

Writing Your Dissertation: A Short Session on the Big Picture

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2014 Summer Conference

Brief Disclaimer

- We are reviewing a brief style for your dissertation
- We teach only APA 6th edition & NSU style guide format
- Numerous faculty philosophies
 - Courses, dissertation chair, and dissertation committee member
- Various writing styles
- Different philosophies of hiring an editor
 - Be careful . . . Do your homework
- Keeping it real . . . have a serious talk with yourself, do an honest self-assessment, and map out your plan
- Wearing (and owning) the scholar's hat

Saving Your Work



. . . Very simple . . . Save it in
numerous areas

Content

- In order to be good, it must sound good and look good
- Organization and structure
 - Level headings (APA manual & NSU Style Guide)
 - Organization of the Study
 - Chapter Summaries
 - Use direct quotes sparingly
- Theoretical Framework
- Limitations of the Study
- Delimitations of the Study
- Suggestions for Future Research
- Scholarly Resources

Examples of Literature Review Headings

Chapter 2: Literature Review
Introduction
Theoretical Framework
Reading Performance in a
Title 1 School
Students With Special
Education Needs
Interactive Read-Aloud
Five Components of
Reading
Fountas and Pinnell
Benchmark System 1
Research Questions

Chapter 2: Literature Review
Introduction
Theoretical Framework
Professional Development
Varied Approaches
Evaluation
Transfer of Knowledge
Professionalism
Conclusion
Research Questions

Examples of Literature Review Headings

Chapter 2: Literature Review
Introduction

Computer-Assisted
Instruction in Reading

Reading Comprehension
and Vocabulary Strategies
in the Elementary Grades

Reading Needs of ESOL
Students

Gaps in the Literature
Summary

Theoretical Framework
Research Questions

Chapter 2: Literature Review
Japanese Lesson Study

Microteaching Lesson Study

Research Studies on
Microteaching Lesson Study

Lesson Study with Preservice
Teachers

Lesson Study with Practicing
Teachers

Summary

Theoretical Framework

- Focuses on time tested theories that embody the findings of numerous investigations
- Provides a general representation of relationships between things in a given phenomenon
- Specifies the theory used as a basis for the study
- Mentions the theorists
- Cites the main points emphasized in the theory
- See examples in following slides . . .

Andragogy and Malcolm Knowles

The theory based on the need to improve teacher professional development is grounded in the Andragogy Learning theory. This theory was advanced by Dr. Malcolm Knowles in the 1970s and was primarily used to study adult learning pedagogy. The theory of andragogy indicates that there are distinct characteristics of adult learning, which includes (a) self-directedness, (b) need to know, (c) use of experience in learning, (d) readiness to learn, (e) orientation to learning, and (f) internal motivation (Chan, 2010).

Zepeda (2012) affirms that “professional development that honors the adult learner has follow up to ensure transfer of new knowledge into the land of practice” (p. 49). Thus, adult learning theories guide professional development for effectiveness and transfer of new knowledge to classroom practice.

Vygotskian Theory & Lev Vygotsky

In the Vygotskian Theory, students are provided intellectual interaction through scaffolding approach that enhances learning more quickly than they could without the intervention (Vygotsky, 1978). This intervention, defined as best practices in education today, guides learning through modeling and cognitive development, while building repertoire of knowledge and understanding in students.

Flint (2010) introduced the Vygotskian and Transactional Reading theories; two approaches that promote literacy and learning. Flint reported that social interactions between teacher-student, student-student, and literary transactions combined with interactive read-aloud and buddy reading, promoted literacy.

Differentiated Instruction

This study is grounded in Differentiated Instruction approach that parallels the principles of the Sternner and Smith's (1982) Lexile Framework, Vygotsky's Social Constructivist (SC) theory (1978), Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978), Bruner's scaffolding approach (Bruner, 1962), and Krashen's Second Language Acquisition Theory including Affective Filter Hypothesis and Input Hypothesis (1981). Based on the idea that all students differ in a way they receive, process information, and learn, the responsibility of providing students with multiple avenues for absorbing and internalizing of knowledge is shifted to an educator (Tomlinson, 2001).



Ineffective Co-Teaching Practices

The problem of ineffective co-teaching practices in the classroom is grounded in the Distributed Leadership theory and Sociocultural theory's More Knowledgeable Other. The Distributed Leadership theory was originally developed by James Spillane in 2004 and was primarily used to study leadership and management within the school. This theory was applied in both elementary and middle school leadership projects "designed to explore and understand leadership as a practice of instructional improvement and to examine the relations between leadership practice and teachers' classroom work" (Northwestern University, 2010, para. 7).

The theory of Distributed Leadership indicates that individuals develop a reciprocal interdependence on one another (Spillane, 2005), where situations and activities require input from both individuals, as well as pooled interdependence on one another (Spillane & Sherer, 2004), where individuals work independently, but for a common purpose.

Lesson Study in Mathematics

In order to examine the development of elementary preservice teachers' mathematics teacher knowledge through MLS, gains in content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge in mathematics were investigated. Shulman's (1986) ideas related to subject matter content knowledge were used to analyze growth in mathematics content knowledge. Graeber's (1999) framework for pedagogical content knowledge related to mathematics was used to analyze preservice teacher growth in pedagogical content knowledge for mathematics...

Graeber's (1999) idea of pedagogical content knowledge is encapsulated in terms of five "big ideas", which describe the attributes of a teacher who possesses pedagogical content knowledge in mathematics. While Graeber's (1999) ideas can be linked to Shulman's (1986) framework for pedagogical content knowledge, her perspective is unique in that it offers ideas for fostering the development of each big idea with preservice teachers.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations refer to the restriction in the study over which the researcher has no control. The major limitation of the study is as follows:

1. The study was based on one first-grade class within an elementary school. Since the collection of data was limited to this one first-grade classroom out of six first-grade classrooms.

2. Since students were taught from different kindergarten and first-grade teachers, fidelity was questionable regarding the instruction of the interactive read-aloud.

3. Students' data collection from the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System 1 was administered without fidelity.

4. The outcomes of this study would be hindered by the students' challenge with expressive language.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was limited to the population of language impaired students in an elementary first-grade classroom. The researcher did not choose the general education student population of the same classroom of the four language impaired students. Due to the researcher's professional experience while working with these language impaired students, a trend was recognized based upon how language impaired students learn to read; in addition, how they are consistently struggling with comprehension of written text across genres. This has a direct impact concerning performance on the FCAT 2.0 as well as the school grade. The researcher also did not select any of the other first-grade students from the other classes. This decision was based on convenience to focus on a specific group of students where fidelity of instruction would not be problematic.

Suggested Future Research

The findings of this study supported the following recommendations for future research of the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System 1, to include the Leveled Literacy Intervention: (a) provide teachers with professional development and training on the implementation and analysis of using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System 1 and the Leveled Literacy Intervention, (b) conduct a phenomenological study and interview teachers to gain the lived experiences on utilizing the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System 1 and 2, and (c) conduct a mixed study using quantitative and qualitative data to gain a better understanding to improve reading comprehension of language impaired students.

Scholarly Resources

- Written or edited by a scholar
- Articles in a journal published by a college or university
- Articles in a journal published by a scholarly group
- Peer reviewed or published in a scholarly source
- Recognized academic publishers or university presses
- Sources are cited and listed references
- Documented research claims
- Conclusions based on evidence provided
- The length of the source and higher level language

NOT a Scholarly Source

- No author or no publisher listed
- Not magazines
- Not newspapers
- Textbook written for classroom use as it is a teaching tool
- Classical works
- Has no review process; material meant for a wider audience
- Wikipedia
- Lots of pictures

Thank You!

Rich