

The Impact of Collaboration in Interactive Reading Settings

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Abstract

The purposes of this study are to discuss the visionary instructional planning through the social process as school wide faculty collaboration and prepare teachers through their identity connections of graduate reading application. The discussion exemplifies four collaborative instructional teams from Honduras Elementary School, Houma, Louisiana, U.S.A. then practitioners' assignments from the Western Illinois University Moline, IL USA reading course, *Teaching Reading in the Elementary School*. In the graduate reading course, *Teaching Reading in the Elementary School*, students participated in required projects, reading assignments, and interactive settings to link to concepts. Several individual and group requirements provided opportunities for personal, academic, and experiential interaction: (1) Reflective written responses, (2) Functional reading creativity, (3) Autobiographical text, and (4) Strategic teaching. The functional reading connections were analyzed quantitatively with nominal and numeric data in grouped frequency polygons.

Introduction

Currently, higher education professors in graduate reading classes focus on the instructional task of balancing and integrating the reading process with the literacy areas (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing), fine arts, and experiences. Teachers are continually facing challenges of designing reading adaptations so that students can better apply and interpret text. Gerald Duffy (2002, 322-326) purported that teachers may go beyond traditional methods with a *vision* that personally connects to self, autonomously creates, and maintains quality academic applications.

The purposes of this paper are to explore four current types of collaboration implemented at an elementary school and to design a course that would effectively guide graduate students in enacting social constructs (reflective adjustments and creative alternatives for reading settings). The reading course, *Teaching Reading in the Elementary School*, includes the social constructs: (1) Reflective practices, (2) Creativity, (3) Interaction, and (4) Strategies. The study demonstrates collaboration in the four elementary school models so that graduate students' coursework requirements in collaboration would enable them to be better prepared for constructive participation on faculty instructional teams. The four models of planning are as follows: (1.) Collaborative cross-curriculum teams, (2.) Grade level meetings, (3.) Professional development (new teachers), and (4.) The foster grandparent mentors.

Setting

School-wide Faculty Collaboration

At Honduras Elementary School, Houma, Louisiana, U.S.A., the faculty consists of 5 master degreed teachers within a faculty of twenty-six members. Honduras Elementary School is a primary school comprised of Grades PR-K through 3 and a non-categorical grade level of ages 2-4 children and special need students through age 7. The school-wide Title 1 identified school is located in a low-economic urban setting with 85% free-reduced lunch students. Four models of instructional planning were shared in the study of the following planning teams: (1) Collaborative cross-curriculum teams (see fig.1A), (2) Grade level teams (see fig. 1B), (3) New teachers' professional development meetings; and (4) Foster grandparent mentors. First on a larger scale, in collaborative cross-curriculum teams, teachers in grades K-3 shared their thoughts and feelings about the curriculum. Janet Miller (1982a) acknowledged that teachers working together expand ideas into new perspectives. Students may benefit immensely from the inquiry within academia.

The collaborative cross-curriculum team sessions were from two to three hours during the school day and were conducted twice a year, early in the beginning of the school year and in January, the second semester. The teams collaborated with diverse teacher groups discussing teaching strategies, reviewing test scores, and the language arts, reading, math, science, and social studies content.

Grade level teams were the second type of planning meetings. These meetings were an hour in length during the school day, and grade level teachers participated in specific curriculum planning and collaborated on special areas of concern. Teachers worked on topics for example curriculum mapping and lesson planning. During this invaluable time, the teachers reflected on their goals that were developed during their last grade level meeting. The teachers discussed problem areas and brainstormed ideas that could strengthen the program. The teachers organized their lessons and content focus to better meet the needs of students.

The third type of instructional planning was to enhance the implementation of the non-categorical grade through Grade 2, Responsive Classroom program with the Honduras faculty's new teachers. The new teachers visited for a half day in classrooms and observed the Responsive Classroom program at Allemands Elementary School, St. Charles Parish, Louisiana. The campus principal met with the group of new teachers to set the observational purpose and tone of

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responsive strategies visitation in orientation and closure meetings. A post-visitation seminar was conducted so that teachers could collaborate about new insights from the observed responsive classroom implementation and the workability of these ideas in their language arts settings. Collaboration of the innovative methods occurred during the visitation to another school, during the travel from the site, and informally with other Honduras faculty language arts faculty members. The program and the meetings continue the Responsive Classroom implementation with valuable contributions from the new teachers' observations.

A district-wide coordination of foster grandparent mentors in the local schools provided the fourth type of school-wide, Grade K-3, instructional planning meetings. Senior Citizen mentors for culturally disadvantaged students were selected for schools and placed in classrooms by a screening process of background checks, health status, administrative interviews, and procedural training. The annual scheduled required the mentors to participate daily from 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The foster grandparents assisted and adhered to these mentoring responsibilities:

- (1) Guided two students and other students with academic and social needs,
- (2) Intervened with reading and off-task behavioral needs, (3) Approximated close, family support and mediation, and (4) Maintained a caring community environment. Final evaluation of the foster grandparent mentor program is based on the assisted students' achievement progress, grade level promotion, and the successful workability of the mentoring program.

Graduate Students' (Teachers') Collaborative Preparation

Western Illinois University, Moline, Illinois, U.S.A. is an extension campus in a quad city location on the Mississippi River with two cities in Iowa and in Illinois. The thirteen graduate students were working on their Reading Specialist certification and consisted of 12 regular grade level teachers and one special education teacher. The required class assignments exemplified collaborative methods of social interaction in the summer class setting so that they could effectively plan with faculty colleagues and better implement collaborative methods with elementary students in reading settings. The reflective interpretations of reading and literacy concepts of the class members are described for the purpose of this study. The following provisions were available for the graduate students (teachers): four textbooks provided the literacy concepts; reading methods were obtained from required readings; and the syllabus was the required source of the daily reflective response appendices. The graduate students (teachers)

participated in the subsequent reflective practice assignments: (1) Reflective response sharing, (2) Environmental print posters, (3) Reading autobiographies, (4) Assigned reading methodology files, and (5) Strategic teaching.

Reflective Response Sharing

On the Western Illinois University extension campus, thirteen students participated in three groups sharing reflective responses, assigned reading teaching strategies, and personal experiences. Each group member contributed daily in a specific role, and the reporters presented weekly their group's compiled written responses as a panel member. Students wrote their initials on a reflective response chart that exemplified an adaptation from Pamela T. Godt's volunteer-rotation process that was maintained in the department file (see fig. 2A). Janet Miller's (1990) "lived experience and creating spaces" result from teacher's voices making expressive interpretations (Quoted by Pinar et al.).

Students in Group 3 reflected on reading areas, personal literacy awareness, meeting students' needs, active engagement, making connections, knowledge acquisition, and decision-making. One reflective response was selected from each Group 3 member according to date. (see fig. 2B).

Cheek, Flippo, and Lindsey's (1999, 5) textbook framed the response procedures and outcomes within the content of the following chapters: Chapter 1: Reading Process; Chapter 3: Emergent Literacy; Chapter 8: Developmental Writing; Chapter 4: Vocabulary Development; Chapters 5-7; Comprehension and Study Skills; Chapter 11: Assessment; Chapter 12: Fluency, Alphabetic Principle, and Phonological Awareness; and Chapter 13: Phonics, Spelling and Structural Analysis. Graduate students responded daily to the reflective responses presented as Course Appendices, A -I. Each graduate student responded to personal belief items connected to evidence-based research, and conceptual background information prior to class then shared in a small group setting. For example, on the first and last days of class, all students responded with semantic maps illustrating the reading process of Chapter 1. "What is reading to you? Make a Reading Diagram." The maps were shared within small groups, and the growth of knowledge about the reading process was evident on the last day's semantic maps.

At the beginning of the course, simple semantic webs were based on drawings of the reader, reading and literacy areas, and text with no details. During the course, all students were actively relating the academic concepts of Kucer's (2001) literacy dimensions (developmental,

socio-cultural, cognitive, linguistic, and literacy events) on their compiled semantic maps. At the completion of the course, members in Group 3 expanded the reading process as Family, Student Reader and Teacher; and added Learner and Reader, Other Factors, and Resources (see fig. 2C).

Environmental Print Posters

Students interacted sharing two types of personal reading reflections on the Western Illinois University extension campus: (1) Functional reading stories were portrayed on visual posters, and (2) Reading autobiographies were illustrated with creative visual presentations. Getting in-touch with one's own appreciation of reading instills the desire to guide all students in becoming aware of functional reading and motivating students to love reading. Bringing printed resources (e.g., labels, cards, music, signs, or ads), from home without knowing the thematic purpose was a type of artistic discovery strategy for creating personalized, environmental print posters. In Figure 6, Mrs. Connie Pitzer, a K-3 special education teacher at Hayes Elementary School, used digital photos of road obstacles traveling to class (see figs. 3A, B).

Laughter and awesome connections unfolded as the students revealed their story creations, i.e., Life's Roles (2 graduate students), by themes and frequency of occurrence. The students interacted with literacy connections in diverse cultural roles (wife, grandmother, teacher, student, traveler, vacationer, friend, or shopper) as predicted in Gee's (1999, 45) insights about developing "storyline.... across different people and in a social group." As the poster visuals and stories unfolded, the creativity connections were demonstrated and the graduate students had learned the creative elements' grading process for brainstorming to establish relationships.

Divergent thinking was assessed through the process of counting and calculating individual and class creativity points. The assessment adhered to Torrance's (1966) "creative elements' evaluation of Fluency (number of Elaborative Details); and Flexibility (number of categorical ideas), " (Quoted by Colangelo and Davis 1997, 178).

The posters were analyzed in three ways with nominal and numeric values for individuals' and combined class' creativity points in number of categories and elaborative details (Aron and Aron 1997, 17). Mrs. De Keyser, a third grade teacher at Grant Wood Elementary School, and Mrs. Walls, a fifth grade and Reading Recovery teacher at Harrison Elementary School, were selected to present the first three ways of nominal and numeric data analysis. The

number of Flexibility items (8) classified personal links to life and careers, represented changes of thinking, and related to objects, ideas, and people. The number of Fluency, Elaborative Details (43) presented artistic illustrations; relationships with text; drawings; messages; ideas; questions; thinking; movement; boundaries; underlining; punctuation and spatial dimensions. The third way combined the Flexibility items and Fluency, Elaborative Details (51) ((see fig. 3C).

The posters were analyzed with class descriptive data (number; range; median; mean; standard deviation; and variance within, below and above the norm) for each of the three measures of creativity. Sprinthall (1997, 35) suggested using the median for analysis since “the mean is always pulled toward the extreme values in a skewed distribution.” This being the case of the frequency distribution of the three class areas: (1) Flexibility, (2) Fluency, Elaborative Details, and (3) Combined Flexibility and Fluency, Elaborative Details).

The Class Flexibility, descriptive data indicated the range (5-24); median (11) and mean (11.07) scores; the SD was 4.28; and scores within the norm (11); below (1); and above the norm (1). The Fluency, Elaborative Details descriptive data indicated the range (40-77); median (50) and mean (52.39); the SD was 9.59; scores within the norm (9); below (1); and above the norm (3) (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). The Combined Flexibility and Fluency, Elaborative Details indicated the range of 50-88; a higher difference (4.31) between median (59) and mean (63.31) score; the SD was 12.53; within the norm (10); below (1); and above the norm (2). (see fig. 4A).

The frequency distribution was displayed indicating the range of scores (see fig. 4B) and the grouped frequency distribution polygons, which were closed and positively skewed to the right with an interval (10). The Flexibility and Fluency, Elaborative Details polygons highlight the data order of the creative elements and poster areas illustrating Aron's and Aron's (1997, 17) bimodal model with two high points. According to their polygon models, the Combined Flexibility and Fluency polygon has “a high narrow peak with many scores in the tail indicating heavy-tailed distribution” (see fig. 4C).

Reading Autobiographies

Personal reading stories were illustrated in another form, autobiographies. Nell Noddings (1986) perceives autobiographical collaboration as caring communities of teachers who confirm instructional demonstration and interactive reading application.

As the graduate students shared their personal reading stories throughout their lives, they experienced making connections to experiences and books in the same manner as the elementary students in reading settings would be expected to do. Cunningham and Allington (2003, 185) purported that “Children who cannot apply their reading, writing, and math skills to real-world situations are not being educated to succeed beyond the wall of their classrooms.” Remarkable stories were told, as the graduate students reflected on relationships; relived memories of people, places, and events; and applied reading theory, “hermeneutics, subjectivity, and aesthetics...” (Slattery 2003, 651-665).

One student, Mrs. Pamela Fox, a second-fifth grade music teacher at the elementary schools: Gale and Steele, expanded her literacy-music poster theme, *A Few of My Favorite Things...* to recount her autobiography as peers selected objects from a discovery bag. Remembering *one of her greatest joys*, as grandchildren’s pictures and the book, *Love You Forever*, were drawn from the bag. She related how she read to the children, sang in the middle of the book, and in later years, her grandson read to her.

Mrs. Fox also expanded her learning of autobiography by reading and sharing a journal article with these two ideas: (1) Young readers in the article enjoyed reading; but, with the increase of academic reading in the higher grades did not often read for pleasure; and (2) Writing autobiographies established immediate, personal writing initiative with narrative text, thus students became *experts* in connecting the reading process and literacy areas (Brown 1999).

Miss Amy Verstraete, a third grade teacher at Hawthorne-Irving School, shared another digital photo story. As a child on trips, she read books while riding in the car and sitting under a tree, while her parents and other adults played *Rolle-Bolle*, a Belgium game that required skill rolling a disk to marked locations. She was taught to read by sight and rhyming pattern methods. Miss Verstraete loved reading, won a PTA Top Reader Certificate, and was a better reader as she became older.

As autobiographies were discussed, students interacted based upon peers’ perspectives of personal reading experiences, research studies, projects, and narrative writing. Mrs. Baxter reviewed one article relating to how high school students wrote autobiographies for publishing (Huffman et al. 1998, 1999). They increased to difficult texts as they prepared for college assignments, but she wondered, “Is this enough to prepare students for expository writing in

higher education courses?” The discussion confirmed and expanded her group member’s thinking.

Assigned Reading Methodology Files

On the Western Illinois University extension campus students expanded the reading development articles of Oakhill and Beard’s (1999) textbook. Textual concepts and strategies were selected from articles of interest from a listing of 112 pre-selected journals on reserve in the sponsored university’ library and electronic on-line site. The articles matched daily topics for group discussions.

Frequently, several students would find and share a popular strategy with different instructional perspectives, such as strategic vocabulary anchors (Winters 2001). Children designed a visual, concrete picture of a boat (new word), anchor (synonyms for retention), and sails (linking associated to experiences and contextual clues). Mrs. Scott agreed that, “relating new words to prior knowledge and experience was crucial.” She learned that concept definition introduced new words with questions, word properties, illustrations, and comparisons for meanings and inferences (Rupley 1999).

Miss Jill Schaapveld read Paribakht and Wesche’s (1997) article that suggested using a five points scale to help students when approaching word confusion. Miss Schaapveld stated that she would definitely use this scale to help students learn new vocabulary, and Mrs. Gale suggested making scale bookmarks.

Mrs. Walls responded to Charles A. Perfetti’s chapter about skilled and unskilled readers using context to interpret words (Oakhill and Beard 1999). For example, prioritizing vocabulary instructional guidelines as a reflective response was a thought-provoking task that involved decision-making. Group members discussed items (1-5) for skilled (extensive reading vocabulary) and (1-10) for unskilled readers (limited reading vocabulary) as listed in Figure 5. Miss Schaapveld responded, “the vocabulary guidelines with the most impact are as follows: (1) Modeling vocabulary use, (2) Using repetitive words, and (3) Building a conceptual base for word learning with varied activities and contexts.” These guidelines were related to her own reading experiences with difficult text in graduate courses (see fig. 5).

On occasion, as students read five to six literacy articles for the week, effective teaching lists were shared. Mrs. Fox remembered two of the ideas from her list:

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(1) Hands-on learning activities applied to real-life situations are more meaningful to students, and (2) Many of the words that we use today can be traced to ancient practices such as weaving which has many cross-curricular connections (Nilsen and Nilsen 2003). These connections linked to Kucer's (2003) literacy events in the core text.

Students also confirmed application of familiar strategies. For example, Readers' Theatre was enjoyed in their own classrooms, and new procedures and research study results verified that repeated reading is believed to enhance fluency development. In addition, Miss Hilary Coffman, first grade teacher at Pizzo Elementary School, related another familiar strategy, think-aloud, that was a great tool for modeling, confirming, predicting, and self-questioning, then practicing in varied groups (Oster 2001).

Oakhill and Beard (1999) suggested that the writing system scaffolds the gap between word identification and interpretation. Mrs. Walls read Garfield's and Brockman's (2000) suggestion of incorporating reading, writing, and listening to cultural Native American stories and music, while also reading that L'Allier (2003) had students create and revise poetry using higher-order thinking. Strategies were collected for methods' files.

Mrs. Meredith Rossow, a fifth grade teacher at Trinity Lutheran School, summarized her summer course experience: "The many different journal readings have really given me some great ideas that I will definitely use in my classroom. My favorite article was about teaching poetry. In the past, I have not enjoyed teaching poetry much, but this article showed me how to make it fun and easy to teach. My favorite idea was the autobiographical poem, which I will use soon with fifth graders. Some of the articles provided ways to help less fluent and able readers become more strategic, develop a larger vocabulary, and use self-monitoring. "

Mrs. Pitzer was also reading poetry to a particular rap art form with elements of rhythm, imagery, tempo, grammar and syntax (Paul 2000). This cultural synchronization of harmony between school, students, and home honors the art form of African American and Latino students. Another reflective student, Miss Charlotte Hartmann, a third and fourth (multi-grade) teacher at Audubon School, learned more about poetry use. She identified 3 benefits of reading poetry: (1) Enhances fluency, (2) Strengthens phonemic awareness, and (3) Links text and prior knowledge.

Fredericksen (1999) stated, "Interactive play increases K-12 literacy learning by fostering a community atmosphere, encouraging teamwork, and reducing the influence of hierarchies."

Mrs. Scott shared that through interactive play in a community-focused reading setting, the learner and teacher exchanged roles in her classroom. Students interacted with common goals, problem solving, risk-taking, and leadership skills.

Strategic Teaching

Instructional Planning Sessions at Honduras Elementary School

Strategic teaching was addressed in instructional planning sessions and categorized as the following: Collaborative cross-curriculum teams, grade level teams, and team teaching meetings that included Special Education Inclusion teachers assisting in the classrooms. First, Cross-curriculum teams provided teachers from different grade levels, Kindergarten and First Grade, First Grade and Second Grade, and Second Grade and Third Grade the opportunities to map out what was needed to move students on to the next grades. Curriculum planning, mapping, and pacing were essential for students to be promoted to the next grade level, and many times, because grade levels did not collaborate, students were unprepared for the next grade. Second, there were subject specific grade level meetings. Reading teachers discussed diverse procedural strategies to enhance weaker objectives of the NRT and CRT scores so that all students could have success. Teachers discussed reading scores and analyzed what was or was not working. Finally, Team Teaching Meetings were defined as classroom teachers who work together, two regular education teachers, each teaching in their expertise or a regular education teacher working along side a Special Education teacher in an inclusion setting. These teachers worked closely in deciding what must be taught and who would do the best job in a particular subject area. Curriculum mapping is vital for teachers in a team teaching situation. This is an area where planning and mapping are essential. Each teacher must collaborate as a team member to prepare lessons in a team teaching situation. Teachers should set and implement goals in the classroom setting as naturally as possible. Teachers need to modify and accommodate to the needs of their students, especially in an inclusive setting. By working in an area that the teacher is most comfortable may ultimately enhance the students' education and by having two teachers working as a team, aiding the students while the other teacher is directing the lesson is a great asset. Teachers may review strategies and techniques used in Literature Circles and book studies.

Literature Study Focus, Graduate Reading Course, on the WIU extension campus

In a literature study, students and teacher develop a sense of community in a social construct as they read together, interact for meaning and interpretation, collaborate with decision-making and share their products. Everyone is learning and the structure leads to independent reading. Some key benefits of participating in literature studies are as follows: (1) Comprehension strategies are expanded through discussion, (2) Critical thinking skills provide opportunities for textual interpretation and story element evaluation, (3) Aesthetic responses and the efferent application extend students' appreciation of authentic literature, (4) Communication skills are developed with a purposeful message and addressing an audience, and (5) Writing skills are extended as students respond to literature.

Teachers may collaborate and plan within a grade level, cross-disciplines, or cross grade level for literature studies. Units of study may be determined according to the type of collaborative group to prevent duplication of themes and content. After planning the units of study, students must be trained in the purposes for literature studies, group routines, group member roles, student-teacher conference procedures, and expected assignments.

Literature opens doors to lifetime learning as students become accountable and set reading goals. As students read diverse perspectives, each one develops an identity and relationship to those perspectives thus develops appreciation for difference. The world of story and expository texts enable readers to visualize and perceive constructively.

Conclusion

In concluding, the purposes of this paper were to first, discuss and realize the importance of visionary instructional planning through the social process of collaborative planning at Honduras Elementary School and prepare teachers through their identity connections of graduate reading application. Gathering data and discussing the similarities and differences allowed the contributions in their own strategic style. Collaborative planning has provided 2 years of insight about what is working and not working in the individual classrooms. Seventeen teachers participated in collaborative planning and believe that this type of planning has given them the needed time to correspond at a slower pace. They can discuss the academic plans and other school events for the year. Monthly grade level meetings have been in operation for 10 years and are more specific. Twenty-one teachers enjoy connecting for an hour each month out of the classroom setting to meet the immediate academic needs of their students. The Reading Recovery teachers work with first grade students and talk about the way that the program

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influenced the students' academic success in the first-grade level's meeting. The librarian meets with the grade 3 teachers because she works with grade 3 students on writing and research skills. Information resources are provided to better prepare the students for the iLEAP exam. Two new teachers are currently participating in the new Teacher Mentoring Program that has been in operation of 7 or more years. Each has a mentor and I, the master teacher, administrated the assessment period. The successful mentoring support and assistance operate smoothly and efficiently as the new teachers and mentors work together gathering, analyzing, and using student achievement information and plan effective instruction . Finally, the Foster Grandparent Program has been successfully in operation for 10 years or more. We have 6 Foster Grandparents working with our teachers. We have one gentleman and five ladies ranging in ages from early 60's to late 70's. We have 2 foster grandparents working with two teachers each. We have a foster grandparent for two of our first-grade teachers, one foster grandparent assigned to a second-grade teacher, and one foster grandparent assigned to a third grade teacher. The teachers cannot rave enough about the foster grandparents. These people show up day in and day out ready to work with these children. The foster grandparents are second grandparents to many of these students.

The students' retention rate is lowered at this school because of the many programs that we have assisting the students and teachers. We seek innovative means to provide a safe secure family oriented environment for our students.

The second purpose was to design and implement a course that would effectively guide graduate students in enacting collaboration through reflective practices and creative alternatives for elementary students in diverse reading settings. As described in the account, the graduate students' knowledge of the reading process expanded through readings in four core texts, projects, presentations, group discussions and beliefs in all three groups from the course's first to the last days. Expanded semantic maps displayed concepts, experiences, literacy dimensions, and strategies. As was hoped, students positively responded to reflective best practices in vocabulary, autobiographies, and poetry readings. Personal queries revealed contradictions and confirmations and expanded authors' ideas.

In subsequent diagnostic reading courses, the River Bluffs' students designed strategic tutoring lessons for balancing the reading process and literacy areas. In addition, the 13 students

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were observed tutoring struggling readers (tutees) with strategically linked abilities, skills, experiences, and genre choices.

In a later reading corrective reading course the graduate students were observed implementing the strategies learned in elementary reading course as they tutored elementary students. Mrs. Pitzer had transferred her love of travel to her tutee whose interest was in learning about the Mississippi River. Many river resource books and maps were brought to the tutoring session so that reflective interests could be united for the tutee's new learning and motivation of reading expository texts. Mrs. Verstraedt who loved reading in her free time as a child shared with a tutee through reading on the computer for the child's free time during the tutoring session. Mrs. Rossow tutored a student to be strategic during reading as they worked on fluency and self-monitoring. Mrs. Walls worked with a Hispanic older student who was interested in princesses and fantasy stories. Motivational lessons were planned and implemented using music and fairy tales. Many cultural exchanges occurred that expanded the interest of the student beyond just a love of reading about dolphins of the initial tutoring sessions.

Using Torrance's (1966) creativity to score environmental print posters, quantitative scores of all three areas revealed in class descriptive data that most students performed within the norm, 1 student below, and 2-3 students above. Grouped frequency polygons illustrated positively skewed distribution of scores.

Findings revealed the graduate students' difficulty in prioritizing vocabulary guidelines from influential factors (age, teacher roles, and existing reading programs). The prioritizing results warranted clarification of transfer, direct instruction, and active word learning in subsequent course lessons. The determination that struggling readers needed direct vocabulary instruction was later observed as these graduate students tutored with students who were performing below grade level. The graduate students taught vocabulary prior to silent and oral reading of high interest books. Also, each graduate student made relevant connections to prior knowledge and experiences with their tutees during tutoring as was evident on the vocabulary guidelines and their conclusive prioritizing in the elementary reading course.

Our hope was that graduate students would share their strategic literacy connections in adult life so that they could more effectively plan elementary reading instruction, and this did become a reality. Strengths of personal beliefs linked to reflective application then to

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instructional implementation in much the same way as their elementary students were instructed to make connections in diverse reading settings.

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<p>A. Cross-curriculum Teams SET YOUR CALENDAR (10/02/06)</p> <p>TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2006 KINDERGARTEN and FIRST GRADE Schedule: <u>Tuesday, Oct. 17, 2006</u> Kindergarten 8:50 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Lunch Break 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Kindergarten 11:30 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. 1st Grade 11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Break 12:20 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. 1st Grade 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.</p> <p>THURSDAY, OCT. 19, 2006 SECOND GRADE and THIRD GRADE Schedule: <u>Thursday, Oct. 19, 2006</u> 2nd Grade 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. 3rd Grade 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Lunch Break 11:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. Break 12:20 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. 3rd Grade 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.</p>	<p>B. Grade Level Teams Collaborative Meeting: Third Grade Thursday, October 19, 2006 Agenda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Book Study: <u>Yardsticks</u>2. Review Morning Meeting and DIBELS Procedures3. Review iLEAP scores4. Discuss Science Needs5. ESL Presentation (2:00–2:30 p.m. both days)6. Planning Time <p>Sign-In:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. _____2. _____3. _____4. _____5. _____6. _____
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Fig. 1: School-wide planning (A), and Grade 3 conversations (B).

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A. Reflective Response Record of Group 3 Members: (T., Language Arts, Teacher; E., Grade 1, Teachers; K., Grade K, Teacher; and J., Grade 3 Teacher)

Volunteer Roles

- (1) **Recorder/Responses-Data Collection**—Compile the diverse perspectives of individual reflections during the group sharing;
- (2) **Timekeeper/Monitor**—Pace the discussion; make sure that all individual reflections are discussed;
- (3) **Reporter/Presenter**—Share the compiled reflective perspectives or concepts exemplifying each reflective component on Mondays with the class;
- (4) **Experiential Leader**—Record daily and share briefly two notable group experiences that exemplify chapters and perspective components with the class; and
- (5) **Typist**—Type the compiled group work for the weekly presentation.

Reflective Group-Role Selection

Scheduled Dates	9	11	12	16	18	19	23	24	25	26
Recorder	T.	E.	K.	J.	T.	E.	J.	E.	K.	T.
Timekeeper / Monitor										
Reporter / Presenter										
Experiential Leader										
Typist										

B. Individual Reflective Responses on June 26, 2003 of Group 3 members

- E. "I really found that I gained a better understanding of the debate between holistic and skills-based approaches."
- T. "I think that there is no one-way to teach children to read. You look at the big picture and teach them what they need, filling in gaps. I think the reflection process has helped me be even more aware of the importance of what I do. I'm glad to be learning many ways to catch children who might otherwise be falling through the cracks."
- J. "Our reflective experiences involved child-centered activities that encourage active engagement. The most meaningful reflections were theories in which we had the most background knowledge and experience."
- K. "Teachers also gain learning and understanding from texts that help them see the big picture, and the importance of reading instruction as well as to learn the skills and good judgment that they need to help children learn to read."

C. Expanding the Meaning of Reading by Group 3 members

Definition: Reading is student-centered but shows the effect of family and culture, the teacher, available resources and other factors.

Semantic Map, Compiled work on the last day of class.

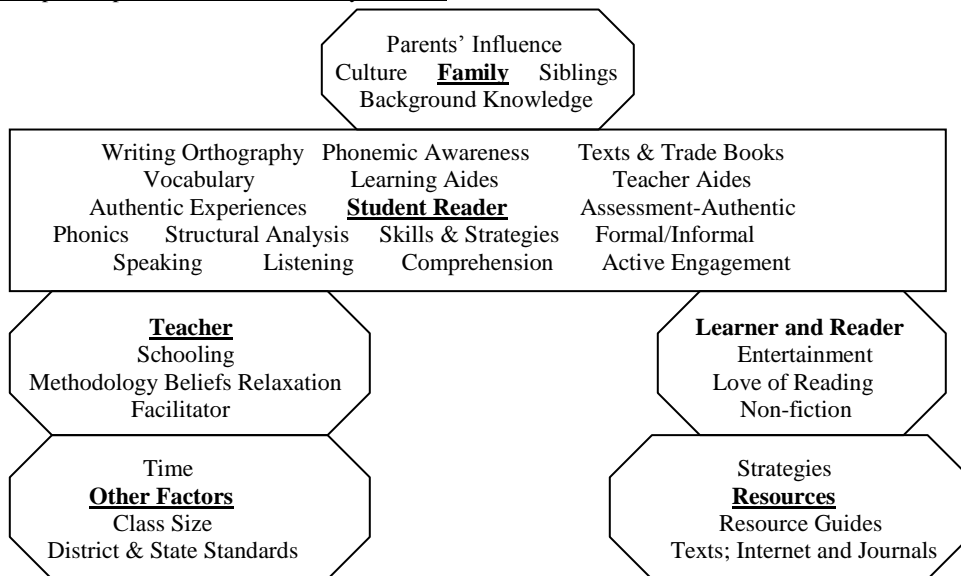


Fig. 2: Reflective group maintenance (A), individual comments (B), and reading process (C).

A. Poster of Road Obstacles Traveling to Class



B. Environmental Print Poster Themes

These Are a Few of My Favorite Things; The Many Hats (1 of 2- roles); Life (1 of 2); Life's Sweet Rewards: Reading is a Party: New Teacher Feelings! My Crazy Life! The Perfect Day; Traffic Obstacles-Signs (1 of 4 originals); My Life...My Roles; My Daily Routine (1 of 2 routines); My Summer Time (1 of 3-recreational reading); and Vacation Time

C. Creativity Descriptive Data

Individual Flexibility Items (8) on one poster example

Theme-My Crazy Life

Categories: Time, school, seasons, weather, finances, actions, health, help request

Individual Fluency, Elaborative Details Items (43) on one poster example

Theme-My Crazy Life

Types of artistic elements: relationships, or connections in text, drawings, ideas, movement, thinking, boundaries, questioning, underlining, punctuation, spatial dimensions, number of illustrations, and message portrayals.

Individual Combined Flexibility and Fluency Items, Elaborative Details (51) on one poster example

Theme-My Crazy Life

Presentation of writing/modeling, teacher representative, seasonal, lawn chair, music, relaxation, bar-be-cue, weather, reading children's books, graduate school, summer, reading, re-actions, classes selection process, and finances, time efficiency, health, actual package, labeling of hurry, outcomes picture, help requested illustration, science related picture, 2 pictures of time [hand drawn and picture], sound word for clock and self, o-o-o-on-going symbol of movement decline, boundary enclosure for school, scalloped emotions, underlining and punctuation of NO!, artistic letters of the theme representing emotions and punctuation, dream, underlining and punctuation of GO!, smiley face, crooked underlining of Buzz and Relaxation, time reference by thermometer, personalizing me, my, I'm, eating, sleep, and out of doors.

Fig. 3: Poster (A), Individuals' themes (B), and creativity areas (C): Individual flexibility and fluency and combined flexibility and elaborative details.

A. Poster Areas: Descriptive Data

Flexibility

Class # 13	SD		4.28
Range	5-24	Within the Norm	11
Median	11	Below the Norm	1
Mean	11.07	Above the Norm	1

Fluency, Elaborative Details

Class # 13	SD		9.59
Range	40-77	Within the Norm	9
Median	50	Below the Norm	1
Mean	52.39	Above the Norm	3

Combined Flexibility and Fluency, Elaborative Details

Class # 13	SD		12.53
Range	0-88	Within the Norm	10
Median	59	Below the Norm	1
Mean	63.31	Above the Norm	2

B. Range of Scores: Frequency

Flexibility	X	f	Fluency, Elaborative Details	X	f	Combined Both Flexibility and Fluency, Elaborative Details	X	f
	24	1		77	1		88	1
	14	1		63	1		82	1
	12	1		61	1		73	1
	11	4		54	1		71	1
	10	2		53	1		68	1
	8	3		52	1		64	1
	5	1		50	2		59	1
				49	1		56	1
				47	1		55	1
				43	1		53	1
				42	1		51	2
				40	1		50	1

C. Grouped Frequency: Class Distribution Data

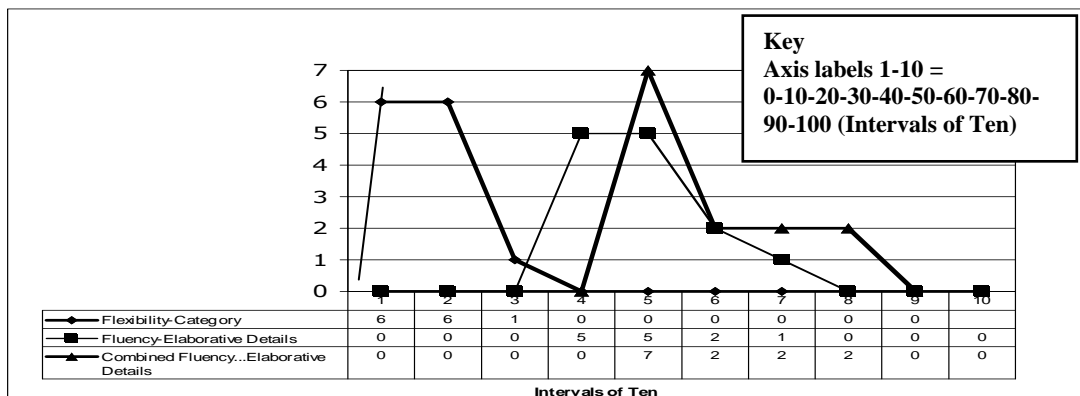


Fig. 4: Class descriptive data (A), frequency distribution (B), and grouped frequency polygons (C).

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Vocabulary Guidelines	
Limited Vocabulary Experiences	Extensive Vocabulary Experiences
(1) Use direct vocabulary instruction;	(1) Determine the students' prior knowledge;
(2) Select words that students will own while reading;	(2) Plan for vocabulary strategy transfers;
(3) Determine the students' prior knowledge;	(3) Create a language rich classroom;
(4) Build a conceptual base for word learning;	(4) Emphasize your students' active role in the vocabulary learning process; and
(5) Provide diverse reading for the students;	(5) Model vocabulary use.

Fig. 5: Top 5 vocabulary experiences. Microsoft Word