Stepping Down From the Ivory Tower: 35 Years of Pedagogical Reading Research With Kids and Teachers

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ILA 2016 Boston: “Literacy Research and its Influence on Teaching and Learning: Presentations by Reading Hall of Fame Scholars”
Midwestern Roots in the 1950s and 1960s
A Bachelor’s Degree, Wedding, and Turn to Education Thought the University of Wisconsin Teacher Corps Project

School of Education
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

HO-CHUNK NATION
PEOPLE OF THE BIG VOICE

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Grade 3-4 Teacher in Wisconsin and then Back to Graduate School for a PhD in Reading Education
Reading & Literacy Education Academic Positions Over the Years

Purdue

The University of Georgia

University of Wyoming
Most of my research with children and their teachers in schools.

Research goal: To better understand how we, as teachers, might enhance students’ reading in classrooms.

Research focus: How to effectively and efficiently teach students to understand the meanings of individual words (vocabulary) and connected text (comprehension).
An Instructional Philosophy
(Baumann & Ivey, Reading Research Quarterly, 1997)

INSTRUCTION: Explaining, modeling, and applying literacy skills and strategies—or lots of EXPLICIT TEACHING.

IMMERSION: Providing opportunities to exercise, use, and develop literacy abilities—or lots of RICH PRACTICE.
Pragmatism: "The doctrine that an idea can be understood in terms of its practical consequences" (Oxford English Dictionary online)

The pragmatic tradition: "Asserts that conducting inquiry to useful ends takes precedence over finding ways to defend one’s epistemology" (Dillon et al. (RRQ, 2000, p. 17).
Pragmatism & Methodological Flexibility

- "Good research is a matter not of finding the one best method but of carefully framing that question most important to the investigator and the field and then identifying a disciplined way in which to inquire into it that will enlighten both the scholar and his or her community. (Shulman, 1997, p. 4)

- "Being a pragmatic allows one to eschew methodological orthodoxy in favor of methodological appropriateness as the primary criterion for judging methodological quality, recognizing that different methods are appropriate for different situations." (Patton, 2002, p. 72)
Thus, depending on my research questions, I have conducted . . .

- “true” experiments
- quasi-experimental studies
- mixed-methods research
- formative/design experiments
- survey research
- qualitative case studies
- content analyses
- clinical case studies
- collaborative teacher research
- research syntheses
- reflective self-inquiries.
Classroom Research as a Guest, With Teachers, on the Collaboration Process, and on One’s Own Practice

- **Guest**: Invited into schools and classrooms to conduct research.
- **With**: Conducting research in collaboration with classroom teachers.
- **On the Collaborative Process**: Examination of the nature of research with teachers.
- **Own Practice**: Reflective, self-study of one’s own teaching.
Research as a Guest in Teachers’ Classrooms


Research in Collaboration With Classroom Teachers

- **Collaborative teacher research study:**

- **Collaborative formative/design experiment:**
Research in Collaboration With Classroom Teachers

- **Multi-Year, Collaborative Design-Based Research:** Baumann, Blachowicz, Bates, Cieply, Manyak, Peterson, Davis, Arner, & Graves. (2013). The development of a comprehensive vocabulary instruction program for nine- to eleven-year-old children using a design experiment approach. In T. Plomp, & N. Nieveen (Eds.), *Educational design research – Part B: Illustrative cases* (pp. 23-47). Enschede, the Netherlands: SLO.

- **Collaborative content analysis:** Davis, Baumann, Arner, Quintero, Wade, Walters, & Watson. (2012). The role of collaboration in formative and design experiments: Where the emic meets the etic (pp. 397-409). In Dunston, Fullerton, Bates, Headley, & Stecker (Eds.), *Sixty-first yearbook of the Literacy Research Association*. Oak Creek, WI: Literacy Research Association.
Research on the Collaborative Process


Research in One’s Own Classroom

- **Year-long qualitative case study:**

- **Retrospective, Reflective Analysis:**
So, With Regard to Research in Schools

- **Do No Harm**, or better, DO GOOD.
- **Try to Understand the World You Enter**: Prior, practical experience is best, but if not, listen, watch, learn, participate.
- **The Golden Rule**: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”
- **Humility**: In what you expect to learn and in conveying what you think you have “learned.” Or, external validity with restraint.
- **Learn**: Listen to, read, and consider the positions and views of your colleagues, your research participants, and those outside your field.
Thank You!

Obrigado!

Dank

Gracias

Bedankt

شكراً

Merci

Köszönettel

Thank You!