

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

James F. Baumann  
University of Missouri, Emeritus

*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



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME



School of Education  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



HO-CHUNK NATION  
PEOPLE OF THE BIG VOICE



# Grade 3-4 Teacher in Wisconsin and then Back to Graduate School for a PhD in Reading Education



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of*  
**WISCONSIN**  
MADISON





# Reading & Literacy Education Academic Positions Over the Years



PURDUE



The University of Georgia



UNIVERSITY  
OF WYOMING

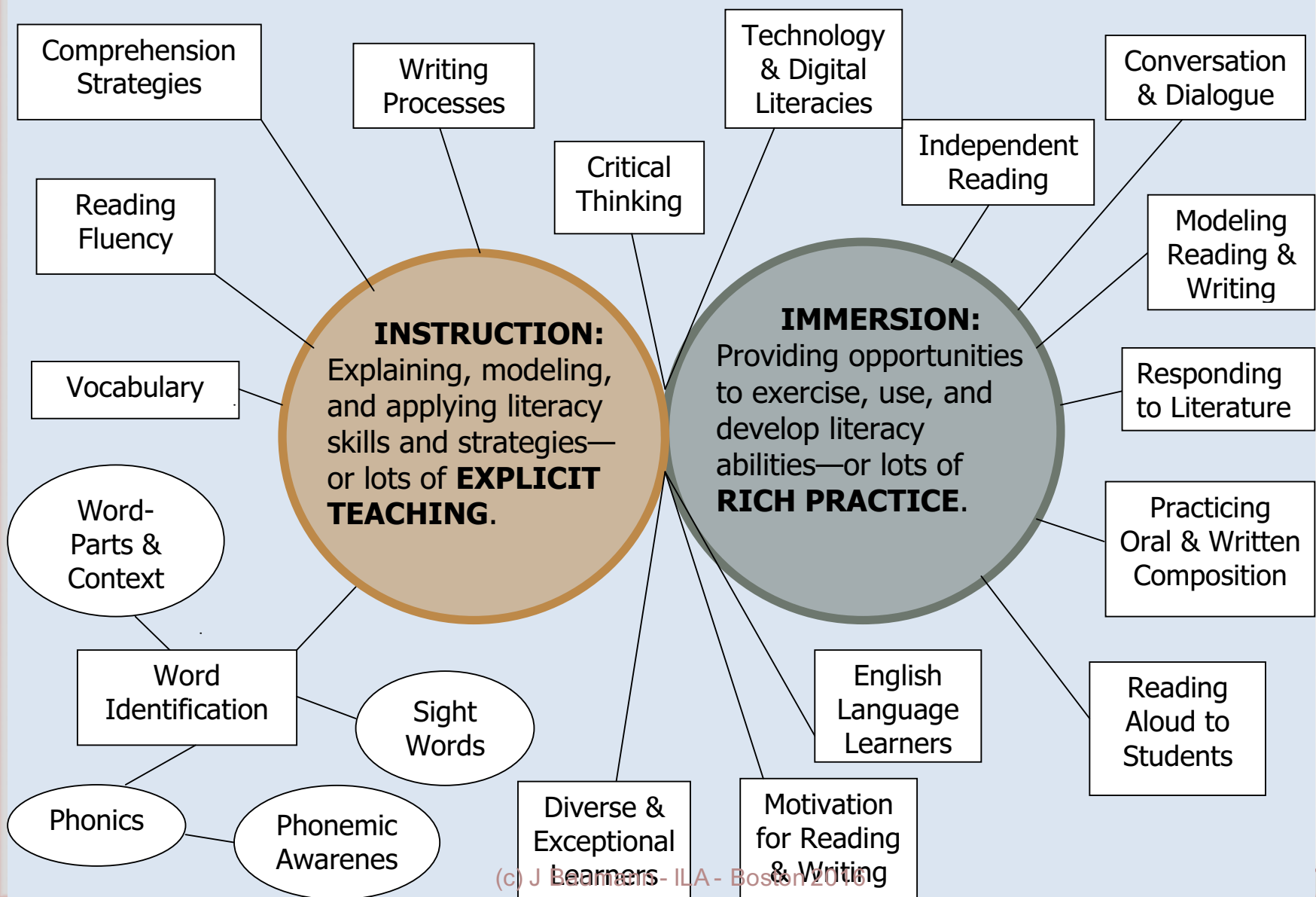


# The Classroom: My Research “Laboratory”

- ◆ 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)



## Pragmatism: A Guide to My Research and 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)

# Pragmatism & Methodological Flexibility

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

- ◆ **Experimenter conceived & conducted research:** Baumann, Edwards, Font, Tereshinski, Kame'enui, & Olejnik. (2002). Teaching morphemic and contextual analysis to fifth-grade students. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 150-176.
- ◆ **Experimenter conceived but teacher-conducted research:** Baumann, Edwards, Boland, Olejnik, & Kame'enui. (2003). Vocabulary tricks: Effects of instruction in morphology and context on fifth-grade students' ability to derive and infer word meanings. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40, 447-494.
- ◆ **Survey research with teachers as informants:** Baumann, Hoffman, Moon, & Duffy-Hester. (2000). *The First R* yesterday and today: U.S. elementary reading instruction practices reported by teachers and administrators. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 338-377.



# Research in Collaboration With Classroom Teachers

- ◆ **Collaborative teacher research study:**

Baumann, Hooten, & White. (1999). Teaching comprehension through literature: A teacher-research project to develop fifth-graders' reading strategies and motivation. *The Reading Teacher*, 53, 38-51.

- ◆ **Collaborative formative/design**

**experiment:** Baumann, Ware, & Edwards. (2007). "Bumping into spicy, tasty words that catch your tongue": A formative experiment on vocabulary instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 62, 108-122.

# 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

- ◆ Ware, Mallozzi, Edwards, & Baumann. (2008). Collaboration in teacher research: Complicated cooperation. In C. A. Lassonde & S. E. Israel (Eds.). *A comprehensive guide to teacher research* (89-100). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- ◆ Baumann, Shockley-Bisplinghoff, & Allen. (1997). Methodology in teacher research: Three cases. Flood, Heath, & Lapp, *A handbook of research on teaching literacy through the communicative and visual arts* (pp. 121-143). New York: Macmillan.
- ◆ Baumann, & Duffy-Hester. (2000). Making sense of classroom worlds: Methodology in teacher research. In Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson, & Barr (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. III* (pp. 77-98) Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

## Research in One's Own Classroom

- ◆ **Year-long qualitative case study:**  
Baumann, & Ivey. (1997). Delicate balances: Striving for curricular and instructional equilibrium in a second-grade, literature/strategy-based classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 32, 244-275.
- ◆ **Retrospective, Reflective Analysis:**  
Baumann. (1996). Conflict or compatibility in classroom inquiry? One teacher's struggle to balance teaching and research. *Educational Researcher*, 25(7), 29-36.



## 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.

תודה

Vielen  
Dank

Obrigado!

Thank You!

Köszönettel

ขอบคุณ

Gracias

Teşekkürler

धन्यवाद

Bedankt

شكراً

Merci