



CARREADER



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CARReader is a publication of the
Connecticut Association for Reading Research

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of the
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About the Publication.....	I
Editor's Notes.....	III
President's Message	IV
Legislative Report: Dr. Ann Marie Mulready Ph.D	VI
Connecticut Teacher Evaluation 2.0 Dr. Rachel Gabriel.....	1
The Influence of Kindergarten Student's Primary Discourse on Expressive Oral Language Dr. Darcy Anne Fiano, Ph.D,.....	11
Preparing Literacy Specialists in Connecticut: Perceptions, Realities and Policies (A Preview of the Research) Dr. Dianna Sisson and Dr. Betsy Sisson.....	52
CARReader Book Review by Agnes Burns: <i>Uncommon Core: Where the Authors of the Standards Go Wrong About Instruction-and How You Can Get It Right</i> Authors: Michael W. Smith, Deborah Appleman and Jeffrey D. Wilhelm.....	62
CARReader Book Review by Adrienne Chasteen-Snow: <i>Quantity and Quality: Increasing the Volume and Complexity of Students' Reading</i> Author: Sandra Wilde.....	65
CARR Goals:.....	68
Top Ten Reasons to Become a Member:.....	69



About the Publication

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CARReader Call for Manuscripts

We invite all those interested in literacy research to submit articles for publication. We request scholarly articles, grounded in theory and research that are of interest to both researchers and teachers. We invite a wide range of submissions focusing on critical issues, current research and/or instructional strategies as they relate to literacy issues on the national level and the state of Connecticut.

We invite:

- reviews of the literature
- graduate /field studies
- thesis statement
- action research
- position statements

The *CARReader* is a peer-reviewed publication that is published once a year in the fall. Its contents do not necessarily reflect or imply advocacy or endorsement by CARR, its officers, or members.

Inquiries and submissions should be directed to the *CARReader*, Tamara Priestley, by sending an email to tlp2112@columbia.edu.

Guidelines for Publication

Publications are limited to no more than 2800 words and must include a title, author, statement of purpose, review of the literature, methodology, summary of findings, discussion and/or recommendations, conclusions, and references. Manuscripts should be formatted using APA 6th edition. The author needs to submit both a hard copy manuscript and an electronic version compatible with Microsoft Word 2000. To be considered for the Fall 2015 volume, the manuscript must be submitted for review before June 30, 2015.

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CARR Scholarships/Grants

An important mission of CARR is to engage its membership in scholarly research and teacher action-research projects.

Wirth-Santoro Award for Outstanding Literacy Research

Awards \$1000

The Wirth-Santoro Research Award for scholarly research in the area of literacy is awarded annually for exemplary work worthy of dissemination in the field. Eligible applicants may be students currently enrolled in a post-graduate program of study or a doctoral program with a focus on literacy research. Applications, including an abstract, will be reviewed for significance and relevance. Priority is given to high-quality studies that are focused on current research in the field of literacy instruction. This is a competitive selection process. Applications are read by scholars in the field and are due for review by **February 20th**. Awardees are notified in March and winners are honored at the Annual CARR Breakfast in May.

Beverly Pearson Memorial Teacher Action-Research Mini-Grant

Awards up to \$600

Teachers, literacy consultants, literacy specialists, or administrators who are current members of CARR and are interested in conducting action-research in the area of literacy may submit a proposal not to exceed a budget request of \$600.00. It is expected that these proposals will be scholarly and will be based on scientific principles of quality action-research. The purpose of this project ultimately will be to share action-research that is grounded in theory and practice with the CARR membership.

**For more information and applications, please visit the CARR
website at:**

<http://ctreadingresearch.org>



Grit, as defined by Merriam Webster: (noun), /grit/, very small pieces of sand or stone; mental toughness and courage. Grit is a word that seems to be popping up these days in various educational settings. So far in this 2014-2015 school year, I've had an inservice on 'grit', I've read about 'grit' in Education Week, colleagues have had students examine their own 'grit' in writing responses, and I had to find my personal 'grit' while editing, or as I prefer to say, creating this publication.

In the past this publication was half the size of the current issue and composed on a PC computer, I have a Mac computer with a different version of Word. Hence, metaphorically, the small pieces of sand or stone that are the first definition of grit according to Merriam Webster have been the 21st Century differences of technology I have had to deal with as editor.

This issue, my first for the Connecticut Association for Reading Research, has tested my mental toughness and courage. During the process of putting this issue together, I encountered numerous roadblocks related to software and platform issues. Yet, there is something within me that either I learned or was born with (certainly reinforced in my home growing up and by teachers and coaches as a youngster) that wouldn't let me quit. Learning experiences in my life have taught and reinforced in me that when something is hard, the reward is often much greater.

So, when I felt like giving up because I couldn't figure out margins, headers, text boxes or formats between platforms, I became more tenacious, knowing the happiness and sense of accomplishment that would come when the product was finished. We need to keep the idea of 'grit' (and its rewards of self accomplishment) in mind when teaching youngsters the difficult task of reading. As literacy educators we know the rewards of getting lost in other worlds via books. We've had life experiences that support our 'grit' when we've been in tough times and we need to make sure that we demonstrate and foster that 'grit' and sense of positive accomplishment in our students.

In the articles of this CARReader, you will find examples of 'grit'. You will gain a sense of what it is and why it is important to foster tenacity, toughness and the courage to learn in all classrooms-from kindergarten to universities. And, when you read the articles, ponder them, and put their information into action, I guarantee you will find reward for yourself *and* for your students.

Tamara Priestley



Summer, 2014

Dear CARR Colleagues;

It is summer and I have been catching up on both my professional and pleasure reading. I hope you are too! My professional reading has taken me to a new level of understanding about public education. As most of you, I went into teaching because I felt that I could make a difference in the lives of our children and encourage them to reach their potential. I looked forward to sharing a great book and creating that sense of awe in my students. I planned lessons that would facilitate deeper thinking and allow my writers to express new ideas that moved our audiences. We read independently and got pleasure from it. We played with words and used them in our conversations and writing. Inspired by my reading, I have reflected on how education has been altered. I asked myself if the changes are for the better or if they impede learning. There is no obvious or decisive answer to this question. But, thankfully, there are colleagues who share my concerns about what is happening in our schools. This issue of the CARReader celebrates Kylene Beers who has asked educators to reflect about best practice while embracing and implementing the CCSS. While she encourages us to prepare students for new computer-based high-stakes assessments, she also reminds us of our responsibility to develop citizens who are creative, empathetic, and persistent in the face of challenges.

Kylene Beers wrote a commentary in the December 2013/January 2014 issue of the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* that is so profound I shared it with several colleagues. Beers starts her column, “What Matters Most: Considering the Issues and the Conversations We Need to Have,” by referring to the work of Dov Seidman (*How: Why How We Do Anything Means Everything*) and Daniel Pink (*Drive*). Both authors discuss achieving success. Seidman states there “is a difference between doing something *so as* to succeed and doing something *and* achieving success (p. xxxvi). In Pink’s words, “when the profit motive becomes unhinged from the purpose motive, bad things happen” (page 302). These statements combine to form a powerful thought: have we lost sight of our mission as teachers? Are we buying materials to use in our classrooms with the sole purpose of using them to prepare students to do well on a single test? Or, are we collaborating to create lessons aligned with the standards that inspire our students and offer them a way to discover abilities that will prepare them for the journey ahead? “In too many places, when the focus is on passing a single test, we don’t seem to be creating kids who are critical and creative thinkers; who are contributors and collaborators; who are problem solvers and change leaders. We seem to be encouraging hesitancy, for teachers are afraid to try new strategies in case they don’t provide the pass-the-test results that are needed, and students are hesitant to take a risk because they’ve internalized that risk-taking



President's Message

might mean a lower grade and school is all about the grade.” (p. 266). Is this how we achieve success in education?

From her experience, Kylene offers an alternative that allows teachers to facilitate learning that will help students pass the test, but not through coercion or external motivators. She suggests that schools become “intellectual communities.” This concept was introduced in the book she co-authored with Bob Probst called *Notice and Note: Strategies for Close Reading*. Simply ask yourself if your classroom and school are “intellectual communities.” Think about it from the perspective of your students. How do they perceive your classroom and school? Who assumes ownership for the learning?

Taking Kylene’s commentary as a launching point, this issue of the *CARReader* provides inspiration for our readers. Rachel Gabriel has written an article describing what administrators should look for in a literacy classroom where engaging instructional practices are aligned to the Common Core. A fascinating article about discourse in a kindergarten classroom by Darcy Fiano offers insight into our own practice. CARR’s research and studies team of Diana and Betsy Sisson provide a glimpse into their current project on the preparation of literacy professionals in Connecticut. Also included are a synopsis of the educational advocacy work done by CARR this year, professional book reviews, and a calendar of events.

Both Kylene and Bob will be presenting their work at a CARR workshop in September of 2015. They will be encouraging Connecticut educators to shift instructional practices and create a pedagogy designed to inspire students as they acquire the flexible, self-directed learning skills that are essential for success in this new century. Follow CARR’s website for information about this opportunity.

As you read this issue of the *CARReader*, please consider how you might create or improve upon the ‘intellectual community’ in your own classroom or professional learning setting.

Agnes Burns

Beers, Kylene. (2014). What Matters Most: Considering the Issues and the Conversations We Need to Have. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 57(4), 265-269.



Legislative Report

Ann Marie Mulready, Ph.D.

For literacy professionals, the most important development at the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE/SBE) this year is the K-3 State-wide Reading Plan. The plan is required by Public Act 12-116, An Act Concerning Education Reform, and requires monitoring at the beginning, middle, and end of the year of all K-3 students with instruments that measure phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

In March, 2014, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE/SDE) conducted a round table review of the proposed K-3 plan. Several members of the CARR Board, including Agnes Burns, our president, attended those sessions and expressed concerns regarding the outcomes of the meetings.

In response to these concerns, Aggie Burns, Dr. Darcy Fiano, our dissertation prize recipient, and I addressed the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) over the course of the April, May and June meetings.

In summary, we pointed to,

- The over-representation of code-based instruments
- The lack of attention to oral language development
- The necessity for integrating foundational skills at the earliest point as opposed to isolating those skills as many of the proposed instruments do
- The failure to distinguish more highly validated instruments from weaker instruments
- The lack of a definition of reading by the state. Without a clear definition, instruction tends to flow from the elements of the assessment

The SDE presented a list of 19 assessment instruments in May, though the final recommendation limited that number to 7. At this point, the Observation Survey (Clay) is not included as it was on the first draft of the plan. This is despite the fact that the United States Department of Education (USDE) afforded it the highest technical ratings of any of the included assessments. The DIBELs was included despite the USDE reporting its validity as “partially convincing” and the Office of the Inspector General objecting to the “clear conflicts of interest of those who were charged with validation,” and evidence that the companion program produced a large negative effect on comprehension.

The other recommended instruments are AIMSweb Tests of Early Literacy or Reading, mCLASS with DIBELS Next, Edcheckup, STEEP, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and STAR.

The SDE could not recommend a vocabulary assessment given the lack of an instrument that can measure vocabulary achievement in a standardized, efficient fashion. And comprehension is not directly tested, again due to a lack of availability of an efficient, standardized measure.

The Reading Plan policy also provides for a transition period from the use of the DRA2 as a screen for the 2014-2015 school year, a change in exit criteria for K-3 English Learners (ELs), assessing students in dual language programs, an assessment reporting table to be submitted to the CSDE, and a biennial, open review period. While priority districts are mandated to report the number of students who are performing below the cut point, other systems are not held to the same reporting requirement.

Lastly, the use of the mandated screening instruments *does not preclude* the use of other diagnostic measures, including the DRA2. They may be used in addition to the mandated instruments.

Other Issues

The most critical issue for the last legislative session has been the reports on and initiation of investigations of the FUSE charter organization that is responsible for Jumoke Academy/Milner School in Hartford, and the Dunbar School in Bridgeport. Commissioner Pryor directed the Department staff to review the existing rules concerning oversight, public transparency, completion and reporting of background checks, and student performance and equity in all charter schools.

Commissioner Pryor also reported the work of the Common Core Task Force. The Task Force has five recommendations:

- Develop clear and consistent knowledge of CCSS at the classroom, school, district and state level;
- Provide the necessary support and training to effectively transition the CCSS into district defined curricula;
Support all teachers and instructional staff in developing the capacity to master the instructional shifts that the standards necessitate;
- Engage all stakeholders in a rich dialogue regarding the CCSS;
- Provide the necessary resources to support effective implementation of the CCSS across all state districts.

The Commissioner is being asked to allocate \$2 million to fund special training days for teachers, and to create a grant advisory committee to formulate mini grants for teachers and parents to develop CC aligned resources in the classroom and community.

The SBE also approved adoption of Praxis II for new cut scores for certification in Middle School English Language Arts, English Language Arts: Content and Analysis, and Mathematics Content Knowledge. Further, the cut score for certification in the ELA was raised from 168 to 173 on a 200 point scale, one conditional standard of error above the multi-state standard. The availability of candidates in the ELA was cited as the rationale. A position statement regarding Social Studies education has also been adopted.

A Final Note

It is incumbent upon all of us as literacy professionals to remain informed regarding literacy policy at the state and national levels and to observe the outcomes of those policies. The unquestioned emphasis on fluency by NCLB is an example. The speed and low cost with which fluency can be measured has resulted in a great deal of student time spent developing rapid reading as an end in itself. The rationale from the instrument developers for this has been that there is a correlation to word recognition, automaticity, and comprehension. But the question has not been asked about whether the observed comprehension, dependent on oral language development and background, is in fact the condition that is supporting the fluency. Further, the measures do not incorporate the other elements of fluency—prosody, expression, and appropriateness—that are essential to its use as a comprehension support. These are the questions that organizations like CARR can ask. We are all volunteers and are beholden only to our members and our mission. This makes your support of the organization vital to continuing the work. To that end, we may request information in the coming months on your districts' use of the tests listed above. And now more than ever, renewal of your membership is essential to accomplishing the CARR mission.



Connecticut Teacher Evaluation 2.0

Rachel Gabriel

Like a message in a bottle that first crashed on to shore on a wave of reforms - only to be carried out and back in again by smaller waves and currents - teacher evaluation has come, transformed, and settled into the everyday lives of teachers across Connecticut. For those who were involved in the pilot year, this marks the third year under the new policy, which has rolled back in intensity each year since the start. For others, this is the second time around: A chance to consider evaluation more closely and to begin to find ways to use it to support teaching and learning.

As I study teacher evaluation and teach reading specialists, I have heard a wide range of responses to the new policy: from teachers who claim new rubrics don't leave room for instruction they believe in, to those who have found new ways to engage and support struggling readers as a result of conversations with evaluators and colleagues. The truth is that teacher evaluation policies and rubrics for observation say very little about the nature of reading instruction that qualifies as exemplary. In this article, I am going to argue that this is good news for literacy professionals. The vague descriptions of "good teaching" in rubrics for evaluation and the room for personalization in individual teachers' goals and measures of student growth leave us room to direct our efforts and

evaluators' attention to what matters the most in literacy classrooms.

Focus on what matters most

Reading is the most researched K-12 content area in all of education research. Despite its importance and complexity, decades of research and experience teaching reading tend to converge on the same set of opportunities needed to develop literacy. Teachers can arrange these opportunities within most any framework using literally any set of materials (Taylor, Pressley & Pearson, 2000; Bond & Dykstra, 1967), but without any one of these opportunities, we know literacy development is thwarted. One way to conceptualize these research-based opportunities to develop literacy is as *non-negotiables* (Gabriel, 2013) that must be part of instruction for every reader every day (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). The four non-negotiables are listed below.

Every reader every day:

1. Reads something they can and want to read
2. Writes something to an audience for a purpose
3. Talks about what they read or write with peers
4. Listens to an expert reader read and think aloud

We ought to hold these truths to be self-evidence because we have found them to be true in so many different studies, from so many different perspectives, with so many different goals. When we organize our instruction, professional conversations and goal setting around these non-negotiables, we can use teacher evaluation to focus our work on what matters the most. In the following section, I will briefly describe each non-negotiable and what it means in the context of classroom observations, goal-setting and professional growth conversations.

Every Reader Reads Something They Can and Want to Read

We know that time spent reading is necessary-but-not-sufficient for reading growth. It is not sufficient because simply putting in the time does not guarantee optimum (not too much or too little) exposure to new words and text structures, or the engagement and feelings of success required to motivate and sustain reading practice within and outside of school. Students must have high-success experiences with texts in order to solidify skills, build confidence, and leave room for the engagement that fuels comprehension and the motivation to continue reading. When students self-select texts, it dramatically increases the chances that they will find something they can and want to read.

Ensuring every reader has something they can and want to read can be accomplished in a number of

ways, but is antithetical to a classroom where every student is always reading the same class text with no alternative. This is not to say that shared reading experiences are not valuable for discussion and that challenge is never a good idea. A balance between shared and individual texts allows the best of both to contribute to literacy development. In fact, English teacher and author Kelly Gallagher would argue for a 50:50 split between whole class novels and independent reading (Gallagher, 2010). For classrooms with many struggling and/or reluctant readers, I encourage teachers to invest even more than 50% of their time doing the independent reading that fuels a cycle of reading success (Gabriel, 2013), and less on the shared texts that fail to match readers by level or interest.

When an evaluator enters an effective literacy classroom, they should see evidence that students sometimes have the opportunity to read something they have chosen at or near their individual level. They should witness students actually reading at some point in a full period, and they should be able to interview students who will describe what they're reading now and what they will read next. These indicators suggest that the teacher has invested in high-success reading experiences and organized instruction that promotes reading motivation, engagement and success.

Every Reader Writes to an Audience for a Purpose

We know that reading and writing are reciprocal processes, which means that growth in either supports the other (Graham & Hebert, 2010). In fact, sometimes writing is a way into engagement with reading (Calkins, 1994), especially for students who struggle to learn to read (Dostal & Wolbers, 2014). Like time spent reading, simply investing more minutes writing is not enough. Students need to be writing to an audience, for a purpose, in order for writing instruction to be meaningful. Like reading for a purpose, writing for a purpose increases engagement and stamina, but it also provides an authentic reason to pay attention to conventions and skill work (e.g., spelling, punctuation, grammar, style) in context.

Marie Clay famously referred to reading as "a meaning-making, message-getting process," (Clay, 1991), but too often, writing is either avoided altogether, or taught and practiced without attention to its meaning or message. That is, students are taught to write formulaic paragraphs, brief responses, and journal entries that are only ever seen by their teachers. In other words, they write, but are not taught writing as an agentic linguistic process of composition (Kihara et al., 2009). Moreover, they are writing in formats that do not have any real referent in the outside world, and therefore fail to transfer to meaningful writing tasks.

When students are asked to write in class, they must be writing *to* someone *for* some reason. Rather than

writing a paragraph that a teacher will grade, students can write to their classmates, students in other grades, or school papers. They can create copy for a class website, a how-to book, a warning sign, a petition, set of directions or menu of options.

Evaluators should see students' writing to an audience for a purpose that they can articulate at some point during every class. Even if the writing is short and informal, without an audience and a purpose writing tasks cannot add up to meaningful practice. Audiences give young writers a reason to internalize conventions in order to ensure clear communication. Writing for a purpose gives young writers a way to make choices about structure and formatting in order to create a text that can accomplish something in the world. Investing in instruction and assessment that include writing to an audience, for a purpose ensures opportunities for students to develop both as readers and writers.

Every Reader Talks with Peers About What They Read or Wrote

We know that literate talk is an important part of literacy and language development. Students need to use words in order to learn them, and will see the impact of their words, as well as the importance of their stories (written or read) in conversation with one another. Classrooms where students have time to talk with each other about what they are reading and writing demonstrate growth in both reading

and writing achievement (e.g. Applebee et al., 2003; Cazden, 1988)

Teachers are often unwilling to allow time for students to talk because they are afraid of what they will talk about, and assume time spent talking is wasted time. Perhaps this is the reason that students have so little practice or opportunity to engage in literate talk. Classrooms that support discussion and provide time and reasons to talk about text show significantly higher achievement, engagement and participation than classrooms where teachers do all of the talking, or only involve students in echoing or filling-in-the-blank of pre-determined answers (see Nystrand, 2006 for a review).

Evaluators should expect to witness students talking with each other about text in every classroom, every day. The old idea that a quiet and compliant classroom is a high quality classroom has been thoroughly debunked by the research. Students need to use language to learn language. They need conversations as reasons for reading and writing, and spaces for considering what they've been reading and writing. This talk about text means that students must have experiences with texts worth talking about and shared experiences making sense of texts they have written or read.

Every Reader Listens to an Expert Reader Read and Think Aloud

We know that access to experts' reading processes and strategies is invaluable for developing readers. This is especially true when reading in content areas where discipline-specific texts present unique challenges for readers such as unfamiliar formats, sentence structures, purposes for reading, and multiple meaning words (Fang & Coatam, 2008; Moje, 2008; Shannahan & Shannahan, 2008). Reading, like other complex and invisible multipart processes (swimming, driving, riding a bike) requires modeling - not of the outcomes of reading, but the very moment-to-moment thinking that leads to reading with understanding.

Even (and especially!) in the upper grades, time spent reading aloud to students increases exposure, engagement and expertise when reading discipline-specific texts for discipline-specific purposes. Though students may have had the benefit of years of stories being read aloud in school or at home, few have been able to watch an expert approach the kinds of texts students use in math, science, theater or agriculture classes. As a secondary teacher, you may be their first and best model for meaning-making in your discipline.

Evaluators should expect to witness teachers talking about their thinking in every classroom every day. Students should be able to articulate how they approach, make sense of and fix their understanding of texts that represent the range of types and purposes required for the discipline. This means that a look around the

classroom should show a range of text types, as well as some evidence or reminders of conversations about *how* they are read.

Advocate for The Instruction You Believe Should be Used

Under new teacher evaluation policies, rubrics for observation and student learning objectives (SLO's) define what counts as good teaching, and what evaluators should focus on during feedback and coaching conversations. Thus, rubrics for observation and guidelines for writing SLO's are general enough to apply to every grade level and subject area. They therefore say very little about what kind of literacy instruction should count as good teaching, or what administrators should pay most attention to when observing and supporting literacy instruction. As literacy professionals, we have a responsibility to be able to articulate exactly how the general descriptors of rubrics, and criteria for goals apply to our visions of excellent literacy instruction. For example, Table 1 includes descriptions from the "exemplary" column of Connecticut's Rubric for Effective Teaching third domain (instruction) next to descriptions of what this might translate to in a literacy lesson.

Table 1. Generic rubric language and literacy-specific "look-fors"

3a. Instruction for Active Learning	Literacy-specific look-for	Every reader every day...
Students are encouraged to explain how the learning is situated within the broader learning context/curriculum.	Students are writing to a real audience, and will deliver their written products to that audience Students are reading in order to do something: act, build, create, write, communicate, and are thus responsible for selecting texts that matter to them	2. Writes something to an audience for a purpose
Invites students to explain the content to their classmates.	Students talk about texts they have written and read, their conversations allow opportunities to use vocabulary in context, evaluate each other's writing, and review/recommend books to one another.	3. Talks about what they read or write with peers
Challenges students to extend their learning beyond the lesson expectations and make cross-curricular connections	Students self-select texts so that they are applying skills and strategies learned in class to novel texts. Similarly, students compose written texts for specific audiences and purposes, this ensures their writing takes on the formats and conventions of authentic texts and are used as communication outside of the lesson.	1. Reads something they can and want to read
Provides opportunities for students to independently select literacy strategies that support their learning.	Students have access to a wide range of explicitly modeled reading and writing approaches that match varied text types and purposes. These models allow them to use these flexibly for their own reading and writing purposes.	4. Listens to an expert reader read and think aloud

We have to be ready to articulate literacy-specific versions of good teaching with evaluators so that we can keep observations, feedback and conversations focused on literacy instruction. Similarly, we have to be ready to suggest goals and measures that mirror our visions of literacy instruction so that SLOs and IAGD's do not promote a limited version of reading. Table 2 includes sample SLO's from the state's website (www.connecticutseed.org) along with the versions of reading they imply, as well as some alternatives.

Table 2. SLOs, measures and implied importance

Source	Grade	SLO	Measure	Implications
CT SEED website	1st/ 2nd	Students will increase fluency of reading with specific skill level, i.e. single word, within a story, etc. to improve reading comprehension.	First graders will increase Nonsense Word Fluency score by 20 words and Second Graders will increase Oral Reading fluency by 45 words per minute, as assessed by relevant measures on the DIBELS assessments.	Measuring fluency using nonsense words narrows the task to rapid word calling, rather than reading quickly and smoothly with expression in ways that promote comprehension.
	6th	Students will write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, including the acknowledgement of opposing claims, references to credible sources, a concluding statement, and a formal style.	The majority of my students will be able to write arguments in response to literary and informational texts that score between Proficient and Advanced on the department's rubric.	Measuring writing using a school rubric may narrow the task to academic essay-writing, rather than allowing students to select and compose in the format and style that matches their chosen audience and purpose.
	12th	All of my 11th grade students will demonstrate growth towards mastery of the Common Core State Writing Standards	Fully-developed essays, graded analytically using the district rubric will improve by 10% by the end of the year.	Measuring growth in writing in terms of the CCSS writ large would require a multitude of writing samples. It's impossible to imagine if/how a goal this broad would influence daily instruction.

Potential alternatives	1st/2nd	Students will increase fluency in ways that support reading comprehension <i>by rehearsing and performing a range of performative texts (poems, plays, speeches) that include repetition and require attention to prosody.</i>	Students will read a novel text with accuracy, prosody and a 20% higher rate in words per minute than they did at the beginning of the year. Prosodic phrasing will indicate comprehension, which will be confirmed by paraphrasing or representing what was read in a visual or other modality.	This classroom is likely to involve repeated reading for authentic purposes (not skill & drill) and attention to prosody for communicative purposes.
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	6th	Students will write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, including the acknowledgement of opposing claims, references to credible sources, a concluding statement, and <i>a style that aligns with their chosen purpose and audience.</i>	Students will compose, publish and deliver a persuasive piece of writing to the relevant school or town official. It will also earn a score of proficient or advanced on an analytic rubric.	This classroom is likely to contextualize persuasive writing within topics that matter to students, and to teach the tools and conventions associated with such writing for the purpose of interpersonal persuasion, not academic correctness. Students select and meet genre-specific expectations by considering their audience and purpose.
	12th	All of my 11th grade students will	Students will generate and demonstrate a set	Students are asked to use their writing

		<i>compose, deliver and evaluate texts of three distinct types using formats and conventions that match their intended audience.</i>	of criteria for effective compositions in a range of settings. They read widely and consider the impact of various structures and conventions when determining criteria for judging various text types, and will be able to create texts that meet the criteria they have developed.	knowledge strategically and flexibly to understand, deconstruct and compose texts depending on a nuanced understanding of how written language is used and understood across contexts.
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When setting SLOs and selecting IAGDs, we have to be ready to suggest and explain the goals and measures that support the kind of literacy learning we believe in, in order to avoid narrowing the focus of instruction to whatever is easiest to measure.

Make Evaluation Work for You

In this second year of teacher evaluation reform in Connecticut, we can no longer leave evaluation's impact on reading instruction to chance. We have to be ready to make evaluation work for us by linking our goals, conversations and instruction to the aspects of literacy instruction that matter most for students. This means making explicit connections between the vague aspects of literacy instruction that matter most for students. We have to be ready to make evaluation work for us by linking our goals, conversations and instruction to the aspects of literacy instruction that matter most for students. This means making explicit connections between the vague descriptions on evaluation rubrics and specific literacy practices.

It also means setting goals and choosing assessment measures that focus on opportunities to develop powerful literacies - rather than contrived or isolated skills.

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The Influence of a Kindergarten Student's Primary Discourse on Expressive Oral Language

Darcy Anne Fiano, Ph.D.

Abstract

This seven-month ethnographic case study elucidated a kindergarten student's navigation through her first formal schooling experience with relation to expressive oral language. Gee's theory of Discourses and methodology of discourse analysis were used to examine expressive oral language in use. Two discursive contexts germane to expressive oral language were observed: Discourse of home and Discourse of school. This study demonstrated the complexity of expressive oral language when a primary Discourse converged with the secondary Discourse of school. Primary data sources included participant observation, audiotaped observations, and field notes, resulting in transcripts and an individual participant dictionary. Critical incidents of oral language samples were analyzed through language-in-use discourse analysis focused on the seven building tasks, significance, practices (activities), identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge, and six tools of inquiry, social languages, Discourses, Conversations, intertextuality, situated meanings, and figured worlds. Secondary data sources included interviews, document/artifact collection, and a researcher journal, providing detail for rich, descriptive

narratives of contexts of her language in use and detailed descriptions of the home and school contexts and the participant in these settings. Data suggest that a kindergarten student's primary Discourse as it pertains to expressive oral language manifests itself in varying ways at the point of juncture with the secondary Discourse of school. Alignment, dominance, discord, and hybridity existed as her primary Discourse and school Discourse converged through expressive oral language. The point of juncture for expressive oral language expanded and limited her discursive abilities in both Discourses.

Introduction

The academic language employed in the social institution known as school is counterintuitive to the primary language spoken by many children prior to their formal school experience, particularly for children of low socio-economic status (SES) (Gee, 2008; Genishi & Dyson, 2009). Numerous studies reveal the disparity in vocabulary growth among young, low SES children and their more affluent peers (Farkas & Beron, 2004; Gottfried, 1984; Hart & Risley, 1995; Sinatra, 2008). Furthermore, research conducted in the realm of vocabulary

knowledge has demonstrated the relationship between word knowledge and reading competence (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Bradely & Caldwell, 1981; McKeown, Beck, Omanson, & Perfetti, 1983; McKeown, Beck, Omanson, & Perfetti, 1983; McKeown, Beck, Omanson, & Pople, 1985; Nagy & Scott, 2000; Ricketts, Nation, & Bishop, 2007). This juxtaposition of a child's primary Discourse to the secondary Discourse of school can interfere with his or her success in the area of schooled literacy (Cazden, 1979; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Purcell-Gates & Dahl, 1991; Rivalland, 2004; Rogers, 2002).

Each year in the United States roughly four million four-year-old and five-year-old children enter into their formal school careers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2008, approximately 50 percent of these children were enrolled in preschool programs; of these preschool programs, as high as nearly 60 percent of children from low-income families attended inferior programs deemed insufficiently able to provide an adequate level of readiness skills. The National Institute for Early Education Research's (NIEER) 2010 *The State of Preschool* reported that nationally 26.7 percent of children age 4 attended federally, state-funded preschool programs. According to NIEER many states did not provide enough funding to ensure its programs met the minimum benchmarks of quality preschool standards. Twenty-three out of forty states failed to fully meet NIEER benchmarks for teacher qualifications (B.A. specializing in pre-

K) and twenty-six failed to meet the benchmark for assistant teacher qualifications [Child Development Associate credential (CDA) or equivalent]. Whereas preschool for some three-year-old and four-year-old children can be ascribed to a portion of their emergent knowledge, learning from birth to the age of three is attributable to parents. Children experience their introduction to the world of language through the discourse of their parents, setting the stage for expressive oral language acquisition, the foundation of their initial vocabulary development (Harris, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2011). There is increasing evidence that the amount of parent speech is related to children's vocabulary development and growth (Hoff, 2003; Huttenlocher, Haight, Bryk, Seltzer, & Lyons, 1991). Similarly, Hart and Risley (2003) noted that between 86 percent and 98 percent of each child's vocabulary consisted of words also recorded in their parents' vocabularies. Farkas and Beron (2004) found the highest rate of oral vocabulary growth occurring between the ages of zero through five noting significant vocabulary differences across social classes produced by the children's linguistic interactions attributable to their parents or caregiver. Children have had varied experiences with oral language prior to the start of their formal schooling. With such diversity in children's foundational oral language upon entering school, it is important for educators to acknowledge these differences and use them as the basis

for instruction in expressive oral language growth and development. This study presents detailed descriptions of a Kindergarten student's expressive oral language as she navigated her way through her first formal schooling experience. The descriptions include her use of expressive oral language in her primary Discourse of home and in the secondary Discourse of school, examining the point of juncture at which the two Discourses converge. Points of juncture encompass instances of overlap between Discourses. Points of juncture in this study comprise incidents of language transfer using home-based expressive oral language in school as well as school-oriented language in the home.

Research Questions

Guiding this present study were the following research questions:

1. What expressive oral language is the child bringing from the primary Discourse of the home using in the secondary Discourse of school?
2. What new expressive oral language from the secondary Discourse of school does the child bring back into the home environment?
3. What is the nature of transfer of expressive oral language between one Discourse to another; is one of the Discourses dominant over the other?

Related Literature Theoretical Framework: Discourses

A theory of Discourses was used to frame this study, specifically the work of Gee (1989, 2008). Gee elucidates Discourse through delineating the difference between the nature of language as social practice and the nature of language as solely linguistic knowledge:

At any moment we are using language we must say or write the right thing in the right way while playing the right social role and (appearing) to hold the right values, beliefs, and attitudes. Thus, what is important is not language, and surely not grammar, but saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combination. These combinations I call "Discourses" with a capital "D" (1989, p. 6).

Within the social nature of a classroom, discourses with a little "d," connected units of meaningful language, are part of the larger Discourses, which have a profound impact on student learning. To fully grasp how children acquire and develop expressive oral language and academic word knowledge, both primary and secondary Discourses must be examined. Gee presents a theory that demonstrates the importance of acknowledging these Discourses, which, at times, can be in direct opposition to one another. Primary Discourse, as described by Gee (1989), is acquired, "...through our primary socialization early in life in the home and peer group...This initial Discourse, which I call our primary Discourse, is the one we first use to

make sense of the world and interact with others" (p. 7).

Non-home-based Discourses are those that are entered into through community and public sphere social institutions such as businesses, organizations, and schools, and are referred to by Gee as secondary Discourses. Secondary Discourses present specific structures of being and protocols that require compliance in order to gain access to them; speaking, acting, and doing.

Over the course of time, interesting dynamics can occur between primary and secondary Discourses. Primary Discourses may come into alignment with various secondary Discourses and diverge from others. Acknowledging both the positive (alignment) and negative (divergent) interactions between primary/secondary Discourses will allow teachers a greater understanding of how a child's primary Discourse affects word knowledge and expressive oral language usage in the classroom setting.

Home Literacy Environment

A contributing factor salient to children's cognitive growth is their initial home life experience. Studies conducted on the effects of pre-school literacy development in the home are clear in their implications. Numerous studies relate the effects of parental level of literacy on children's language development and vocabulary growth (Gottfried, 1984; Hart & Risley, 1992; Heath, 1982; Hoff, 2003; Huttenlocher,

Haight, Bryk, Seltzer, & Lyons, 1991; Wells, 1986). Hoff (2003) found that children of high-SES, college educated mothers developed more productive, expressive vocabularies than children whose mothers were of mid-SES status with high-school education.

Seminal, longitudinal studies conducted by Hart and Risley (1992, 1995, 2003) demonstrated the effects of experience and interaction with language in the first three years of life. Findings evidenced direct word for word correspondence between a child's vocabulary and his parents' vocabularies. Additional findings in Hart and Risley's studies demonstrated relationships between children's vocabularies and their family's SES. Overall, low SES children had smaller vocabularies than children in professional families (Hoff, 2003; Huttenlocher, Vasilyeva, Waterfall, Vevea, & Hedges, 2007; Murray, Fees, Crowe, Murphy, & Henriksen, 2006; Pungello, Iruka, Dotterer, Mills-Koonce, & Reznick, 2009; Sinatra, 2008). Hart and Risley's work (1995) produced a developmental trajectory of cumulative word experience by the age of four. They calculated that children from welfare families (families with incomes below the U.S. federal poverty level) would have 13 million fewer words of cumulative experience than a child from a working-class family and 32 million fewer words of cumulative experience than children from professional families.

Heath (1982) in a comparative, ethnographic study of three Southeastern communities within the

United States observed narrative skills and language use at home and school. Heath concluded that early socialization experiences influence learning style and stated that, "...much of the literature on learning styles suggests a preference for one or the other is learned in the social group in which the child is reared and in connection with other ways of behaving found in that culture" (Heath, 1982, p. 55). Similar findings by Sénéchal, Thomas, and Monker (1995) and Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, and Daley (1998) supported the importance of the bedtime story, being read to, asserting that children with smaller vocabularies were read to less frequently than children with larger vocabularies.

Wells and his colleagues' Bristol study (1986) investigated the language development and disparity between children's home language and the language of school. Two important findings from the Bristol study were that children's experiences at school were more similar than their experiences at home; and, although oral language ability was predictive of school rank prior to formal school entry, it ceased to be an important predictor after the age of five.

Similar to Wells (1986), Genishi and Dyson (2009) noted a reductionist view of schools narrowly defining literacy learning to reading and writing skills. From their view, schools tended to "...suppress the inherent variability of language by authorizing uniformity" (p. 13). They believe that children's socialized family language should be used by teachers as a foundation for

helping children construct meaning and negotiate communicative situations. In investigations of language in the school context Genishi (2001) pointed out that effective teachers need to have a working knowledge of children's contexts outside the school.

Dyson and Smitherman (2009) noted, "... children's voices are their major pedagogical resource for learning to write and are also potentially construed as a major pedagogical problem" (p. 975-976). A popular instructional cue that teachers use to help students record their voice through writing is to prompt children to put down what "sounds" right. Dyson and Smitherman (2009) argued that developmental, situational, and sociocultural aspects of language will dictate what sounds right for individual students creating variance rather than standardization. Just as the initial development of oral language is a socially situated activity learned through interaction with others in their community, composing needs to be relevant to children's lives (Vygotsky, 1978; Wells, 1986).

Hybrid Discourses

School discourse has been described as authoritative, homogenous, monologic, and middle-class oriented (Gebhard, 2005; Kamberelis, 2001; Santos & Cavalcanti, 2008). Marginalized groups not reflected in the typically Eurocentric structured curricula of the school fail to benefit fully from their formal education (Gee,

2008; Wells, 1986). In situations where a child's primary Discourse misaligns with the secondary Discourse of school, a heterogeneous discourse or hybrid discourse may be created by the student and/or teacher in which the student can function more productively linking school to his/her everyday life. "In classrooms, hybrid discourse practice involves teachers and children juxtaposing forms of talk, social interaction, and material practices from many different social and cultural worlds to constitute interactional spaces that are intertextually complex, interactionally dynamic, locally situated accomplishments" (Kamberelis, 2001, p. 86). Third spaces are hybrid learning contexts in which students' linguistic and cultural forms, styles, artifacts, goals, or ways of relating coalesce and transform the official linguistic and cultural forms of the school, teacher, or classroom (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejada, 1999). Santos and Cavalcanti (2008) noted that although many students were able to "homogenize" themselves within the socially discursive contexts of the classroom, difficulty arose during the academic application of reading and writing.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Research suggests that early vocabulary acquisition is established during infancy, developing from the foundations of speech-sound categories and auditory word forms. Origins of children's vocabulary development begin with auditory learning occurring

within the first 12 months of life (Nazzi & Bertoncini, 2003; Swingley, 2008) to lexical processes focused in an infant's native language (Jusczyk, 1997). Sociolinguistically, Kuhl et al. noted, "To acquire a language, infants have to discover which phonetic distinctions will be utilized in the language of their culture" (2008, p. 980).

As children enter school, it is estimated that in the primary grades they will learn between 2000 and 3000 new words a year (Beck & McKeown, 1991). Due to the complexity of the acquisition process, research on the most effective vocabulary instruction practices remains somewhat inconclusive. Studies of vocabulary learning in schools indicate that presentation of new words occurs primarily in three ways: through direct, explicit instruction in word meanings; through incidental learning from verbal contexts; and through a combination of direct instruction and incidental word learning (Biemiller, 2003; Goerss, Beck, & McKeown, 1999; Penno, Wilkinson, & Moore, 2002). Delpit (2003) in discussing how to assist children of low-socioeconomic backgrounds who do not have the same access to the culture of power as their more affluent counterparts asserted that vocabulary must be developed "in the context of real experiences" with the connection of "new information to the cultural frameworks that children bring to school" (p.17). These issues coupled with studies reporting a lack of curricular focus on vocabulary particularly in the elementary grades (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Biemiller,

2003) contribute to the challenging task of how best to deliver vocabulary instruction.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis (Gee, 2005, 2011a, 2011b) is utilized on segments of oral language from transcriptions to analyze independent oral language and oral language exchanges. The approach to discourse analysis at the macro level focused on the analysis of language-in-use which, "...seeks to balance talk about the mind, talk about social interaction and activities, and talk about society and institution" (Gee, 2005, p. 6) at the situated meaning level (Gee, 2008, 2011a, 2011b). Discourse analysis allows for the study of discourse in Discourse and is a useful framework as it takes into consideration the cultural models present in both people and their settings. Words not only have different meanings in different contexts of use, they also vary across different social and cultural groups. Gee (2005, 2011a) describes an ideal discourse analysis as one that involves asking questions about the seven building tasks using the tools of inquiry and thinking about other relevant language detail in specific instances of language-in-use. The term language-in-use refers to how people build identities and activities and recognize the identities and activities others build.

The seven building tasks as the seven components of discourse situations are: significance, practices (activities), identities, relationships,

politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge. These building tasks allow for analysis of the discourse situations—the situations in which language is put to use. Gee (2011a) defines the seven building tasks in the following way: *Significance*—How the speaker or writer is trying to give significance to things; *Practices (Activities)*—The practice (activity) or practices (activities) that are relevant in a context and how are they being enacted; *Identities*—The identity or identities relevant in a context; *Relationships*—Relationships that are relevant in a context and how are they being enacted, recruited, and used; *Politics*—The social goods that are relevant and at stake in a context and how they are being distributed or how their distribution is being viewed; *Connections*—The relevant connections and disconnections between things and people in a context and how these connections or disconnections are being made or implied; *Sign Systems and Knowledge*—The relevant sign systems (e.g., languages or social languages) and forms of knowledge (ways of knowing) that are relevant in a context and how they are used and privileged or disprivileged (p. 17-20, 102). Gee notes that while not all seven building tasks will be readily apparent in a discourse data sample, the discourse analysis questions (see Appendix A) should be applied to the sample in order to gain evidence about the language-in-use.

Tools of inquiry are used to analyze the seven building tasks relevant to language-in-use: social

languages, Discourses, Conversations, intertextuality, form-function correlations, situated meanings, and figured worlds. Social languages are socially situated, people use different styles of language dependent upon the different identities they enact and the different settings they enter into. Discourses are the identities and activities people build through their language, actions, values, and beliefs to get recognized as a particular social identity. Conversation with a capital “C,” refers to the themes, debates, and issues in society at large or within certain social groups. People take sides in these such debates and are therefore socially defined by the side taken. Gee defines the fourth tool of inquiry as intertextuality, the words we speak or write that allude to or quote words that others have said or written (Gee, 2011a, p. 29-30). Form-function correlations are the general meanings that grammatical units of speech or writing can have e.g., the subject of a sentence is functionally associated with being the topic of a sentence and is not necessarily situated in social contexts. Situated meanings, however, refer to the meanings words and phrases take on in specific social contexts. Finally, figured worlds are the unconscious socially and culturally constructed theories we have about the world and the way it works. These tools of inquiry guide us to ask certain questions about a piece of language. There are six tools of inquiry (social languages, Discourses, Conversations, intertextuality, situated meanings, and figured worlds) within which to ask

questions about the seven building tasks (See Appendix A).

Within each of the tools of inquiry Gee suggests sub-questions to further explore the language-in-use samples. In all there are 42 possible questions that can be asked of any one piece of data (See Appendix A). An ideal discourse analysis would probe all 42 questions, however, most analysts apply only some of the questions. Different samples of discourse require a concentration of some building tasks and tools of inquiry over others and overlap will occur within language samples. The nature of the inquiry into the situated language-in-use will determine which tasks and tools are most relevant.

Methodology

Context of the Study

The School

Northeast Elementary is in an historically agricultural, suburban community close to a major urban center in the northeastern part of the United States.

Participant Selection Criteria and Participant

The unit of analysis for this research study was a case study of one child’s sphere of Discourses around expressive oral language. A criterion-based selection procedure focusing on an extreme case selection was used to determine the sample. The participant for this study was an incoming

kindergarten student during the 2010-2011 school year who was not identified as English Language Learner (ELL), speech and language impaired, special education, or a retention. Participation in the study was not restricted by factors such as gender, socioeconomic status (SES), ethnicity, or race. To accomplish participant identification the researcher examined the school administered Kindergarten screenings prior to the start of the school year. The participant selection process included the district Kindergarten screenings of: Kindergarten Screener—2010-2011; Preschool Boehm; and The Bracken: Basic Concept Scale subtest seven “Self-/Social Awareness” as well as the standard district Kindergarten assessments of Clay’s An Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement subtest “Letter Identification” and modified letter/sound association; Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS); and The Phonological Awareness Test (Robertson and Salter). Using this data, five to six students were selected as possible candidates for the study. Classroom teacher and specialist input was utilized to choose families they felt would be willing participants in the study given their knowledge of and familiarity with the families. The building principal contacted the target families to explain the study and determine interest in participating; one family expressed immediate interest in having the student participate. The participant, Janie, was an African American five-year-old girl of low SES who met the above criteria.

Data Collection Methods

This study triangulated both multiple data sources and data collection methods. The data sources were both primary and secondary in nature. Primary data sources included participant observation, audio taped observations, and field notes. These sources resulted in transcripts and an individual participant dictionary. Secondary sources of information for this study included interviews, document/artifact collection, and a researcher journal which provided detail for the rich descriptive narratives. Methods triangulation was achieved by integrating and comparing the qualitative data sources with relevant quantitative data analysis of the participant dictionary.

Participant Observation

Participant observations with audio taping and field notes occurred in the home and school. Observations were typically scheduled on Wednesdays. The length of time during home and school visits was kept consistent, approximately 60 minutes in each setting.

School-based observations and data collection took place in the classroom during the class’s literacy block for approximately 60 minutes for each observation. Literacy activities during this timeframe included whole group and small group instruction by the teacher, dyads, and independent

work stations. Common whole group activities were the Star of the Day activity; songs including the *Animal Alphabet Cheer* and *The Vowel Samba*; Reader's Workshop; and occasionally sharing time. Small group instruction by the teacher consisted of guided reading. Independent work stations, as the teacher referred to them, including listening, 1-2-3 (math), writing, free choice (computers, books), A-B-C, and a special activity that the classroom paraprofessional ran. Researcher affect on data collection in the school setting occurred during independent work stations. The researcher would often defer the participant to peers in her group for assistance or would assist the participant if others in the group were unable to help. The researcher worked to limit such interactions to keep researcher affect on the data to a minimum.

Home-based observations were conducted after school on the same day as school-based observations in order to fully observe congruous interaction of the expressive oral language between primary and secondary Discourses. The context for home data collection included observing the participant during various forms of play and exchanges with her grandmother and her siblings for a correlating amount of time as the day's school observation, approximately 60 minutes. A marginal degree of researcher affect on data collection resulted during home observations while helping the participant complete homework assignments. Homework help did not

occur during every visit with the duration of time spent on homework lasting approximately 10-15 minutes of the 60 minute observation. The researcher worked to keep her affect on the data to a minimum by limiting engagement as much as possible in a one to one setting and through the use of general, non-specific language and non-leading response and questioning with the participant.

Audio Taping

As Discourse and discourse are the focus of this study, all observations in all settings were audio taped during the sessions. A small digital voice recorder was used to record the participant's discourse for later transcription; the participant did not wear the recording device. Audiotapes of the observations were transcribed by the researcher. As the focus of this study was on the expressive oral language of the participant, transcription of the 40 plus hours of recorded audio allowed for acute attention to the participant's expressive oral language in use.

Field Notes

All observations in all settings were recorded in field notes with attention to describing in detail the participant, setting, activities, behaviors, and interactions of the participant with others and her surroundings. After the observations, extended field notes were written and audiotapes transcribed

with conceptual memos (Heath & Street, 2008) or integrative memos (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) of the field notes written weekly.

Individual Participant Dictionary

Transcriptions from the audiotapes and field notes were used to create the individual participant dictionary. The dictionary for this study consisted of all spoken words used by the participant recorded in both the school and home settings. Only words from her natural language were entered into the dictionary. Words she read directly from text or orally copied verbatim from others and never used on her own during observational visits were not included in the document. The participant dictionary provided both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitatively the participant dictionary triangulated with the observations and field notes to create a holistic view of the participant's expressive oral language use within and between the two discursive settings. The dictionary was initially compiled for the student divided into home and school sections. This enabled the researcher to make note of instances of words used between the two settings and to begin to delineate the juncture of the home and school Discourses. Entries of words used on each date at school and at home were reviewed for convergence of expressive oral language between the two settings. Quantitative data from the participant dictionary provided means and

frequencies of word use and variation of word use within and between the two separate Discourses. Calculations included totals of all words from the entire study in both the home and school as well as examination of frequencies and variations by date.

Interviews

Although interviewing can be one of, if not the primary source of data collection in qualitative research, it served as a secondary data source for this study. Due to the participant's age and preliminary probing into her ability to articulate her perspective, it was apparent that interviewing her would not yield sufficient data for analysis. Therefore, informal interviews and conversations were held with secondary informants including the participant's grandmother and classroom teacher. The focus of the interviews was to provide background information about the participant for this study. All interviews and informal conversations were digitally recorded and later transcribed.

Document/Artifact Collection

Document/artifact collection served as another secondary source of data for this study. Documents and artifacts relevant to the participant's language-in-use from the home and school were collected.

Documents and artifacts collected from the school with guardian permission encompassed items reflective of the participant's language-in-use including progress reports,

report cards, homework, literacy activities, work samples, district-wide and individualized assessments, and letters home. These provided descriptive background information about the participant.

From the home, document and artifact collection included samples of activities the participant engaged in that reflected language use such as homework assignments, written stories, letters, and informal writings completed by the participant. Documents gathered from the home were sparse as expressive oral language activities and conversation were the primary activities that occurred in the home during weekly visits.

Researcher Journal

A researcher journal was kept during the research project as part of the reflective process of the study and for the purpose of an audit trail. Included in the researcher journal were initial thoughts on data analysis; notes and questions about the process; response and query to literature relevant to the study; and general reflections on the undertaking of the study itself pertaining to methods, methodology, literature, ethnographic data analysis, discourse analysis, and new research questions evolving out of this study.

Data Analysis Techniques

The use of complementary methodological approaches of

ethnographic case study and discourse analysis (Gee, 2005, 2011a, 2011b; Merriam, 2009) were used in this research study to examine the expressive oral language-in-use within and between the two contexts of the participant's primary Discourse of home and secondary Discourse of school.

Discourse Analysis and Coding

All data including field notes, transcripts of audiotapes from home and school observations, interview data, and collected documents were examined and coded into emerging analytic categories. As Gee's method of language-in-use discourse analysis was used to analyze the data, coding focused on the seven building tasks, significance, practices (activities), identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge, and six tools of inquiry, social languages, Discourses, Conversations, intertextuality, situated meanings, and figured worlds (2005, 2011a, 2011b). Discourse analysis was applied to critical incidents of oral language samples from audio taped transcriptions of home and school observations to further describe language-in-use within and between the two contexts of the home and the school. As the seven building tasks are inherently linked to one another, they are often reflected in the same words and phrases. Oral language samples were chosen from the transcripts that clearly reflected language-in-use that was representative of a particular

building task and tool of inquiry. Complementary to the culturally responsive nature of an ethnographic approach and case study design, discourse analysis is sensitive to situated meaning. The main focus of the discourse analysis was on discourse related to expressive oral language in the academic setting and in the home as it pertained to the research questions. Discourse analysis allowed for the exploration of the participant's expressive oral language use in her primary Discourse, the home, and the secondary Discourse of school.

Gee's (2011a) suggested steps toward discourse analysis were followed. First, all of the audio taped data from observations were transcribed by the researcher. This allowed for greater attention to the expressive oral language used by the participant in both the home and school settings. Notational devices of speech features were used on the relevant oral language samples from transcripts. Features such as pauses, overlaps, stress, and intonation were coded using notational devices (see Appendix B).

Next, during this recursive and ongoing process multiple readings of the transcript data began to reveal several recurring categories relating to the seven building tasks illuminating how the participant attempted to negotiate oral language between her primary Discourse of home and the secondary Discourse of the school. Key words and phrases began to emerge from the data that reflected situated meanings which were chosen to exemplify themes of the building

tasks in the data given the overall context. These key words and phrases were categorized by building tasks and color coded to reflect the most representative building task. Subsequently, Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages emerged that were relevant to the language-in-use data within the building tasks. Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages represented social activities and socially situated identities that were being enacted and/or recognized in the data. Probing further into the data linguistic details for how Discourses, situated meanings, social activities, social languages, socially situated identities, and figured worlds were being "designed," or enacted by the participant and recognized by the researcher in the data were analyzed in both the home and school transcript data sets.

Reflecting on this information the participant's oral language samples were recorded as "idea units" or "lines," then grouped together as "stanzas." For each stanza, the 42 questions and sub-questions (six tools of inquiry questions about the seven building tasks) were asked (see Appendix A). Corresponding discourse analysis questions pertaining to the expressive oral language samples contained in the audio taped transcriptions of the observations were used to analyze language-in-use.

During this process answers to the 42 questions had some overlap and converged resulting in emerging themes relevant to the research questions. The samples of oral language were categorized based on the

identified, relevant building tasks and the relevant tools of inquiry. Discourse analysis data were compared across the two domains of the home and the school for comparisons between the two social contexts that revealed places of both overlap and dissonance. From the discourse sample data, coding related themes emerging from the set were documented and analyzed to answer the research questions.

Individual Participant Dictionary

Analysis of the individual participant dictionary included counts and cross comparisons of words used within and between the two contexts home and school. The words in the dictionary were analyzed within and between each Discourse for frequency, variety, and situated meaning as revealed through discourse analysis with samples of text that contained words in the dictionary. The participant dictionary provided both qualitative and quantitative data.

For qualitative analysis the participant dictionary was initially divided into home and school sections. This enabled the researcher to make note of instances of words used between the two settings and to begin to delineate the influences of the home and school Discourses on one another. Entries of words used on each date at school and at home were reviewed for convergence of language between the two settings.

The quantitative analysis was conducted by calculating means and frequencies of word use and variation

of word use within and between home and school. The total number of the participant's words spoken during each visit in the separate settings were tallied and averaged to report the mean number of total words spoken at school and at home. The total number of variant words spoken during each visit in the separate settings were also tallied and averaged to report the mean number of total variant words spoken at school and at home. Frequency of individual words were also tallied for each setting. Words uttered by observation date at home and school were also calculated to compare word use and word variation chronologically over the course of the study.

Results of the Study Discourse Analysis

Janie's expressive oral language from the transcripts of audio taped observations was analyzed through Gee's approach to discourse analysis using situated meaning focused on the building tasks of language-in-use (significance, practices/activities, identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge) and the theoretical tools of inquiry (social languages, Discourses, Conversations, intertextuality, situated meanings, and figured worlds) resulting in 366 pieces of coded data.

The percentage of the coded data of each building task of language-in-use follows: The percentage of the coded data of each building task of language-in-use follows:

Practices (Activities)	23%
Connections	22%
Significance	18%
Identities	15%
Relationships	15%
Sign Systems and Knowledge	4%
Politics	3%

Coding of the data by the seven building tasks revealed practices (activities) and connections figured most prominently in the data followed by significance, identities, relationships, and sign systems and knowledge. Instances of the building task politics was minimally represented in the data set. Intertextuality, Discourses, and social languages were the most frequently identified tools of inquiry used to analyze the building tasks. Data for these three tools of inquiry were documented in the transcriptions from the audio taped observations. Intertextuality, specifically the borrowing of language both oral and written from sources including written text (books), peers, siblings, and adults, occurred frequently in Janie's expressive oral language and was documented in both the audiotaped transcriptions and the field notes. Subvocalizing during read-alouds was also a frequent occurrence. Data supporting observed behaviors in Discourses and intertextuality were recorded in the field notes.

The results of the discourse analysis are presented through the

individual examination of each analytic category of the building tasks [practices (activities), connections, significance, identities, relationships, sign systems and knowledge, and politics]. Each building task is further divided into the subcategories of the relevant, reflected tools of inquiry that were present in the participant's discourse (Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages). The subcategories of the tools of inquiry are further divided into the two settings of the home and school. The samples of oral language used to evidence the building tasks and tools of inquiry contain overlap. Language samples were chosen that were considered to be the most representative of particular building tasks and tools of inquiry, however, these were not absolutes, utterances often perform more than one building task and provide answers to multiple tools of inquiry.

The Discourse From Home to School

What I first noticed about Janie when I met her in the apartment with Nanny and her sisters for the first time was that she had a warm and inquisitive nature. The next time I saw her was at school a week later. Janie immediately recognized me, acknowledging me with a big smile and a "Hi." She was engaging from the start, and this quality prevailed over the entire course of the study. During the first home visit, Janie produced the second-most words uttered (1,512) and variation of words uttered (275) of any observation. Having been identified by

the school as a student with low expressive oral language, I was surprised by how verbal she was; she was quite orally expressive at home. Residing in a relatively small area, the family was close-knit and engaged in verbal exchanges with one another frequently. During the first four months of observations, the television was rarely on. The girls engaged in play with various toys, read books, and drew. Nanny spent her time during the observations helping Mae with her homework, cooking dinner, bathing Janie's sisters before dinner, reading the Bible, and periodically engaging with Janie and me. The activity in the home fostered oral language exchanges among the family members; Janie's primary Discourse, her home environment, appeared to encourage oral language use.

Quantitative Data

Quantitatively (see Table 1), Janie uttered more total words in the home setting (19,850) than in the school setting (5,553). She uttered 1,095 different words during the home observations, and of those words, 479 were the same words spoken at school. Accordingly, there were 616 different words uttered by Janie at home that were not spoken at school during

classroom observations. The majority of these words (97%) were Tier 1 words, such as box, buy, and can't; 3% would be categorized as Tier 2 words, such as detail, pointy, and magnifying; and no words met the criteria for classification as Tier 3. Hence, saliency of quality versus quantity is consequential. Analysis of the quality of Janie's oral expressive language at home was reflected in the building tasks and tools of inquiry.

Building Tasks and Tools of Inquiry

Building tasks emblematic of Janie's use of primary Discourse home language in school were significance, practices (activities), identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems and knowledge.

Table 1. Total words uttered in both observation settings

	Home (21 observations)	School (20 observations)
Total # Words Uttered	19850	5553
Total # of Different Words Uttered	1095 (6%)	621 (11%)
Total # of Same Words Uttered	(2%) 479	(9%)
Average # of Words Uttered Daily	945	278
Average # of Different Words Uttered Daily	52 (6%)	31 (11%)

Significance

Janie built significance using Discourses and social languages at school through home-oriented language and beliefs “Janie: Jehovah said don’ do ‘ha-ha.’ You know Jehovah? You know Jehovah?” (School transcript, 3/30/11, p. 14). Religious beliefs instilled at home by Nanny made an impression on Janie. She made these values significant by transferring them into the school setting to address a peer’s unkind behavior

Practices (Activities)

Janie built practices at school through home-oriented language with Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages underpinnings. This was evident when she transferred language used at home while practicing her

writing in school “Janie: Hey, that floating” (School transcript, 3/23/11, p. 9), for letters that were not sitting on the lines.

Identities

Identity building at school included home-based language incorporating Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages. For example when Mrs. Williams asked her to talk about her favorite book during an assessment she chose a text from home “Janie: Happy Monkey Mrs. Darling gave me that” (School transcript, 2/9/11, p. 12). Rather than choosing a more recent book from school, she mentioned a book I had given her three weeks prior during a home visit.

Relationships

Janie used language from home to build relationships in school through social languages as reflected in this excerpt “Janie: The member [remember] you, the member you chose, the member you just didn’t need the right one” (School transcript, 4/6/11, p. 8) she uttered while working with a partner in the computer station.

Politics

Language from Janie’s primary Discourse was used within the politics building task (the distribution of various social goods) in school carried out by Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages. Janie struggled with reconciling a ubiquitous rewards system, eventually coming to realize that what worked at home did not necessarily produce similar results in school. Whereas social goods were more readily attainable at home, rules had to be followed to procure them at school “Janie: Tha’s a tha’s a funny. Jorge do this way. Mrs. Vine: Janie, you’re not in charge of him honey, you need to sit down” (School transcript, 3/23/11, p. 8). Where helping her sisters at home was rewarded, this was not the case at school during instructional lessons.

Connections

During observations Janie built very few connections using language from home in school. In this rare example “Janie: I’m not in Dr. Seuss Birthday”

(School transcript, 3/9/11, p. 10)

Discourse and social languages were used to express a religious value at home that Janie must adhere to, willingly or not.

Sign Systems and Knowledge

With this final building task, Janie was often times unsuccessful using language from her primary Discourse to build sign systems and knowledge at school. She was frequently disadvantaged at school when she communicated with her primary social language. Although the quantity of the oral language she produced at home was greater than that at school, the quality of her utterances was not necessarily superior. As reflected in her share during Field Day, she often times resorted to one word or two word phrases to express herself.

Teacher: Janie, you want to tell us how you’re feeling now, what’s what are you thinking? [7 s] What do you think about field day?

Janie:water balloons

Teacher: What’s that?

Gia: water balloon

Janie: water balloon

Teacher: What about the water balloons?

Janie: I like.... [6 s]

Teacher: I can’t hear you

Janie: I like them...

Teacher: You like what?

Janie: throwing

Mrs. Vine: Throwing them

Teacher: Throwing them, yah, okay. Jakai, what are you thinking about today?

(p. 6-7) (School transcript, 6/8/11, p. 1-2, 6-7)

In a contextualized sense she assumed the listeners would construct the meaning for themselves, whereas in the school setting teachers work to develop oral language with children in a decontextualized manner, expecting the students to do the work of creating a context for their oral expressions.

An abundance of expressive oral language was brought from Janie's primary Discourse of the home and used within the secondary Discourse of school. Janie's home language-in-use at school was used to enact a number of the building tasks carried out by various tools of inquiry. Unfortunately, the quality of many of her home words did not meet academic standards and would not be categorized as the type of tier 2 words research suggests (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli, & Kapp, 2009; Hoff, 2003) enhances the level of a child's achievement in school.

The Discourse From School to Home

Quantitative Data

Looking from a quantitative perspective (see Table 1), Janie uttered 621 different words while at school over

the duration of the study. Of those 621 words 479 were the same words spoken at home. Hence, there were only 143 different words uttered by Janie in school that were not spoken at home during observational visits. Most of these words, 90%, would be classified as tier 1 words such as ball, hit, and hurry; 1% would be classified as tier 3 words including Jehovah and "tearasauros" [Tyrannosaurus]; and 9% would be categorized as tier 2 words such as stencils, burst, and design.

Building Tasks and Tools of Inquiry

The building tasks reflective of the presence of secondary Discourse school language in use at home were practices (activities), identities, connections, and sign systems and knowledge.

Practices (Activities)

Janie built practices using Discourses and social languages at home through school language and behaviors in academically-based practices including reading and writing, for example "Janie: But is says check the picture, think about it" (Home transcript, 5/4/11, p. 5). While doing her homework at home she used the language her teacher taught her about the word recognition strategies of checking the picture and thinking about it. These are practices that students in school participate in.

Identities

School language and behaviors were also used by Janie to build identities with Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages. School identities enacted at home were that of a teacher, competent student, reader, and writer. Acting in the identity of a student she uttered “Janie: Ya hada make a pattern of cereal of pattern” (Home transcript, 3/16/11, p. 14). In her classroom at school the students had been working on making patterns during the math block and in the 1-2-3 station.

Connections

Through Discourses, intertextuality, and social languages Janie built connections between the school and home Discourses. Often times at home Janie would recognize words as her Kindergarten words from school “Janie: Becuz that is in my name. I have tha’ Kindergarten word at my...school” (Home transcript, 3/30/11, p. 15). Interestingly she contextualized the words, it was not only a Kindergarten word, but it was specifically found at her school.

Sign Systems and Knowledge

Finally, with the sign systems and knowledge building task, Janie was privileged at times by language introduced from the secondary Discourse of school into the home through intertextuality and social languages. Janie had gone on a nature field trip to a park and was telling me,

Nanny, and Mae about it later on that day at home “Janie: Um, I wen’ on a field trip with my friens’ an I had um mikein [magnifying] glass ta, ta look at something that’s bi’. An I saw a snake”

(Home transcript, 4/27/11, p. 1).

Another notable aspect of this language sample was that Janie seldom spoke about her day at school or school in general at home; this discourse ensued without any prompting.

What was occurring at home that could be limiting the inclusion of new expressive oral language from the school? Literally, in a tangible sense, language from the school environment was brought back into the home by Janie almost daily in the form of homework and classroom, school, and district notices including field trip permission slips, Extra K parent information sheets, report cards, and district newsletters. Linguistically, however, Janie’s integration of school-oriented language into her discourse at home was inconsistent and sparse. It was rare during an observation for Janie to independently share anything about school or what happened at school that day in the home setting.

Nanny was supportive of Janie’s education, however, struggled with getting Janie to complete school tasks. Often times during my visits she would ask if I could work on Janie’s homework with her because she had been unsuccessful in getting Janie to complete the assignment “Nanny: This is the one I been tryin’ to get her to do ‘for but she has been writin’ all over the

paper, I had to keep e-rasin' it an she made marks all over don' do what she tol' do wit it" (Home transcript, 3/2/11, p. 4). I wanted to limit the effect I had on the study and its outcomes by engaging with and helping Janie too much, however, I wanted to be a model for Nanny on how to go about working with Janie.

Although I did not observe Nanny reading to the girls, Janie acknowledged this as a practice that occurred at home. When asked by the teacher during an assessment who read to her at home Janie replied "granma." The number of books in the home and the recognition of story elements by Janie in many of the books suggested this to be true.

The home environment was also a busy place. Nanny cared for the three young girls on a daily basis by herself for the most part. As an older woman with several health issues, the task of caring for the girls was overwhelming at times. Nanny did the best she could to meet the needs of all the girls both collectively and individually. Children at these ages thrive on individual attention and as her time was a coveted commodity she did her best to divide her time amongst the three girls. Basic needs were met first including fixing meals and the personal health and hygiene of each of the girls, academic support including homework assistance and read-alouds followed.

The support for specific oral language or vocabulary that originated in the school and was integrated into the home setting by Janie was both direct and incidental. Evidence of

direct support of specific words could be seen in Nanny's work with Janie on her reading recognition of Kindergarten word lists which were high frequency words such as am, can, this, and me, all tier 1 words. Support for other school-based vocabulary words transpired incidentally when Nanny listened to Janie practice her weekly guided reading take home book or read her weekly story sentence task around a word of the week which included words such as jelly, ducks, and earrings, again a tendency toward more tier 1 classified words.

Limited new expressive oral language was brought from the secondary Discourse of school into the primary Discourse of the home environment by Janie. Her school language-in-use in the home was used to enact several of the building tasks carried out by various tools of inquiry. As with her home language, the quality of many of her school-based words did not meet the criteria for tier 2 words that research suggests (Beck & McKeown, 2007; Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli, & Kapp, 2009; Hoff, 2003) supports academic achievement in school. Support for integration of these words into the home environment by the parents, in this case Janie's grandmother, was evident. Wells (1986) notes, however, that after the age of two when children begin to learn that everything is named most parents do not continue to teach vocabulary to their children.

Therefore, it was not necessarily that Janie's home inadequately supported more academically-based expressive oral language, rather, there

was a lack on the school's part of supplementing these lower-level word selections (e.g., Kindergarten high frequency word lists, word of the week words) with more tier 2 words in the home environment.

Transfer of Discourses

Transfer of learning between contexts is a vital goal in learning. True understanding of a concept allows for application within and across many diverse settings. Transfer of expressive oral language between one context and another, in this study the Discourses of school and the home, elucidated the point of juncture between the two Discourses. Transfer of expressive oral language for Janie varied depending on the setting. Overall only 479 words were shared between the two settings. In the home, shared words only accounted for 2% of the words uttered, while at school it was slightly higher accounting for 9% of the words uttered. Janie more readily transferred language from home to school than from school to home or within different learning contexts in the classroom. Janie also did not readily transfer language from one context to another independently. In most instances these connections needed to be explicitly drawn for her. These findings substantiate work by Genishi and Dyson (2009) "Ultimately, the educational goal is to help children adapt to, participate in, and negotiate a range of communicative situations in our sociolinguistically complex world" (p. 21). Preceding discussion of home

to school and school to home language-in-use cited specific data samples that examined the relationship of expressive oral language transfer between the home and school Discourses as it related to the building tasks and tools of inquiry.

Janie's home expressive oral language Discourse was more prevalent in the building tasks and more evident throughout the school day. This could be in part due to the fact that Janie was more verbal in the home environment hence more comfortable with the language she used in her primary Discourse. Janie commented about her talking during a home visit "Janie: I talk a lot" (Home transcript, 1/10/11, p. 12). This finding supports conclusions by Wells and his colleagues (1986) reported in the Bristol study that children spoke more at home than at school. Quantitatively over the course of the study Janie uttered 19,850 words at home compared to 5,553 at school. The length of the observations was nearly identical with home and school visits occurring on the same day. There was one more home observation than school observation, however, impact from the difference of having one more home visit would be negligible. The quality of the words Janie uttered in both settings were predominantly common everyday, tier 1 words. Although the school setting contained more tier 2 and tier 3 words in its environment, it was not observed during this study that Janie independently acquired and integrated them into her own expressive oral language-in-use repertoire.

The nature of transfer of expressive oral language between one Discourse to another was dissimilar. Janie's enculturation into the language of her primary Discourse was an organic process that had been nurtured over the course of the first five years of her life. The inherent use of language in her home environment had been practiced by her and cultivated by those she encountered on a daily basis. This is the language she entered the public domain with and incorporated into the secondary Discourses she participated in. Enculturation into the institute of school was a process divergent from the home for Janie. Although the classroom provided a language-rich environment, oral language development and acquisition was not nurtured in a similar way as it was at home. The pace at school was quick and the variation within academic language was great and ever changing. The academic language of the school curriculum contrasted at times to the language spoken in her home. This in part could account for some of why language from Janie's primary Discourse was dominant over the academic language of school. Her primary Discourse provided the language base from which she built practices (activities), identities, connections, significance, relationships, sign systems and knowledge, and politics (what counted as social goods) upon entering school. As Janie became enculturated into the secondary Discourse of school, language from her primary Discourse allowed her to function in the classroom environment

and have her basic needs met. The classroom at times served as a third space for Janie. The environment enabled her primary Discourse to further extend her expressive oral language as well as inhibited her from acquiring new oral language vocabulary at other times. Mrs. Williams cultivated hybridity of language creating a third space environment for children in her class to explore their expressive oral language choices. Although she served as a model for English syntax while engaged in book reading during guided reading and whole group interactive reading, prompting children to conform to proper English syntax, she lessened the emphasis on proper English syntax during less structured times of the day such as snack time.

Language from home reflected in the seven building tasks was more pervasive than language from school, however, it contained a predominance of basic everyday or tier 1 words. Being grounded in her home-based language, Janie did not readily acquire new words as her own and transfer them from one context to another. Inclusion of expressive oral language into home Discourse was limited.

The data from this study suggest that a child's primary Discourse as it pertains to expressive oral language manifests itself in a variety of ways at the point of juncture with the secondary Discourse of school. Alignment, dominance, hybridity, and discord exist as a student's primary Discourse of home and secondary Discourse of the school converge

through expressive oral language. This point of juncture for expressive oral language-in-use served to both expand and limit Janie's discursive abilities in both her home and school Discourses.

Discussion, Conclusions, Implications

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore through the lens of Gee's theory of Discourses (1989, 2008) a Kindergarten student's expressive oral language at the point of juncture between the primary Discourse of the home and the secondary Discourse of school.

Significant to this study is the use of Gee's theory of Discourses and applying Gee's methodology of discourse analysis focused on situated meaning (2008, 2011a) to the participant's language-in-use. Previous studies have quantified words uttered by children (Hart & Risley, 1992, 1995, 2003; Hoff, 2003; Farkas & Beron, 2004) and explored methods of instruction for effective word learning (Biemiller, 2003; Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007; Delpit, 2003; Goerss, Beck, & McKeown, 1999), this research observed a child's language-in-use within and between the home and school settings. The importance of what the child was doing with her language and building with her language in the social contexts of both the home and school found in this study supports the previous work characterized by others such as Genishi and Dyson (2009) who view language learning as a socially mediated process.

The present study extends the importance of oral language, moving it beyond the words in and of themselves and to the application of language for specific reasons—to get recognized as engaging in certain practices; to render things connected; to make things significant; to get recognized as taking on certain identities; to build social relationships; to privilege or disprivilege various sign systems and knowledge; and to enact politics by building what counts as social goods.

Language is socially situated, at times integrating multiple Discourses creating hybrid Discourses (Gee, 2008). Kamberelis (2001) discussed the importance of cultivating hybrid discourse practices within the classroom allowing children the space, third space, to experiment with new language through the support of their foundational language. The participant in this study engaged in hybrid discourses in both her home environment and at school. Similar to findings by Santos and Cavalcanti (2008) hybridity was valued by Janie's teacher in socially discursive contexts such as snack time but to a lesser degree, however, during academic applications such as guided reading instruction.

Similar to previous studies, this study included a quantitative component to the research that calculated the number of words uttered during the observations, typically and hour, as well as the variation in the words uttered. Hart and Risley's research (1992, 1995, 2003) demonstrated quantitatively the effects of early home experiences with

language on children's later vocabulary development. Their focus was on words produced per hour, variations in words produced per hour, as well as correspondence between the children's vocabulary and their parents' vocabulary. Extending the findings of Hart and Risley's research, this study compared the number of words uttered not only within the home, but within the school and between the contexts of home and school. The findings revealed that Janie used more words and a greater variety of words at home than at school. This conclusion substantiates findings by Wells and colleagues (1986) that children spoke more at home than at school and that schools were not providing an environment that fostered language development equal to the children's homes.

From the observations in the classroom, there were two distinct factors that appeared to contribute to the decreased number of words uttered at school as compared to the home, lack of authentic discourse and discourse opportunities in the classroom and lack of connecting concepts across the curricular contexts.

Fostering Discursive Opportunities

First, there appeared to be a lack of fostering instructional discourse within the classroom. During whole group instruction most students were not actively engaged orally. Participation in whole group either consisted of the Star of the Day, one child, providing a sentence to share and write with the

class or those who raised their hands and were actually called upon.

Discursive strategies such as turn-and-talk and whole group share were each only observed twice during classroom visits. During station rotations talking was discouraged. Children were reminded that stations were not a time for talking and they were to be working quietly. Prohibitions such as not being allowed to talk have been shown to negatively impact expressive oral language development (Hart & Risley, 1995; Murray, Fees, Crowe, Murphy, & Henriksen, 2006). Discouragement from talking was not noted during any of the home observations. According to Wells (1986) all children benefit from exploratory talk in order to make knowledge their own. When children are actively involved discussing an activity or task collaboratively, they are making meaning and gaining confidence and fluency in the skill.

Another practice that may have contributed to the decreased number of words uttered in the classroom setting was the nature of a number of the stations themselves which promoted silence rather than discourse. At the computer station students were engaged in software with headphones on. Although two children were allowed to sit at one computer station together, the software in the classroom did not encourage discourse; the headphones also deterred conversation. Another station that did not promote discourse was the listening station. Children sat at a table in a small group, each child had a copy of the book on the CD, and the text was read on the CD

player as the children followed along with the text. Again, this activity did not encourage discourse among the children as they were to sit and listen to the story. After listening to the story there was usually an independent task to complete that went along with the book, at times a written or drawn response to the text. During a number of observation visits two of the stations Janie would be assigned to were the computer station and the listening station. This accounted for thirty of the forty-five minute literacy station time in which discourse was not promoted.

Connecting Contexts

A second factor the study elucidates is the importance of making connections between contexts through language which is essential in developing expressive oral language in children. In order to transfer language from one Discourse to another children have to understand how to apply language across contexts. Children with low expressive oral language do not readily make these connections on their own. As a socially mediated process, educators need to emphasize these connections for students. Within the Discourse of school, teachers need to connect the language and vocabularies from one content area to others. Polysemy, the multiplicity of a word's meaning, and dispersion, the degree to which a word occurs across texts with different content emphasis, present challenges to many students with lower

expressive oral language. The word table during the literacy block in a story about the three bears sitting down to eat conveys a much different meaning when encountered in a numeracy lesson where the child needs to create a table to show the prices of tickets for rides at a carnival, and different still in a science lesson about how the water table varies with surface topography.

In scaffolding oral language connections across school-based contexts, educators also need to foster linguistic connections between the Discourses of school and home. Teachers cannot assume that children will transfer expressive oral language presented during the school day into their home environments. Nor can it be assumed how school-oriented language will be supported within the home. Educators need to be linguistically aware of their students' home-based language by interacting outside of the institutional setting with parents and the community (Genishi & Dyson, 2009). Enculturation into the oral language of the secondary Discourse of school should reflect the authentic cultivation of oral language development in the primary Discourse of the home.

Implications for Instructional Practice

There are several implications for instructional practice from this research study that can be adopted by school districts and educators to enhance the expressive oral language

development and use of their youngest learners. A number of the implications are inherently school-based while others focus on the building of school to home connections.

School-based Implications

Oral Discourse in Work Stations

All students and in particular students with low expressive oral language would benefit from more oral discourse related work station tasks. Research supports the merits of oral discourse in the development and acquisition of words/vocabulary and reading ability (Lawrence & Snow, 2011; Paratore, Cassano, & Schickedanz, 2011). Teachers need to be more tolerant of student talk in the classroom. Consistent modeling and multiple opportunities for practicing oral discourse in student-led stations will alleviate off-task behavior by students. As well, there needs to be time built in for teachers to observe the language that students are using during independent station use. Overloaded curriculums require teachers to be meeting daily with guided reading groups during which time they are unable to observe what is taking place in the independent work stations. The Common Core State Standards adopted by nearly every state in the U.S. do not stress the importance of merging the authentic expressive oral language children enter school with and that of school's more academically focused vocabulary. Its College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for

Language outline tightly woven and extremely structured academically-based standards for vocabulary acquisition and use. The document presents specifically for Kindergarten, "Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts" (p. 27). Although the anchor standard for language appears to place importance on language it does not foster expressive oral language development in Kindergarten children. The standard is more concerned with the institutional academic agenda of vocabulary acquisition rather than centering on the student and honoring the cultural complexity in expressive oral language that each student brings to school with him. An emphasis needs to be put back on more authentic student-centered oral discourse tasks in stations. For instance, an oral language or vocabulary work station might be a kitchen area where students learn and use vocabulary and phrases related to the everyday workings within the kitchen environment including whisk, temperature, barbecue, and cabinet. As well as incorporating synonyms for words associated with this environment such as plates/dishes, silverware/utensils, market/grocery store. A veterinarian work station could include chart, stethoscope, artery, and dorsal for students to take care of injured animals and a numeracy station might emphasize collaborative student tasks and discussion analyzing and comparing two- and three-dimensional shapes using language to describe

similarities, differences, parts e.g., number of sides and vertices/“corners” and other attributes e.g., having sides of equal length. As these stations are introduced the teacher would emphasize the content-specific language that children need to practice in the station. If we want students to be using and learning vocabulary and expressive oral language, time and opportunity need to be provided for them to apply it in authentic tasks.

Opportunities for Oral Discourse

In addition to work stations, ample opportunity for student discourse needs to be provided throughout the instructional school day. Practices such as turn-and-talk/think-pair-share during whole group mini-lessons, student-led literature circles and book clubs, student-led debates, small group work, share time, and peer conferencing allow students the opportunity to express their thinking to their peers. Many teachers undervalue these practices and view them as too time consuming, taking away from their instructional time with students. Studies have shown teacher-talk taking up to in excess of 55% of class time with high-achieving students and as much as 80% of the time in classes with ELL, low SES, and low-achieving students (Flanders, 1970; Guan Eng Ho, 2005; Lingard, Hayes, & Mills, 2003). Students who need to be engaged in discourse the most are experiencing a disproportionate amount of opportunity to utilize their expressive oral abilities.

Explicit Instruction

Educators could provide systematic, explicit instruction in word learning/vocabulary development, this is particularly essential for students with low expressive oral language. Nagy and Hiebert (2011) assert, “For the students whose exposure to academic language occurs almost exclusively in the school context, the instructional choices that are made from the tens of thousands of words in English will determine the extent to which these students acquire the vocabulary of academic texts” (p. 388). It is important for children from varying levels of oral expressive language to develop word consciousness. Word consciousness moves vocabulary instruction beyond learning the definitions of a set number of words toward becoming word aware.

It is teaching children how to learn and apply a variety of words in their own personal repertoires. Teachers need to create a word-rich classroom environment that fosters an interest and awareness of words in their students.

Connecting Contexts

Along with explicit instruction and authentic opportunities for practice, educators should be providing explicit, scaffolded connections for words and their use across multiple contexts. Thought needs to be given to how words can be incorporated into multiple contexts throughout the school day, it should not be assumed that students

will draw these seemingly natural connections independently. Students with low oral expressive language do not automatically independently make generalizations with words from one context to another.

Grouping Practices

Teachers need to be thoughtful and intentional in their grouping practices. Consideration to the make-up of groups weighing both the positive and negative aspects for each individual member must be attended to. Groupings could have profound effects on student's expressive oral language and overall academic achievement resulting in adverse outcomes. Studies suggest that marginalized populations placed in lower performing groups are negatively impacted by ability grouping in the earliest years of school (Lleras & Rangel, 2009; Tach & Farkas, 2006). The findings from these empirical studies illustrate the negative effects ability grouping practices can have on students such as the participant from this current study.

School-to-Home Implications

Hybridity

As educators need to scaffold connections for students of word usage between different contexts within the classroom, so to connections need to be made between school and the home. Most Kindergarten students see the school and home as two completely separate Discourses. These two

environments may be dissimilar and even conflicting for some children.

Educators could relate oral language being taught during the school day with the home environments. They could make explicit connections for children of how expressive oral language can be shared between the two settings creating hybrid environments where children can feel safe experimenting with integrating home and school Discourses. Similarly, Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) present the notion of using "funds of knowledge" to connect teaching in the classroom to the already existing cultural and cognitive resources from student's homes. They define "funds of knowledge" as the historically and culturally developed skills and knowledge used in home environments to accomplish everyday life functions. This promising course of research capitalizes on using home visits by teachers to develop an understanding of families and how the home culture can positively contribute to the academic context of the classroom.

Communication

In this same vein educators could form lines of communication with the parents of their students with regard to the academic vocabulary being taught in the classroom. Weekly newsletters would be an efficient means of communicating to parents focus words for the week or month that are being explored and suggestions for how to support the usage of these words in the

home. Scheduled home visits could also be conducted to strengthen the relationship between the home and school.

Limitations of the Study

This study presents a number of limitations that should be acknowledged. Due to the qualitative design of this study as an ethnographic case study, issues of dependability/reliability, credibility/validity, and transferability/generalizability come into question. The researcher has given careful consideration to each of these issues taking steps to lessen their impact on the study. Through the rigor of such techniques as multiple levels of triangulation, audit trails, and reflexivity (Merriam, 2002), dependability and credibility of the data collected has been preserved.

As this study is focused on the lived experiences of one participant it is arguable that findings are not replicable or generalizable. Flyvbjerg (2006), however, presents five misunderstandings about case study research, one of which discusses generalizability—one can't generalize a single case so single case doesn't add to scientific development. He cites numerous single case studies that have advanced fields in the human and natural sciences e.g., studies by Einstein, Marx, and Freud. According to Merriam (2002), "If one thinks of what can be learned from an in-depth analysis of a particular situation or incident and how that knowledge can be transferred to another situation,

generalizability in qualitative research becomes possible" (p. 28). By researching the expressive oral language a child brings to school with her as enculturated through her primary Discourse of the home, observable interactions with her expressive oral language from the secondary Discourse of school were documented during this study. This information will be germane to the school and the district in order to assist its teachers in better educating the changing demographic of students attending its schools. Limiting may be the extent to which these interpretations may be transferable to other children within the same or similar population. Each individual case would involve a unique history of enculturation into a primary Discourse affecting interactions with secondary Discourses, in this case, the school. Further research of various cultural models within schools examining discursive interactions would provide greater insight into the dynamics of Discourses in these academic institutions possibly allowing for greater transferability.

Data collection for this study in the school setting focused solely on the academic block of literacy instruction, limiting the curricular scope. Observations did not occur during the numeracy block or content area instruction including science and social studies. The literacy block was, however, integrated with numeracy, social studies, and science tasks for the station rotations.

A final limitation of this study

is the role the researcher played as a participant observer particularly in the school setting. It could be argued that the participant associated the researcher with school and academically-based Discourses. This association might have, in turn, influenced the participant's readily adopting and identifying with school Discourses at home in her completion of homework activities. This may also partially explain why the participant was more willing to complete homework assignments with the researcher rather than with her grandmother.

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APPENDIX A

Gee's seven building tasks discourse analysis questions:

Significance:

Discourse Analysis Question: How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?

Practices (Activities):

Discourse Analysis Question: What practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?

Identities:

Discourse Analysis Question: What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as operative)?

Relationships:

Discourse Analysis Question: What sort of relationship or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?

Politics:

Discourse Analysis Question: What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as “normal,” “right,” “good,” “correct,” “appropriate,” “valuable,” “the ways things are,” “the way things ought to be,” “high status or low status,” “like me or not like me,” and so forth)?

Connections:

Discourse Analysis Question: How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant another?

Sign Systems and Knowledge:

Discourse Analysis Question: How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g., Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations, etc.) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief (e.g., science vs. the Humanities, science vs. “common sense,” biology vs. “creation science”)? (p. 17-20, 102).

Gee's six tools of inquiry questions about the seven building tasks:

Building Task 1: *Significance*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to build relevance or significance for things and people in context?

Building Task 2: *Practices (Activities)*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to enact a practice (activity) or practices (activities) in context?

Building Task 3: *Identities*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to enact and depict identities (socially significant kinds of people)?

Building Task 4: *Relationships*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to build and sustain (or change or destroy) social relationships?

Building Task 5: *Politics*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to create, distribute, or withhold social goods or to construe particular distributions of social goods as “good” or “acceptable” or not?

Building Task 6: *Connections*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to make things and people connected or relevant to each other or irrelevant to or disconnected from each other?

Building Task 7: *Sign Systems and Knowledge*: How are situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, intertextuality, Discourses, and Conversations being used to privilege or disprivilege different sign systems (language, social languages, other sorts of symbol systems) and ways of knowing? (Gee, 2011a, p. 121-122).

Sub-questions related to social languages, Conversations, intertextuality, and Discourse include:

What social language(s) are involved? What sorts of grammatical patterns indicate this? Are different social languages mixed? How so?

What socially situated identities and activities do these social languages enact?

What Discourse or Discourses are involved? How is “stuff” other than language (“mind stuff” and “emotional stuff” and “word stuff” and “interactional stuff” and non-language symbol systems, etc.) relevant in indicating socially situated identities and activities?

In considering this language, what sorts of relationships among different Discourses are involved (institutionally, in society, or historically)? How are different Discourses aligned or in contention here?

What Conversations (public debates over issues or themes) are relevant to understanding this language and to what Conversations does it contribute (institutionally, in society, or historically), if any?

How does intertextuality work in the text, that is, in what ways does the text quote, allude to, or otherwise borrow words from other oral or written sources? What function does this serve in the text? (Gee, 2011a, p. 60).

Sub-questions for situated meaning include:

What situated meaning or meanings for a given word or phrase is it reasonable to attribute to their “author,” considering the point of view of the Discourse in which words were used (e.g., the Discourse of biology or the very different Discourse of fundamentalist creationism)?

What situated meaning or meanings for a given word or phrase is it reasonable to attribute to those who are listening to or reading these words or phrases, again considering the Discourse in which these words are used?

What situated meaning or meanings for a given word or phrase is it reasonable to attribute to those who are listening to or reading these words or phrases, from the point of view of *other* Discourses than the one in which the words were uttered or written? These other Discourses might be ones that bring different values, norms, perspectives, and assumptions to the situation. For example, what sorts of situated

meanings might a fundamentalist creationist give to a text in biology or a Native American to an American history text if they chose to interpret the text from the point of view of their own Discourse and not the one from which the text had originally been produced?

What situated meaning or meanings is it reasonable, from the point of view of the Discourse in which these words were used or of other Discourses, to assume are *potentially* attributable to these words by interpreters, whether or not we have evidence anyone actually activated that potential in the current case? (Gee, 2011a, p. 73).

Figured worlds as a tool of inquiry sub-questions include:

What figured worlds are relevant here? What must I, as an analyst, assume people feel, value, and believe, consciously or not, in order to talk (write), act, and/or interact this way?

Are there differences here between the figured worlds that are affecting espoused beliefs and those that are affecting actual actions and practices? What sorts of figured worlds, if any, are being used here to make value judgments about oneself or others?

How consistent are the relevant figured worlds here? Are there competing or conflicting figured worlds at play? Whose interests are the figured worlds representing?

What other figured worlds are related to the ones most active here? Are there “master figured worlds” at work?

What sorts of texts, media, experiences, interactions, and/or institutions could have given rise to these figured worlds?

How are the relevant figured worlds here helping to reproduce, transform, or create social, cultural, institutional, and/or political relationships? What Discourses and Conversations are these figured worlds helping to reproduce, transform, or create? (Gee, 2011a, p. 95-95).

APPENDIX B

Coded Notational Devices

In order to convey pace and tone of the conversational excerpts, the following conventions were applied:

- *Reading of text*: Where text is being read from a print source, such as a book, word wall, or chart, it is presented in italicized type.
- *Emphasis*: Where a word, syllable, or phoneme is spoken with extra emphasis, it is presented in boldfaced type.
- *Tone*: Where a phrase, word, syllable, or phoneme is spoken in a loud tone, such as shouting, it is presented in capital letters.
- *Simultaneous speech*: Where two people speak at once, the overlapping segments of their utterances are underlined.
- *Incompleteness*: Where an utterance is interrupted or left incomplete, it is indicated by a hyphen. The incompleteness could occur within phonemes of a word or at the end of the fully spoken word.
- *Pausing*: Pausing occurs between and within utterances. These pauses are indicated with a dot or series of dots, with each dot representing approximately one second of silence. Where a pause lasts for five seconds or longer, the information is stated in brackets (e.g., “[16 s]” would be a 16-second pause).



Preparing Literacy Specialists in Connecticut: Perceptions, Realities, and Policies (A Preview of the Research)

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Authors Note: CARR is currently conducting original research on Connecticut universities' preparation of literacy specialists. The following is an excerpt from the complete study that will be released in 2015.

The achievement gap. Poverty. Racial inequalities. New educational standards. Changing platforms for student assessments. The international race between American students and competing nations. For over four decades, U.S. policymakers have searched for effective tools to raise student achievement and ensure American competitiveness. What has research definitively established? Teacher quality is the single largest factor affecting student achievement (Boston Public Schools, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Jordan, Mendro, & Weerasinghe, 1997; Rowan, Correnti, & Miller, 2002; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Sanders, 2000; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997) with the strongest teacher qualification variable being an educator's state licensure – so significant in fact that after controlling for student factors, the achievement gap between Black and White students can almost entirely be explained by differences in teacher qualifications (Armour-

Thomas, et al., 1989; Ferguson, 1991; Fuller, 1999; Strauss & Sawyer, 1986).

What is universally accepted today is the understanding that educators have a profound effect on student achievement, and the programs they attend to develop this specialized skill set is critical to their effectiveness and ultimately . . . to the success of their students. As Connecticut continues to grapple with the largest achievement gap in the United States, the teaching and learning carried out in this state's classrooms demand instructional support focused on the needs of a diverse student population. The key support commonly comes in the form of literacy specialists (Dole, 2004; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Sykes, 1999) who, with an advanced degree in literacy possess more sophisticated skills than their classroom colleagues, devote their professional energies to academic support.

This recognition of the power of literacy specialists to influence learning outcomes informs this current study on preparation programs. The Connecticut Association for Reading Research will conduct qualitative research on the preparation programs for literacy specialists in Connecticut. Do literacy specialists perceive themselves as comprehensively trained to meet the onslaught of needs they face daily in the field? What are the views of school administrators? Classroom teachers? Importantly, what views do leaders of these preparation programs hold?

As the world around us catapults into a rapidly changing landscape of student needs, technological challenges, and international competition, this study seeks to inform literacy specialist preparation programs in Connecticut as to the perceived needs and successes of training as well as what the future may hold for the ways in which we ensure that those who specialize in literacy come to the field thoroughly prepared to meet the needs of students, classroom teachers, and administrators as they all work collaboratively to assure that Connecticut classrooms offer a world-class education.

In looking at today's preparation programs, an awareness of where we have come is essential to our understanding of what is in place as well as to an

impartial analysis of current practice. In these efforts, we begin with what the literature tells us about the significance of teacher preparation programs.

Importance of Teacher Preparation Programs

Since the formation of teacher education, there have been few instances when it has not been studied, evaluated, and reformed (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Wideen & Grimmer, 1995). So, perhaps, not surprisingly, teacher preparation programs have once again been thrust onto the national stage by policymakers intent on using them as a tool to transform the educational system in this country. On April 26, 2014, *The New York Times* reported that President Obama's administration was constructing a rating system for teacher preparation programs to ensure greater accountability for educators' performance in the classroom. The newspaper quoted Secretary of Education Arne Duncan as saying that:

We have about 1,400 schools of education and hundreds and hundreds of alternative certification paths, and nobody in this country can tell anyone which is more effective than the other . . . Often the vast majority of schools, when I talk to teachers, and have very candid conversations, they feel

they weren't well prepared. (p. A12)

Such an undertaking is incredibly controversial as many education experts believe that it isn't possible to link a preparation program to student achievement in schools, arguing that it isn't feasible or helpful to rate programs. Linda Darling-Hammond, a professor at Stanford and one of the nation's foremost experts on education, countered a more realistic rating system should be based on surveying graduates and their employers – as is illustrated in the current CARR study.

Despite its detractors, the federal government is moving forward with its efforts. What compelled such a decision can be viewed through two much-discussed, heavily-researched lenses – teacher influence on student achievement and education's role in global competitiveness.

Teacher Effects on Student Achievement

Since the well-publicized study by James Coleman discounting the importance of schools and teachers to affect substantial changes in student achievement, large-scale research has consistently demonstrated that teachers do, in fact, have profound power to influence student outcomes (Carey, 2004; Ferguson, 1991; Ferguson &

Ladd, 1996; Haycock, 1998; Jordan, Mendro, & Weerashinghe, 1997; Nye, Konstantopoulos, & Hedges, 2004; Odden, Borman, & Fermanich, 2004; Sanders, 2000; Sanders & Rivers, 1996) – particularly in the area of reading (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000). After reviewing the literature in 1997, Scheereens and Bosker posited that approximately 60% of variability in student performance stems from student factors, however, 20% relates back to the schools that students attend, and 20% links directly to individual teachers and classrooms. Thus, based on their appraisal of the existing research, schools and teachers can account for nearly half of the variation in student achievement -- a conviction echoed by the general public who voiced their opinion in a study in which 55% of respondents selected teacher quality as “the greatest influence on student learning” (National Education Association, 1999).

This research has been substantiated with numerous studies corroborating the link between teacher quality and student achievement (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2007; Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001; Perry, 2011). The inarguable power of educators to affect student outcomes has become a significant rationale for examining teacher preparation programs. The

perception that the education system plays a key role in the U.S. ability to compete globally is another significant factor.

Education's Role in Global Competiveness

In 1983, the U. S. Department of Education released the incendiary report, "A Nation at Risk" which spoke directly to teacher preparation programs and an evaluation of their effectiveness in training teachers.

The teacher preparation curriculum is weighted heavily with courses in "educational methods" at the expense of courses in subjects to be taught. A survey of 1,350 institutions training teachers indicated that 41 percent of the time of elementary school teacher candidates is spent in education courses, which reduces the amount of time available for subject matter courses. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, p. 20)

Interwoven throughout its findings, however, was a consistent link from educational outcomes to the ability of the United States to compete globally, beginning with these opening words: "Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by

competitors throughout the world" (p. 9).

This conviction has consistently been reiterated throughout research, academic texts, and popular media (Barro, 2013; Lauder, Brown, Dillabough, & Halsey, 2006; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2008; Sahlberg, 2006; The Role of Education in Global Competiveness, 2006; U. S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, 2010). Thus, the belief that our educational system has a causal link to our economic well-being pervades all aspects of American society and impacts the role of preparation programs.

Current Status of Teacher Preparation Programs

With over 1,400 teacher preparation programs, 200,000 candidates leave training programs annually and enter the teaching profession. Twenty-five years ago, veteran teachers had an average of 15 years of experience; today that number is down to just one year with studies finding between 23% to 50% of teachers typically leaving the field within five years (Keigher, 2010; Plash & Piotrowski, 2006). Of greater concern, Levine's seminal 2006 study revealed that three in five teachers feel that their teacher preparation program did not prepare them for the classroom. Their principals agreed.

In 2001, The U. S. Department of Education

commissioned a report to summarize research on teacher preparation programs. After reviewing over 300 research studies, only 57 adhered to the inclusion criteria for their meta-analysis. The report determined that multiple studies found a link between training in subject matter and higher student achievement, particularly in reading. Studies also revealed that some pedagogical training is beneficial. The report further found that “study after study shows that experienced and newly certified teachers alike see clinical experiences (including student teaching) as a powerful – sometimes the single most powerful – component of teacher preparation” (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001, p. 17) and discovered that teachers performed better on certification tests if they attended an institution approved by the national accrediting association.

Within the preparation programs, literacy professionals also gain a specialized skill set necessary to support classroom instruction. How have these professionals emerged as a critical aspect of schools and classrooms?

The Specialized Field of Literacy Professionals

Literacy professionals have been an integral component of instructional support since the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 which established federal funds for compensatory education in American schools. Within this model of *Title I* support, the literacy professional, more commonly known as the reading specialist, tended to work with struggling students and offered services in addition to classroom instruction, providing additional, targeted support with little attention to the needs of the classroom teacher. Despite the expense of providing literacy professionals, numerous studies reflected little evidence of continued student growth after they were returned to mainstream teachers (Allington & Walmsley, 1995). In 2000, Congress re-authorized the ESEA with three specific aspects directly influencing the role of the literacy professional: 1) highly-qualified professionals should be a requirement to teach reading, 2) reading programs and strategies should be scientifically-based, and 3) informal assessment should inform instruction.

Since 2003, the International Reading Association has recognized two distinct roles inherent in the role of literacy professionals – reading specialist and literacy coach (International Reading Association, 2004).

In this new role the reading specialist supports teachers in their daily work—planning, modeling, team-teaching, and

providing feedback on completed lessons in collaboration with classroom teachers in a school. In addition, the reading specialist assists teachers by helping them understand the assessment and instructional cycle and how that cycle can help them as they develop lessons and organize their classes for instruction. (Dole, 2004, p. 462)

In the most recent draft, the International Reading Association (2009) offers six standards for the reading professional:

- 1) foundational knowledge
- 2) curriculum and instruction
- 3) assessment and evaluation
- 4) diversity
- 5) literate environment
- 6) professional learning and leadership.

After consulting a number of reading coaches from the field, Dole (2004) suggested that reading professionals require several attributes in order to be effective. They must have a greater expertise than the classrooms teachers they support and be capable of articulating what they see taking place in classrooms. They must have extensive knowledge about how to teach – both in theory and in practice – and be reflective about their own instructional practice. Coaches must also be able to “support and nudge” their colleagues as they help them

improve their own practice.

How effective are literacy professionals in the field? Several studies have researched their impact on student achievement. In 2003, a study of the International Reading Association Exemplary Reading Program award-winning schools revealed that coaches act as change agents, providing instructional materials as well as a wide range of professional development support services, such as a: (1) resource to colleagues, (2) liaison between school and community, (3) coordinator of the school reading program, (4) contributor to assessment practices, and (5) instructor (Bean, Swan, & Knaub).

As the spotlight continues to highlight the work of literacy professionals, this current CARR study will be performing document analyses, conducting interviews, and holding focus groups as it seeks to provide a comprehensive review of how literacy professionals are prepared in Connecticut, the perceptions stakeholders maintain regarding their preparation, as well as the current and future policy ramifications of this research. The complete report will be released in late 2015.

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CARReader Book Review by Agnes Burns

Uncommon Core: Where the Authors of the Standards Go Wrong About Instruction and How You Can Get It Right

Authors: Michael W. Smith, Deborah Appleman, and Jeffrey D. Wilhelm

ISBN: 978-1-4833-3352-6

Publisher: Corwin Literacy

Audience: Educators, Administrators, and Curriculum Specialists at the Secondary Level

Educators are familiar with the confusion and controversies that have surrounded the Common Core State Standards. Many have weighed in and offered opinions that have left educators, parents, and stakeholders wondering what direction to take. In their book, *Uncommon Core: Where the Authors of the Standards Go Wrong About Instruction and How You Can Get It Right*, Michael Smith, Deborah Appleman, and Jeffrey Wilhelm offer some guidance about how the English Language Arts standards can be implemented faithfully using what are considered research-based, best practices. By means of introducing their recommendations, they offer a look into the development of the standards, some of the positive aspects and breakdown misconceptions regarding instructional practices. Most of all, they offer teachers a path to follow that is clearly marked by research

on what works for students.

The authors describe several favorable aspects of the standards including that for the first time all states can have common understandings of what needs to be taught at each level and can share resources. The standards provide teachers the freedom to choose resources and materials, which combined with the fact that there are fewer standards allow educators to teach more deeply. Covering content is no longer a sprint, but a marathon. And finally, all our children can learn from instructional practices that inspire them while providing a true purpose.

However, they also, as the title suggests, provide some insight into the negatives that have been voiced. For example, we have heard the controversy over how much time or what percentage of

instruction should be allocated to nonfiction versus fiction. This has caused quite a national discussion. If some teachers believe that there is a prescribed amount of time that is best for teaching fiction, then those teachers might miss opportunities to engage, motivate, and teach students to appreciate literature and the joy of reading for pleasure.

Misconceptions surrounding teaching one text and not connecting across texts or teaching strategically across texts, can deprive students of expanding their knowledge and learning how to think analytically and problem solve independently. Misconceptions can plague instruction if educators are not well informed. All students deserve the kind of instruction that will prepare them for the future and literacy educators can rely on Smith, Appleman, and Wilhelm's guidance in this well-laid out book.

Smith, Appleman, and Wilhelm devote each chapter to describing a misconception as well as how describing how teachers can implement the standards, but in a meaningful way. One chapter addresses the critical importance of background knowledge. Many educators have seen David Coleman's demonstration of close reading using Martin Luther

King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail" done on the Engage NY website. In referring to Coleman's description of pre-reading, the author's state, "His is an impoverished and gross misrepresentation and underrepresentation of good teaching." (p. 39) Following this harsh statement, the authors argue their case for the importance of background knowledge by using a sports analogy of practicing before the "big" game and not just showing up hoping for a win. Five possible strategies with specific guidelines for implementation follow along with a research base. Throughout the book, Smith, Appleman, and Wilhelm refer to David Coleman's video of teaching "Letter From Birmingham Jail" as their basis for explaining misunderstandings and how classroom teachers can plan instruction that reflects the expectations of the Common Core. Coleman advocates for teaching the three paragraphs of *The Gettysburg Address* over six days! He breaks the instruction down by following each paragraph with text-dependent questions that don't correlate with the rigorous expectations set forth in the standards. Smith, Appleman, and Wilhelm rescue their readers with a hefty dose of what research tells us are effective practices that guide us to notice information in any text

and offer ways to instruct students to create their own questions!

The book culminates with the authors' revised unit for teaching "Letter From Birmingham Jail." The planning and materials are described in detail along with why these ideas will work. This unit exemplifies what should be happening in classrooms across the United States. The activities are aligned with the Common Core State Standards and illustrate instruction that is appealing to all students and prepares them for a literate life in which they can understand, appreciate, analyze, and communicate with friends and colleagues.



*CARReader Book Review by
Adrienne Chasteen Snow*

*Title of Book: Quantity and Quality: Increasing
the Volume and Complexity of Students' Reading*

Author: Sandra Wilde

ISBN: 978-0-325-04796-6

Publisher: Heinemann

**Audience: K-12 Classroom Teachers and Reading/Literacy Specialists,
Coaches, and Consultant**

Protected time for reading and literacy instruction is a norm in most public elementary schools. Language Arts has traditionally gotten much of the focus in professional development for educators. With the Common Core making more than half of the standards (Foundational, regular, and secondary subject-specific Literacy) English Language Arts, Reading continues to be at the forefront of research and focus for best practices. In her book, *Quantity and Quality: Increasing the Volume and Complexity of Students' Reading*; Sandra Wilde takes a good, hard look at Reading as a practice and as a subject area. She argues that the reading that our students do needs to not just be bookended by tried-and-true pedagogy and implications from the latest research, but needs to be authentic and of a true rationale, heavy in both quantity and quality.

She begins with 6 core principles that she says enable her main premise

that reading must be the main activity in our Reading/English/Language Arts classes. The principles from the first page of the first chapter are:

1. Everyone reads a lot, including setting personal goals, as described below.
2. Everyone reads widely: fiction and information, different genres, topics, and styles. You can also read narrowly or deeply if you want; all of the *Twilight* books in a row, everything you can find on spiders.
3. Everyone grows as a reader. The goal each year is to read more challenging books over the course of the year than those you read at the beginning. The reader chooses the books, but the teacher mentors.
4. There's time for reading during the school day. The

amount will vary depending on circumstances, but reading needs to be a part of school, not just a hobby.

5. Teachers help kids be smarter readers. This includes literal and informational understanding, and also literary appreciation. There needs to be plenty of teaching, in individual conferences and in lessons and conversations for small groups and the whole class.
6. Everyone keeps a record of books read. Readers need to monitor and document the extent of their reading.

While none of these ideas are particularly revolutionary, Wilde argues that the precepts are non-negotiable if our children are to become the type of readers that our world demands they be if they are to succeed. Wilde expressed gratitude to other writers and let the reader know that many of the ideas in the book come from the notable research and positions on education held by so many in academia. Stephen D. Krashen's book, *Power of Reading* (2004) provides support for Wilde's basic tenants that we read more and more as we grow and that those readings need to increase in complexity over time because if we do, then we will have a group of better writers, speakers, learners, thinkers,

and humanitarians. On paper, we will also have adept test-takers who are able to demonstrate comprehension through their own metacognition. The future is rosy for our students if we can help them find their way to literacy and informational text!

Wilde speaks to teachers in a smart and friendly tone, showing respect for their profession and always remembering that the children are the reason why they are teachers. She makes a point to use her knowledge of curriculum and instruction in the latter half of her text when she focuses on "What to Teach". Wilde makes it known that a room full of students who are reading is not enough; the teacher must also consider what information to bring to her students in a most serious manner. Wilde's perspective is very child-centered and does not advocate following a script blindly or teaching lessons on subjects students have already mastered. Instead she believes in using information gained through the process of conferring and bringing students to knowledge through discovery and a Constructivist approach.

One of her chapters is titled "Special Cases: Beginning Readers, English Language Learners, Struggling Readers, Reluctant Readers". In this chapter Wilde addresses many of the exceptions to the rule. She is sensitive to the differing journeys of students and shares strategies for scaffolding.

She also shares three research studies that demonstrate the powerful connection between the role of culture and literacy. Understanding these correlations, teachers can be sensitive as they challenge all students in their charge to grow.

The book has many statistics, facts, and figures that support Wilde's message. However, when looking for a common-sense justification for her rationale, her straightforward words do it best, "Reading, a lot of it, has got to be the center of our reading curriculum, just like cooking is at the center of cooking school. Everything else that goes on must be in support of readers spending time constructing meaning from the books they read. Reading itself develops not only reading ability but the knowledge that comes from reading and the habits that support a lifetime of reading" (p. 13).

CARR Goals

Professional Development

To enhance and improve the professional development of reading and language arts educators in Connecticut

Advocacy

To provide leadership in support of research, policy, and practice that improves reading instruction and supports the best interests of all learners and reading professionals

Partnerships

To form partnerships with other organizations including universities and local agencies that share our goal of promoting literacy

Research

To encourage and support research at all levels of reading and language arts education to promote informed decision making by reading professionals, policy makers, and the public

Global Literacy Development

To identify and support leadership and significant state, national, and international issues

Ten Top Reasons to Become a Member of Connecticut Association for Reading Research

- Be a Member of the Country's Only Research Special Interest Council
- Become an Advocate for Literacy promoting best practice and cutting edge, scientifically based research
 - Be Eligible for Research Grants to improve instruction and student achievement
- Read the peer-reviewed research based *CARReader* in order to support best practice and improve student achievement
- Receive Legislative Updates on Literacy
- Support Cutting Edge Research in Connecticut
- Experience the Fall Session With the IRA President or IRA Board Member
- Engage in a State-Wide Networking System
- Access National Speakers regarding a variety of aspects of Literacy
- Attend the Spring Research Breakfast Symposium celebrating the current CARR Literacy research