Discourse/Narrative Analysis/Cultural Difference


Analyzes discourse regarding university students' perceptions of their communication competence. Finds that three conceptions prevail: communication competence as quality of performance, as varying from purely physical to purely intellectual, and as a form of sociality. Argues that discourse analysis can be useful to studies of communication competence.


Examines differences in discourse and argumentation between men and women from different educational levels who participated in group discussions. Finds that the major differences are related to educational level. As the educational level of the participants increases, their discourse becomes more general or abstract, and differences in the generality of discourse between men and women become apparent.


Analyzes the historical writing of 38 secondary school students (16-18 years old) to examine how successful students use grammar and vocabulary for building causal explanations. Finds that learning to construct a historical account (instead of simply recording past events) marks a turning point in students' progression through secondary school.

Investigates the affective experiences of college students in classroom discussions using observation, self-reports, interviews, and formal assessments. Proposes a model of affect with four main components: attending, listening, talking, and tuning out. Finds that affect is a critical part of students' experience, acting as a catalyst of students' thinking and actions. Suggests that tuning out during discussions is a useful, even necessary response, allowing students to regulate their emotions.


Explores the mediating role of classroom discourse in the development of understanding in the multiethnic classroom. Presents and analyzes discourse episodes from a Norwegian 3rd grade classroom, illustrating various misunderstandings. Shows the discrepancy between teachers' implicit sense of what is "common knowledge" and minority pupils' lack of background knowledge, which impedes joint meaning construction. Argues that disparities in understanding are not to be avoided, but should be viewed as generators of new understandings.


Explores the shifting participation and identity construction of two disadvantaged, African American boys in literature discussion groups in a third-grade classroom. Finds that the boys' participation was influenced by the skills they did or did not possess, their relationships with the teacher and other students, and the degree of choice in the task. The literature discussions offered opportunities for the boys to participate in more active ways.


Examines the effect of various goal instructions on undergraduates' reasoning during Web-based discussions. Finds that the specific goal to "generate as many reasons as possible" results in deeper arguments, whereas the general goal to "persuade" results in more opposition and debate. Suggests that students' argumentation can be improved by adding the right goal instructions to a discussion question.


Analyzes the ideological content and the social organization of eighth-grade students' informal talk as a pre-writing activity in a language-arts classroom. Finds that the socially powerful students are less supportive, and more often challenge and confront the others. Students' writings reflect the complexity of the social and ideological negotiations in their informal talk or brainstorming session.
Other Related Research:


Literacy


Compares two literacy programs for three- to five-year-old preschoolers in Israel; one focused on storybook reading and one on writing. Seventy-one preschoolers participated, with an additional 24 serving as the control group. Finds that children in both programs progressed more than the control group in phonological and orthographic awareness, with the writing group outperforming the reading group.


Examines the strategies of very young children to assert power in socio-narrative activity. Focuses on the spontaneous storytelling of three children in a preschool classroom. Finds that the children used various combinations of color, size, and placement of drawings, but also written language, gestures, and silence. At the same time, they played out real-world relationships.


Examines the developmental significance of family involvement in the child’s education for the literacy achievement of low-income children. Follows 167 children from kindergarten through fifth grade, finding that family involvement and maternal education had a joint effect on children's attitudes about literacy and their literacy achievement; higher levels of involvement were associated with more positive attitudes and higher levels of literacy performance.


Examines the effects of a 20-week intervention program for five-year-old new-entrant students from Maori and Pacific-Island cultural backgrounds in New Zealand, using older students in the same classrooms as the comparison group. The intervention involved focused instructional dialogue between the student and teacher when misunderstandings occurred in structured beginning reading and writing tasks. Finds that intervention children had significantly higher scores on all literacy and language measures. Also finds a dramatic reduction of “risk” for literacy-instruction failure in the intervention group. Concludes that achievement gaps are neither necessary nor immutable when addressed early on with culturally supportive practices.


Examines changes in attitudes towards reading among more than 2,000 elementary school students (years 4 and 6) in the United Kingdom. Finds that enjoyment of reading decreased over a five-year period from 1998 to 2003, while confidence as readers increased over the same period. Suggests that changes could be related to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.

Examines whether children who fail reading in first grade are capable of improvement beyond that point, and which literacy and behavioral skills may predict improvement. Follows the progress of 146 low-income children from first to fourth grade. Finds that 30 percent of the children showed steady improvement. Children who displayed a relative strength in certain literacy skills in kindergarten (phonological awareness, oral language, print knowledge, letter-word identification) were more likely to show improvement after initial reading difficulty.

**Other Related Research:**


Literary Response/Literature


Examines literary reading strategies and their meanings in terms of coping with daily life and a person’s past. Six adult readers, who had purchased the same novel, were interviewed before, during, and after reading the novel. About 1000 German novel readers were interviewed about their reading practices. Finds that different readers prefer different strategies for dealing with a
literary text. Most strategies appear to be polyfunctional, serving different purposes for the reader. Gender and sociocultural background are important determinants of the strategies used.

Examines hedonic odor and its effect on literary processing. Undergraduate students read literary passages about positive or negative subject matter, while smelling pleasant and unpleasant odors. Finds that odor affects the reading process, and that a positive subject matter combined with pleasant odor evokes the most images and feelings. Passages with negative subject matter are not readily affected by the hedonic odor context.

Analyzes the written responses of eighth graders to multicultural literature. Finds that although students like the novels, their perceptions reflect their own dominant culture. When the text world conflicts with their personal views, students either reject the text material or reshape it, resulting in inconsistencies and illogical conclusions.

Examines the effects of think-and-feel-aloud instruction on eleventh-graders' orientation to poetry. In the experimental condition, students learned to verbalize their own thoughts and feelings aloud, whereas the control group received regular instruction in literary analysis. Finds that the experimental group showed greater interest in poetry, wrote longer essays about poems, participated more frequently in classroom discussions, and asked higher level questions than the control group.

Explores what happens when a culturally diverse class of 16 ninth-grade students, ranging in age from 14-18 and in English proficiency, talk about texts that represent cultures different from their own, how different types of students participate in the discussions, and whether or not the talk about text leads to greater cultural understanding. Demonstrates that while students were learning to respect and understand other cultures, those from mainstream middle-class white cultures found it more difficult to relate to a text about Native Americans than did students of various other backgrounds, none of whom were Native American.

Examines the fluctuating participation of two African American boys in their third-grade literature discussion groups. Explores the constraints posed by typical literary events as well as the ways that the teacher tried to ease those constraints for the two case participants. After looking closely at the two boys' shifting participation across literacy events, explains their behavior in these events and in literature discussion groups in terms of social-constructivist and poststructuralist notions of the dynamic nature of identity. Rather than examining the boys' literary understanding, identifies conditions that allow or hinder the boys' participation, and discusses how the teacher's mediation offered the boys the opportunity to gain cultural capital.
through their participation in literature groups, capital that enabled them to alter their “struggling reader” identities in the classroom.


Documents how one fourth-grade girl who struggled with reading fluctuated among four roles in her literature discussion group: an outsider, a member who needed a great deal of support, a capable peer with help from others, and a peer who influenced the groups’ understanding in important ways. Describes how the fluid contexts of literature discussion groups influenced the student’s status and role in the group and questions the description and labeling of students as struggling readers, suggesting instead that all students have something to offer to their literature discussion groups if the conditions are supportive.


Compares undergraduates’ responses to three different popular texts, finding that changes in their beliefs, interest, and knowledge are influenced by reader differences in beliefs, interest, and knowledge, as well as text differences.


Examines how two literature teachers try to bridge the gap between their students’ perceptions and beliefs and the remote “historical horizons of expectations” of the text in classroom discussions. Finds that the teachers were not aware of the role of historical background in the process of interpreting canonical texts. Argues that knowledge of Jauss’ theory of reception and the concept “horizons of expectations” could help teachers to deal with students’ responses more effectively.


Describes two experimental projects based on networked collaborative learning: StoryBase, a history project, and Words in Jeans, aimed at promoting literature and fostering collaborative poetry and story writing. The projects were intended for twelve- to thirteen-year-old students of lower-secondary schools in Italy. Suggests that the benefits went beyond mere learning of content. Both projects appear to contribute to students’ technological education, co-operation, reasoning, and writing skills.


Examines longitudinal changes in reading attitude and reading behavior among Dutch secondary school students (grades 7-11). Finds that attitude scores and reading behavior diminish with age, although girls and students from culturally sophisticated home environments show less decline. Suggests that reader response approaches are most beneficial for fostering a positive attitude towards reading adolescent fiction.
Other Related Bibliography:


Green, M. C. (2004). Transportation into narrative worlds: The role of prior knowledge and perceived realism. Discourse Processes, 38, 247-267.


**Professional Development/Teacher Education**


Examines tensions involved in sustaining a complex teacher-research network related to the development of teacher knowledge and identity and its relationship to institutional structures and social contexts. Established groups of teacher-researchers from different parts of the United States were drawn together into the Practitioner or Teacher Researchers as Inquiring Travelers (PorTRAIT) meta-network where pairs of teacher-researchers from disparate teaching contexts carried out collaborative research projects. Cross-site visitations, e-mail exchanges, and network conferences supported the researchers in carrying out their research. Finds that the theoretical perspective of figured worlds operates powerfully here through the detailed analysis of how three pairs of teachers negotiated their collaborative research.


Studies the reported experiences regarding teacher leadership and organizational development of four teachers as members of the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL). Examines the full range of consequences when a teacher publicly participates in teaching through reflection, research, and collaboration on school change and colleagues. The importance of teachers as public intellectuals grounds the discussion of credibility and influence. Finds that issues of identity, teacher community, and the role of institutional power are highly relevant in the current political context of public education.


Conducts a three-year ethnography of communication of four teacher-researchers in terms of the interplay of identity, profession, and research. Demonstrates how engaging in teacher research is a process first of becoming a teacher-researcher, then of collaboratively developing ways to support inquiry, and, finally, of mediating learning. Highlights the key role of posing "refractive" questions as contributing to teacher reflection and study groups.


Examines the roles four supervising teachers assumed in relating to preservice teachers in a school-based practicum in New Zealand. In contrast to evaluative or social roles described in the literature as critical, these case studies demonstrate how conveying instructional practice
through modeling and planning dominated the day-to-day enactment of the mentoring relationship. Draws implications for developing relationships between university and school-based teacher educators and fostering discussions of supervising teachers’ multiple roles.


Examines ways of integrating teacher inquiry into teacher education programs through use of focus group discussions with teacher candidates to determine how they approach their work from a questioning stance. Finds that while preservice teachers regarded the inquiry process as beneficial, they also report tensions between a need to strengthen their emerging understanding of teaching and the ambiguous findings of their inquiries, between their institutionally-defined roles and their role as researchers of practice.


Investigates the effects of a school-based reform effort over two years in 13 high-poverty schools. Components of the framework for change included professional development and school-wide leadership activities aimed at improving reading instruction. Finds higher-level questioning to be positively related to students’ reading growth, while the practice of rote-comprehension skills is negatively related. Also finds that coaching interactions with students have a positive relationship with their writing growth. Evaluates schools as high- or low-reform implementers, and finds that growth in effective teaching techniques as well as student achievement are related to degree of reform implementation. Suggests that successful reform efforts are focused and long-term, connected to site needs, research-based, supported by strong leadership, and characterized by professional perseverance.

Other Related Research:


**Reading**


Explores an unexpected finding from a larger study examining the effects of district and school organization on teacher induction. Uses a mixed-methods design to study the influence of state policy, local conditions, and teachers’ beliefs and practices on their socialization into literacy teaching practices. Finds a “multilayered system” that appears to result in the tracking of new teachers. Suggests that this tracking reproduces inequities contributing to the achievement gap in literacy.


Examines the relationship between students’ mastery of reading strategies and their reading comprehension, in-depth information processing, and attitudes towards reading. Subjects were 15-year-old students in Dutch secondary education (n = 144). Finds a strong relationship between reading strategies and reading comprehension. A relationship between mastery of reading strategies and preference for self-regulation or in-depth processing could not be demonstrated.


Evaluates an individualized tutoring program for struggling readers in the second and third grades, as well as the effectiveness of supervised paraprofessionals in delivering such a tutorial. Uses a quasi-experimental, matched-pairs design in a treatment and comparison condition. Finds that the tutored group outperformed the comparison group on each of the posttest measures, and that trained and supervised paraprofessionals were nearly as effective as licensed teachers in producing these results. Outlines the specific and crucial roles of the school-based tutoring supervisor.


Uses a cross-case, historical design to study responses of teachers in two California elementary schools to state reading policy. Analyzes teachers’ connections to policy messages in terms of mechanism (how they learned), content (what they learned), and intensity (their level of engagement); considers both the formal policy system and nonsystem actors. Finds that messages from nonsystem actors were more influential for teachers’ classroom practices. Notes the importance of attending to the broader social and cultural environment surrounding the formal policy system.

Examines the effects of language arts instruction and students' beginning-of-the-year language and reading competency on third-grade children's comprehension skills. Conceptualizes classroom instruction along four dimensions: explicit vs. implicit, teacher managed vs. child managed, word-level vs. higher-level, and change over time. Data were collected through observations and analyzed using hierarchical linear modeling. Finds that the effect of instruction depended on fall comprehension scores. Suggests that instruction should be based on individual strengths and weaknesses in order to be effective.

Gilbert, R., Martinez, G., & Vilm-aroca, E. (2005). Some good texts are always better: Text revision to foster inferences of readers with high and low prior background knowledge. *Learning and Instruction*, 15, 45-68.

Tests the effectiveness of two types of text features fostering the reader's active processing, benefiting both high- and low-knowledge junior high school readers as well as undergraduate readers. Types of revision were a) augmenting the argument overlap between text sentences, and b) improving the causal explanatory connections. Results show that argument overlap is very positive for recall, but less for deep comprehension. Discusses the types of revision that stimulate readers to elaborate on texts.


Compares the extent to which CORI—Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction, a combination of motivation support and strategy instruction—differs from SI (explicit cognitive strategy instruction) and TI (traditional instruction) in influencing reading comprehension. Explores how CORI differs from SI in influencing reading motivation with third-grade students. The CORI model was implemented for 90 minutes each day for 12 weeks; assessments of reading comprehension, strategy use, and reading motivation were conducted in pre- and post-test formats. Finds that students in CORI classrooms scored higher on measures of reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading strategies.


Uses ethnographic research over a two-year period to document the school experiences for poor children in a first-grade classroom, including what happens when students face social-class differences in the classroom and how this impacts the ways they engage in literacy events. Analyzes read-aloud and writing-workshop classroom activities to demonstrate how disparate social-class experiences shape literacy practices and how teachers of poor children may respond to topics of poverty. Finds that some students may take on the perceived classroom values of the teacher in a way that further silences these children and their peers. Suggests the importance of the use of class-specific topics to validate and value students' lives and to connect the out-of-school experiences of youth to classroom activities.

Studies one teacher's qualitative investigation of critical literacy in her first-grade classroom as part of a grant-funded professional-development project. Analyzes how the teacher worked to help students make personal connections to stories that address topics such as homelessness, racism, and war. Finds that students made stronger connections to these books as compared to "happy books" usually read in the classroom, and that their awareness of social issues showed considerable growth. Indicates that this learning occurs when educators involve learners in deeper processes of critique and analysis of texts. Notes that students put more effort into their written and artistic responses, took up multiple perspectives, and made intertextual connections when reacting to these books.


Examines the effects of two strategic approaches to reading comprehension taught to fifth-grade students. Uses the two approaches with expository texts—RQT: Cooperative ReQuest, and TWA: Think before reading, think while reading and think after reading. TWA instruction was followed by explicitly taught self-regulated strategy-development instructional procedures. Finds that students taught with TWA improved significantly on five oral-reading comprehension measures. Indicates no significant differences between groups on three written-comprehension measures, self-efficacy, or motivation.


Examines the effects of providing reading-strategy instruction to improve self-explanation (i.e., explaining the meaning of information to oneself during reading). In the SERT condition, participants received strategy instruction and self-explanation practice with science texts. In the control condition, participants read aloud the science texts. Finds that SERT has beneficial effects for participants with low domain knowledge.


Tests three hypotheses regarding the effects of social relationships, positive interdependence, and teacher structure on partner reading of second graders. Data were obtained from observations and standardized test scores. Hypotheses were tested using regression, ANOVA, or a non-parametric approach, depending on the variables involved. Finds that children who chose their own partners showed higher levels of social cooperation, but the pair should have both the need for and the ability to provide the assistance. Finds that a basic level of instruction on paired reading is more effective than a highly elaborated one. Confirms that partner reading is an effective instructional strategy.


Examines the prominence of actors in the national reading policy elite network, their activity related to Reading First, and the interaction among these actors; also investigates the roles and
actions of the inside elite that led to the passage of Reading First. Extends research from a larger study on reading policy at national and state levels. Uses social-network analysis methods to analyze data from structured interviews and archival documents. Finds that a small group of policy makers not viewed as highly prominent controlled the writing and enactment of Reading First, while other more prominent actors such as IRA and NEA had little influence.


Uses case-study research to detail the nature of two expert teachers' effective scaffolded instruction with first-grade students experiencing difficulty learning to read. Analyzes one-to-one tutoring intervention, over a 12-week period, focusing on the teachers' and students' participation and interactions. Uses analyses of audio and videotaped lessons and teacher reflections to document the nature of effective instruction. Finds that effective teachers respond to students' growing and changing literacy competencies through ongoing problem-solving cycles. Teachers' interactions during cycles of interaction were categorized according to the kind of help and the level of help offered at particular moments during lessons.


Reports on a two-year project that stressed fluency development in 14 second-grade classrooms. Components included repeated reading, partner reading, choice reading, and a home-reading program; lessons were comprehension-oriented, focused on increased time spent in engaged reading both at home and in school, and comprised of materials geared to students' instructional reading levels. Finds that in all classes, students made significantly greater-than-expected growth in reading achievement, even students who came into the program below grade level. Posits additional findings related to partner selection and level of reading materials chosen, and their impact on students' reading growth.

Veenman, M. V. J., & Beemelzun, J. J. (2004). Intellectual and metacognitive skills of novices while studying texts under conditions of text difficulty and time constraint. Learning and Instruction, 14, 621-640.

Tests the relation between intelligence and metacognitive skill as predictors of learning from text in undergraduate social sciences students. Results from think-aloud protocols show that metacognition, although correlated with intelligence, also uniquely contributed to comprehension. Suggests that teaching metacognitive skills, under certain conditions, may result in better text-studying behavior.


Examines the effects of an analogy-based phonics program taught by 15 second-grade teachers to low and normally achieving students. Lessons were sequenced and included teacher modeling and guided practice in using analogy strategies in addition to coaching during reading. The program was used in the context of a comprehension-focused reading program. Uses hierarchical linear modeling to analyze results from standardized tests. Finds significant positive relationships between number of lessons completed and students' gains on word reading and reading comprehension.

**Other Related Research:**


Second Language Literacy


Examines the connections among bilingualism and success on early-literacy tasks in both languages for bilingual Chinese-English, Spanish-English, and Hebrew-English first-grade students, as well as in English for a group of monolingual English speakers. Focuses on the effect of bilingualism on children's early progress in reading, and whether that effect varies depending on the specific languages and writing systems. Controls for initial differences among groups such as age and verbal memory. Finds that bilingualism in general contributes to children's early literacy acquisition, and that the transfer of reading principles is enhanced when the two languages use the same writing system.


Analyzes how school reforms (i.e., grouping students into multi-age classrooms, integrating English language learners into classrooms taught by elementary teachers with ESL credentials, using a project-based approach, fostering a culture that respects differences and supports students' use of their home language) play out in a Hmong-English third-grade classroom. Data come from a qualitative two-year study of the microtextual practices of English language learners and their teachers in the context of school reform. Example shows how a Hmong child elicited help on her essay from a classmate who took on the role of friend, student, and teacher. Such collaboration seemed to support younger, less English-proficient students in acquiring academic literacies in English, but may not have met the academic needs of their collaborators. Reforms also fostered opportunities to display multilingual and multicultural identities and appropriate academic uses of English.


Argues that sociocultural theories and academic literacies must be present in classrooms to facilitate understandings of the language and literacy development of children. Studied two kindergartners as they demonstrated their work with academic literacies and social interactions. Data included home visits, interviews, observation protocols, and sociograms. Data showed that agency and cultural capital are key components in accessing academics. Asserts that research should prioritize the importance of children's histories, resources, and understandings, and that teachers should move from designing lessons to designing ecologies.

Describes faulty assumptions made in relation to the creation and use of parallel assessments: standardized achievement tests developed in the native language of English-language learners that intend to emulate the content of the same achievement tests for native English speakers. Demonstrates how these tests, originally designed for accountability, have been used for multiple other purposes. Examples show that although the texts for these tests were originally written for native Spanish speakers, diverse dialects were standardized. Explains how the dialectical differences can be especially pronounced in the young grades as children work to develop their vocabularies. Recommends that professionals dedicated to bilingual students create standards and that the assessments used consider the program type—English-only, transitional bilingual, dual language immersion—in addition to the linguistic variation in communities.


Describes a case study of 14-year-old Mei, a sixth grader originally from China, who failed to learn to read after several years in a U.S. public school. Data included researcher’s field notes; interviews with teachers, principal, parents, and the student; classroom instructional texts; and informal reading inventory results. Found that instructional methods, materials, and assessments did not adequately address and support Mei’s reading development. School personnel did not communicate with each other and felt unprepared to provide effective reading instruction to English learners. Recommends increased professional development for preservice and inservice teachers, varying teaching strategies for English language learners, the use of diverse and age-appropriate reading materials, and ongoing formal and informal assessments to design appropriate instructional programs.


Describes the educational experiences of two Central American immigrant women as they engaged in ESL- and family-literacy programs in San Francisco. Used life-history interviews and classroom observations to contextualize learners’ second-language and literacy development within the larger sociopolitical context and to uncover intergenerational trajectories of education, immigration, and bilingualism. Illustrates role of immigration policies, employment trends, and parents’ messages about education on language/literacy development. Argues that sociocontextual issues that adult language learners face should be incorporated into the curriculum through a problem-posing approach to instruction.


Describes ways teachers can use information from writing samples in Spanish and English to informally assess students and plan meaningful instruction. Data included writing samples from more than 100 young Spanish-English bilinguals. Compared writing samples with the developmental levels for monolingual English-speaking children and developmental levels for monolingual Spanish-speaking children. Demonstrated the children’s growing understanding of similarities and differences between Spanish and English. Encourages teachers to emphasize meaning in both languages. Summarizes the article with nine important recommendations for monolingual and bilingual children.
Other Related Research:


Technology/Media


Examines the efficacy of electronic books in fostering kindergarten children's emergent story understanding. The study compared effects of children's independent reading of stories electronically with effects of printed books read aloud by adults. Participants were 18 four- to five-year-old Dutch kindergarten children in the initial stages of developing story comprehension beyond just responding to pictures. Electronic reading produced experiences and effects similar to adult-read printed books. Children frequently interacted with the animations often embedded in electronic stories, but there was no evidence that the animations distracted children from listening to the text presented by electronic books, nor that the animations interfered with story understanding. Findings suggest that children at this stage of development profit from electronic books at least when electronic books are read in a context where adults also read books to children.


Analyzes Brazilian adolescents' uses of hip-hop cultural texts in a correctional facility program designed to develop their sense of agency and challenge status-quo political systems. Documents the influence and ultimate demise of the program due to political repercussions of the critical use of hip-hop as a cultural tool.


Analyzes examples of the production of digital multimodal texts in terms of the semiotic, hypertextual linking and kinds of learning that occur in combining different texts. Argues that the process of constructing these links itself contributes to learning reflexive and rhetorical practices.

Conducts an autoethnographic analysis of the author’s instruction in his media-and-society college classes. Examines how his use of himself as a “text”—as an African American responding to portrayals of multiple forms of racism in media texts—serves to foster interrogation of authority related to race, class, and gender differences. Documents changes in his students’ critical responses to popular-culture texts to illustrate the influence of his teaching methods.


Samples 2,000 third-through-twelfth graders who completed questionnaires, 700 of whom kept media diaries. Participants average up to 6 hours, 30 minutes a day in some media-related activity: watching TV, 3.04 hours a day; listening to the radio, 55 minutes; listening to CDs, tapes, or MP3s, 49 minutes; and 48 minutes on the Internet. Forty percent indicate that their parents are aware of what they are viewing. Heavy TV viewers do not necessarily read less than other young people; heavy game users actually read more than those who play fewer games. Eighty-five percent listen to music on a daily basis, devoting an average of 1 hour and 44 minutes a day listening to CDs, tapes, the radio, or music on the Internet. Eighty percent of young people have one or more video game consoles; they average 50 minutes a day playing video games, with those between the ages of eight and ten averaging 1 hour, 5 minutes a day, and young males averaging 1 hour, 30 minutes a day. The amount of time devoted to multitasking use of more than one medium increased by 10% compared to five years ago; about 40% are engaged in other tasks when they are viewing, including 28% who often go online to access material related to their viewing.


Explores the impact of CD-ROM storybook features on the reading behaviors of six- and seven-year-old students with limited exposure to CD-ROM storybooks. Six categories of behaviors were identified: tracking, electronic-feature dependency, distractibility, spectator stance, electronic-feature limitations, and electronic features as tools. Results from this study indicate advantages and disadvantages of the features found in this electronic text medium. One of the most intriguing examples of advantageous use is the ability of CD-ROM storybooks to set a mood and context for a story in a highly appealing manner. They can also support struggling readers’ initial attempts at unfamiliar vocabulary. However, there are also elements of CD-ROM storybooks that merit caution—their potential, for instance, to promote passivity, putting readers into a sort of “spectator stance” in which they let the computer do the “work” of reading rather than becoming actively engaged in the reading process. Implications from this study suggest that an awareness of the benefits and limitations of CD-ROM storybooks can ensure that their use in classroom instruction provides maximum reader support without building reader dependency.


Reports on the first year of a three-year study investigating the reading and writing of e-literature (also known as “hyperfiction” or “literary hypertext”). Specifically, the researchers used
two forms of hypertext software—wikis and Storyspace—with 12 undergraduate students whose declared major or minor was secondary (middle or high school) English education. Participants read examples of published e-literature and created their own hyperfiction using wikis. The authors also participated by creating their own hyperfictions. In this article, data from one of the author's writing journals are compared with reading responses of the 12 participants. The data show that the author and undergraduate students had difficulty creating meaning in e-literature since, as writers and readers, they had to come to understand such a process from their familiarity with print and narrative. Rather than relying on a chain of metonymies that connected and developed the overall metaphor of the story, they had to think of chains of metonymies that offered a less cohesive sense of story. The findings suggest that new skills for working with e-literature will need to be developed and taught, particularly for those readers and writers whose experiences have been primarily with print.


Conducts a two-year ethnographic study of urban high school students' participation in a program involving critical analysis and production of popular culture related to their own lives. Through participation in this program, students acquire critical literacies that improve their school performance, enhance their critical literacies, and improve their access to college. Suggests that students' engagement in critical education practices around popular culture leads to improved academic performance.


Uses 20 life-history case studies based on six years of data collection to trace the evolution of technology literacies over the past few decades. Finds that variation in the acquisition of technology literacies are influenced by a range of factors associated with historical period, political and educational events, beliefs and attitudes, and instructional experiences.


Studies eight 12-year-olds' computer uses in two California school districts over four years. Documents the difficult challenges of computer instruction, the aggressive marketing of computers to schools based on false claims, and the commodification of Internet content for children. Proposes alternative ways of incorporating computer instruction into schools.

Other Related Research:


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Writing


Examines differences in ideas of and responses to text among a teacher and four Latin-American women in a family-literacy class. Whereas the teacher's focus was on revising textual elements, learners used text to explore and negotiate maternal practices. Emphasizes need for broadened definition of literate activity and for recognition of classroom practices such as peer-editing as social constructs that may need to be explicitly scaffolded.


Explores influences of the knowledge economy on the status of writing and literacy. Drawing on in-depth interviews of 12 individuals employed in writing-intensive positions, examines the organization of workplaces for production of texts, the work of writers as mediational means within the workplace, the growing presence of regulatory controls, and how demands for innovation and change affect writers and their work.

Year-long study explores complexities of the writing process, particularly first-grade writers’ multiple progressions in textual development. Focuses both on a macroview of all children within writing workshop, as well a microview of six case studies that displayed a range of literacy understanding within classroom. Findings include identification of 12 different progressions in textual development.


Proposes that literacy development in immigrant, refugee, and other historically marginalized communities be understood as a response to rhetorical struggles in contexts of civic life. Examines a collection of anti-immigrant letters published in a Midwestern newspaper between 1985 and 1995, and responses to these letters by a group of Southeast-Asian Hmong refugee writers. Explores relationships of content, form, language, and audience in two sets of letters to show how anti-immigrant rhetoric became the basis for new forms of public writing in the Hmong community.


Explores out-of-school literacy practices of three adolescent girls who write against gender, race, and class stereotypes in their zines. Uses methods of participant observation to examine what motivates and enables these girls to write. Describes how writing is related to identity-construction.


Examines how educational dialogue and narrative informed the reading and writing experiences of students in three professors’ classrooms. Focuses on the writing, in each classroom, of a story about “social ghosts” (strong but usually unexamined forces that shape everyday lives). Finds that the “ghost stories” were important indicators of students’ educational histories.


Tracks the writing of remedial composition students in nine community colleges and two universities who bring a range of different background preparations and profiles. Less well-prepared students experience more difficulty in making progress in college writing than students with stronger composition preparation. Developmental paths in writing also reflect differences in language and social-class privileges.


Examines how reflective writing is solicited, taught, composed, and assessed within a state-mandated portfolio curriculum. Finds that reflective letters are a genre within the state curricu-
lum that regulates substance and tone of students' reflections. Demonstrates importance of understanding how large-scale assessments shape pedagogy and students' writing.


Tracks survey data from 400 Harvard students of the class of 2001 and a random sample of 65 Harvard students over four years to determine changes in their perceptions of their writing. Writing increasingly functions as a means of locating themselves as community members within academic disciplinary cultures. Students who cling to familiar formulaic high-school writing conventions experience difficulty adopting argumentative modes. Students use writing to move into positions of expertise by acquiring disciplinary knowledge. Students who recognize the need to move beyond their novice roles toward expertise in their disciplines are more likely to improve in their writing.


Analyzes 172 pre-kindergarten pupils' writing in the pre-alphabetic spelling phase. Finds that their knowledge of what constitutes written language is relatively sophisticated in terms of how reading and writing are interrelated for purposes of communication, suggesting the limitation of decontextualized pre-school literacy instruction.


Explores two teachers' efforts to help students improve at persuasive writing on tests without sacrificing what they value about writing workshop. Findings suggest that teachers do not need to teach to the test in a narrow manner: rather, they can develop tools that move students toward test readiness while keeping writing process principles in focus.

Other Related Research:


