-week experience. Qualitative analysis of online communications, course assignments, and interviews revealed key differences between the groups, including how they interpreted challenges and how much they were able to observe literacy specialists’ collaboration. Implications for teacher educators include a need to support literacy specialist candidates in securing internship sites that provide varied opportunities to observe leadership, and to support candidates’ reflection on the challenges and opportunities they experience.

Reports the results of a randomized controlled trial on the effectiveness of a language and literacy PD made freely available to early childhood educators by the state. Researchers assigned 546 educators to PD, PD plus coaching, or comparison (alternative topic PD) conditions, and collected data on the quality of literacy instruction and student outcomes for up to 5 children per classroom. Quality of instruction in PD and PD plus coaching classrooms was higher in phonological awareness and writing. Children’s emergent literacy skills and kindergarten readiness did not differ significantly between conditions. Implications for large-scale PD efforts include the importance of balancing consistent PD content with responsiveness to the context and participants.


Utilizes a metasynthesis of studies of literacy coaching from a relational perspective to determine opportunities and obstacles that occur in literacy coaching, noting that metasynthesis allows for review of both qualitative and quantitative research. Researchers defined relational coaching as the teacher and coach working to create new knowledge and skills in co-construction. In the synthesis of 28 studies, salient patterns of (a) knowledge flow, (b) distributed expertise, and (c) vulnerability were identified as elements of a relational coaching approach. The authors suggest that naming and outlining this approach may provide school leaders with a framework for moving toward professional development that responds to the complexity of teaching and learning among teachers and coaches.


Examines the influence of administrative policies and expectations among two instructional coaches and five teachers in one school setting. Tensions identified in the coach–teacher relationship were: competing demands by administrators, a coaching structure that limited access to in-depth conversations, and an evaluation tool whose process was unfair for coaches and teachers. Recommendations are made directly to school districts and researchers, including a call for critically examining how coaches are prepared and the extent to which coaches navigate administrative policies.


Studies the teaching practices of middle school teachers who were engaged in a high-quality professional development program designed to improve literacy-infused science instruction for English learners. Investigates the differences in teaching practices related to the language and literacy of science instruction between treatment and control groups. Teachers in the treatment group received ongoing, intensive, and structured professional development throughout the school year. Researchers used the Transitional Bilingual Observational Protocol to collect classroom data in treatment and control classrooms in the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Results indicate that teachers who received the treatment professional learning opportunity spent significantly more time engaged in practices that were beneficial for ELs, such as hands-on inquiry, cooperative learning, and supporting the use of academic language.


Investigates how teachers’ reflective practice moved into instructional practice through the use of video-based literacy coaching. The coaching focused on how to facilitate dialogic conversations
in a 4th- and 5th-grade literacy classroom. Researchers utilized a professional vision framework to conceptualize how teachers made instructional changes through three coaching cycles, in which each cycle included a pre-phone conference, a written reflection on a video clip taken in the classroom, and a post-phone conference. The study was situated within a larger study on web-based literacy coaching.


Reports results from a survey of teacher candidates’ (TCs) knowledge of morphology to address questions of teacher preparedness to respond effectively to the needs of striving K–12 readers. Participants included 350 teacher candidates from 9 university-based elementary, secondary, and special education teacher preparation programs across 7 different states and 4 regions of the country. The instrument used the morphology-focused items from a published “Survey of Reading-Related Knowledge and Perceptions.” Results of the survey showed that regardless of teacher preparation program or licensure area, TCs had difficulty identifying morphemes in both simple and complex words, and the majority did not attempt open-ended response items that elicited morphemic analysis of provided words. The authors concluded that the TCs may not have had a strong knowledge base of technical terminology related to morphology—which may have contributed to their reluctance to answer open-ended items—and offered suggestions for explicit approaches to teaching morphology in literacy-related teacher education courses.

**Other Related Research**


Durriyah, T. L. (2019). “If we don’t include literature, where do we teach our students from?” An effort to introduce children’s literature to Indonesian preservice teachers. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts, 58*(3), 52–70.


development: Positive effects mediated by compromised fidelity. *Reading and Writing*, 32(6), 1483–1506.


**Reading**

Research selected for this section explores topics of parental support of reading; reading engagement and comprehension; and varieties of text types, instructional methods, and interventions for at-risk students. Trends emphasize the importance of reading engagement, particularly social-emotional factors, and an increase in international studies. Notably, “Reaping the Rewards of the Reading for Understanding Initiative,” a significant publication from the National Academy of Education in Washington, DC, was published in the spring of 2020. This report synthesizes research on the nature and development of reading comprehension, reading comprehension assessment, and curriculum and instruction to promote reading comprehension. The citation for this report can be found in the list of other related research following the reading abstracts. (Kathryn Allen, lead contributor)


Analyzes the effects of a summer reading intervention across four years among students entering grades 1–3. Materials provided for home use included multicultural leveled texts; narrative and informational texts for read-alouds; copyright-free and replicable games related to phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight words; and videos showing families how to use the materials. Students’ reading was assessed at the beginning and end of each summer using the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System. Families completed feedback forms and calendars documenting the number of days materials were used. Participating students retained more reading ability than the baseline group. Also, series and pop culture texts were read more fre-
Results suggest that involving families and allowing students to keep the books added to their motivation to read.


Examines eye movement data from 166 elementary students randomly assigned to one of two treatment conditions: questions within the text or questions given after reading. Passages were narrative, came from norm-referenced achievement tests, and included at least five multiple-choice questions. Both literal and inferential questions were included. Power analyses identified effect sizes. Students were more accurate, reread more, and took longer to read in the within-text condition. In the within-text condition, 96% of students read the entire passage before reading questions. Response accuracy was higher for students who could precisely locate the section of text relevant to the question when rereading.


Assesses engagement in and impact of teaching and learning with comics in seventh-grade social studies classrooms. Analyzes ethnographic data from interviews, classroom observations, and student work samples from 3 social studies teachers and 6 seventh-grade students using memo writing and thematic coding. Finds evidence that the use of the complex visual text of comics alters both the structure of the physical space of the classroom and the usual discourse rhythms between teachers and students, leading to a more engaged, collaborative learning space. Concludes that using comics as texts affords rich opportunities for students to encounter multiple perspectives as they collaborate with peers in complex meaning-making and interpretation of verbal and visual information.


Uses an interactive narrative app to examine reading self-perceptions and habits of adolescents and adults who self-identify as poor readers. Finds that participants disliked reading in school, but enjoyed reading in the app because of the interactive component and the quality of the stories. Other reasons for engagement with the app included freedom from negative labels and avoidance of judgment, participants’ ability to read at their own pace, and freedom to choose what stories to read. Participants noted that reading on the app allowed them to experience growth in reading ability and enjoyment; however, this did not transfer to reading outside of the app. Based on these findings, the author suggests that educators disrupt the practice of labeling readers, normalize struggles with reading, and offer multiple and varied experiences with texts.


Compares 69 severely to profoundly deaf 10- to 11-year-old students with spoken language with 20 children with a history of dyslexia, matched on reading ability. Describes assessment of word and nonsense word reading, letter-sound knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming, vocabulary, spelling, and verbal short-term memory over four sessions within 1 week. Finds that independent *t*-tests on both standard and raw scores resulted in low effect sizes for both groups, and regression analysis identified vocabulary as a predictor of reading achievement for the oral deaf group. Recommends that both groups receive early intervention with instruction in phonological and language skills.

Investigates whether gender and socioeconomic status (SES) moderate the relationships between variables that predict reading achievement outcomes, including intrinsic motivation to read, self-concept as a reader, and reading activity. Reports results of structural equation modeling with data from the 2014 National Assessment of English Reading and a self-reported survey on intrinsic motivation, self-concept, and reading activity from a sample of 4,078 sixth-grade students in Ireland. Confirms the assertion that intrinsic motivation and self-concept contribute to reading activity, which in turn, predicts reading achievement. Finds evidence that gender and SES do not moderate the relationships between variables. Concludes that interventions aiming to increase leisure reading and intrinsic motivation to read may reduce gaps in reading achievement between genders and SES groups.


Explores the relationship of executive functioning with reading fluency and comprehension in 106 linguistically diverse students in New York City. Describes how, using standardized reading assessment data collected in the students’ 7th- and 8th-grade years, researchers applied multiple-group multivariate path analysis and interaction analysis to determine mediated and predictive effects of executive functioning on fluency and comprehension. Finds that executive functioning and fluency predicted reading comprehension in both grades when researchers controlled for oral vocabulary and nonexecutive processing speed. Recommends pairing evidence-based reading interventions in fluency and comprehension with strategic teaching practices as well as modified content that is sensitive to executive functioning demands.


Traces the indirect and direct relations between morphological awareness and reading comprehension in 325 Mandarin-speaking second graders. Indirect relations included vocabulary, word reading, and listening comprehension. Control variables included age, sex, and parental education. In written Chinese, morphological information remains orthographically consistent across characters, unlike in English spellings. Researchers tested alternative structural equation models to compare variances in indirect and direct relations, finding that 87% of the variance between students in comprehension was accounted for by morphological awareness (both direct and indirect), word reading, and listening comprehension. Results suggest the importance of semantic processing in both word reading and reading comprehension, indicating the need for systematic and explicit instruction in morphology for students learning to read Chinese.


Explores associations of access to a variety of books with book-sharing interactions among low-income, ethnically diverse mother-child dyads (4-year-olds). Results show that a greater number and variety of books in the home was correlated with families that were English-speaking, had a resident father and older siblings, and reported preschool attendance. Hierarchical regression models found that access to a variety of narrative books led to more frequent and more cognitively demanding book-sharing interactions, while access to a variety of concept books was negatively associated with these factors. Findings suggest the need for distribution programs and practitioners to consider sociocultural factors such as language and oral storytelling traditions, while simultaneously facilitating access to a wide variety of books.

Annotated Bibliography

Examines the influence of text difficulty and instructional supports on comprehension in 293 ninth graders identified as performing below grade-level in reading. Reports results of a 2 x 2 randomized controlled study: easy or challenging versions of the same text, paired with know-want to know-learned (K-W-L) or listen-read-discuss (L-R-D) instruction. Finds evidence that comprehension outcomes were similar for students regardless of text difficulty, but students who received the K-W-L instruction outperformed students who received L-R-D instruction on comprehension measures. Theorizes that most students can successfully comprehend challenging texts when accompanied by appropriate instructional support, particularly instruction that activates prior knowledge. Concludes that easier texts, as determined by widely used readability formulas, do not yield benefits in development of comprehension skills for most learners, and may shortchange comprehension by limiting readers’ exposure to formal language, new vocabulary, and complex text structures.


Investigates the impact of tracking-leveled variations in English language arts curriculum and instruction on struggling eighth-grade readers. Uses linear regression models with robust variance estimators to analyze a data sample of 6,700 eighth-grade students and 3,230 teachers drawn from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–1999. Finds evidence that the track level was a significant predictor of instructional practices and that students in low-track classes received more comprehension skills and strategies instruction (particularly worksheets and videos), read fewer challenging texts, and engaged less in literacy analysis and comprehension-based practices such as making predictions or generalizations and describing the structure of texts. Concludes that teachers of students in low-track classes ought to continue the use of lower Lexile-level books, while altering their instructional practice to increase the challenge and rigor of the instructional tasks.


Reports on a single-subject case study exploring contextual and personal factors contributing to the literacy development of a deaf 17-year-old proficient and strategic reader. Describes how iterative data analysis generated themes contributing to definitions of early access and comprehensible language, and revealed the importance of early and continual exposure to language, explicit literacy instruction, and personal student characteristics, as well as coordinated efforts between home and school. Advocates for a more nuanced and balanced understanding of supporting literacy development for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.


Examines the effect of Promoting Acceleration of Comprehension and Content through Text (PACT), a content area reading instructional intervention that focuses on text-based reading, discussion, and critical thinking, on middle school students’ social studies knowledge acquisition. Utilizes data from randomized controlled trials of 35 social studies teachers and 2,786 eighth-grade students. Analyzes audio-recording data of instruction from classrooms with and without the PACT treatment, coded for dimensions of instructional time. Finds that teachers spent more time on interactive on-task instruction in the PACT treatment condition, and that in classes without the intervention, dimensions of instructional time had a statistically significant relationship to students’ social studies knowledge acquisition that was not found in classes that had the intervention. Concludes that the methods utilized to deliver instruction are equally or more important than the amount of instructional time to the resulting impact on content knowledge acquisition.

Offers insights into efforts to challenge societal beliefs regarding independent reading and ways to change societal misconceptions regarding the value of independent reading in rural China. Reports on a cluster randomized control trial exploring causal effects of in-class libraries on student attitudes toward reading, student reading habits, reading and math achievement, and perception of independent reading. Finds that an in-class library program with no additional interventions can positively influence student attitudes and habits around reading and holds potential for reducing gaps between male and female students, between low- and high-performing students, and between students who live with their parents and those whose parents have migrated for work. Implies that policy makers should promote access to books as well as professional development support for teachers in the area of reading.

**Other Related Research**


Annotated Bibliography


Second Language Literacy

*The research included in this section focuses on emergent bilingual/multilingual learners’ language use and acquisition. In selecting the research to be abstracted, we attempted to represent a variety of methodologies, ages, languages, contexts, and modalities, while highlighting prominent projects and theory building. Studies in this section are representative of a continued interest in the examination of bilingual and biliterate pedagogies; translanguaging practices, biliterate identities, and critical literacies in curricula; and teacher development. Specific trends noted this year include an emphasis on home literacies and cultural knowledge, writing and composition, technology integration, and the role of feedback. (Amy Frederick, lead contributor)*


Investigates narrative reading comprehension skills and initiative to read in a fourth-grade Spanish–English dual-immersion classroom that incorporated explicit collaborative translation during small-group reading activities. Draws on the theory of active bilingualism and analyzes audio records of reading groups, field notes, artifacts, and memos to follow five students classified as English learners as they engaged in translation activities with dual-language books. Finds that students quickly and naturally took up translation as a meaning-making strategy at both word and text levels, and demonstrated positive changes on multiple reading comprehension assessments. Asserts that students also developed bilingual identities surrounding their bilingual competence, resulting in less reading avoidance, greater risk-taking, and greater participation during reading events. Highlights that the benefits of collaborative translation appear to extend to elementary school contexts when translation is used to supplement effective reading instruction and is added to teachers’ translilingual pedagogical repertoires.


Explores the relationship between syntactic complexity and writing quality in research papers by undergraduate ESL students. Employs a multidimensional set of complexity measures, including: mean length of T-unit as a global measure; clauses per T-unit and T-units per sentence as clausal measures of subordination and coordination; and mean length of clause and complex nominals per clause as phrasal measures. Analyzes these global and phrasal measures of complexity in papers graded as high-, mid-, and low-tier writing quality using one-way multivariate analysis of variance. Suggests that higher levels of global and phrasal syntactic complexity are
associated with higher-quality research papers. Highlights the importance of explicitly teaching and explaining syntactic complexity in L2 English writing coursework in order for students to produce these complex structures.

Draws on critical and sociocultural frameworks of literacy and critical translingual theories in a secondary ethnic studies course unit employing a sanctuary-based curriculum and Social Justice Posada. Foregrounds the lived experiences and local community knowledge of students who are immigrants or children of immigrants. Examines 33 students’ engagement with literacies of refuge that affirm immigrant rights, humanity, and legal protection. Analyzes data from audio recordings taken during class and Las Posadas, student interviews, two focus groups, and artifacts to identify connections between student learning and broader sociopolitical and economic forces. Finds that students contested negative discourses and stereotypes surrounding immigrants and drew parallels to their school literacy practices where their everyday dissonances became scaffolds for literacy development. Suggests that literacy instruction should build on marginalized students’ community cultural knowledge and practices of resistance through participatory activist literacies that respectfully facilitate students’ exploration of their assets and literacies.

Identifies interactions between type of written corrective feedback (WCF; direct vs. indirect), type of error (grammar vs. nongrammar), and the perspective of feedback (accuracy vs. acquisition). Reports on a study that employed a pretest-posttest design with 46 English majors at a Spanish university, comprising two intervention groups and one control group. Finds that direct WCF reduced grammar errors after a rewriting session in comparison with unfocused indirect WCF and, moreover, that the successful uptake of these grammar corrections was related to language and noticing the errors. Recognizes the need for teachers to approach WCF with caution so as to avoid overwhelming students, as uptake is unlikely to occur if students do not notice and understand how to correct their writing errors.

Examines the cognitive and sociocultural reading practices of four elementary English learners as they read culturally relevant and culturally distant texts in their English language arts classrooms and at home. Identifies 12 reading strategies categorized as higher-order thinking strategies or sociocontextual reading strategies, and investigates ELs’ use of these strategies when reading the different texts through analyses of retrospective and concurrent verbal protocols, classroom and home observations, interviews, and artifacts. Finds that the ELs employed the full range of strategies, but did so differently depending on their reading proficiency level. Less proficient readers engaged in transactional reading processes that favored more sociocontextual strategies to connect with culturally relevant texts, while more advanced readers utilized dialogic-critical reading processes that drew more on higher-order thinking strategies to engage with all texts. Recommends that teachers integrate all strategies and model them through think-alouds, while ensuring that beginner readers have access to culturally relevant texts that facilitate their empowerment.

Annotated Bibliography

Synthesizes research on the effectiveness of technology-integrated literacy instruction. Reviews 36 studies including 4,354 English language learners in grades K–12. Finds that technology-integrated instruction produced a positive, medium effect size (0.47) on literacy outcomes, as compared with traditional methods in which technology was not incorporated. Based on moderator analyses, concludes that learning context (more effective in English as a foreign language settings) and literacy outcomes (writing and vocabulary were most effective) had statistically significant effects, yet grade level did not. Advocates for the use of educational technology in literacy instruction for ELLs, regardless of literacy outcomes, pedagogical use, teaching methods, learning contexts, and grade levels.


Investigates the role write-alouds and dialogue journaling played in fostering dialogic and caring literacy pedagogy in a 9th-grade social studies class in a newcomer school for students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). Follows one teacher and five Guatemalan students through a yearlong ethnographic case study that analyzed classroom observation field notes, teacher and student interviews, and classroom artifacts to explore how the teacher’s write-aloud scaffolding and dialogue journals were responsive to the students’ needs. Finds that write-alouds and journals enabled the teacher to build students’ background knowledge through context-rich, multimodal, and caring literacy instruction, during which students practiced authentic, identity-centered writing. Indicates that write-alouds and dialogue journals offer newcomer SLIFEs scaffolded autonomy and comprehensible input for learning how to write, and offer teachers an important tool for formatively assessing students’ language and literacy development.


Examines how middle school English learners negotiated their identities as readers and writers during an identity-oriented unit of instruction, and how teachers can construct spaces to support continuous and dynamic exploration of identities. Considers data from 10 sixth-grade EL students attending one middle school within a predominantly Mexican American community in South Texas, including state testing scores, interviews, written reflections, reading response journals, and observations conducted throughout the unit. Notes that during the unit, students shared their hopes and dreams for themselves as learners, readers, and writers. Finds that the unit provided a venue for EL students to explore their own identities as competent learners while resisting negative external positioning. Recommends that teachers provide opportunities for students to reflect on their own experiences and discuss how those experiences have influenced their views of themselves as readers and writers.


Draws on theories of translingualism and emergent biliteracy to examine how and why a group of 44 second-grade multilingual students engaged in code-meshing in English language arts and social studies classrooms. Follows students with no formal education in languages other than English during a 9-week unit focused on translingual poetry, and analyzes classroom audio records and still photographs, student poetry samples, and teacher and student interviews. Finds that students code-meshed by utilizing available resources, such as their phonological knowledge of English letter-sound correspondences to transliterate, their orthographic knowledge of languages beyond English to write letter strings, and their rich multilingual environment to remix print into their translingual poetry. Shows how students demonstrated awareness of their audience and expressed pride in their abilities to index their identities and assert their multilingualism.
Highlights the potential for translilingual writing to foster emergent biliteracy skills in young multilingual learners, and suggests that teachers support this asset-oriented literacy approach by choosing translilingual mentor texts and modeling code-meshing in their own writing.


Investigates the multilingual and multiliteracy practices of emergent bilingual students and their families in rural Indiana. Draws on an understanding of multiliteracies from a strengths perspective. Frames rurality as a site for local relationships and created resources. Analyzes questionnaire and interview data from multilingual families. Finds that students typically opt for English print and media resources in the home, while church communities and home cooking practices promote heritage language use. Recognizes that it may be difficult, but important, for teachers to appreciate and support the multiliteracies of emergent bilingual students.


Draws on a languaging perspective in which language is inseparable from the social interactions of those using the language. Explores the social act of writing e-books with iPads as a novel medium that can foster languaging opportunities. Analyzes microethnographic data on third-grade emergent bilingual students' humorous language use during collaborative e-book writing. Finds that humor served multiple functions, often simultaneously, including: composing text, connecting to peers, and constructing social positionings. Represents humorous language as a sophisticated linguistic and literacy practice, as opposed to an off-task behavior in the classroom.


Reviews the literature on emergent bilinguals and digital multimodal composition in secondary classrooms. Analyzes 70 studies and focuses on key findings and characteristics across the body of research, identifying five main themes: (1) students used digital multimodal composition to navigate their identities (60% of studies); (2) multimodal composing reshaped traditional classroom spaces (46%); (3) students developed as intentional designers with new possibilities for communicating (40%); (4) students expanded their linguistic repertoires and awareness of language use (34%); and (5) academic literacy practices were supported by multimodal composing (26%). Recommends that emergent bilingual students collaborate with teachers and peers to leverage the potential of multimodal composition.


Examines the effects of metacognitive reading strategy instruction on reading comprehension among 25 fifth-grade English learners in a Hong Kong international school. Identifies students' metacognitive knowledge about reading in English and investigates the usefulness of metacognitive reading strategy instruction through analysis of students' written reflections and notes, videotapes of group discussions, and two sets of reading tests. Describes how, during 10 hour-long lessons, students read for authentic purposes in an extended process in which they read a text, answered questions, reflected on the reading, and finally, reported on comprehension and discussed the use of reading strategies. Finds that readers gained an awareness of the many factors that influenced their reading, and that receiving explicit metacognitive instruction contributed to improved reading performance. Notes that students with low English proficiency adopted mostly bottom-up (specific) strategies in comparison with their higher-proficiency peers, who adopted a range of specific and general strategies. Suggests that students’ metacogni-
tive knowledge should be developed using methods—such as introspection and process-based discussion—that focus alternately on text and process.

Yeung, S. S., Liu, Y., & Lin, D. (2020). Growth of phonemic awareness and spelling in a second language. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 23*(6), 754–768. Investigates the development of phonemic awareness of beginning sounds and its relationship with English spelling in 141 Chinese kindergartners learning English as a second language, who had begun learning English at 2 years of age and were receiving 60–90 minutes of English instruction per week. Describes how the children were assessed on nonverbal intelligence, letter name knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness, and word reading four times at 3-month intervals during the year, and on spelling 12 months after the study began. Finds that phonemic awareness grew in a nonlinear fashion, and that both initial level and growth of phonemic awareness were significant predictors of English spelling at the age of 6. Suggests that curriculum be tailored for ESL kindergartners, with a focus on the teaching of identification, segmentation, and blending of phonemes to encourage them to attend to units smaller than syllables, which are prioritized instructionally when learning to spell in their native language, Cantonese.

Zhang, D., & Ke, S. (2020). The simple view of reading made complex by morphological decoding fluency in bilingual fourth-grade readers of English. *Reading Research Quarterly, 55*(2), 311–329. Examines the complexity of the simple view of reading theory when used with bilingual readers of English, focusing on morphological decoding. Compares three groups of fourth-grade readers of English in Singapore: Chinese students who used English as their dominant home language (Chinese EL1); and Chinese and Malay students whose dominant home language was not English but Chinese (Chinese EL2) or Malay (Malay EL2). Uses path analysis to examine pseudo-word decoding (phonemic decoding), timed decoding of derivational words (morphological decoding fluency), oral vocabulary, and passage comprehension. Finds that morphological decoding fluency, as opposed to phonemic decoding, surfaced as a unique, significant predictor of reading comprehension, yet played a larger role in the Chinese EL1 and Malay EL2 groups. Discusses the dual impact of target language experience and cross-linguistic influence. Highlights the importance of: (1) engaging children with multiple processes, beyond the process based on letter-sound correspondences, for fluent decoding in English reading; and (2) differentiated instructional support for readers depending on the linguistic distance of their home language from English.

**Other Related Research**


**Social Justice/Critical Approaches**

*Articles selected for this section offer a range of diverse perspectives about literacy experiences and curricula that specifically focus on social justice and critical approaches. The studies include readings of texts to evaluate representation and cultural identities, considerations of participation and interaction in classroom and community settings, and analysis of student compositions. This work is about and for educators who are willing to engage students in critical approaches and literacy learning that involve reading, talking, and writing about power and resistance as related to racial and cultural identities and histories, responses to anti-Blackness, religious affiliations, sexual identities, and gender identities. (Tracey Pyscher, lead contributor)*


Analyzes theories of a critical new materialism and poststructuralism through an antiracist ethic for use in literacy research and practice. Illustrates intra-action analysis of a short autobiographical video produced by a Black male high school student and interpretations of student literacy practices. Raises ethical concerns regarding analyses of racialized students’ literacy practices that emphasize materiality and affect. Addresses the lack of critical race perspectives in much new materialist literacy research. Suggests that critical new materialist literacy research engage with the paradox of rejecting static social categories while acknowledging the need for respect of
difference, historical inequities, and the removal of human agency through uncritical readings of racialized students’ literacy practices. Examines emergence related to human connections and engages in intra-actional analysis that privileges racialized research analysis in response to marginalized/racialized youth perspectives.

Coles, J. (2019). The Black literacies of urban high school youth countering antiblackness in the context of neoliberal multiculturalism. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education, 15*(2), 1–35. Examines data from a yearlong ethnographic study in a Philadelphia high school to understand how Black urban youth use literacy to make sense of their experiences of antiblackness. Describes the phenomenon of neoliberal multiculturalism as an Obama-era framework that renders antiblackness invisible and relegates it to the past. Imagines antiblackness as a wall—an obvious structural barrier—to better address its effects, and ultimately to dismantle it. Draws on Black critical theory, critical race English education, and living Black history as lenses for analyzing literacy artifacts and interview data from nine Black youth in an after-school program. Argues that critical literacy engagement that grapples actively with antiblackness is uplifting and transformative for youth affected daily by the structures of antiblackness. Pushes teachers to fight for opportunities for Black students to do critical work through literacy and suggests the importance of third spaces such as the after-school program.

Crampton, A. E. (2019). A literacy of armed love: Confrontation and desire in aesthetic and critical projects. *Studies in Social Justice, 13*(1), 94–117. Draws on critical ethnography and mediated discourse analysis to explore how critical literacy manifests acts of love for self and community for queer-identified and racialized urban youth. Describes students’ aesthetic and critical literacy multimodal productions in detail, viewing critical work as creative resistance to oppressive discourses, coupled with expressions of desire for imagined futures. Includes analysis of social interactions to discuss how students function as critical educators, sometimes with and sometimes against their peers and teachers. Describes implications for literacy learning as not only a practice of critical reading and production, but an expression of love that recognizes lived experiences containing emotional and affective qualities. Shows how critical literacy projects as forms of activism can forward Freire’s concept of armed love as a radical striving toward a more just society.

Damico, J. S., Baildon, M., & Panos, A. (2020). Climate justice literacy: Stories-we-live-by, ecolinguistics, and classroom practice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 63*(6), 683–691. Positions literacy educators to lead critical justice pedagogies of climate change by presenting an inquiry-based analysis of power and privilege. Describes how the concept of ecoliteracy can challenge privileged narratives of human supremacy and consumerism. Offers alternative “stories we live by” to consider interdependency in Indigenous narratives of place, gender perspectives of intersectionality, and youth activism to shape political policies. Asserts that critical literacy can reveal the social and cultural influence on climate change data, aid analysis of multimodal digital texts, and create language to reflect structural injustices of climate change. Offers educator inquiry strategies to overcome resistance while teaching a climate change justice literacy unit.

de los Ríos, C. V. (2019). “Los músicos”: Mexican corridos, the aural border, and the evocative musical renderings of transnational youth. *Harvard Educational Review, 89*(2), 177–200. Uses locally situated ethnographic methods to trace the evolution of the musical genre corridos, border folk music, and its subgenre, narcocorridos, in youth’s social protest against American domination of Mexico. Illustrates how migrant youth are positioned by globalization, politics, and culture to resist transnational dynamics of power and inequity. Points to a lack of research on narcocorridos and emphasizes how music serves as an informative memory of place, particularly for migrant youth. Describes the critical framework of transnationalism, resistance practices, and communicative repertoires of transnational youth. Proposes that narcocorridos as
critical transnational literacies support migrant youth’s ability to find belonging while resisting marginalization in schools. Makes a case for educators to teach critical skills as informed by the unique translilingual practices and social-political engagement of youth.


Using culturally sustaining pedagogy and community cultural wealth theories, details how a Latinx family writing workshop with fourth and fifth graders set in Arizona, a restrictive state and educational context, revitalizes and sustains family language and literacy practices. Notes that writing is not viewed as a solitary act, but as collective and relational. Using a practitioner research stance, describes family workshops in detail as a model for educators. Acknowledges the complex realities of students’ and families’ lives while characterizing the resistance in these same experiences as tools of strength and hope, and positioning families as experts of their lived realities. Promotes critical literacy practices and policies that guide Latinx children and families through a deep understanding of local knowledge and literacies.


Examines fugitivity and fugitive literacies by Chicanx/Latinx *transfronterizx* youth, defined as young people who cross and experience life on both sides of the border between Mexico and the United States. Uses storytelling and multimodal *cuentos* (multimodal creations) from a community-based literacy project to illustrate how youth exhibit, build, and sustain their ways of resisting white, Western, hegemonic definitions of literacy through communication and creativity. Shares implications for using fugitivity, Indigenous epistemologies, and transfronterizx youth literacies for language and literacy education for Chicanx/Latinx border crossers.


Describes how students face unprecedented challenges and calls for a model of civic education that emerges from the perspectives, concerns, and stories of youth. Features six classroom communities involved with the Digital Democratic Dialogue (3D) Project and National Writing Project (NWP). Proposes a “speculative civic literacies approach” that draws from critical and multiliteracy theories, particularly an Afrofuturist interpretation of the speculative. Challenges the current civic education curriculum that promotes assimilative practices that erase the experiences of minoritized youth within hegemonic discourses of national unity. Explores the potential for youth to re-story the civic present and future through digital storytelling and dialogue with their peers, and to reimagine democratic civic education. Shows how educators can take a speculative approach by centering youth knowledge, exposing power and privilege in social constructs, and integrating digital multimodalities as equitable places of expression.


Details results of a study that used critical race and borderlands theories, along with critical ethnographic and participatory action research methods, to analyze how middle school debaters integrated their identities and epistemologies into the traditional literacy practice of debate to advocate for more expansive and inclusive forms of academic and civic discussion. Illustrates how spoken word and translanguaging helped students redesign spoken-word pedagogy in their own unique ways. Highlights the creation of literacy “rules” and demonstrates youth expertise in reimagining ELA toward a more compassionate public sphere.

Annotated Bibliography

Describes the concept of “agitation literacies” and stresses that they should be taught within a historically responsive equity model. Suggests that youth need pedagogical opportunities to understand current social and political situations while building literacy skills. Outlines an equity model where educators consider questions in their unit planning to encourage student identity, intellect, skill, and criticality. Emphasizes use of historical writings and speeches of Black African activists as primary sources for political inspirations of resistance that include layered diverse texts and multimodalities with accompanying short written exercises.


Highlights culturally sustaining and responsive instruction using the novel *All American Boys* with urban youth in a summer alternative school program. Identifies how, through character experiences, the novel offers a valuable duality of perspectives for a wide range of diverse students and community contexts related to racial trauma and white privilege. Illustrates how literacy levels were increased when the novel was paired with current social justice movements. Makes a case for student literacy and sociopolitical awareness to be taught together to increase student agency. Scaffolds writing practices with close reading strategies to deepen understanding of racism and advocacy, while affirming choices in expression to support the linguistic, literal, and cultural pluralism of students.


Proposes ways to teach differently in the times of Trump, when the old forms of domination (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia) are made more explicit, while also critically bearing in mind how other, larger discourses, like neoliberalism, shape our responses to the fascist leanings embodied in Trumpism. Drawing on critical literacy, neoliberal multiculturalism, and standpoint theory, illustrates how the backdrop of US cultural politics and white supremacy is shaped by a new form of neoliberal multiculturalism that is meant to further divide collective efforts on the parts of racialized and classed marginalized communities. Recommends pedagogical strategies related to race and class that challenge activist researchers and educators to reconsider how to collectively navigate and resist the impulses inspired by neoliberalism.


Describes how eight Black mothers'/caretakers' stories served as a type of Black motherhood and girlhood critical literacy practice when shared with their daughters in an afterschool program. Shows how this type of critical literacy practice affected both mothers and daughters as they questioned stereotypical views of themselves, and highlights how they negotiated intersectional structures like gender, sexuality, race, and class to sustain and uplift themselves. Contextualizes the mothers’ stories within a reproductive justice framework, offering insights into their experiences of multiple and simultaneous oppressions. Points to a new kind of critical literacy of Black motherhood and girlhood to improve young Black women’s life outcomes, while enhancing the potential for them to realize their gifts, and ending the many forms of violence against them.


Analyzes three YA novels (*Hush, All American Boys, The Hate U Give*) written by African American authors that challenge negative perceptions of Blackness through Black abolitionists' counter-storytelling and challenge the perceptions of Blackness in American media, society, and classrooms. Using a close reading analysis, framed through critical race theory, explores the African American young adult storytelling tradition and the role it plays in resisting dominant narratives about Blackness. Suggests that the three texts are forms of counter-storytelling,
drawing on the personal and “outlaw” emotions that resist the many forms of White supremacy (and White rationality) and help to inspire revolutionary acts of social justice for students while also providing youth acts of resistance. Challenges teachers to rethink and redefine curricula and the literary canon.

**Other Related Research**


**Writing**

To determine which writing and composing research studies to abstract, we prioritized the representation of various theoretical approaches, methodologies, ages/grade levels, and instructional contexts. To demonstrate the range of writing research, we included large-scale quasi-experimental studies, K–16 classroom-based research, qualitative case studies/self-studies of students and teachers, and research in teacher preparation programs/classrooms. Studies highlighted in this section reflect major
trends and themes evident in the research on writing from the last year: dialogic writing pedagogies, argumentative writing instruction, academic and content-area writing processes (mathematics, science, history, etc.), multimodal writing practices, digital tools and technologies for writing, perceptions and identities of preservice and inservice writing teachers, and writing instruction with and for diverse learners. (Erin Stutelberg, lead contributor)


Compares perceptions of ideal writing instruction of four urban secondary English teachers to their actual writing instruction with diverse learners. Utilizes interviews and instruction video-recordings to analyze, through a critical literacy and sociocultural framework, how and why teachers’ beliefs and actions compare/contrast. Reveals tensions between teachers’ perceptions of ideal writing instruction and their practice: a lack of time to teach the writing process, topic knowledge, or language; teacher identities narrowly focused on test-centered writing instruction; and limited agency to make pedagogical decisions about writing instruction. Indicates a need for teachers to examine how their beliefs compare with their instructional practice and disrupt the ways high-stakes testing and accountability measures impede effective writing instruction for diverse learners.


Characterizes teachers’ goals and beliefs as writing epistemologies that guide their use of scaffolding during formative writing assessment practices. Utilizes a qualitative case study method to share portraits of individualized scaffolding during dialogic writing assessments where assessment align with instruction. Traces connections between teachers’ writing epistemologies and the scaffolding and responsiveness present in examples. Finds that teachers’ epistemologies influence how they facilitate dialogic writing conferences. Concludes that relational and dynamic scaffolding support equity-based writing assessments, and calls for expanded understandings of epistemologies around writing practices.


Explains how dialogic local space combines dialogue with local realities to create a space where students (re)see their surroundings by hearing other perspectives and honoring the immediate and personal experiences of classmates. Utilizes sociocultural discourse analysis to focus on how one 2nd-grade teacher’s design and implementation of a poetry unit created a site of dialogic local space. Finds that successful practices included grounding lessons in students’ experiences and focusing on opportunities for students to see things in new ways. Shows that the teacher’s dialogic stance supported her teaching of dialogic language and practices over time as she modeled a sense of possibility for her students. Suggests making space in curriculum for teachers to cultivate dialogic values, and developing research that looks beyond single classroom interactions to understand how practices are developed over time.


Explores the benefits and challenges of mathematical writing for students, specifically the effects of a self-regulated strategy development intervention on 25 sixth-grade students’ mathematical writing. Reports on a quasi-experimental study inquiring whether explicit instruction of a strategy for writing-to-learn in mathematics affects the quality, complexity, and length of students’ mathematical writing. Finds improvement in intervention-group students’ written expression of mathematical reasoning, with evidence of better structure, longer responses, and
increased use of technical vocabulary in mathematical writing. Indicates that self-regulated strategy development interventions can improve students' mathematical writing. Encourages explicit teaching of such writing strategies, and suggests additional iterations of the proposed strategy with larger groups of students to achieve similar results in the classroom.

Kohnen, A. M. (2019). Becoming a teacher of writing: An analysis of the identity resources offered to preservice teachers across contexts. *English Education, 51*(4), 348–375. Conceptualizes teacher candidates’ identity formation through a lens of material, social, and ideational resources to understand how context influences writing teacher identity. Describes a case study tracing teacher candidates’ writing teacher identities in a 1-year English education master’s program. Compares resources aligned with No Child Left Behind policy, those emphasized in the university teacher preparation program, and those taken up by teacher candidates in the beginning, middle, and end of the program. Finds that teacher candidates drew on resources connected to standardized tests, narrow definitions of writing, and No Child Left Behind policy, contrasting with the definition of writing and pedagogy found in the university program. Argues for an expansive view of writing across policy, K–12 education, and teacher preparation programs to support teacher candidates’ identity development around writing pedagogy.


Lewis Ellison, T., Robinson, B., & Qiu, T. (2020). Examining African American girls’ literate intersectional identities through journal entries and discussions about STEM. *Written Communication, 37*(1), 3–40. Investigates how three African American adolescent girls wrote and spoke about their experiences in a STEAM program, and how journal-writing, specifically, reflected and enhanced the girls’ intersectional literate identities and representations of self. Details qualitative open and thematic coding methods used for analysis of the girls’ writing. Describes how the focal participants used journal writing as both a learning tool in their coding workshops and as a reflective tool for understanding and expressing their gendered and raced identities. Finds that the journals functioned as a site for expression of the girls’ self-assurance, self-awareness, and agency. Provides insight into pedagogical methodologies for teaching writing to girls of color through the creation of a third space in which girls might voice their lived experiences through writing.

Monte-Sano, C., & Allen, A. (2019). Historical argument writing: The role of interpretive work, argument type, and classroom instruction. *Reading and Writing, 32*(6), 1383–1410. Describes a comparative case study of five novice secondary history teachers’ writing instruction. Asks how history teachers define, situate, and support argument writing, and what kind/quality of argument writing students produce in the history classroom. Utilizes grounded theory approaches to analyze observations of teaching, teacher interviews, classroom artifacts, and student writing. Presents four key findings: (1) historical work involved in writing calls for interpretation; (2) different kinds of historical work can produce arguments; (3) arguments have different levels of complexity; and (4) teachers support students’ historical work more than argument writing. Suggests that argument writing in secondary history is complex, contextual, and
situated. Further, notes that “argument” has many meanings and uses specific to the discipline of history, and is expansive, depending on the historical work necessary for a given writing task.

Neumann, K. L., & Kopcha, T. J. (2019). Using Google Docs for peer-then-teacher review on middle school students’ writing. *Computers and Composition, 54*, Article 102524. Explores the use and impact of peer-then-teacher feedback with Google Docs. Describes a single case study using convergent mixed methods with 26 middle school students during a 3-week unit on argumentative writing. Examines the frequency and nature of comments from both peer and teacher feedback, rubric scores of each draft of writing, and revision patterns across students’ drafts. Reveals that students improved their writing across drafts, and text-based improvements were more common in response to teacher feedback than in response to peer feedback. Highlights how students’ engagement in peer feedback discussion threads provides important exposure to others’ writing and an opportunity to reflect on writing. Suggests providing students with more scaffolding and practice in giving feedback to increase text-based revision.

Ohito, E. O. (2020). “The creative aspect woke me up”: Awakening to multimodal essay composition as a fugitive literacy practice. *English Education, 52*(3), 186–222. Conceptualizes *fugitive literacy practices* as tools for liberation from anti-Blackness, describing multimodal essay composition as one such tool. Utilizes self-study methodology to inquire how multimodal essay composition could illuminate an interracial group of college students’ knowledge of Blackness, what discourses about whiteness (and its disruption) this practice evoked, and its implications for English education. Using qualitative data and analysis of the instructor’s personal reflective writing, students’ writing assignments, and course documents and observations, finds that multimodal essay composition awakened students’ social consciousness and caused an epistemic disruption to whiteness while revealing differences in knowledge about Blackness that Black, white, and Latina students brought to the classroom. Calls for the critical integration of fugitive literacy practices in English education curriculum.

Olson, C. B., Woodworth, K., Arshan, N., Black, R., Chung, H. Q., D’Aoust, C., Dewar, T., Fried- rich, L., Godfrey, L., Land, R., Matuchniak, T., Scarcella, R., & Stowell, L. (2020). The pathway to academic success: Scaling up a text-based analytical writing intervention for Latinos and English learners in secondary school. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 112*(4), 701–717. Reports findings from a multisite randomized controlled trial in which the Pathway to Academic Success Project, in conjunction with the National Writing Project (NWP), was scaled up to train a large cohort of secondary English teachers to support English learners’ academic writing practices. Asks what effects the NWP intervention has on teacher practice, what facilitates the process of effectively scaling up such an intervention, and what impact this intervention has on ELs’ writing practices and outcomes. Finds improved academic writing outcomes for ELs in attributes of content, structure, fluency, and conventions. Addresses challenges to scaling up a writing intervention model, provides advice for scaling up professional development successfully, and encourages the use of NWP teacher training to improve secondary writing instruction.

Robinson, J., Dusenberry, L., Hutter, L., Lawrence, H., Frazee, A., & Burnett, R. E. (2019). State of the field: Teaching with digital tools in the writing and communication classroom. *Computers and Composition, 54*, Article 102511. Details results of an international survey of 328 instructors at 317 colleges and universities regarding how and to what extent writing and communication instructors use digital resources in their classrooms. Finds that writing and communication instructors depend on their own knowledge to utilize digital resources and are less reliant on them as tasks become more complex. Shows a balance between teacher and student actions using digital resources, with a focus on familiar and commonly available resources (learning management systems, presentations, email) over simulations, chats, and games. Suggests embedding digital resource training within academic
departments rather than at the institutional level, creating a repository of shared models and discussions, including writing educators in the development of resources, and collecting annual information about digital resource use to continue shifting training.


Draws on Arendt’s (1978) concept of stance, and Ehret’s (2018) view of affect, to capture the embodied dimensions of multimodal processes and materialized stances students make in multimodal compositions. Describes the use of ethnographic methods during a 6-week unit in a 12th-grade visual arts class focused on self-portraits as selfies. Features five case studies, tracing students’ stances, stories, and understandings of their multimodal processes as they made self-portraits as selfies. Shows how a lens of stance highlights complexity and creativity in students’ design processes, as well as their agency and hoped-for agency. Calls for an expanded view of composition that acknowledges and honors students’ expressive stances, their use of varying modes in their lives, and the production of designs.


Builds on previous studies that explored the relationship between dialogic interaction and the construction of argumentative writing. Describes a yearlong intervention with 49 sixth-grade students, half participating in e-dialogues with partners before writing argumentative essays. Compares the written assessments (argumentative essays) of the intervention and control groups to analyze the differences in students’ meta-level awareness of the purpose, goals, and selection of evidence in their argumentative writing. Finds that the intervention group developed an enhanced meta-level of understanding about the role and selection of evidence in argumentation, which translated to their written compositions. Makes a case for fostering the development of students’ argumentative writing through peer dialogue and deeper engagement with content.


Examines multiple conceptualizations of embodiment in two adolescent girls’ writing. Analyzes qualitative case study data from a middle school ELA poetry-writing unit, including student and teacher interviews, observations and field notes, and artifacts, to understand how writing is produced by, in, from, and for bodies. Finds powerful interactions between bodies and writing: participants expressed embodied ways of knowing through writing, used writing about bodies as a tool for constructing counter-narratives, leveraged bodies as social texts to create multimodal compositions, and responded to writing in visceral and embodied ways. Inspires writing teachers to consider how the body is “a tool for writing, a medium that experiences writing, and a social text that works with/through writing” as they develop writing pedagogies (p. 27).


