Negotiating Literacy Instruction: Pedagogical Perceptions of Secondary Preservice Teachers.

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NEGOTIATING LITERACY INSTRUCTION:
PEDAGOGICAL PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY PRESERVICE TEACHERS

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in
The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by
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B.S., Southeastern Louisiana University, 1990
M.S., Louisiana State University, 1992
May, 1997

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DEDICATION

To Keith

To Mama and Daddy,
Shirley and Julius Hill

To my dear friend,
Annette Gordon
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This text represents an undertaking I never could have accomplished without the prayers and support of many of my favorite people.

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ABSTRACT

Secondary teachers face the challenge of planning instructional activities that combine their own subject knowledge with information from textbooks and other forms of text to help students learn content material. This study explores preservice teachers’ perceptions regarding literacy instruction within the context of teaching and learning content material.

The participants are senior secondary education students enrolled in a content area literacy course at a regional university in the southeast. Case studies are constructed for six preservice teachers representing different content areas.

Qualitative data collection procedures included a questionnaire, guided journal entries, literacy autobiography, and personal interviews. Cross-case analysis was employed. By contrasting their past literacy experiences with contemporary instructional considerations, a better understanding of how these preservice teachers plan to organize instruction is gained.

Vocabulary instruction is most frequently cited as a means to help students learn content. Definitions for various aspects of literacy are similar. There are differences in perceptions regarding the importance of literacy instruction in content area teaching. Instructional decisions are related to preservice teachers’
perceptions regarding the source of content knowledge authority. Within their content areas, these teachers perceive themselves as the primary knowledge source, the textbook as a significant resource, and other text materials as supplementary resources to help students learn content. In this situation, literacy instruction is of lesser importance. However, a lack of background knowledge places the teacher in the position of learner, and literacy becomes a significant aspect of teaching.

The content area literacy course experience gave these preservice teachers an awareness of how literacy strategies can be used to enhance content instruction and the impact literacy can have in secondary classrooms. Several found it difficult to discuss literacy instruction, because they did not know the proper names for literacy strategies.

This study extends the research to allow for a clearer explanation of the subtle yet dynamic effect that literacy perceptions have on secondary classroom instruction. Engaging in reflective activities about literacy instruction facilitated the development of these preservice teachers' understanding of self as teacher.
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

University students enter teacher education programs with pedagogical perceptions about instruction and learning that have developed through years of experience with schools, primarily in the role of student. As these prospective teachers move from the position of student toward that of teacher, their pedagogical perceptions continue to change and evolve. When confronted with new concepts and ideas about teaching, decisions are made about how that information will be incorporated into their existing belief systems (Hollingsworth, 1989; Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

Through reflective activities, preservice teachers can begin to consider and articulate their pedagogical perceptions. By exploring personal ideas about literacy issues, such as definitions of terms and how reading instruction can be incorporated into practice, these future teachers can expand their perceptions of literacy in the context of secondary classrooms (O’Brien, Stewart, & Moje, 1995).

Because "interactions with students have implications for their pedagogical knowledge and decisions" (Moje, 1996, p. 176), the data gathered for this study focused on the perspectives of secondary education students who had no prior classroom teaching experience. The intent of the study was to explore preservice teachers’ perceptions.
regarding literacy and content literacy before they experienced classroom teaching. Additionally, their initial understandings about the role literacy instruction plays in the context of teaching and learning content material was examined.

While in the learning environment of teacher preparation courses at the university level, secondary preservice teachers should have the opportunity to articulate how beliefs about literacy and literacy instruction help shape decision making and frame thinking about content area expertise (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Bullough, 1989; Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992). From the perspectives of college students who are preparing to teach in secondary schools, "lay beliefs about teachers' subject-matter specific roles as disseminators of information" (Holt-Reynolds, 1992, p. 329) were also explored and discussed in this report.

The Purpose of the Study

Secondary teachers face the challenge of planning instructional activities that will combine their own subject knowledge with information from textbooks and other forms of text to help students learn content material.

This study examined how six preservice secondary teachers negotiated the function of literacy instruction in the context of subject matter knowledge and student learning.
The purpose of the study was to answer the following research questions:

The Primary Research Question

How do preservice teachers in different secondary content areas perceive the impact of literacy instruction on the relationship between subject matter knowledge and their students’ need to learn the material?

Secondary Questions

1. How do preservice content area teachers define literacy?
2. How do preservice content area teachers define content literacy?
3. Is literacy instruction a valued component of instructional planning for new teachers?
4. a. How do preservice teachers perceive the relationship between their knowledge base and the role of the textbook in instruction?
   b. How do preservice teachers perceive the relationship between their knowledge base and the role of other text materials in instruction?
5. How can literacy instruction be used to communicate content?

The Setting

The participants were students at a regional university in the southeast. The Department of Teacher Education is administratively located in the College of
Education. Students who are preparing to become teachers in elementary and secondary schools are enrolled in the College of Education.

At this university, the teacher education program subscribes to a traditional model of teacher preparation. The program outline is a collective endeavor of the faculty. Their perspectives about the nature of education, learning, and teacher education reflect concerns held by many teacher educators. New teachers are encouraged to develop proficiency in process-oriented, student-centered instructional methodology.

Specific education courses are required for students with a student teaching practicum during the last semester. Students who are accepted into the program are required to have a 2.5 grade point average. At this university, the students are granted opportunities to develop personal and professional competencies. Opportunities are also provided to enhance intellectual curiosity and integrity, promote self-discipline, and gain an understanding of people.

Significance of the Study

This research represents an effort to understand preservice teachers' perceptions regarding the role of literacy in content area instructional planning. The recognition of differences in definitions gives support for the investigation, particularly if those involved do not realize they hold differing opinions and ideas. McKenna
and Robinson (1990, p. 182) suggest that defining content literacy will have "significant implications for content area teachers--implications that may add to the arguments used to encourage these educators to view matters of literacy with an open mind."

Educational Importance of the Study

This study contributes useful information to the field of content area literacy. Patton (1990, p. 490) explains that "findings are most useful with regard to the particular setting from which those findings emerged, and the interpretation of findings is particular to those people who need and expect to use the information that has been generated by evaluation research." Therefore, application of the information is significant to teacher educators, content area teachers, and researchers who examine literacy issues for older readers.

Teacher Educators

This research makes a contribution to teacher education programs by providing suggestions that will direct thinking about program effectiveness and variations in program design to help meet preservice teachers' needs. Insightful information that will help address the question of why literacy strategies are not being implemented into practice by some secondary classroom teachers is gained from this research.
Content Area Teachers

When preservice teachers have "gained some awareness of their personal theories of teaching and learning" they can use reflection to analyze their theories and beliefs about content literacy "and how they might use various content literacy methods and strategies within various secondary-school contexts" (O'Brien et al., 1995, p. 455). Such self-evaluation can support the instructional actions of effective teachers (Olson & Singer, 1994) who successfully negotiate literacy instruction to enhance student learning. While university students with no formal teaching experience were targeted to supply the data for this study, it is hoped the reflective activities they experienced will carry over into their teaching.

Participants in the research articulated their own perceptions about content literacy and the role it plays in the relationship between content knowledge and student learning. This was partially accomplished through reflective activities that focused on pedagogical perceptions about literacy instruction. It is anticipated that enhanced learning will result in content area classrooms when teachers use reflective activities to make instructional decisions that can positively change or alter practice to effectively meet students' literacy needs.
Theoretical Importance of the Study

This research adds to the literature which is concerned with teachers' perceptions regarding the role of literacy instruction in the relationship between content knowledge and student learning. It is also significant in its contribution to the limited interpretive studies available in secondary content area literacy (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Moje, 1996; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Ratekin, Simpson, Alvermann, & Dishner, 1985).

The findings provide foundational support for further research into the role pedagogical perceptions play in the formulation of instructional decision making by preservice secondary teachers. Also, because this study examined why particular literacy strategies are valued (or not valued) and how new teachers plan to implement reading into their instruction, the research adds to the existing literature available on implementation of literacy strategies in secondary content classrooms.

Key Terms

The following are key terms to assist the reader in interpreting and understanding the data:

- analyst triangulation—several analysts independently review the data and then compare findings to reduce the potential of investigator bias
confirmation survey—a structured questionnaire used to verify the applicability of data to the overall study group

content literacy—reading, writing, and using language to learn new content in a particular subject area

data source triangulation—comparison of data collected at different times and by different means to cross-check findings for verification

formal teaching experience—practicing the profession of a teacher; receiving pay for classroom instruction

guided response journal—written responses to suggested topics; respondent’s informal expressions of reflections, understandings, and feelings

literacy—reading, writing, and using language for a variety of purposes

member checking—respondent’s review of the researcher’s interpretations reported in a case study

negotiating—dealing with a matter that requires ability for its successful handling; managing

observation—classroom observations by the investigator documented with handwritten field notes

pedagogical—of, relating to, or befitting a teacher or education

perception—awareness or understanding of

personal guided interview—the researcher meets with the respondent to ask open-ended questions in
conversational style for the purpose of detecting respondent's meanings, interpretations, and verification of information; interviews are taped and transcribed

reflection—thoughtful consideration of a matter, idea, or purpose

triangulation—the use of at least three data-collection techniques and analysis methods to strengthen the study design; to verify the investigator's perceptions and provide a comprehensive investigation by checking findings against other sources and perspectives

Summary

While reading is considered to be "connected" with instruction as subject matter is presented (Alvermann & Moore, 1991, p. 965), many content area teachers fail to recognize the potential literacy can have on learning in their classrooms (Marksheffel, 1969; Readence, Bean, & Baldwin, 1995). Beginning secondary teachers frequently viewed content reading courses as "irrelevant to their future success as teachers" (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990, p. 101). Inconsistencies found in the literature regarding these attitudes and the resistance to application of reading methods into instructional practice point to the need for further action. An effort should be made to identify problems and offer solutions that will most benefit secondary students and the teachers who teach them.
Communication with the student to facilitate learning is an element of pedagogical expertise that is sometimes not discovered until one actually begins teaching. This study involves preservice teachers’ attempts to articulate their own perceptions about sources of content knowledge and how they conceptualize subject matter authority and learning.
Chapter 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A History of Content Literacy

The Early Years

Prior to and during the 1940’s and 1950’s, reading was described as a process that combined perception of written symbols (letters, words) and the ability to translate those symbols into verbal code. Reading was taught in a mechanical manner that included memorization of letters, words, and sounds that they represent which were practiced until the translation from written word to oral word was accomplished (Betts, 1959, 1967).

Bond and Bond (1941) are the authors of one of the first textbooks that addressed reading at the high school level. Emmett A. Betts (1959, 1967), was also among the early researchers and writers in reading methodology for secondary students. He likened reading to thinking and encouraged teachers to plan direct instruction that is designed to guide students as they think about reading in terms of word meaning, text structure analysis, and purposeful questioning. He also emphasized the need for teachers to recognize differences in students’ needs and abilities.

As the early 1960’s approached, efforts to improve reading for older readers were incorporated through the use of rapid reading training. However, improving comprehension by increasing reading speed did not seem to
produce the proficiencies initially hoped for in high school readers (Holmes, 1962; Spache, 1958, 1962). Strang (1961, 1967) presented the idea that different reading tasks require different kinds of thinking. She addressed the concept that students use varied thinking strategies to interpret text depending on the purpose they have for the reading task. During this period, scholars began to take a different look at secondary reading.

A Broader Theoretical Perspective

Early research led to reading skills development through drill-and-practice instructional programs that separated reading instruction from the regular school curriculum. Drill-and-practice instruction was effective in terms of higher standardized reading test scores (Roehler & Duffy, 1991). However, Herber (1978), an early author of content area reading textbooks, relates that though reading programs that separated reading instruction from content area instruction were effective for achieving the goal of improved reading scores, they were ineffective in improving reading comprehension in content areas.

The failure of this kind of behavioral approach to improve comprehension caused researchers to question further the process of reading and the instructional methods used to enhance reading (Herber, 1978). As new ideas about reading instruction approaches received more interest, different concepts about reading as a process
began to surface. Linguists worked with the "structure of language--the system of symbols with which thinking is done" (Betts, 1967, p. 99) and the complex nature of language and its natural acquisition. New ways of looking at reading gained the attention of researchers and theorists, and content reading instruction began to evolve into its own discipline of inquiry (Pearson & Stephens, 1994).

The psycholinguistic views of researchers during the 1970's continued the linguists' work in considering reading as a process. Goodman (1976, p. 501) explained students' reading "miscues" illustrate "a selective, tentative, anticipatory process quite unlike the process of precise, sequential identification commonly assumed." The reading process and the comprehension process were considered simultaneously in explaining how readers construct meaning from text.

In an effort to understand comprehension of content within the relationship of knowledge readers bring and the text itself, Rumelhart (1980) addressed schema theory. This theory deals with knowledge structure in memory and the mind's ability to "restructure" by adding information to existing slots (schema) or form new slots to accommodate new data. Constructing meaning of expository text by using the relationship between prior knowledge and new information became the focus of reading instruction during
the 1970’s. Schema theory explained reading comprehension as well as learning (Pearson & Stephens, 1994).

As the 1980’s approached, the sociolinguists heightened awareness in the field of reading to social, political, and cultural concerns (Pearson & Stephens, 1994). Continued interest in the linguistic, structural makeup of language led to a newly discovered interest in the cognitive processing of information. The idea that secondary teachers in content areas are responsible for reading instruction gained emphasis, and reading development methods courses became required in teacher education curriculum (Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984; O’Brien & Stewart, 1990).

Secondary Reading Instruction

The teaching of reading has long been considered by many secondary teachers to be the responsibility of the elementary schools; further reading instruction is considered to be the responsibility of the reading or English teacher; and the teaching of specific subject information is considered to be the primary responsibility of content teachers (Marksheffel, 1969). Singer (1983) in a review of content reading during the last century, explains that early studies indicate high school student reading abilities vary from subject to subject and from student to student. Betts (1967) considers master teachers to be those who understand that students need instructional
help when they are expected to comprehend difficult subject material. Fisher (1967) gives content teachers the responsibility to motivate students to be independent readers who can identify organization of text, pinpoint details, and analyze information.

Karlin (1972, p. 292) states, "learning to read...is a continuous process." Reading instruction should use the text and other resources already available within content areas to teach and re-enforce reading skills. Herber (1978) further explains that a broader definition of reading in terms of content instruction exists. He differentiates between teaching reading in a reading class and teaching reading within content areas. This concept is in opposition to the former practice of using unrelated materials that focus on development of skills rather than the understanding of content.

Estes and Vaughan (1978, p. 8) describe reading as "an assumed prerequisite for academic success." With the differences in individual reading abilities found in high school content classes in mind, these authors assigned secondary schools the responsibility of enhancement of reading instruction. Content teachers have the opportunity to help students develop the maturity levels needed in reading skills to make the necessary adjustments in reading to accommodate various reading assignments and materials.
Teachers at the secondary level are generally considered to be specialists in their particular content areas. However, some secondary teachers lack the knowledge necessary to transfer subject information to their students (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Estes & Vaughan, 1978). Karlin (1972, p. 292) notes secondary teachers in content areas seldom "receive any orientation in the teaching of reading." According to Karlin (p. 292), "every teacher whose subject-matter area calls for reading can help students overcome obstacles in textbook reading." Herber (1978) also contends secondary teachers need reading instruction training to enhance content instruction.

Different content areas require different approaches to reading material (Herber, 1978; Karlin, 1972; Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1983). Often students are faced with reading assignments that require an understanding of text with little or no prior reading instruction to help them problem-solve and use higher thinking levels to comprehend what is being read. Deficiencies in reading ability for high school students and the need for reading programs at the secondary level continues to be a dilemma for high school teachers (Karlin, 1972; Rubin, 1983). Difficult reading poses a problem for content teachers. When the text is written at a higher level than the students' reading abilities, the responsibility for the teacher becomes more difficult. Students need help to
apply reading skills previously learned to content materials. The obstacle posed by text written above a student's level of expertise can be overcome by teachers who are able to teach students to transfer reading skills to various content materials (Herber, 1978).

During the 1980's, the important role prior knowledge plays in reading comprehension and the instructional decisions of teachers continued to be a major issue in the field (Pearson & Fielding, 1991). These authors (p. 849) also explain the trend for teaching began to shift away from the "task director" model to the "facilitator of learning" concept. The psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic views about comprehension processes, individual differences, and the influences of social, political, and cultural concerns on reading were being reflected in instructional patterns during this time. These components became integrated with traditional instructional techniques such as prior knowledge activation, guided writing, vocabulary instruction, and text feature instruction to improve reading comprehension (Niles & Lalik, 1986). In a discussion of a "directed reading approach to teaching content," Rubin (1983, p. 13) includes knowledge of the process involved in reading, text structure, purpose for reading, and students' needs in suggestions for content teachers.
Interest in content area reading seemed to decline somewhat during the 1980's as exemplified by no mention of secondary reading in the first *Handbook of Reading Research* published in 1984. However, researchers such as Tierney, Readence, and Dishner (1990) continued to stress the importance of teaching reading techniques to enhance comprehension in content areas. Other scholars proceeded with content area reading research that increasingly involved student interaction in instruction (Alvermann, 1986), the role of the teacher as decision-maker (Conley, 1986), and continued work with reading and study strategies (Vacca & Vacca, 1989).

In a report entitled, *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*, Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985, p. 117) state, "The more elements of good parenting, good teaching, and good schooling that children experience, the greater the likelihood that they will achieve their potential as readers." These researchers recommend teachers "devote more time to comprehension instruction" because "there is very little direct comprehension instruction in most American classrooms" (p. 118). This report prompted a renewed interest in content area literacy that began to emerge in the late 1980's.
Negotiating Literacy Instruction

One of the visions secondary teachers have maintained through the years in content areas is to have their students gain knowledge in particular subject areas (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Hafner, 1967; Herber, 1978; Spache, 1958; Vacca & Vacca, 1989). In a discussion about specific content reading procedures, Stevens (1969, p. 138) speaks of "trade and reference books," informal interest inventories, vocabulary instruction, and student involvement in assignments and class discussions. These same ideas have continued to be a focus of concern for integrating reading into content areas (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Cheek, Flippo, & Lindsey, 1997; Rubin, 1983).

The instructional benefits of using reading strategies to strengthen reading comprehension to enhance learning in content areas has been well documented in the literature (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Brozo & Simpson, 1995; Estes & Vaughan, 1978; Herber & Herber, 1993; Readence et al., 1995; Rubin, 1983; Tierney et al., 1990; Vacca & Vacca, 1989). Reading strategies used at the secondary level have historically been grouped into categories such as word-recognition skills, meaning skills, and study skills.

The expository text found in content areas is different from the narrative-type text students encounter in lower grades (Karlin, 1972; Shepherd, 1969). Herber (1978) describes content reading instruction techniques
based on three levels of comprehension: the literal level, the interpretive level, and the applied level. This type of hierarchical organization of instruction incorporates interpretation, conceptualization of ideas, and use of prior knowledge to achieve understanding in content reading (Singer, 1983). Herber also emphasizes the use of organizational patterns of text, prediction, and vocabulary development to help students connect new ideas and build knowledge. As reading progressed through this period of time, the constructivist theories of incorporating new information with existing schema was apparent in instructional methodology.

Current Trends

From a vague decline in interest in the mid-1980's has come a renewed interest in reading at the secondary level for the 1990's. The implications of students leaving high schools to face a diverse and technical society with inadequate reading abilities are surfacing as major concerns for educators. Individual differences in reading ability have also evolved into a dominant issue in content reading (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Herber, 1978; Karlin, 1972). As decisions are made about instruction, the "array of student abilities and vulnerabilities" cannot be ignored (Beck & McKeown, 1991, p. 791.) The concept of "metacognition" and the ability of an individual to control
thinking focuses on understanding and meaning-making as a conscious effort (Roehler & Duffy, 1991, p. 862).

As content reading continues to develop and reshape in the 1990's, the former authoritarian role of the teacher is becoming that of a member in a cooperative partnership. Working together, teacher and students can develop meaningful reading programs that meet content objectives and recognize and respect the diversity of the individuals involved (Cheek et al., 1997).

There are other current trends in the field of content reading. A teacher who is willing to take advantage of the knowledge students bring to the classroom will find enhanced learning and comprehension in subject areas. Through reflective teaching and reflective learning, educators are trying to understand the uniqueness of classroom cultures. The effects of reading strategies and teaching methods continue to be studied and refined.

Today's technological society is demanding literacy competency in young people graduating from high schools today (Alvermann & Moore, 1991). Computer technologies "are coming into wide-spread use in classrooms" (Readence et al., 1995, p. 242). Some high school teachers are using computers in the classroom to create writing opportunities for students by using various software packages (Stuhlmann, 1994). Telecommunication is impacting instruction as
students are experiencing network accessibility through
classroom computers (Brozo & Simpson, 1995).

Attempts to Define Literacy

The content teacher's role is to promote an atmosphere of understanding in the classroom. This involves examination of the relationship between subject area material and students' abilities and attitudes so that learning can be maximized. This complex task involves expertise in subject area knowledge, theoretical knowledge about the learning process, and an understanding of instructional strategies (Vacca & Vacca, 1989). Preservice secondary teachers are in an opportune position to use reflection to begin to negotiate the instruction they will employ in their own classrooms to help their students learn (Pultorak, 1993; Wenzlaff, 1994; Ziechner & Liston, 1987) and to examine personal definitions for literacy in content areas.

In some instances, preservice teachers hold different definitions of key pedagogical terms than those of their university instructors. When such differences are not identified, communication is hindered and possible resolution of differences cannot be discussed. For example, Holt-Reynolds (1992) found theoretical definitions held by an instructor in a teacher education course of terms such as lecture and learning did not correspond with lay definitions held by the students. The instructor
defined lecture as being teacher-centered, teacher-telling, while some students defined it as an interactive discussion with the teacher as a mediator between the text and the student. This university instructor described learning as developing and using cognitive abilities, and preservice teachers described it as being the motivational potential of classroom activities.

From Research to Practice

Mosenthal (1984) examines the complexities involved in translating reading research into practice, and suggests there are contradictions in definitions of terms that are used to support various reading theories. He discusses the difficulties that exist in the reading research community because of numerous and partially specified definitions.

Inconsistencies in definitions for literacy processes that are in reading research appear in practice as well. For example, some practitioners aspire to the developmental, interaction theoretical viewpoint that describes reading as involving "the interaction of task complexity and material complexity with the level of development of the individual" (Mosenthal, 1984, p. 212). These educators value pedagogy that encourages readers to deal with text that is difficult enough to enhance cognitive growth. New learning is the result of engaging strategies, such as interest inventories, prior knowledge awareness, and pre-reading activities that integrate new

Mosenthal (1984) offers a heuristic for the purpose of defining reading. Several theoretical definitions for reading are discussed. For example, "one theory of reading defines reading in terms of the materials context" (p. 207), and meaning comes from the current text. Another theory is contingent upon the reader's understanding of the grammar used, recognition of the text structure, and the ability to comprehend the text.

In another theory, social situations are a source of meaning, and the accepted definitions agreed upon by the community of readers (such as a classroom community) for well-formed or poorly-formed text are used to organize learning. Because each classroom community has its own definitions for reading processes and because these meanings represent diverse interpretations, operations, and purposes, a dilemma surfaces as theories compete for the authority to use discourse to promote a particular ideology (Mosenthal, 1984).

Tierney (1994, p. 1177) explains the nature of literacy is "complex, multifaceted, and dynamic" and "a complex intermingling of meanings, including approximations or traces of different texts" are involved as readers interpret text. Content teachers face the challenge of
restricting their teaching to an exclusive approach to reading instruction or of adopting a combination of several approaches. Beach (1994) describes literacy events that occur in the classroom through several stances of (or approaches to) literacy research. The textual stance concerns knowledge of text structure; the social stance involves social integration; the cultural stance recognizes differences between classes or ethnic groups; and the field stance deals with content-specific knowledge. These stances represent differing theoretical views and translate into different instructional strategies. He encourages reading researchers to adopt multiple stances in an effort to expand literacy instruction in practice.

Defining Literacy

Rubin (1983, p. 28) defines content reading as "the bringing to and the getting of meaning from the printed page." She explains that a definition of reading is needed to set instructional goals, and teachers need to be aware of personal definitions because meaning for the term can vary. While reading is considered to be an important factor in learning content material, Bruce and Wasser (1996) acknowledge other methods of gaining knowledge also contribute to student learning from text. These researchers contend content area educators are now moving from a definition of the reading process that involves
proficiency of skills to a more comprehensive view that includes literacy approaches that span the curriculum.

In the 1970's, Bormuth (1973-1974, p. 22) defined literacy as "the ability to exhibit all of the behaviors a person needs in order to respond appropriately to all possible reading tasks." He immediately pointed out the lack of utility that this broad definition for literacy would have for researchers and practitioners. To limit the range of a definition that includes "all" behaviors needed and "all" reading tasks available, Bormuth recommends including selected parameters in the definition. Suggested behaviors such as level of performance criterion, specific reading tasks, and individual differences are suggested to explain the concept.

Expanding the Definition

An expanded definition of literacy that includes reading and writing (or language) with other ways that meaning is expressed or conveyed in various social forms is offered by Eisner (1991). He acknowledges the notion that literacy ability in one context may not be applicable in another by stating, "One might find the language of biology lucid and experience literature as a morass of ambiguity that obscures rather than reveals" (p. 122). This researcher discusses two different forms of language. One form places emphasis on singularity and definite certainty; the other on the metaphorical and ambiguous
intention. However, in defining literacy, other forms of systems used to convey meaning are also included. Examples he gives include meaning constructed through art, music, architecture, and human experience. Because literacy is not limited to text, meaning is expanded as intellectual skills are developed that help students construct knowledge.

Another definition for literacy that goes beyond reading and writing is found in the research of the Santa Barbara Discourse Group (1994). According to these researchers, the "communicative processes through which it (literacy) is constructed" (p. 125) are also included in the definition.

To understand the nature of this portrayal of the concept, The Santa Barbara Group (1994) conducted a study with a high school English class to determine how this community of learners constructed and reconstructed a definition for literacy. After observing classroom activities that related to the reading of a short-story, it was determined that meaning was constructed by the teacher and the students through various forms of reading strategies. Class and small group discussions about the meaning of the text were used to define terms and confirm interpretations. Other literacy activities such as students sharing journal writings, oral conversations about personal experiences, and individual artifacts were
included in the instructional plan to strengthen socially constructed meanings derived from the text.

Defining Content Literacy

McKenna and Robinson (1990, p. 182) define content literacy "as the ability to use reading and writing for the acquisition of new content in a given discipline." These researchers include "general literacy skills, content-specific literacy skills (such as map reading in the social studies), and prior knowledge of content" to describe the reading and writing abilities noted in their definition. Implications for such a definition of content literacy point to differences in literacy skills between subject areas (Moje, 1996; Readence et al., 1995; Spache, 1958).

A student may be literate in biology, but illiterate in English literature. The difference is not in general reading ability, but in prior knowledge of content (McKenna & Robinson, 1990), and the student's ability to assimilate new information into existing schema (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Thus, content teachers are encouraged to pursue literacy instruction in an effort to guide students into domain specific knowledge construction (Brozo & Simpson, 1995; Herber & Herber, 1993). A dilemma for educators that has emerged is students do not transfer reading strategies learned in one content area to other subject areas (Moje, 1996).
Expanding the Definition

Moje (1996) further extends the definition to include the social interactions in which literacy processes are practiced. This researcher suggests those involved in literacy activities, such as in the classroom, not only construct meaning for what literacy is, but also for how literacy will be used within the social context of the classroom community. She examined teacher-student relationships to understand how literacy events in a high school chemistry class were defined and how the participants' beliefs and life experiences helped to shape the literacy events in this classroom. In this two-year, ethnographic study of one teacher with first year chemistry students, Moje (p. 180) found "literacy was practiced as a tool for organizing thinking and learning in the context of a relationship built between the teacher and her students."

This progressive definition becomes a consideration to be taken into account when investigating how particular communities of learners use literacy.

Attitudes About Content Area Literacy

Secondary Reading

Definitions for effective content teaching change and broaden as teachers prepare secondary students to be literate, independent learners in a changing world. The rationale for including reading instruction in middle school and high school teacher education programs
consistently refers to the importance of proficiency in literacy for individuals to meet the demands of daily living (Brozo & Simpson, 1995; Herber & Herber, 1993; Readence et al., 1995). Teaching students to read critically is fundamental as our schools become more diverse culturally (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994). Universal literacy for students in today's multicultural society has become a predominant concern for education in the United States (Readence et al., 1995).

Though reading expectations for high school students differ from those for elementary students, a need for literacy development in secondary education exists as well (Alvermann & Moore, 1991). For adolescents to survive and excel in the rapidly changing technological environment of today, higher levels of sophistication in their literacy skills such as reading, writing, and reasoning are required (Herber & Herber, 1993). The complexity of choosing instructional practices that will prepare secondary students to be successful in an information-oriented world is a challenge for content teachers.

Resistance to Literacy Instruction

Issues dealing with teaching reading in specific subject areas have been researched from several different pedagogical perspectives. Secondary teacher education instructors struggle with resistance to reading instruction, mandated guidelines for reading instruction,
and societal pressures on education to produce students with higher levels of competence in reading. There are content area teachers who are not aware of the positive impact literacy can have on learning in the classroom (Readence et al., 1995). In an investigation that examined preservice secondary teachers' perceptions about content instruction, Jackson and Cunningham (1994) found these teachers often do not teach study strategies to help students learn from text because of a lack of knowledge about the strategies.

Through the use of reflective journals, observations, interviews, and other qualitative research methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990), researchers are exploring attitudes and beliefs of teacher educators, inservice teachers, and preservice teachers about various pedagogical concerns, including literacy instruction. Insightful inquiry is being used to answer why positive or negative attitudes exist. Another question qualitative inquiry can answer involves how beliefs influence current thinking about content area literacy. Frager (1993) suggests that how teachers feel about and understand the contribution of reading in content area teaching effects the instructional decision-making that motivates (or discourages) high school students to read.
Teacher Education

University instructors are faced with the dilemma of offering content area reading courses that are mandated by state certification requirements (Farrell & Cirrincione, 1984; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990) to preservice secondary education students who are sometimes resistant to the instruction. Though research on teacher preparation is considered to be in its infancy (Huling-Austin, 1992), several studies have used reflective data obtained from university educators to establish reasons for resistance to these courses. Being in touch with their own perceptions, with their students' perceptions, and an awareness of attitudes about content reading instruction gives university instructors in various subject areas the ability to recognize the pressures facing secondary education teachers (Daisey & Shroyer, 1993).

Huling-Austin (1992) found that while approaches that are currently employed address many issues involved with acquiring expertise in instruction, other approaches might also be incorporated into teacher training programs. This variety in instructional activities can better prepare beginning teachers for the real world experiences and responsibilities of teaching in secondary schools. For example, in an informal study of undergraduate and graduate students, dialogue journals were used with positive results. Not only did these participants feel journal
writing helped build writing confidence, but also improvement in communication between student and instructor was reported, and several of the teachers began using journal writing in their own classrooms (Hennings, 1992).

Inservice Teachers

Reading, writing, and comprehension of text are considered to be essential elements of instruction in the middle and high school setting (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Herber & Herber, 1993; Moniuszko, 1992; Smith & Feathers, 1983a). Brozo and Simpson (1995, p. 16) state that "the potential power of literacy as a tool for social, political, and economic transformation is largely ignored in secondary schools." Inservice teachers vary in their responses to the importance of content area reading instruction.

Alvermann, O'Brien, and Dillon (1990) used observations, guided questions, and interviews to learn that some inservice teachers choose not to encourage reading comprehension through directed group discussions designed to demonstrate learning because of the ever-present pressure to cover the content and maintain classroom control. Pressure created by time constraints in content teaching to cover the content along with lack of expertise in the teaching of reading is also noted by O'Brien & Stewart (1990) to discourage literacy instruction.
In an investigation of four groups of teachers with varying levels of teaching experience from beginning pre-student-teaching to three or more years of teaching, Jackson and Cunningham (1994) used open-ended questions designed to examine teacher conceptions about study strategy instruction. One hundred and four participants' responses were examined. They found some of these teachers lacked knowledge about study strategies and felt confusion about which ones would be effective.

For teachers to include reading strategies in instructional decisions, there must be a knowledge of the strategy itself and an understanding of which strategies might be appropriate in different situations (Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). Within the subcultural setting of the schools, Tierney (1994) suggests a need for including sociopolitical issues and concerns outside the classroom that effect the lives of the participants on a daily basis. Ruddell and Unrau (1994) also note that reflective insight gained from analysis of students' responses to instructional activities will help teachers understand the meaning-construction taking place in context. This knowledge can then be used to refine their teaching to best meet learning needs.

The classroom teacher has the responsibility to facilitate learning in the classroom in such a way that students are collaborators within their community of
learners (Tierney & Pearson, 1994). Qualitative methods of inquiry can be utilized to investigate the every day realities of classroom communities. Communication and cooperation between students and between students and the teacher can be enriched by participants sharing personal perspectives and ideas.

Preservice Teachers

Preservice secondary teachers have been found to view content reading courses as "irrelevant to their future success as teachers" (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990, p. 101). However, research indicates student attitudes toward content reading courses before and after completing the course work can change positively with regard to the need for the courses and with regard to the content teacher's responsibility for teaching reading techniques to help students learn from text (Christiansen, 1986; Stewart & O'Brien, 1989).

While knowledge is gained by some students after completing content area reading courses, the reality of implementation of the strategies is questionable. Daisey (1993) suggests preservice teachers personally experience various literacy methods while they are in content reading courses in an effort to promote the learning value of the techniques. This would also enhance the potential for the students to incorporate the strategies into their own classrooms. Participatory action will, hopefully, reappear.

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in practice as teachers include student responses to instruction in lesson planning.

Rafferty (1990) used guided questions to study preservice teachers enrolled in education courses. She found no significant difference in content area reading knowledge occurred between students in an introductory teacher education class and students in a content reading class who had completed several more semesters of course work. Resistance to the application of reading methods in practice points to the need for preservice teachers to understand the rationale for lesson planning that incorporates literacy instruction.

O'Brien and Stewart (1990) conducted a study of 250 preservice teachers in an effort to discover the nature of any resistance to content reading instruction. These university students were enrolled in required content reading courses, but had not been involved in student teaching activities at the time the study was conducted. Instructional methods such as varied readings, small and large group discussions, and reflections in learning logs were utilized to initiate student thinking about reading in their respective content areas.

Qualitative data from five sources (pre-course statements, learning logs, group discussions, course evaluations, and structured interviews) was analyzed by
O’Brien and Stewart (1990). The analysis resulted in the following three assertions:

1. Resistance to content reading instruction is based in part on global perceptions about secondary schools as workplaces. Content reading is resisted because it is viewed as incompatible with the organization and traditions of secondary schools which themselves are viewed as immutable.
2. Resistance to content reading instruction is, in part, based on simple misconceptions about reading. Simple misconceptions not specifically tied to a disciplines’ pedagogical traditions are relatively easy to counter. However, there are also complex misconceptions tied to institutionalized practices that are much more difficult to counter.
3. Some of what appears to be resistance to content reading is actually one facet of a broader complex of preservice teachers’ assumptions about teaching and learning.

This study reveals some distressing examples of preservice teachers’ negative perceptions about reading in content areas. For instance, while one preservice teacher thought he might use the strategies later in his teaching career, he felt he would primarily use lecturing during the first years because this is what would be expected. Several such examples illustrate underlying beliefs about what teachers are "supposed" to do in practice in order to meet societal expectations and fit in with the predominant instructional practices in current classrooms.

Another aspect of attitudinal perceptions about content reading discussed by O’Brien and Stewart (1990) focuses on subject area subcultures and the membership within these cultures that excludes members of other disciplines. For example, a math major explained
mathematics as a process that involves a linear understanding of concepts that build upon each other toward more complex content, while dismissing English as "a series of almost unrelated, unsequenced events" (p. 115).

Examples of misconceptions found were such notions as a belief that a content reading course was mandated to assure preservice teachers met effective reading requirements; the idea that reading is a separate content area that should be taught by reading specialists with skills mastered before students enter secondary grades; and a belief that "hands-on" learning does not include reading (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990).

In this study, O'Brien and Stewart (1990) discuss two general assumptions that emerged from the data gathered. First, some of the preservice teachers involved in this study feel content reading instruction is "common sense" and lessons are "automatically" arranged to implement reading (p. 121). Second, there is a belief that subject area content and reading instruction are different disciplines and, therefore, the two are not compatible.

Teacher Beliefs

Aspiring teachers come into teacher education programs with a profusion of ideas and beliefs about what good teaching is and how they will go about the business of practicing good teaching (Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Years of experience with schools and with
teachers in the role of student help form belief systems about pedagogy and what constitutes excellence in teaching (Holt-Reynolds, 1992) for preservice teachers.

Changing Beliefs

In a study that involved preservice teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors and instructors, Hollingsworth (1989) chose 14 preservice teachers to follow through a 9-month graduate teacher education program. The purpose was to determine knowledge and beliefs about reading and classroom instruction as these students entered the program, attended classes, and taught in assigned schools as student teachers. Hollingsworth served as a participant observer in the program. This researcher's analysis of the data suggested prior beliefs were significant in learning to teach and changes in the thinking of preservice teachers could be predicted as students progressed through various stages of teaching knowledge and experience.

Initial beliefs were found by Hollingsworth (1989, p. 168) to be "filters for processing program content and making sense of classroom contexts." She identifies a need to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to apply important concepts from reading methods courses. Teacher beliefs and assumptions play an important role in decision making and instructional choices (Nespor, 1987; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). As new teaching experiences are encountered,
it is important for teachers to have the opportunity to express their own beliefs and share ideas with others. Pre-existing beliefs may be problematic in that they could be misleading and potentially unproductive.

Hollingsworth (1989) found the preservice teachers who exemplified the most knowledge growth were those who were challenged to confront pre-existing pedagogical beliefs about reading instruction and student learning from text. For example, looking up vocabulary words and then writing a sentence using each one was a method one preservice teacher discovered resulted in meaningless learning. The students who were doing the assignment seemed to be trying to be good students, but were not learning the vocabulary words as intended from the exercise. The realization that several different reading levels were represented in one classroom caused preservice teachers in this study to reflect upon the utilization of workbooks as unchallenging and unproductive in another experience that challenged prior beliefs. This researcher recommends teacher education programs be flexible in their approach so that preservice teachers with different ideas and beliefs can have the opportunity to begin to understand the complexities and varieties found within different classroom situations.

Holt-Reynolds (1992, p. 344) reports that "preservice teachers’ beliefs are well established, tenacious, and
powerful" and these beliefs are used as "criteria for evaluating the potential of the ideas" suggested to them in teacher education courses. She recommends that teacher educators investigate personal histories with preservice teachers in an effort to identify differences in definitions and values to generate discussion on pedagogical beliefs and theories.

The Role of Reflection

New teachers arrive in high school classrooms with an array of pedagogical ideas and instructional techniques. Often these ambitious teachers are filled with desire and expectations, but do not have the ability to articulate what their personal beliefs are about teaching and about their subject area knowledge. Also, some are uninformed about how to adjust instruction to meet the learning needs of their students (Olson & Singer, 1994). Olson and Singer explain that though teachers are eager to improve their teaching, they may not be aware of the role beliefs play in pedagogical decisions and actions.

O'Brien and Stewart (1990) examined preservice teachers' perceptions of themselves as practitioners and how past experiences work to shape their attitudes toward content reading instruction. These researchers found that for preservice teachers, there is "a strong identification...with their practicing counterparts and the
work place they will inhabit as practicing teachers" (p. 102).

In a study designed to explore teacher beliefs, Olson and Singer (1994) communicate the importance of teachers making positive changes in reading instruction that reflect their own personal beliefs. This requires an understanding of one's beliefs and how those beliefs frame instructional decisions. Twenty inservice secondary school reading teachers were participants in this study. Self-report inventories over a two-month period were completed that concerned beliefs about reading and reading instruction. Several instruments were employed to ascertain reading orientation and belief systems along with classroom observations and field notes, student inventories, and personal histories by two of the teachers. A Profile Sheet for each participant was developed to be used in discussions with the teachers and for reflective thinking.

The results of the Olson and Singer (1994) study indicate the teachers' belief systems matched their teaching practice. It is noted the responses given by the participants forced them to reflect upon the influence of their beliefs on their instructional decisions. This activity in itself is recognized as being a possible facilitator of voicing beliefs and visualizing the relationship of beliefs to actual practice. These researchers discuss the complexities of teaching and the
changing perceptions about literacy and literacy instruction in content areas. They found teacher profiles allow reflective insight into personal beliefs and practices. This information about one's teaching can be used to make instructional decisions that will respond to a variety of students' learning needs.

A study involving 9 preservice teachers who had no prior teaching experience, examined the personal history-based beliefs which these students used as a knowledge base from which they made instructional decisions (Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Data was obtained through loosely structured interview sessions conducted throughout a semester during which the participants were enrolled in a content area reading course. The researcher wrote personal histories for each interviewee. After the histories were reviewed for accuracy by the participants, the data was examined and categorized according to themes that emerged from the responses. Results indicate these preservice teachers used their existing beliefs to support and defend a lecturing, teacher-centered format of instruction as opposed to the student-centered, process-focused rationale presented in their course work.

While these teachers advocated variety in instruction and the importance of student interest, the foundation for their rationale for instructional effectiveness was found in their own personal belief systems. The participants
used prior experiences as students to predict how their students would react and to test theories offered in class.

**Content Knowledge Authority**

O’Brien and Stewart (1990) point out that the strong identity held by content area specialists with their own subject subcultures could be threatened by the introduction of what they feel to be a new content, reading. After observing and interviewing 50 subject matter teachers (including reading specialists) about reading in content areas, Courtney (1969, p. 29) reveals that some "teachers are not aware of the reading demands of their own subjects." Bruce and Wasser (1996, p. 285) warn against a "lack of a unified vision of literacy across the curriculum" which can cause some content teachers to minimize the role of literacy in learning and increase biases that separate reading instruction from content expertise.

**The Text**

The text is an integral component of instruction (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994), and there is widespread agreement in the literature that learning is enhanced when students are helped to use their texts efficiently and effectively (Brozo & Simpson, 1995; Herber & Herber, 1993; Robinson & Thomas, 1969; Tierney et al., 1990). Readence et al. (1995) indicate the text has its purpose as a source of information, but it is the teacher who has the
responsibility to help students successfully learn from text materials.

In an effort to discover how eight content area teachers use reading in instruction, Ratekin et al. (1985) conducted a qualitative study that included classroom observations and video recordings. They found practitioners tend to use the textbook as the primary source of confirmation of content for lecturing and class discussion as well as the basic source of information for assignments. In a similar vein, other researchers have found some teachers use the text as the curriculum (Vacca & Vacca, 1989).

Bruce and Wasser (1996) suggest a narrow focus on literacy instruction constrains learning content. These researchers consider three models of literacy that are used to discuss beliefs about reading—a Skills Model, an Instrumental Model, and an Inquiry Model. According to the skills model, reading is "a complex skill built out of a wide variety of other specific skills, such as identifying sequences, finding the main idea, processing the grammar of sentences and decoding vocabulary" (p. 186). The instrumental model depicts reading as a series of activities that begin with prereading, which "might include discussion, field trips, asking questions, making predictions and activities intended to activate prior knowledge or to generate interest on the part of the
reader" (p. 286). After reading, there are postreading activities such as writing assignments, further reading, or additional discussions. This model is described as "privileging" the prior knowledge needed to understand reading because for successful comprehension of what is read to take place, specific schemata are needed.

With the inquiry model, Bruce and Wasser (1996) present a view of instruction in which reading plays an important, but not central role in its relation to curriculum. They examined 30 preservice teachers’ comments during a social studies class session. It was discovered that these preservice teachers "assumed that textbooks spoke the truth, and (the teachers) had never examined them critically nor questioned their content" (p. 293). The preservice teachers participated in an activity that began with a "meaningful question" and engaged them "in the discovery of information related to the particular topic area" (p. 297). It is reported that these participants discovered instructional value for literacy development in the "examination of various modes and forms of discourse, broad questioning of one's own experience, and reflection on the social implications of the new knowledge" (p. 297).

The Teacher

Content area teachers value being very knowledgeable about their subject (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). However, Moll
(1994, p. 193) claims that "the teacher-student relationship is usually single-stranded, where the teacher possesses knowledge and the student is the intended recipient of that knowledge; there is surprisingly little deviation from that single-stranded relationship." Ruddell and Unrau (1994, p. 996) note, "It is the teacher who frequently assumes major responsibility for meaning negotiation within the social environment of the classroom."

Some researchers (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Ratekin et al., 1985; Smith & Feathers, 1983a, 1983b; Vacca & Vacca, 1989) report that students perceive the teacher as the knowledge authority in content classrooms. Ruddell and Unrau (1994) suggest the students who think the teacher is the source of authority for content meaning become limited in their interpretations of text. In a discussion of the teacher as the expert authority, Welker (1992) considers the view that teachers need to be learners themselves, rather than having the answers beforehand that students are expected to give back. He cautions that when the classroom focus is on the teacher's expertise, dominance in the classroom shifts away from the student. He further warns that teachers who "are obsessed with the need to have the answers and to pass on their knowledge" (p. 73) hinder independent, creative learning for their students.
Secondary content teachers struggle with various responsibilities, one of which is pressure to cover the information that is dictated by administration (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Brozo & Simpson, 1995). Therefore, teacher-centered instruction is often practiced in the form of lecturing (Holt-Reynolds, 1992). However, as Welker (1992, p. 136) explains, "the point of educational service is to get the student to perform, not to reserve performance for the teacher."

The Classroom Community

Rubin (1983, p. 11) describes content teachers' responsibility to help students learn the material by stating that "content matter is supreme, and the emphasis is not on the accumulation of discrete data or facts but on the understanding of generalizations." The idea that teachers are learners along with students is evident in Ruddell and Unrau's (1994) description of the teacher as a key element in the sociocognitive interactive model of the reading process. This conceptualization of the reading process places the reader, the text and classroom context, and the teacher as three major components that "are in a state of dynamic change and interchange as meaning negotiation and meaning construction take place" (p. 998).

Communication about reading assignments among students and the teacher was found to serve as a basis for the establishment of new interpretations for text (Santa
Barbara Discourse Group, 1994). In this study of a high school English class, it was also discovered that the interactions of the participants about readings gave new meaning to literacy expectations for this particular group. For example, new text was constructed through discussion and writing assignments shared within this setting. In a similar line of thought, meaning constructed from text within a classroom community is said to be in a constant state of restructuring as interaction takes place. However, Ruddell and Unrau (1994) emphasize the idea that meaning must be supported by the text.
Chapter 3
RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

A qualitative research model was used to guide the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the findings in this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990). The approach to interpretation focused "on individuals' perspectives and interpretations of their world" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8).

In this study, preservice teachers' literacy experiences, perceptions, and definitions for literacy terms were examined. Qualitative data collection activities, including interviewing and document review, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) were employed. The use of qualitative research involves repetitiveness in procedures to achieve understanding of one's lived experience (Patton, 1990). Therefore, the constant comparative method of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was applied.

Reflective Thinking

Reflection has been described as a manner of thinking about pedagogy that includes the ability to accept responsibility for decisions (Goodman, 1988; Ross, 1990; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Dewey (1933, 1964) explains that reflective thought is a logical process that ends with an understanding of the references that lead one to a
conclusion. Reflective practices provide opportunity to develop an attitude of open-mindedness in making instructional choices and the capability to consider new knowledge while thinking introspectively (Ross, 1990). As preservice teachers practice reflective activities, analytic skills develop that are useful in future teaching endeavors (O'Brien et al., 1995).

Teacher education students "acquire a simple yet powerful way to consider their teaching carefully and hence to become more thoughtful and alert students of teaching" through the practice of reflection (Cruickshank, 1985, p. 17). In a discussion about the value of allowing students to express their personal beliefs and pedagogical perspectives, Holt-Reynolds (1992) cautions against discouraging preservice teachers' enthusiasm and ambition about becoming a classroom teacher. The values, beliefs, and prior experiences which helped make education a career choice for these future teachers motivate and allow them to feel "they can make a difference to their students" (p. 346).

Through reflective activities, this study attempts to clarify preservice teachers' perceptions about the role literacy instruction plays in secondary teaching.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Model

Qualitative research methodology considers the uniqueness of individuals in their natural environments.
The research seeks to answer questions about "the socially constructed nature of reality" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 4). Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) explain that qualitative data "have strong potential for revealing complexity; such data provide 'thick descriptions' that are vivid, nested in a real context, and have a ring of truth that has strong impact on the reader." This methodology was used to generate particular knowledge in an effort to illustrate the pedagogical perceptions of preservice teachers within the context of literacy and content knowledge.

By design, the preservice teachers involved in this study had no formal teaching experience in the middle school or high school setting. Therefore, they were unable to contemplate actual practice experiences. It is reported that preservice teacher education students experience difficulty when asked to articulate personal assumptions about teaching and learning (Goodman, 1988; Trumbull & Slack, 1991). Cruickshank (1985, p. 40-41) observes that reflective practice "seems to satisfy the psychological needs of prospective teachers."

The conceptualization of reflection, for this investigation, was one vehicle used by the participants to question their perceptions about teaching. Though preservice students from different subject areas participated in this study, they were given the same
survey, asked the same questions, and interviewed in the same manner.

The Setting

The participants in this study were university students who were enrolled in a content area literacy course. This course is designed to provide middle and secondary school teachers with a knowledge of the reading process, methods and materials that can be implemented into classroom instruction, and skills for developing reading comprehension of students. Any university student seeking certification in secondary education is enrolled in the College of Education at this university and is required to take this content literacy course.

As anticipated, some of the students who were taking the course did have formal teaching experience (for example, a teacher seeking re-certification). However, the majority of those enrolled were senior university students who planned to begin student teaching practicums within the next year.

Selection of Participants

The participants were selected from two sections of the content area literacy course offered at the university during the fall semester of 1996. These classes had a combined enrollment of approximately 60 students. One section of the course was offered as a day class and the other as a night class. A different instructor taught each
section. The instructors collaborated on course objectives, and both required the same textbook. The course was offered in conjunction with a methods course in which students participated in limited field experiences at the end of the semester.

All students enrolled in the classes were given the opportunity to respond to the Student Survey form which included demographic information, teaching experiences, and several open-ended questions related to teaching expectations and content area literacy knowledge. Based on the demographic information on the Student Survey questionnaire, six students were selected as participants and two students were designated as alternates. An alternate would become a participant in the event someone dropped out of the study. Care was taken to choose one participant to represent a particular subject area typically offered in the high school curriculum.

Criteria for the selection of participants included:

- content area major
- teaching experience
- gender
- which content area literacy course
- university classification
- informal teaching experience

Efforts were made to find six students who were most alike in terms of the stated criteria. None of the participants reported having formal teaching experience, and all were designated as seniors at the university. Two males and one female were selected from one section of the content.
literacy course, and two females and one male were selected from the other section.

Participation in the project was voluntary, and each student was asked to sign a participation form that assured anonymity and gave the researcher permission to use the data generated from the various activities. Case studies on the six students were conducted. No one dropped out of the study; and, therefore, a replacement from the group of alternate participants was not necessary.

Data Collection Instruments

Multiple data points were used to collect information for the study. They included:

1) A questionnaire with demographic information and open-ended questions was completed by each student enrolled in the content reading classes. This instrument was titled, Student Survey, and it provided general information about the students and their perceptions regarding literacy instruction in their content areas.

2) Autobiographies of the six participating students' personal literacy histories were examined.

3) Guided Journal Entries were completed at approximately two-week intervals during the semester. The students were asked to discuss topics related to their decisions to become teachers, their perceptions about the profession of teaching, their definitions for literacy and content literacy, and their thoughts about the use of
instructional strategies in content areas in which they had a limited knowledge base.

4) **Personal Guided Interviews** were conducted with the six participants to gain a more in-depth description of their individual positions on pre-determined topics and other issues that emerged from the journal responses.

5) **Observations** were conducted by the researcher during three class sessions of each section of the content area literacy course. The researcher assumed the role of observer, taking field notes during the observation visits.

**Data Collection Procedure**

Several procedures were developed to obtain data used to answer the research questions. The procedures included: 1) a questionnaire that asked for biographical information and responses to open-ended questions; 2) an autobiographical account of participants’ personal literacy histories; 3) guided journal entries; 4) individual interview sessions; and, 5) observations. In addition to these procedures, informal interviews were held with the instructors for descriptive information about the setting and clarification. Pseudonyms were assigned to replace all names to ensure anonymity.

**The Student Survey**

The purpose for using a confirmation survey instrument, as described by Goetz and LeCompte (1984, p. 121), "is to assess the extent to which participants hold
similar beliefs, share specific constructs, or execute comparable behaviors." The Student Survey questionnaire was completed at the beginning of the semester by all of the students enrolled in the two content area literacy courses. Information from the Student Survey was examined to produce profiles of the six students and to verify the existence of common issues that emerged from the data.

**Autobiographies**

Because one's own experiences play an important role in the formulation of perceptions and beliefs, participants were asked to describe their experiences with literacy in an autobiographical narrative. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p. 135), "autobiography, rich in detail, written for the purpose of telling the person's own story as he or she experienced it...can be an introduction to the world you want to study." The literacy autobiographies of the six participants were transcribed for analysis.

**Journals**

The time spent in the field for observations and data collection was approximately three months during the fall semester. During this semester, the students were asked to keep a response journal. All of the students enrolled in the classes were asked to record their responses to the researchers' topics in their journals as a participation assignment given by the course instructors.
The researcher provided the journals and consulted with the course instructors about scheduling class time for the writing activities. The journals were given to the students with the appropriate guided entry prompt on five occasions during the semester, and class time was allocated for them to complete their entries. Students who were not present to write in their journals caught up with their entries during subsequent writing sessions. The journals were collected after each entry, and the writings of the six participants were transcribed.

Personal Guided Interviews

The final data collection procedure consisted of individual, taped interview sessions. The interview sessions were conducted by the researcher with each of the six participants individually. Information from the interviews was audio-taped and transcribed for analysis as recommended by Spradley and McCurdy (1972) for maximum accuracy of the data. Each tape began with an announcement that included the date and place of the interview. The tapes will be erased after final approval of the study has been obtained to assure the continued anonymity of the participants.

Observations

Descriptive field notes were recorded during classroom observations. As recommended by Patton (1990), the notes were dated and included detailed descriptions of the
setting; quotations from people in observed activities; and the observer's feelings, reactions, and interpretations of the experience. The field notes were transcribed and incorporated into the research to provide "the reader of the study findings to experience the activity observed through the research report" (p. 239).

Data Analysis

The study focused on the reflections of the participating students and their responses to the data collection instruments and interview questions.

Case Studies

Case studies were constructed for six preservice teachers. Patton (1990) contends that data analysis is dependent upon the interpretation of themes which emerge from the data gathered. Consequently, as the text is considered, a general theme emerges and then separates into clusters or categories of meaning. The themes are then integrated into a narrative form of interpretation of the participant's background and perceptions. In order to maintain subjectivity in the descriptions of the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 1990), the process involved multiple data sources, evaluator triangulation, and validation of information by the participants.

Data Source Triangulation

To ensure trustworthiness, the constant comparative method of analysis was used as a guide for understanding
the data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Throughout the fieldwork, the information collected was reviewed. The responses to the open-ended questions on the Student Survey, guided journal entries, and interviews were analyzed and categorized on separate occasions. Data was coded into tentative conceptual categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) as they emerged from responses generated during each procedure.

The purpose of this study was to investigate preservice teachers' perspectives about content area literacy. In addition to the thematic issues the research was designed to investigate, several subsequent issues emerged. For example, it was discovered that relevancy of content material to students and the content area reading course experience were issues these preservice teachers perceived to be significant in their discussions.

Categorizing is described as "an invention of ways to classify and organize experience" (Spradley & McCurdy, 1972, p. 61). Categories were adjusted for clarification of the concepts and ideas noted in the data to further explore the perceptions of the participants.

As information was collected and examined, questions emerged that were used to further guide the investigation. These questions were addressed during the interview sessions with the participants. For example, the kinesiology preservice teacher was asked to explain the
difference between a teacher and a coach. Findings and subsequent information were compared to initial categories and modifications were made (or new categories established) so the information could be presented in clearer detail for further analysis.

Analyst Triangulation

Multiple methods of data collection and triangulation of data analysis contributed to methodological rigor for this project (Patton, 1990). To establish consistency in data analysis and to accomplish triangulation of the interpretations, three individuals examined the data from the autobiographies, journal entries, and interview sessions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Consequently, the concept of objectivity in data analysis technique and interpretation was reinforced (Peshkin, 1988).

The participants' responses were transcribed individually and then grouped together according to each entry. The course instructors for both of the content area literacy classes and I independently read each group of responses. Each analyst read the information and developed separate sets of categories that emerged from the data. By reading and rereading the transcriptions, the topics used to label the categories were modified to include additional information, combine current topics, and reword previously labeled categories for clarification.
After each analyst was satisfied that the individual categories of information and the topics assigned to them accurately characterized the data gathered from the participants, we met to compare our interpretations and develop the general categories that would best describe the responses to the journal entries. Together we compared our categorical listings with each other and with the original data from the journals. We included supporting information from the interview sessions to supplement applicable categories.

Objectivity in the interpretation of the data was discussed. When there was discrepancy in descriptions or terminology, consensus was reached before continuing. An example of this collaborative process was the decision to use the term "teacher as learner" as opposed to "teacher as student."

The analysts' professional knowledge influenced the inclusion of items in particular categories. For example, three categories emerged from the data that had to do with the classroom community, society in general, and family issues. It was mutually decided that a general category of Communities would be established to combine these three sub-categories.

Member-checking

A review of the findings by the participant to help establish credibility of interpretations of the data is
described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as member-checking. Student participants in this research were given the opportunity to examine their own case studies for accuracy in transcription and interpretation prior to the final report of findings. A verification form was signed and dated by each participant.

**Cross-case Analysis**

Strategies for cross-case analysis of the six case studies created from the findings were implemented as described by Denzin and Lincoln (1994). Recurring themes that emerged from analysis of the data collected through each procedure were organized into five categories that represent the participants' perceptions of significant issues in content instruction.

Information from the individual student responses was then re-visited to include data from the thematic categories condensed from the full data set. The cases were inspected for similarities and differences, patterns, and other comparable variables which appeared. According to Huberman and Miles (1994, p. 437), this type of further examination will lead to other themes that could be grouped by "cases that share some characteristics."

**Confidentiality**

The names and other identifying information of all participants and informants were considered to be confidential. Pseudonyms replaced the names of
participants, informants, and the university in reporting findings. Permission slips were signed by each student and kept on file throughout the study.
"I didn’t realize that I was going to be that responsible for encouraging students to read. I just assumed students would like to read."
(Rose, Interview)

Introduction

In this chapter, six case studies representing the six preservice secondary teachers that participated in this study are discussed. Characteristics of the participants are described along with their reasons for becoming teachers and how they chose the content area in which they wanted to teach. In each participant’s story, their perceptions about various aspects of literacy instruction and their reflections about themselves as teachers are recounted. Through reading their journal entries and talking with them individually, I gained a sense of these preservice teachers’ past experiences with literacy and how those experiences have flavored their perceptions of literacy instruction.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), comparative case studies can be used to focus on and attempt to understand the dynamics of similarities between various participants. As a study progresses, the process of data collection and analysis is ongoing. Questions emerge and analytical insights that occur during data collection can improve the quality of the study. As explained by Patton (1990), questions generated and resolved during the study
and interpretations that emerged while data was being collected serve as primary and secondary sources for final analysis of the information.

Comprehensive, systematic information about each participant is gathered in the case study approach to qualitative data analysis (Patton, 1990). The information found in these case studies offers insight into what it is like to be a preservice secondary education teacher.

General Background Information

Each of the six preservice teachers who were participants in this study was enrolled in a content area literacy class at the same university during the 1996 fall semester. None of them had formal teaching experience prior to and during the time this research was conducted. For the purpose of this study, formal teaching is defined as practicing the profession of a teacher; receiving pay for classroom instruction. While each of the participating students focused on a different content area, all were classified by the university as secondary education majors.

In order to understand how this group of preservice teachers perceived literacy instruction and how they perceived themselves as teachers, each participant’s story was examined to provide insight into their worlds of pedagogy. As shown in Table 4.1, the participants have several similar characteristics. The ages represented by the group range from 21 to 37 years. To achieve a balance
within the group, three males and three females were chosen to participate, and three students from each of the two content area reading courses offered during the semester were selected.

Table 4.1
Participant Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Formal Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>University Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fran Vocational Family &amp; Consumer Sciences</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Science</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Kinesiology</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penni Mathematics</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas Social Studies</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each story begins with a Teaching Vignette which describes the preservice teachers at the time in their teaching careers that this study takes place. The first story is Fran, a Vocational Family and Consumer Sciences teacher. The second story is Daniel, a Secondary Science teacher. The third story is Jeff, a Kinesiology teacher. The fourth story is Penni, a Mathematics teacher. The fifth story is Lucas, a Social Studies teacher. The final story is Rose, an English teacher. These six prospective teachers are introduced in the next section.
Fran

Teaching Vignette

Fran is 28 years old, and she is a senior Vocational Family and Consumer Sciences Education major. Fran has had some exposure to teaching in a day care setting and occasionally plays the role of teacher with her step-children and nieces and nephews. She remembers wanting to be a teacher since she was in the ninth grade in high school.

Fran chose her content area because of her strong belief in the practical aspects of the field of family and consumer sciences. She has always loved this subject; therefore, she majored in family and consumer sciences education when she entered college after graduating from high school. She dropped out of college after one year, but enrolled again with the same major three years ago. She acknowledges she has never considered any other field of study.

Fran thinks good teaching occurs when students are motivated to learn. She considers instilling the "desire to learn" in a student to be a characteristic of good teaching. Also, she believes students who are challenged to think will naturally be motivated to learn. In Fran's opinion, a teacher's ability to show the relevancy of the material within the content area is an important aspect of teaching.
Literacy and Content Area Teaching

Definitions

The ability to read and comprehend general information was included in Fran's definition for literacy. She further explained that learners who are content literate can understand, define, recognize, and comprehend information in specific content areas. According to Fran, one must possess the ability to read and comprehend information as well as to recognize letters of the alphabet and be able to write to be considered literate. Anyone who cannot read or write would be considered illiterate, even if that person possessed a limited amount of knowledge about the alphabet in general.

Her experiences with children helped to define her perceptions of literacy along with various other life experiences. An example she offered was encounters she had with people while helping them complete job applications. Problems with following written directions also contributed to Fran's ideas about literacy.

Experiences

Fran could recall little, if anything, about her earliest reading experiences. She recalled "See Jane Run" books from first grade. She did not enjoy reading, and she was not required to do much reading in school. However, she remembered enjoying being read to as a young child and continued to enjoy this practice by listening to books on
tape. Her high school reading was "just enough to do well on the tests and make good grades." In college, she usually resented reading because of its demands upon her limited time schedule.

Fran, who considered herself to be a "very detailed person," frequently read consumer-oriented information such as directions for new products, food labels, warranties, and the newspaper. She explained she liked to read the Bible and several magazines and enjoyed browsing through bookstores. She collected books that contain practical, useful information. She did not enjoy reading fiction. She regretted not having been exposed to more reading during her adolescent years.

**Instruction**

Fran explained that in her subject area, many hands-on activities are incorporated into the learning experiences of students. She planned to require her students to "do some type of reading in order to complete the task at hand." Examples she offered included pattern guide sheets in clothing construction, following a recipe in food preparation laboratory activities, and reading labels in consumer education classes. She stated that opportunities for reading "in my area of study are endless--they simply need to be incorporated in the classroom lesson plans." Fran planned to experiment with reading aloud to her students and hoped that teenagers would like it. She
wanted to use newspapers, catalogs, and magazines because "you can always find something that's relevant" in them.

The role of teacher as learner was stressed by Fran as a necessary component of teaching in all content areas. She had as one of her goals, the establishment of a cooperative learning environment among the members of her classrooms. Fran related that higher levels of thinking result when students question each other and the materials they are asked to read. In her area of family and consumer sciences, Fran explained she will be required to teach several different courses. When asked if any of them would include reading, she said, "They will all include reading." Fran felt comprehension strategies and questioning techniques would help her identify reading weaknesses in her students. She also expressed the possibility of using word games, writing in dialogue journals, and including vocabulary instruction in her teaching. In Fran's opinion, "the textbook is a guide," and she thought she could teach without it.

Content Knowledge

When faced with the scenario of teaching in a content area in which she did not feel comfortable with her own knowledge expertise, Fran stated many literacy strategies would be needed so that students could learn as much as possible from the text and other information sources.
She described the practical aspects of her own content area (such as parenting, nutrition education, making decisions, and reading food preparation directions) as "life skills." She said she would strive to show that the information in her content area is relevant to her students' everyday lives. She did not see herself as an "all knowing" teacher, but as a learner along with her students. She described herself as a "discerner of information" and preferred to have several resources for verification of information. She pointed out that this would result in more work for her, but she believed many points of view were valuable to a teacher.

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

Fran said literacy "is an important foundation to learning." She believed that using the literacy strategies she learned in the content area literacy course in her teaching would help her students become more successful readers. The course brought her more awareness about reading and writing in the classroom and how literacy strategies can be incorporated into teaching to help students comprehend the material. Even though she did not realize the reasons for having to take a content area literacy course at the beginning of the semester, she came to understand the connection that reading has to different subjects as the course progressed. Fran gave an example to
Illustrate the usefulness of what she learned. She said if she gets "stumped with vocabulary," she can make a puzzle or play a vocabulary game--"and it's reading instruction."

**Self as Teacher**

As a result of spending time reflecting upon literacy, Fran felt she was beginning to look at the "big picture" of teaching. She realized her students will probably not remember details and all the facts, but hoped the concepts she will teach them (for example, how to follow step-by-step directions) will transfer to the rest of their lives. She planned to promote literacy in her teaching because she felt literacy was important for students after high school. She saw herself as a teacher that would instill "a yearning for learning" in her students and cause them to think at higher levels.

**Daniel**

**Teaching Vignette**

Daniel is 37 years old, and he is a senior Secondary Science Education major. Daniel decided to become a teacher about a year and a half ago. He was looking for a career change at the time and was helping his wife (a high school teacher) with tutoring. He was also involved with coaching teenagers and said that becoming a teacher just "fell into place" for him. He did some work as an assistant in a high school science lab, taught in Sunday School, and counseled at various summer camps.
Daniel chose secondary science as his content area major because of his personal interest in the subject. He explains that it seemed "both logical and sensible" that he would be more effective in generating student interest in science if it were a subject he enjoyed himself.

According to Daniel, a good teacher is an effective teacher. In his opinion, this kind of teaching has taken place when students walk away with an understanding of the material that allows them to "expound upon the knowledge" and apply what they have learned.

Literacy and Content Area Teaching

 Definitions

The ability to read, write, speak, and hear a language as well as understand the context in which it is used was the definition Daniel offered for literacy. A way of speaking and writing information about his subject to a target group broadened his definition to content literacy. Daniel related that he thought society has a dividing line which is used to determine a literate or illiterate person. This criteria is based upon "whether or not you can read, understand, and respond to written text." He agreed with this societal definition with the addition of verbal communication.

His perceptions of literacy were affected by his own experiences as a student. Also, he discovered that
literacy became very important to him when writing instructions for others to follow.

Experiences

Daniel could not actually remember learning to read. His earliest memory of reading was "a light turning on somewhere in the third or fourth grade." During this time in his life, he recalled reading things like magazines, books, labels, and newspapers, but not being very interested in reading school books. He enjoyed being able to choose what he wanted to read, and when and for how long he would read.

During his high school years, he liked reading adult fiction, but did not place school books "high on my list." While in college, with the demands of work, family, and school, Daniel said he rarely read anything other than required readings from classes. He did, however, occasionally purchase a book to read during semester breaks, and scheduled some reading time for magazines, short stories, and the morning newspaper.

Instruction

Daniel noted that he did plan to use the textbook in his teaching. He planned to give his students an outline or use a graphic organizer to structure the information he will present. He wanted to offer his students something they could attach to their existing knowledge to make understanding easier for them. He felt pre-reading
activities would help introduce new material and organized study guides with pictures would help accommodate different types of learners. He also felt analogies would fit well into his subject area and that the KWL strategy was "very interesting."

Daniel’s intention was to "push to establish vocabulary as a tool that is always in use." He believed vocabulary should be incorporated into the lesson and class discussions as opposed to a list of definitions used for test questions. If the technical terminology could be mastered, he believed the concepts would be easier for the students to learn.

Daniel thought literacy should be promoted in high schools as a way to meet the objective that each student understand basic principles rather than memorize listed facts. However, he expressed concern about structuring his class within the requirements of the state and concern about time limitations for his classes, particularly for hands-on learning such as lab work. When asked if literacy instruction would be included in his lesson planning, he said he did not "know how much time is going to be left over."

Content Knowledge

Daniel related a recent experience during which he was surprised to discover some information he did not know in a tenth grade biology textbook. He also shared a story about
going to several different science classes to observe how veteran teachers with different teaching styles taught the same subject. Through these observations, he recognized that some students learn visually, some learn auditorily, and that each student brings a totally different background into the classroom.

Daniel discussed those students who are self-motivated. These are the students, he explained, that see the teacher as an aid—they will do the work themselves. He further explained that the majority of students could not learn without a teacher because they cannot see how science would apply to them personally. When challenged by teaching in a content area in which he felt he had limited expertise, Daniel recognized he would have to broaden his base knowledge of the subject through literacy. He said he would be a "literacy student" in this situation, and he would include his students in the "adventure" of learning the new information.

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

At the beginning of the semester, Daniel saw the content area literacy course he was enrolled in to be relevant, but expressed that he had "more questions than answers." His desire was to know specific ways to incorporate literacy into his content area. During the latter weeks of the semester, he felt the course had
affected his perceptions about literacy in high school classrooms in that it had given him "a lot of ideas." He noted again that there was confusion on his part and acknowledged it was probably due to his lack of experience in the classroom.

Self as Teacher

Daniel felt he would be a demanding teacher, but intended to treat his students with respect. He learned more about himself as he reflected upon literacy during his participation in this study. He found his real concern was not with whether his students would like him, but with what they would learn. He reached the understanding that students learned differently because he recognized that, as a learner himself, he had used two or three different sources to reach understanding. Daniel indicated he would use stronger students as peer helpers with weaker ones "without their realizing it." He wanted to be a flexible teacher; he did not see himself as a teacher who "puts things up on an overhead and sits down."

Jeff

Teaching Vignette

Jeff is 21 years old, and he is a senior Kinesiology Education major. Jeff cannot actually remember the moment when he decided to become a teacher, but states, "I’ve always had a desire to touch the lives of people and help them in any way that I could." He has coached summer
baseball, but has no formal teaching experience. Jeff comes from a family of teachers. His mother is a teacher and taught Jeff reading during junior high school. He also has a sister who is a teacher and "close to fifteen relatives" who teach. He surmises, "I guess you could say that teaching is in my blood."

Jeff chose kinesiology education as his major because he wanted to become a coach as well as a teacher. When asked what he felt to be the difference between a teacher and a coach, Jeff explained that teaching involves more knowledge and skills and that coaching involves more recreation. He believes one must be a teacher first and a coach second. In his kinesiology and health education classes, he hopes to combine helping students learn to use their minds as well as their bodies. He also plans to teach in his minor area of math and later to become a principal. He wants to get his master's degree in mathematics and perhaps teach algebra at the college level in the future.

According to Jeff, good teaching is "giving the knowledge and skills that you have acquired as a teacher to your students." He explains that teachers and coaches have the responsibility to push students to higher levels of accomplishment.
Literacy and Content Area Teaching

Definitions

To Jeff, literacy was defined as "the ability to read and comprehend material." One who could do this was considered to be literate. One who was unable to perform this task was considered to be illiterate. In Jeff's opinion, content literacy additionally involved reading and comprehending material "in a particular area of interest."

Watching his mother and older sister in their teaching helped him define his perceptions of literacy. While he believed it would be difficult to integrate reading into kinesiology, he did see the possibility of having students read about a particular sport. However, he quickly pointed out this "would take away from the student's physical exercise." He stated he felt kinesiology was "not necessarily written things—but skills and staying healthy."

Experiences

Jeff remembered sitting in his mother's lap and reading with her at a very young age. However, he did not recall enjoying reading while he attended elementary through high school. He remembered helping a classmate in junior high school who was not a good reader. He could only think of three books he had read by the time he entered college. With the increase in reading that postsecondary education demanded, Jeff found reading
relaxed him and gave him a chance to unwind. He added, though, that he had not yet "reached a level of total enjoyment" through reading.

**Instruction**

Jeff planned to use rule books "and things like that" for various sports in his kinesiology department. He also planned to use the textbook to teach health education. Journals were another kind of text he felt he would incorporate into his instructional planning, and he added that articles about how exercise affects cardiovascular endurance would be useful. Sports magazines and the sports page of the newspaper were other things Jeff felt would be "good for them to read."

When asked about using vocabulary strategies in his teaching, Jeff responded by saying, "Maybe in the health part...I feel like we should stay outside as much as possible in learning skills and things like that. You get more out of it when you do it hands-on than you do when you’re sitting in the classroom reading." He acknowledged vocabulary would be important when learning about a particular sport or when learning about the body in health education.

**Content Knowledge**

Jeff stated students need more classroom time to read, but reading would "take away from" a student’s time for physical exercise in a kinesiology classroom. He further
believes that students become bored with simple instructions such as read the chapter and answer the questions. He suggested an "after-school program" would best help students improve reading proficiency.

If teaching in a content area in which he did not have expertise, Jeff felt literacy would be "a large part of this type of class." In this situation, he felt students would learn much more by reading information than "from me explaining it to them." Group work would be emphasized, and he would involve himself more with his students and their learning by discussing the material more as a peer than as a teacher.

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

Jeff said the content area literacy course helped him realize there are high school students who are "not getting the reading in a reading classroom" and, "even in kinesiology" students need to be encouraged to read. He thought the course gave students "a chance to realize the importance of incorporating reading into their content area."

Self as Teacher

Because Jeff always wanted to be a teacher and had been coaching for a while, he explained he usually tended to look at things and think about how he would teach them to his future students. He considered promoting literacy
in high school classrooms to be important because literacy helps students understand their worlds and improves their vocabularies.

Jeff felt his kinesiology background would help him teach his players to stay physically fit and healthy throughout life. He noted that in his role as teacher, reading information would be beneficial for him and his students because it would give them a chance to "cooperate with each other to learn the material." He recognized not reading much in high school hurt him as a college student.

Penni

Teaching Vignette

Penni is 23 years old, and she is a senior Mathematics Education major. Penni has no formal teaching experience, but has tutored high school students in math, taught a preschool Sunday School class, and conducted math "help sessions" while attending college. Penni decided to become a teacher after many years of saying she never would. Her mother was also a teacher.

When she first started college, Penni majored in math because she "always loved math," did very well in it, and wanted to use math later on in her career as well as in her daily life. However, she decided to change her major to management because her parents owned a business she was involved with at the time. Penni's comment for the content area of management--"I hated it!"

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Penni left college before completing her degree. After having children, she returned to school, majoring in secondary mathematics education. Penni felt teaching would give her the opportunity to study math once again. In fact, she could not think of any other subject she would rather teach. She also recognizes that teaching will give her time off to spend with her children. Penni looks forward to sponsoring high school level extracurricular activities such as the dance team, homecoming, and prom.

In Penni’s opinion, good teaching involves recalling prior knowledge and expanding upon it. To re-enforce new topics, she says "teaching tools" such as projects and group assignments will help students remember information. She feels a math teacher has the opportunity to discover if a student has "literacy deficits" or perhaps "just needs a little help from time to time." This could be accomplished through the use of journal writing which she says "a lot of reform teachers" are now using in their math classrooms.

Literacy and Content Area Teaching

Definitions

Her definition for literacy included the ability to read and write, but Penni expanded these competencies to being able to read and write sufficiently enough "to survive in our society." Her definition for content literacy included a knowledge of vocabulary in a subject area. She described a person who could read and write as
well as comprehend or understand printed materials as literate. She described an illiterate person as one unable to read and write and elaborated on this point by saying that being illiterate makes it hard for a person to survive in our society.

Experiences

Penni could not remember when she learned to read, because for as long as she could remember, she knew how to read. She believed she must have been very young when her mother taught her how to read. She recalled always wanting to read, voluntarily reading her mother’s kindergarten classroom books along with her own books during her elementary school years. She also read her brother’s reading books he brought home from school. This brother was a year ahead of Penni in school, and she would remember the stories the next year when she was assigned the same books.

Penni did not enjoy being required to read particular materials in middle and high school. She continued to dislike assigned readings at the college level. She did, however, enjoy reading fiction novels and magazines during her high school years and continued to read them while in college.

Instruction

"Math classes do not use a lot of reading and writing skills, but they are slowly evolving!" Penni made this
response when asked how she as a high school teacher planned to meet the literacy needs of her students. She felt the use of dialogue journals would be a great way to give math students the opportunity to discuss what was on their minds. Such things as what they do or do not understand could be expressed through journal writings. She also noted she could assess problems or misconceptions about learning and determine whether a student was having trouble with reading and writing. She explained that "a math teacher cannot determine this just by working problems!"

Penni stated, "There's not a lot of vocabulary in math, I don't think." She did plan to use "the new math instruments where you can do motion things and it will graph it for you on your calculator." Along with the textbook and specialized calculators (with probe adapters), Penni planned to use computer programs in her instruction and a "problem of the week" (for extra credit) which she would post for each one of her classes. Problems from her students' science classes and other subject areas would be included in her instruction to help students see the relevance of math to their lives outside the math classroom.

Content Knowledge

Penni felt she would be able to teach high school math without a textbook. To explain this, she stated, "because
math has this foundation, and you just build on what you’ve taught before--build on their prior knowledge." She said she would use the textbook as a base or "sort of an outline" adding that she may "jump back and forth in the book," but the information would be in a logical sequence for her way of teaching it.

Literacy would definitely be in her instructional planning if she found herself teaching in another content area. Penni said she "would have to read the student’s text as well as use some outside sources." She believed she would be able to incorporate math into many other subjects and stressed the importance of making the information relevant to the students.

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

At the beginning of the semester, Penni questioned why she was required to take a reading course because she thought her students would be reading only an occasional word problem in her math classes. As the course progressed, she realized literacy was involved with "learning how to get them [students] to remember things." For example, group work and peer assistance were teaching strategies Penni said she would use in her teaching because she discovered that some students learn differently than the way she does.
She also said she learned about the use of visuals (such as flow charts) and songs ("math" words to familiar tunes) as strategies that could help students remember mathematical formulas. Penni felt her students would definitely use the literacy strategies they learn in her classroom in other subject areas.

Self-as Teacher

After reflecting upon the role literacy will play in her future teaching, Penni stated that she recognized the ability to read and write is something "you surely have to do in a math classroom!" She also noted that her students "will have to be able to read beyond--they have to understand what they're reading." She clarified this by saying her students would not be able to apply math strategies to word problems if they do not understand what they are reading. Penni thought reading was important in every high school classroom, and determining her students' reading abilities would help her decide what she needs to teach.

Lucas

Teaching Vignette

Lucas is 21 years old, and he is a Social Studies Education major. Lucas decided to become a teacher during his freshman year of college. For an English assignment, he had to write a paper on what his career choice would be. He conducted research on teaching, interviewed some
teachers, and decided teaching would "be good for me."
Lucas enjoys watching people learn. While he has no formal
teaching experience, he has taught a Sunday School class.
He has discovered through his education courses that
"preparing to teach is more work than the actual teaching."

Because he has always been interested in history and
government, Lucas chose secondary social studies education
as his major.

Good teaching to Lucas is effective, "impact
teaching." This involves students wanting to learn and
having interest in the material "because of the impact and
influences you [the teacher] have on them." He feels a
teacher should be organized and present the material well.
Lucas says, "Most of the time, 'good' teaching will produce
'good' student results."

Literacy and Content Area Teaching
Definitions

Lucas defined literacy as the ability to read and
write "legibly on a small scale." The ability to
understand what was being read in such a way that it could
be explained was how he defined content literacy. He felt
a literate person could read and write even if some
passages or books could not be understood. It was his
opinion that an illiterate person could not read or write.

Experiences he had with illiterate people and people
with dyslexia affected Lucas's perception of literacy. He
added that the importance of being literate was "pushed on me by my parents."

Experiences

Lucas remembered early literacy experiences reading in groups in a kindergarten class. His teacher would work with each group, and there were weak and strong readers in each group. He recalled being a strong reader. He was never told he was a good reader, but he knew because he "read a little quicker" and was able to help his classmates with their reading. He did not realize at the time that he was expected to help his peers—"I was just helping my friends." He became somewhat more of an independent reader during his middle school years and was reading alone on his own time during his high school years. During high school, he said students would read assignments alone and then discuss the readings together in class.

In college, he acknowledged that reading assignments were rarely discussed in class; students were just tested on what they were supposed to read. He would have liked for his college reading experiences to have been more like his high school experiences, because he felt class discussions on the readings were beneficial.

Instruction

Lucas stated that he believed students' literacy proficiencies would be enhanced by writing assignments. He planned to have his students write research papers and to
give essay-type questions on exams rather than questions which require students to "fill in bubbles or letters." He felt scantron tests and objective tests hurt students in terms of their literacy abilities, and subjective questioning would allow students the opportunity to share their opinions. He anticipated he would definitely use class discussions about reading assignments.

In Lucas's opinion, students have a chance to talk about their own ideas when they work in small groups. The textbook was considered by Lucas to be a base for his instruction. He planned to use videos and journal and newspaper articles in his teaching. He stated that reading "is a great way to cover" areas such as history and the culture of a society, and that government issues and politics will always be in the newspapers. According to Lucas, vocabulary instruction will be necessary because "when you're lecturing...you'll be using words--so-called history words that they need to be familiar with."

**Content Knowledge**

Lucas stated he would have more of an impact with his teaching if he taught what he knows the most about. He felt he could teach without a textbook, but it would be more work for him outside of class. He discovered "some things I didn't know" by looking at a high school textbook, and expected that during his first year of teaching he would probably learn a lot of things. He thought sharing
additional knowledge that supports information in the text was important because it lets students know "you really know something."

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

Lucas believed secondary content teachers needed a literacy course because "it is important to understand about the reading problems that students in high school classrooms might have." He explained the course helped him become more knowledgeable about literacy strategies to use and how to help his students be better able to comprehend the material they will be reading.

Self as Teacher

Teaching will be "enjoyable, but challenging." Lucas said students need to see that their teachers know more than just the information in the textbook. He recalled that he found teachers who added information and could go into detail about their subject were more credible and he respected them more. Because there is a lot of reading in history, Lucas felt literacy would be an important part of his instruction.

Reflecting upon the role literacy will play in his teaching helped him make a shift away from the point of view of a student, because he had to look at himself as a teacher in order to answer the questions. He wanted to remember how it felt to be a high school student, because
he could adapt what he had experienced into his instruction to help his students learn.

Rose

Teaching Vignette

Rose is 24 years old, and she is an English Education major. Rose always wanted to be a teacher. Her father was a high school math teacher and her mother was also a teacher. She and her younger sister often played teacher-student when they were children. She has no formal teaching experience but taught 5 and 6 year old children at her church.

In the beginning, Rose chose science as her major. She explains she was interested in knowing "why things are the way they are." However, she later changed her major from science to English because "science was too male oriented" and English was easier for her. She does have plans to get alternative certification in general science, because "that is where my heart is." When asked if she thought it was the field of science that was too male oriented or the department in which she was studying, she said she felt both were. She quickly added that she really enjoys English and makes good grades in it.

Rose includes caring and understanding as characteristics of good teaching. She feels that interacting with students and having discussions with them helps a teacher and her students learn and grow together.
Making literature relevant to the student, in her opinion, is important. Rose also expresses the opinion that her students should see her reading, enjoying books, and writing so they will know she believes literacy activities are important.

Literacy and Content Area Teaching

Definitions

Rose defined literacy as "being able to draw inferences, conclusions, and meaning from materials." Being able to understand the materials that one reads and works with in a specific content area was her explanation for content literacy. She felt that a literate person could function in the world and gather information from reading. An illiterate person would not be able to do these things.

Experiences

Rose described her first memories of reading as "me being in first grade struggling to read aloud in a group of ten students while they laughed." She did not remember her parents reading to her, but during her childhood she was "surrounded" by books. Her dad had a college degree and read a lot, and her mother "read romance books every night." She does not recall being encouraged to read at home.

Her love for reading developed during her middle school years when reading became an escape "into the lives
of others. I was able to visit far away romantic places where people were always happy and content." She described her own life during this period as "less than pleasant." She found books to be fun and exciting and enjoyed reading science fiction.

Then, teachers began to assign particular books for her to read and required her to complete book reports. She recalled "utter terror" at being called upon by her teacher to share a book report with the class. Even though she hated reading during middle school, she rediscovered her love for reading when she was in high school. An English teacher introduced her to "the horror of Edgar Allan Poe and the romance of William Shakespeare." Because this teacher made the classics "come alive" for her, she began reading again.

**Instruction**

Rose said she believed literacy instruction would be important in her teaching, particularly vocabulary instruction. She thought teaching the meaning of words and using context clues to understand words would help her students become independent readers. She also planned to use filmstrips, computers, and guest speakers in her teaching. To make her subject "come alive" for her students, she intended to use illustrations, dictionaries, experiments, and ask critical thinking-type questions. Some of the literacy strategies she learned about and
planned to incorporate into her instruction were predictions, direct reading activities, clues and questioning, and word associations. She felt her students would use the strategies she will teach them in other content areas as well.

She observed that some high school English teachers were beginning to move away from teaching the classics to teaching more young adult literature because it seemed to be more relevant to teenagers' lives. However, Rose believed the classics could also be linked to students' lives. For an example, she said a student who likes to read Stephen King may enjoy reading Edgar Allan Poe. Rose pointed out that parental involvement can make a difference in a student's literacy development as a child is growing up, including the high school years.

Content Knowledge

Rose stated, "...I don't see myself as an authority yet." She said she definitely would use her textbook or "some kind of text" in her teaching. While she may not agree with everything in the textbook which will be assigned to her, she believed textbooks would help her "come up with new ideas." She also planned to add supplemental information from other sources. Rose described herself as a researcher and said she would bring lots of supplementary materials into her instruction. She
noted, "You know, teaching them [students] to interpret literature is a big responsibility."

Reflection

A Content Area Literacy Course

Rose said she always believed literacy was important. The content area literacy course helped her understand "why and how it is so important." It also gave her practical strategies which she can use in her teaching. She said she found out that her students may not understand their textbooks.

The course taught her how to "promote literacy in the classroom." She described it as a hands-on course, rather than "a lot of theory garbage." She planned to use the course textbook as a resource for strategies she could put to use in her own classroom. Rose did not question why she had to take a literacy course in her curriculum, but looked forward to it because of her love for reading.

Self as Teacher

Rose said helping students know how to find materials and resources that can help them with their reading is an important responsibility for teachers. She also noted that how a teacher feels about literacy makes a difference in teaching. She illustrated this by saying a teacher should model literacy behaviors such as journal writing along with the students and reading during sustained reading periods.
In her opinion, if the teacher "is not paying attention, the students won't be either."

Reflecting upon how literacy is involved in teaching at the high school level caused Rose to believe that being a teacher is "scarier" than it was before. She stated, "I just assumed students would like to read." She learned that teaching includes the responsibility for encouraging her students to read along with teaching them grammar and how to interpret a poem.

**Negotiating Literacy Instruction**

These senior college students were asked to look inward and think of themselves as teachers. Past experiences with literacy influence teachers' perceptions about the role literacy plays in instruction (Bean & Readence, 1995; Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Olson & Singer, 1994). The perceptions preservice teachers have about various aspects of literacy instruction and their reflections about themselves as teachers provide "a foundation for planning and organizing instruction in the classroom" (Bean & Readence, 1995, p. 325).

Preservice teachers who are prepared to become reflective teachers are more aware of themselves and their environments and are in a better position to bring about positive change (Wenzlaff, 1994; Zeichner & Liston, 1987), and to broaden their perceptions about literacy (Blachowicz & Wimett, 1995). The definitions the preservice secondary
teachers who participated in this study offered for literacy and content literacy were similar. However, there were differences in their perceptions regarding literacy instruction and the role of literacy in content area classrooms. The participants related their literacy experiences during childhood, the influence their parents had on their literacy development, and their experiences (positive and negative) with reading as students through the qualitative inquiry activities they participated in during this study.

An initial data set was established by examining these students' writings and by talking with each one individually. In Chapter 5, the analysis of the data gathered attempts to capture the individual differences among the six teachers as well as the similarities they share. Through their own voices, this study attempts to clarify these teachers' perceptions regarding the impact that literacy instruction will have on the relationship between their content area subject knowledge and their students' need to learn the material they will be teaching.
Introduction

In this chapter the findings from the reflective writings and the interviews with the six preservice secondary teachers who participated in this study are reported. Interrater agreement on the interpretation of the information from the journal entries and interview sessions is based upon each analyst’s review of the data. The transcriptions for each entry were read and examined separately by the course instructors and the researcher as an on-going process throughout the fieldwork phase of the project. A collaborative discussion was then held regarding themes and categories that emerged from the information in the transcriptions.

This multiple approach to data analysis helped to establish consistency in the interpretation of the information and contributed to the methodological rigor for this project (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990). An integration of the information from the Student Survey, the journal entry responses, and the individual interview sessions was used to answer the primary research question and the secondary research questions. The give-and-take process of analyst triangulation which was employed yielded the dominant issues that emerged from the data.
The Primary Research Question

How do preservice teachers in different secondary content areas perceive the impact of literacy instruction on the relationship between subject matter knowledge and their students' need to learn the material?

The primary research question and five secondary research questions were designed to explore how these teachers will face the challenge of planning instructional activities that will combine their own subject knowledge with information from textbooks and other forms of text to help their students learn content material.

As I attempted to answer the prepared research questions, thematic issues began to emerge from the reflective writings of this group (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1
Secondary Preservice Teachers' Perceptions of Significant Issues in Content Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy Autobiography</th>
<th>Teacher as Learner</th>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Relevancy of Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Content Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was anticipated that some of these issues would emerge, such as literacy autobiography and the content literacy course experience. Interestingly, there were other themes which emerged as significant issues to the participants. Therefore, they are considered to be worthy of further
attention and are incorporated into the report to help describe how these preservice teachers perceive the negotiation of literacy instruction in their content areas.

Literacy Autobiography

Writing a literacy autobiography provides preservice teachers with the opportunity to reflect upon how literacy has influenced their educational backgrounds. Some of the positive and negative experiences with literacy that these preservice teachers shared in their writings are reported in Table 5.2. Their stories began with their earliest memories of reading and ended with their perceptions of the role literacy was playing in their college experiences.

"Because personal biography provides a foundation for planning and organizing instruction in the classroom, it offers a picture of teachers' potential actions" (Bean & Readence, 1995, p. 325). Positive and negative aspects of these preservice teachers' perceptions of how they will incorporate literacy into their instructional planning is also reported (see Table 5.3). This data came from the Student Survey questionnaire, journal writings, and interview sessions with the participants.
Table 5.2
Literacy Autobiography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fran</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Consumer Sciences (FCS)</td>
<td>-Being read to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Like to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-magazines, Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Love English Lit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Did not enjoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Read just enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-to get by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Takes too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daniel</strong></td>
<td><strong>Did not enjoy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>reading school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Not enough time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to read now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jeff</strong></td>
<td><strong>Did not enjoy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>reading as a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Still does not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>enjoy reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Penni</strong></td>
<td><strong>Did not enjoy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>required readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Always ready to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Read lots of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Loved romance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Still reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lucas</strong></td>
<td><strong>We do not</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>discuss required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>readings in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Teacher helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>me in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Enjoyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discussions about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>readings in high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rose</strong></td>
<td><strong>Struggling to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>read aloud in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>first grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Did not read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-&quot;Stuck&quot; inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reading books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Terror when had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to give oral book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 5.3
Literacy In the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fran</td>
<td>- Read trade books to students</td>
<td>- Textbook is just a guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Consumer Sciences</td>
<td>- Lots of supplemental reading materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Writing activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>- Will stress vocabulary</td>
<td>- Not sure how to go about including literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>- Students have different learning needs</td>
<td>- Class time is limited for content teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>- Might read rules about sports</td>
<td>- Reading secondary to hands on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>- Articles about fitness</td>
<td>- Reading class is separate from content class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vocabulary in health is important</td>
<td>- Can't use literacy instruction in kinesiology class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penni</td>
<td>- Will use journal writing</td>
<td>- Not a lot of reading in math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>- Students learn in different ways</td>
<td>- Will only use textbook as a base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>- Writing assignments</td>
<td>- Subject matter, not literacy, should be teaching priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>- Discussions about readings</td>
<td>- Not many current articles for history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>- Important for teacher to model literacy activities</td>
<td>- Including literacy instruction makes teaching a greater responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>- Will stress vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of Literacy Autobiography

While early experiences tended to be positive, this group of secondary teachers generally had negative literacy experiences during their middle and high school years. Examples such as required reading assignments and limited time for reading were given to explain why reading was not enjoyable. Jeff and Rose recalled that book reports were particularly unpleasant projects for them. Four of the six participants noted they still did not enjoy reading. Lucas complained that in college readings were assigned with no discussion to clarify interpretations. Fran and Daniel said course work responsibilities left little time for pleasure reading.

By examining their past experiences through autobiography and contrasting those experiences with contemporary instructional considerations, a better picture of how these preservice teachers plan to organize their instruction can be gained. A comparison was made of their past literacy experiences with their anticipated uses of literacy instruction.

Only two spoke of enjoyable literacy experiences beyond elementary school. Lucas reported he enjoyed discussing reading assignments in high school. Rose explained she had some unpleasant experiences with reading in middle school, but reading continued to be an enjoyable hobby for her. Lucas reported he would use class
discussion as a strategy for reading comprehension. However, he contends that subject matter, not literacy, should be the secondary teacher's priority. Rose said she would model literacy activities such as sustained reading and journal writing and stress vocabulary in her teaching.

The impact of past literacy experiences on the participants transfers into their perceptions of the role of literacy instruction in their own teaching. Negative perceptions regarding the importance of literacy in secondary classroom instruction were evident. For Fran, reading in high school took "too much time" and she "read just enough to get by." In her classroom, there would be lots of supplemental reading materials, but she would only use the textbook as a guide. Penni, who did not enjoy reading in high school, said there was not a lot of reading in math, and she would only use the textbook as a base for her teaching.

Teacher as Learner

Secondary education majors with no teaching experience have preconceived ideas about teaching (Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992). This group shared their perceptions about the role of teacher as learner. During the study, they were asked how literacy instruction would be used if they were teaching unfamiliar content material. The individual content areas represented by the participants are not specified in the following

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descriptions. Rather, the perceptions regarding content knowledge expertise are collectively reported through the voices of individual secondary preservice teachers.

Fran: "As with any content area, I feel that the teacher is a learner as much as the student. I don't like it when you get up there and you're all knowing. I think you can learn from your students. I think it's a dual thing—you're a learner, you're a teacher." Fran explained that a teacher should consider several sources of information by saying, "I like to have more than one resource before I say this is what it means."

Daniel: "To a certain extent, I'll be learning along with the rest of the class. I'll have to broaden my own base of knowledge and vocabulary." Daniel related a story about going to five different science classes to observe experienced teachers "with different styles, teaching different subject matter all within my content area." Daniel described a benefit of these classroom observation experiences: "I am learning more about myself."

Jeff: Jeff reported he always looked at things and thought, "How would I teach this?" He said he could relate better to his students "by discussing the material more as a peer rather than as a teacher." He further explained, "If I read the material, I will also benefit in my understanding of the subject. Reading gives both the
students and me a chance to involve ourselves in the material."

**Penni:** In Penni's opinion, to get the basic knowledge they need, "the students have to read, understand, and relate...so I feel that I will have to read ahead a lot. By reading ahead I could study into the different areas, learn important facts, and encourage student interest."

**Lucas:** Lucas related he had recently learned some new information from a high school social studies textbook. He thinks during the first year of teaching, "you’ll learn some things because there’s a lot of things and a lot of facts." He wanted to remember how he learned best and "adapt that to teaching."

**Rose:** Rose explained that teaching "involves more than lecturing. It involves discussion and interaction between the teacher and his/her students--(the) teacher and students learn and grow together."

**Analysis of Teacher as Learner**

A general overview of the perceptions of the participants regarding the issue of teacher as learner indicates an awareness that teachers continue to be learners. Learning with the students appears to be an aspect of pedagogy which elevates the confidence of the teacher and the students. For these preservice teachers, a lack of background knowledge would clearly place the teacher in the position of learner. In this teaching
situation, literacy would become a significant aspect of learning.

Communities

While literacy in the classroom was a major emphasis for the design of this study, the issue of literacy outside the classroom emerged from the data as well. Because the respondents addressed the role of literacy in several community situations, this category was established to report the findings. The data is presented in three subsections: 1) The Classroom Community, 2) The Community Outside the Classroom, and, 3) The Family Community.

1) The Classroom Community

Each of these teachers indicated they would try to establish a cooperative learning environment in their classrooms. This would be accomplished through group discussions between the teacher and the students and among members of small groups. According to Penni, group projects "enforce new topics." Jeff and Lucas remembered participating in peer help groups, and both continued to feel this type of cooperation could be used to help students learn.

Daniel spoke of different types of learners that make up classroom communities. "Some are very visual, some are very auditory...some may get more from one source, and some from the other." To accommodate these differences, Daniel said he would use peer help groups in his science classes.
Penni also discussed individual differences and said she would bring in problems to solve mathematically from her students' other content classes to help meet different learning needs. She recognized there would be "invisible students" or "ones that you hear nothing from and forget when the year is over." She hoped dialogue journals would help her find these students and give them an opportunity to express themselves.

2) The Community Outside the Classroom

Several literacy concerns from the students' worlds outside the classroom emerged from the data. For example, Fran said if literacy were not promoted for high school students, it could "prove to be a roadblock in their future." The ability to complete job applications, follow written directions, read labels and warranties, and read the newspaper were mentioned as necessary literacy skills to survive in society. Herber and Herber (1993) stress their opinion that teenagers need advanced literacy skills to move forward in the technological world in which they live.

Jeff explained that literacy "gives the students a better understanding of the world around them." Lucas felt students should understand their cultures, and teachers should bring current events and societal issues into the classroom. Rose said bringing in guest speakers would verify information being covered in class as well as "help
tie in the world outside the classroom." Rose also stressed the importance of literacy to function in today's world. She explained, "No matter what your future career choice, you must be able to read and write effectively."

3) The Family Community

There were several references to the importance of literacy in the home and the influence that family can have on the value placed on literacy. Four of the six participants recalled being read to as children. Two of them remarked that the negative or positive influences regarding literacy received by students in their homes carry over into their school performances.

Analysis of Community Issues

The members of this group of preservice teachers feel it is important for students to be given an opportunity to work together and share ideas and opinions in the classroom setting. Conveniences which are readily available in today's society such as television and radio were criticized for being obstacles in the development of literacy skills. For example, Fran said, "We seem to focus on what is quick and easy." Similarly, Daniel said, "We require a low level of understanding to get by day to day. I'm specifically referring to our ability and need to interpret written information."

The majority of the participants remembered positive literacy experiences in their homes. Most mentioned they
were encouraged to read as young children, and Jeff reported, "Now, I can see that every little bit of reading helps."

Relevancy of Content

These preservice teachers recognized the importance of making content area instruction relevant to their students' lives (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Brozo & Simpson, 1995; Vacca & Vacca, 1989). The findings from this category are presented in sections by the content areas represented.

**Vocational Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS):** Fran felt that in her content area of family and consumer sciences, she would teach practical life skills. She gave examples such as reading directions, making decisions, learning parenting skills, and becoming a good consumer to explain the relevance of her subject area to the lives of her students. She explained, "I think the whole realm of FCS is life skills. My big thing is relevancy, so whatever content I'm teaching for that day, I always will try to show relevance of the content." Fran said she believed the information her students learned would transfer to other areas of their lives.

**Science:** Daniel said good teaching had taken place when a student gained understanding that could be applied to life outside the classroom. He explained, "It is hard to get high school students to see the need for--they can't see it apply to them today or next week." He thinks
tapping into prior knowledge helps students structure information and makes it easier for them to understand. He planned to have his students look at things two or three different ways so the relevance of the subject matter would become more apparent to them.

**Kinesiology:** Jeff said that students are taught "how to become fit and stay healthy throughout their lives" in kinesiology classes.

**Mathematics:** "They have to be able to relate to learn." Penni explained that helping students relate their worlds outside the classroom to the subject being taught generates interest. She also said she would find resources to make math relevant to her students. "I want to use practical algebra problems to let them know the ways they use algebra when they're not in the classroom."

**Social Studies:** Lucas hoped to be able to associate some current events with history and felt using journals and newspapers would be an ideal way to bring real life topics into his government classes. As he said, "These kinds of issues are in the papers all the time."

**English:** Rose thought young adult literature was relevant to teenagers’ lives, as well as classic literature. She planned to use illustrations, critical thinking questions, predictions, and brainstorming to help her students relate to literature. Rose said she would
model literate actions so her students would realize she valued literacy.

**Analysis of Relevancy of Content**

These secondary preservice teachers acknowledged that using relevant topics and a variety of sources would be an important aspect of their teaching. They plan to use literacy instruction as a tool to help make the connection between their students' worlds outside the classroom and their worlds inside the classroom. Developing student interest in subject matter is suggested by Frager (1993) as an important aspect of instructional decision making. This group of prospective teachers agreed that providing relevance for subject material would generate interest and encourage learning.

**The Content Area Literacy Course Experience**

Even though the research indicates that secondary preservice teachers often do not find relevance in a content area reading course (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990; Rafferty, 1990), the perceptions of this group were generally positive with regard to the benefits of such a course.

The participants were asked the following question on the Student Survey questionnaire at the beginning of the semester about the content area literacy course in which they were enrolled: *Do you see this course as being an asset to the educational background of a secondary*
education major? Why or why not? Every respondent said it was an asset. These preservice teachers also gave the following comments:

If we can incorporate reading strategies into our lessons, the students can become more successful readers. (Fran)

I have more questions than answers. I want to know specific ways to incorporate reading in my content area. (Daniel)

It gives the education major a chance to realize the importance of incorporating reading into their content area. (Jeff)

It will help me to determine my students’ reading abilities and determine what I need to teach. (Penni)

It is important to understand reading problems in the classroom. (Lucas)

It has given me some practical reading strategies. (Rose)

During the interview sessions at the end of the semester, I asked the participants to talk about the literacy course they were taking by answering the following question: Has this content area literacy course influenced your perceptions about literacy instruction in any way? Some of their responses follow:

Fran (FCS)---"I had a hard time at first really understanding what the course was. But now I think it makes you aware of writing and reading and how you can use it for comprehension and studying and all that. She [the course instructor] says you don’t realize that you do it [reading instruction] all the time; like you read the
labels. I think it brings an awareness of the strategies. When you begin to teach, you'll probably be aware of where the skills are not what they should be, and you'll want to use them even more. I understand this now, but I didn't at first. I don't know all the strategies, but part of it is creativity."

Daniel (Science)—"The down side is that with no experience, it's created a lot of confusion."

Jeff (Kinesiology)—"I think that the main thing that it's done for me is help me realize that there are students out there that are not getting the reading in a reading classroom, and that we need to be establishing it in our classrooms. Like even in kinesiology, there's not much reading, but there has to be something there for the students to encourage them to read."

Penni (Math)—"I wondered why I had to take this class—my students will only be reading a word problem or two. But, when I got in there, I realized it's more than that—it's learning how to teach students."

Lucas (Social Studies)—"I think it's added to—I think as far as changing my beliefs or opinions, no. I have become more knowledgeable about strategies to use and how to help students understand content."

Rose (English)—"I always believed in literacy, you know. But I think that this class has really helped me with how to promote literacy in the classroom. It's been
very practical and very hands on. It's not been a lot of theory garbage. It's been a lot of practical things I can put my hands on and use. I can flip to the vocabulary chapter and have strategies that I can use in my classroom."

Analysis of the Content Area Literacy Course Experience

There were comments which indicated positive perceptions regarding the benefits of having a content area literacy course in the secondary education curriculum. For example, "...since we've been using the strategies, it's really helped" (Fran, Interview) and "It's given me a lot of ideas" (Daniel, Interview). While Rose said she always thought reading was important, she credited the content area literacy course with helping her to understand why.

There were also negative comments expressed with regard to the course. Confusion about what to call the strategies and not having an opportunity to use many of them in a real classroom setting were among the negative remarks voiced by this group.

In general, it appears the content area literacy course experience gave these preservice teachers an awareness of literacy strategies; it helped them discover how literacy strategies can be used to enhance content instruction; and it helped make them aware of the impact literacy can have in secondary classrooms.
**Literacy Definitions**

*Secondary Question 1—How do preservice content area teachers define literacy?* and

*Secondary Question 2—How do preservice content area teachers define content literacy?*

At the beginning of this project, the participants were asked to offer their definitions for the terms literacy, content literacy, literate, and illiterate. The responses they gave focused on general descriptions of the ability to read written material with nonspecific dictionary-type wording. All of the respondents noted the ability to read in their definitions for literacy. Other key terms used in these initial explanations were "comprehend," "write," and "understand." This type of formal and restrictive definition was also found to be characteristic by Blachowicz and Wimett (1995) in a study that involved 12 preservice teachers who were asked to define literacy.

The traditional notions of literacy that include reading, writing, and attainment of meaning from written communication (Blachowicz & Wimett, 1995; Eisner, 1991; McKenna & Robinson, 1990) are evident in these prospective teachers' definitions. Each response mentioned reading abilities that are sufficient for one to understand or comprehend information as an explanation of the level of reading ability necessary for a person to be considered literate.
According to Eisner (1991, p. 120), "meaning is the core of literacy," but a broader notion of literacy includes the ability to comprehend text that is not written such as visual images or listening experiences. Daniel included understanding verbal communication as criteria for being literate in his definition, and Rose's explanation for understanding text included the ability to draw inferences and conclusions. However, none of the participants in this study ventured beyond traditional explanations for constructing meaning through text.

Literacy and Society

Blachowicz and Wimett (1995) suggest a broader definition for literacy that will cross traditional boundaries to expand literacy outside the context of school. Social implications of being illiterate were addressed by Penni, Rose, and Daniel.

Penni believed it would be hard for illiterate individuals to survive in society, that they would have trouble at the grocery store, and illiterate parents would have difficulties helping their children with school work. Rose explained that illiterate people would be unable to function in "their worlds." Daniel talked about a "dividing line our society uses" to separate literate and illiterate individuals.

While all of the descriptions included the ability to read and understand written information for a person to be
considered literate, only half included the ability to write as a component of literacy or as necessary to be considered literate. Additionally, none of the participants discussed the construction of meaning which comes from literacy activities that involve social interaction within the classroom such as group discussions or cooperative learning projects (Moje, 1996).

Content Literacy

These preservice teachers expanded their definitions of literacy to content literacy by adding phrases such as "to a target group" or "in an area of particular interest to you" or "in specific content areas." This realization that content literacy is specialized has implications for a broader definition of literacy (McKenna & Robinson, 1990). At the end of the semester, the participants were asked to discuss their perceptions about content literacy. Answers given at this point in the semester reflected more insight into the concept of content literacy.

For example, Fran reflected, "I think it's the big picture you have to look at--I'm teaching family and consumer sciences, but students need to be able to read and write." Penni came to realize her math students will need the ability "to read beyond--they have to understand what they're reading." Rose commented, "I thought I just had to teach them grammar and how to interpret a poem...but I need to encourage them to want to read." These reflections
suggest a deeper interpretation of content literacy developed during the experience of the content area literacy course.

The Value of Literacy Instruction

*Secondary Question 3--Is literacy instruction a valued component of instructional planning for new teachers?*

The participants were asked to respond to the following guided journal entry:

> It has been said that our high schools today are turning out "students who can't read and understand the fine print on a bag of potato chips" (Readence, Bean, & Baldwin, 1995, p. 4). Consider that you will be teaching the students described in this quote from your textbook. In your journal, under the heading, Literacy Needs, share what you, as a _____ (your content area) teacher can do to help meet these students' needs to improve reading proficiency.

This scenario was designed to elicit the participants' initial perceptions about literacy instruction in their classrooms. It was worded to have them say what they would do, rather than what they think should be done, with regard to the issue of teaching students with poor literacy skills. It addresses how these preservice teachers perceive they will be using literacy instruction and, therefore, whether it will be considered a valuable component of their instructional planning.

In addition to this guided journal entry, the participants were asked during the interview phase of the project if literacy instruction would be a part of their
instructional planning. Further questioning about whether these preservice teachers perceive literacy instruction to be a valued component of content area instruction helped to verify the data obtained from their journals. According to Patton (1990) asking questions that focus on understanding particular information that emerges from the data serves to establish validity of the findings.

Though none of these preservice teachers had formal teaching experience, all of them anticipated they would be student teaching within the next year. Jackson and Cunningham (1994, p. 113) suggest that secondary teachers have a "strong subject-matter orientation," and conceptions of how to teach content may differ across content areas for these teachers. The respondents represented different content areas in this study, and different viewpoints of instructional convention are evident in their answers.

The following stories recount the perceptions of six future high school teachers concerning the value of literacy instruction:

Vocational Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS)

The Family and Consumer Sciences teacher, Fran, essentially avoided the possibility that she may be teaching students who need help with literacy proficiencies and focused on society's support for "conveniences" which replace the need for reading to answer this question. Examples she offered were eating out, which requires
reading only a menu rather than reading food preparation instructions on packages or recipes; watching movies instead of reading books; or listening to radio or watching television for the news instead of reading newspapers. In Fran's opinion, these types of societal sanctions for the "quick and easy" way to do things result in a decrease in time spent reading and reduce the importance of reading.

Fran emphasized the idea that hands-on activities are often involved in the learning experiences which take place in family and consumer science classrooms. However, she said she would "continually incorporate opportunities" for her students to do some reading in her teaching. When asked if literacy instruction would be a valued component of her instructional planning, Fran asked for clarification of the question by saying, "Do you mean like reading and writing combined with my content? Yes." In her responses, she did not specifically address how she would assist students with reading difficulties.

Science

In his journal writings, Daniel indicated he will stress vocabulary in his secondary science classes. He will use technical terminology throughout his lessons and in classroom discussions. However, his explanation for strongly emphasizing vocabulary use was not in response to helping his students with reading deficiencies. It was
more a general notion that mastering content vocabulary would help his students learn science concepts.

When Daniel was asked personally if he planned to make an effort to include literacy instruction in his lesson planning, he said, "I would like to." He described literacy instruction as giving students "things to draw on other than a bunch of facts to remember." He did admit he was not sure about how to go about including literacy instruction, because he was not sure about how he would structure his classes.

Daniel stated, "Instead of vocabulary simply being a list of definitions and test questions, it needs to be employed in the lesson." His responses generally focused on learning vocabulary, and the value he places on literacy instruction beyond vocabulary strategies is questionable. For Daniel, literacy instruction is separate from science instruction, as exemplified by his comment about classroom time being "really limited" so that there may not be enough time "left over" for literacy instruction.

Kinesiology

"As a kinesiology major, it would be hard to integrate a reading lesson." This was Jeff's introductory comment in his response to this question. Other remarks such as reading would "take away" from physical exercise time, and "in kinesiology, there's not much reading" are evidence that literacy instruction is not a valued component of
instructional planning for Jeff. While he did plan to include vocabulary instruction in health classes, he did not see a need for vocabulary instruction in kinesiology classes. For example, he stated, "I really don’t see how I could use it in the kinesiology department."

**Mathematics**

Though this journal entry prompt was worded so the answer would focus on what the participant would do in this situation, Penni’s response was written in third person. She remarked that "reform" math teachers are using journals, and explained how journal writing can be integrated into teaching to discover if students are having difficulties in a particular area, to learn more about students as individuals, and to detect "reading and writing" problems.

In an effort to have Penni talk about what she might consider doing in her own classroom, I asked her during the interview session if she planned to use journals in her teaching to help students with literacy deficiencies. She said she did plan to use them because students would be more likely to write about problems they may be having than to tell her. When she learns something is not going well for a student, she can "clear it up or set aside special time to work." Further discussion revealed, however, that Penni was referring to difficulties with math rather than literacy problems. She said if the math teacher is unable
to help a student with literacy deficits, then she should find "someone skilled in remediating literacy deficits" to help the student.

Social Studies

Lucas said he felt he could help his students who may have literacy deficiencies by "making them write a lot." He further explained he would guide them with their writing assignments. This was the only example he offered about how he would meet his students' needs for literacy development. During the interview, I asked Lucas whether he felt literacy instruction would be a valued component of his teaching. He responded by saying he thought literacy was "real important in history--it's a lot of reading."

While his comments were in favor of literacy instruction as a part of social studies teaching, he seemed to be somewhat perplexed about the role literacy instruction would play in his major subject area of history. For example, to improve literacy abilities, he would have his students write research papers and answer essay questions on tests. He explained, however, that this type of assignment would really be an effort to "allow the students to share their answers and opinions."

English

Rose's definition for literacy, being able to draw inferences, conclusions, and meaning from materials, is reflected in her response to this scenario. She began by
saying she believes vocabulary instruction is important. She offered examples she will use in her teaching. She plans to teach the meaning of root words and show her students how to use context clues because these are good ways "to help students become independent readers."

Rose also said she will teach her students how to use materials that can help them with their reading such as illustrations and dictionaries. She said she would model literacy activities she assigns to her students to show them she feels literacy is important. Rose perceived literacy instruction to be a tool that could help her make English "come alive" for her students.

**Interpretation of Secondary Question 3**

This scenario had the preservice teachers assume there will be students in their classes who have literacy deficiencies. Most of the responses did not address the issue of teaching students who need help with improving literacy proficiencies. However, the responses did offer insight into these preservice teachers' perceptions about the role of literacy instruction in their content teaching, particularly in the area of vocabulary (see Table 5.4).
Table 5.4
The Value of Literacy Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family &amp; Consumer Sciences</td>
<td>&quot;It's important to be able to read the directions on a box of cake mix and know what it means to separate an egg.&quot; (Fran)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>&quot;Vocabulary instruction is a tool that is always in use.&quot; (Daniel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>&quot;I feel that students do more studying than reading.&quot; (Jeff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>&quot;Reading difficulties may be the cause for some students having trouble with word problems in math classes.&quot; (Penni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>&quot;When you teach, you use 'history words' that the students need to be familiar with.&quot; (Lucas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>&quot;I think vocabulary is important because if you can't understand the textbook, then you can't get any meaning from it.&quot; (Rose)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The importance of including literacy in their instructional planning varied for these preservice teachers. An example is Rose's statement during the interview. "As a teacher, I feel I need to model reading and writing to my students...because even though I tell them this is so important, I think they'll believe me more if I'm doing it." Rose's statement reflects her perception that literacy instruction is an integral component of English instruction.

Another example is Penni's comment, "There's not a lot of vocabulary in math...when they know what everything
means, then we can go on from there." This comment from Penni reflects her perception that vocabulary instruction is important for math because students need a "foundation" from which math can be taught. However, once particular words are learned, a student becomes "literate" in math and vocabulary instruction is no longer needed. According to Penni, "you just build on what you've taught before." This illustrates the perception that vocabulary instruction is a one-time endeavor which is addressed before continuing with further math instruction.

Is literacy instruction valued?

There is evidence that shows these preservice teachers are experiencing some confusion about their responsibilities for literacy instruction and their definitions for literacy instruction. For example, the kinesiology teacher said, "I feel like we should stay outside as much as possible...rather than sitting in the classroom reading." However, he contradicted this claim by saying, "There should be more time in class for the students to read." Daniel admitted to having "a lot of confusion" with regard to literacy instruction. When Fran was asked about literacy instruction, her comment was, "Do you mean like reading and writing combined with my content?" While literacy instruction was generally described as being valued by most of the respondents, their
commitment to making it a valued component of their instructional planning is questionable.

Daniel, Jeff, and Lucas noted that teaching content would leave little time for literacy instruction. Daniel commented that state requirements for science instruction would be the first priority in his classes with possible "left over" time for literacy instruction. For the student who is experiencing literacy difficulties, the kinesiology teacher, Jeff, suggested "an after school program would probably be best." Lucas, the social studies teacher, did not feel literacy should be considered a "priority" in secondary classrooms.

These responses indicate the idea that literacy instruction and content instruction are different subject areas. This finding supports O'Brien and Stewart's (1990, p. 103) claim that some secondary content teachers view reading as "another subject to teach." In their study which explored preservice teachers' attitudes toward content area reading, they found some preservice teachers assume students who have literacy deficiencies should be taught by reading specialists.

The Role of Text

Secondary Question 4--a. How do preservice teachers perceive the relationship between their knowledge base and the role of the textbook in instruction?
Secondary Question 4—b. How do preservice teachers perceive the relationship between their knowledge base and the role of other text materials in instruction?

The Textbook

Vacca and Vacca (1989) suggest that teachers are becoming less dependent upon the textbook as the main focus for instruction. They further explain there is great variety in how teachers use textbooks in practice. For example, some teachers feel the textbook is the primary source of knowledge and curriculum; some circumvent the textbook; and others make occasional reading assignments from the textbook. This group of preservice teachers seems to value their own knowledge base as the information authority rather than the textbook. The following quote from Daniel illustrates this view:

It worries me that sometimes I see something [in the textbook] that I have a question about. I'm supposed to be the authority, and I don't know!

Daniel/Science, Interview

While most of these preservice teachers said they would use a textbook, four of the six participants said they could teach without a textbook in their content areas. The science and English teachers agreed that a textbook would be necessary for them to teach their subjects (see Table 5.5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fran</td>
<td>FCS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>Kinesiology</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penni</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several descriptions of the purpose of the textbook were offered by these preservice teachers. Fran considered the text in family and consumer science classes to be a guide which offers several points of view. Penni will use her textbook as a base, and Lucas says the textbook "is a real big help." Additional comments are shown in Table 5.6.

When Rose was asked during the interview to compare her level of expertise as an authority of the subject matter with that of the textbook in her English classes, she replied:

That's hard for me because I don't see myself as an authority yet. I think the textbook is important. Whether or not I agree with everything in there, it helps me get ideas and come up with new ideas—I'm not one of those people who can always come up with new ideas. The textbook helps me look at things in different ways; I can add to it and make it better.
Table 5.6
Thoughts about Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fran</td>
<td>It makes you feel like you have to stick to it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I could really do without it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The textbook is just one resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Textbooks give me two or three different ways to explain things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I'm very comfortable with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>I’ll use a textbook in health classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penni</td>
<td>I’m not going to use the textbook solely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is sort of an outline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I will probably jump back and forth in the textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>I could probably teach without a textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It would be a lot of work for me outside class, but it could be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’ll learn some things I didn’t know from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It will bring back some things I won’t remember.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>I read other things besides the textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’d have to have some kind of textbook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These six preservice teachers mentioned several related text materials they plan to use in their classrooms to support learning. Table 5.7, Other Text Materials, lists the additional resources and the subject areas in which the materials will be used.
Table 5.7
Other Text Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FCS</th>
<th>SCIENCE</th>
<th>KINES</th>
<th>MATH</th>
<th>SOC ST</th>
<th>ENG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Guides</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charts/Maps</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Word Problems</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other CA Text</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visuals</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir./Rules</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation of Secondary Question 4

In their study of eight veteran content area teachers, Ratekin et al. (1985) found the teacher, not the textbook, was the authority source for information. In a similar manner, Lucas related he felt it was important for a teacher to have additional knowledge to support the textbook because "when students see you do that, they know you’re not an idiot and you really know something about what you’re teaching."

The rationalization about textbook use offered by the participants in this study demonstrated a general
perception that textbooks are an important component of secondary instruction. However, within their content areas, these preservice teachers perceived themselves as the primary knowledge source, the textbook as a significant resource, and other text materials as supplementary resources to help students learn the content.

Literacy Instruction

*Secondary Question 5—How can literacy instruction be used to communicate content?*

When teachers have the opportunity to learn about a literacy strategy, experiment and practice with it, and modify it to meet their students' needs, the strategy then "becomes an automatic part of a teacher's instruction repertoire and a natural part of teaching" (Readence et al., 1995, p. 11). Because the participants selected for this study had no prior formal teaching experience, their discussions concerning implementation of literacy strategies were limited in terms of their ability to practice the strategies outside the university setting.

They were asked to respond to the following guided journal entry prompt at the end of the semester in which they were enrolled in the content area literacy course:

Congratulations! You have landed your first teaching job. However, you have been assigned to teach one class of World Geography. In your journal, under the heading *Negotiating Instruction*, discuss how you will promote learning for your students in a content area in which you feel less confident about your own knowledge base. Will literacy be a part of your instructional planning? Why or why not?
World Geography was chosen for this example because none of the participants indicated they had expertise in this subject area. This question was designed to invite both general and specific responses concerning the use of literacy instruction. I wanted to know how much confidence these preservice teachers placed in the use of literacy strategies and their perceptions about the importance of literacy instruction. A content area in which they did not feel they had expertise was selected so they would discuss the type of instruction they would provide in a teaching situation in which they could not rely on their own knowledge base.

All of the preservice teachers said literacy instruction would be included in their instructional planning if they were teaching a class outside their content area. The following quotes from the participants reveal the impact literacy instruction will have in communicating content material in this type of teaching situation:

**FCS/Fran:** In light of these circumstances, I feel that literacy will be a crucial aspect of the lesson planning/activities in order to promote learning.

**Science/Daniel:** Consequently, I’ll be the first literacy student in this area, so I may as well include the rest of the class in the adventure.

**Kinesiology/Jeff:** I feel that literacy will be a large part of this type of class.
Math/Penni: Literacy would be a part of my instruction--because I would have to read the students' text as well as incorporate some outside sources.

Social Studies/Lucas: Literacy would be a part by assigning journal articles or newspaper articles to read and react to.

English/Rose: Of course literacy would be a big part of my instruction.

Literacy Strategies

The six preservice teachers discussed or mentioned a variety of different literacy strategies they felt would be beneficial in helping students learn content material (see Table 5.8). Vocabulary instruction was most frequently cited by these teachers as a means to help students learn content. Rose commented, "I think vocabulary is really important...vocabulary is something I’m really going to stress."

Other frequently mentioned literacy strategies were student journals/writing activities, large and small group discussions about reading assignments, brainstorming, and the use of outside resource materials. Additional teaching techniques mentioned were songs, lectures, group projects, peer tutoring, and hands-on activities.
Table 5.8
Literacy Strategies

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Interpretation of Secondary Question 5

This group of preservice teachers found it difficult to discuss literacy instruction, because they were not sure about the proper names of the strategies. For example, when Daniel was asked about using literacy strategies, he...
said he would like "to have something like prereading" for his students. To clarify this comment, I asked him if he was talking about prereading activities. His reply, "I don't really know." Later, I asked him if he had any favorite literacy strategies he would be using. He said, "Yes, but I can't remember the exact names. One of them has to do with analogies...I thought it was interesting; I think it will fit."

Other examples come from the interviews with Lucas and Rose. Lucas replied to a question about which literacy strategies he felt would be appropriate for him to use by saying, "Well, I don't really remember all the names of them." Rose responded to this question by saying, "That direct reading activity--I found out that I was doing it. I didn't know that's what it was. You know, before-during-after reading."

The responses to this teaching scenario suggest these preservice teachers would be more likely to use literacy instruction if they were teaching content outside their area of expertise. These results support the perception that the teacher is the primary source of content knowledge (Moll, 1994; Ruddell & Unrau, 1994). It was apparent that these secondary teachers would rely more on literacy instruction if they felt they had an inadequate knowledge base of the content material.
Assessment

The sub-category, Assessment, emerged from the data regarding literacy instruction. Two of the participants noted that literacy strategies could be used to discover possible reading difficulties. For example, Fran said she would use "comprehension strategies" to detect problems her students may be having with reading their textbooks. Penni said she felt "literacy deficits" could be determined through journal writings. While these comments are somewhat vague, they suggest these preservice teachers were thinking about the possibility that literacy instruction could be used to assess reading and pinpoint comprehension difficulties.

Discussion

The purpose of this project was to investigate the pedagogical perceptions of preservice teachers regarding literacy instruction at the secondary level. I found that my investigation continues to reveal the richness of the contributions which dynamic, enthusiastic prospective teachers bring into the field of content area reading (Holt-Reynolds, 1992). Based on an analysis and interpretation of data collected in this study, I can make the following assertion regarding the negotiation of literacy instruction in secondary classrooms:

Secondary content area preservice teachers perceive literacy instruction to be relevant to the relationship between subject area knowledge and their students' need to learn the material.
As I examined the data, I was encouraged by responses that revealed reflective insight into the responsibility which secondary teachers have to help students develop literacy proficiencies. Comments such as "...students need to be able to read and write--if I can help them do that and teach them content, then I’m doing good" and "...even in math you have to read instructions...definitely science classes would have a lot of reading" indicate preservice teachers are becoming aware of the impact that literacy can have in helping their students learn content material (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Readence et al., 1995).

Using literacy instruction to encourage higher level thinking was implied by several of the participants. For example, Fran said she came to realize that discussing reading assignments in a cooperative manner "may actually lead to higher level thinking." Daniel stated, "I see literacy as broadening your base knowledge and, hopefully, making some realistic connections in the students’ schema." Lucas described literacy instruction as a tool to help students "understand history, culture, and society as a whole."

Data Sources

The primary data sources included a student survey questionnaire, five separate guided journal entries collected over a period of approximately three months during the 1996 fall semester, and an individual interview.
with each of the six participants. Secondary data sources included field note observations from the three-month investigation; artifacts such as the course textbook, handouts, work sheets, and supplementary readings; and semi-formal interviews with the course instructors. Because these data sources did not include specific information from the six participants, they were considered to be secondary. The information from these secondary sources was used to support or expand the analysis of the primary data.

Further interpretation of the primary question was accomplished through examination of thematic issues which emerged from the data, cross analysis of the primary data sources used in answering the secondary research questions, and the information obtained through secondary sources. There were several overall findings.

The Impact of Literacy Instruction

First, there were differences found in perceptions about the necessity of literacy instruction in secondary classrooms based on the subject matter taught (Jackson & Cunningham, 1994). Similar to findings by Daisey and Shroyer (1993), and Ratekin et al. (1985), those preservice teachers whose students were expected to read more, such as English and social studies placed more value on literacy instruction than those in areas where more "hands-on"
learning is traditionally emphasized, such as kinesiology and science.

Subject Matter Knowledge

Secondly, I found that decisions about literacy instruction in content area teaching were related to preservice teachers' perceptions about the source of content knowledge authority. The data revealed contradictions with regard to the role of literacy instruction in content area teaching. When the teacher was considered to be the authority on subject matter, literacy instruction was of lesser importance. Examples of teacher-centered instruction such as teacher-telling and lecturing with a minor role for textbooks support the perception that the teacher is the knowledge authority. These preservice teachers did not feel literacy instruction would make a significant contribution to student learning within their subject areas of expertise.

There were contradictory statements, however, regarding the importance of literacy instruction when the respondents considered teaching content in a subject area outside their major field of study. Literacy instruction would have more impact on students' learning in this type of situation. A cooperative learning environment including discussions, group work, and teacher/student dialogue would more likely be found in these teachers' classrooms if they...
have the opportunity to teach a subject out of their areas of expertise.

Examples of literacy strategies included vocabulary emphasis, textbook reading assignments, and use of outside resources such as magazine and newspaper articles. Comments such as, "If the students read the material, they will receive just as much, if not more, information than they would from me explaining it to them" and, reading strategies would be needed "to learn as much as possible from the text" support the finding that preservice teachers perceive they would rely more heavily on literacy instruction and cooperative learning if they were teaching unfamiliar content material.

According to Frager (1993), when the teacher is viewed as the authority for content knowledge, students learn to be insecure and dependent. When the teacher is viewed as a participant in gaining knowledge, students learn confidence and independence. In fairness to these prospective teachers, their lack of classroom experience and exposure to the complexities of teaching should be re-emasphazized.

Secondary Students' Learning Needs

A third overall finding was that preservice teachers support the idea of incorporating reading, writing, and comprehension into content area lessons. They also see a need for students to have literacy proficiencies for use
outside their classrooms. The participants agreed literacy should be promoted in secondary classrooms.

These prospective teachers seemed genuinely interested in knowing more about literacy strategies and how to use them in their content areas. During the interview discussions at the end of the semester, some of the respondents mentioned they had come to understand the importance of a content area literacy course for secondary education majors. Rose explained her instructional decision making would center around her love for reading and desire to instill that love for reading in her students. She said she wanted to "encourage them to read and write and use it in other classes."

Other examples of positive perceptions about the need for such a course included Lucas' comment that he wanted to help his students become "content literate" and Penni's statement, "I've realized students...need to be able to pull out important facts." Perhaps this can be attributed to the holistic explanation of the role of literacy in secondary education provided by the content area literacy course experience. The preservice teachers were provided with sufficient rationale for incorporating literacy instruction into content area lesson planning.

Additionally, in discussions concerning the content area literacy course adventure, several participants acknowledged the realization that different learning styles
and literacy abilities will be represented by the students they will be teaching (Readence et al., 1995). Trumbull and Slack (1991) stress the notion that preservice teachers should understand that their students will view subject material in different ways. The following selection from Rose’s interview illustrates the insight she gained through personal reflection and the content area literacy course experience:

Actually, I see my responsibility as a teacher is greater than I originally thought. I’ve always liked to read, and I thought everybody else did, too. This class has given me ways to get students involved and want to read. It’s given me some hope that I can do it.

Reflection

An increase in the use of literacy instruction can be the result of teachers reflecting upon past literacy experiences. While prospective secondary teachers are generally willing to improve their pedagogical abilities, they are often unaware of how their perceptions of teaching in specific content areas affect the instructional choices they will make (Olson & Singer, 1994).

Combining personal literacy experiences with current literacy research and instructional methodology learned in teacher education programs, places preservice teachers in a more favorable position to consider content area literacy. Reflections about instructional decision making that can be used to initiate change in perceptions about the role of literacy require that preservice teachers have the
knowledge and disposition to question understandings which emerge from reflective activities.

Clarifying perceptions so that a response could be given to the guided journal prompts may have forced these preservice teachers to re-examine instructional planning decisions. Penni made the following statement to me after a visit I made to her classroom for observation and data collection: "I like answering the questions you give us; it makes me think about things I don't usually give myself time to think about."
Chapter 6
CONCLUSIONS

This study offers impetus for discussion about the consideration of the impact of literacy instruction on the relationship between subject matter knowledge and secondary students' need to learn the material. In this research, I have examined pedagogical perceptions of six preservice teachers concerning the negotiation of literacy instruction in content area classrooms. A more complete assessment of instructional decisions could have been achieved with a more comprehensive examination of one subject area preservice teacher. However, it was not the purpose of this study to conduct an evaluation of the impact of literacy instruction within a particular content area. Rather, this study was designed to initiate a discussion concerning pedagogical perceptions of different content area preservice teachers regarding literacy instruction.

Preservice teachers' perceptions about the impact of literacy instruction in helping students learn content are powerful and important elements of instructional planning. These perceptions influence the value placed on promoting literacy in the classroom. This study extends the research to allow for a clearer explanation of the subtle yet dynamic effect that perceptions regarding literacy have on secondary classroom instruction.
Engaging in reflective activities about literacy instruction facilitated the development of these preservice teachers' understanding of self as teacher. The participants were asked the question, "What changes, if any, do you see in your perception of yourself as a teacher as a result of reflecting upon literacy?" The following comments were offered:

Fran—Just seeing the big picture. It's the concepts you want them to learn...they're not going to remember the details anyway.

Daniel—Some teachers are not willing to be flexible. I want to do things that work.

Penni—Students need to be able to see and understand what they're doing and why.

Lucas—The reflections are good because I had to shift into a teacher's point of view.

Implications

There are implications for content area literacy research, for preservice and inservice teachers, and for those involved with preparing secondary teachers for classroom practice.

For Content Area Literacy Research

This study provides a methodology to investigate the impact of literacy instruction on the relationship between subject matter knowledge and secondary students' need to learn content material as it is perceived by preservice teachers. It enriches the knowledge base by offering a clearer picture of how prospective teachers negotiate
literacy instruction as they begin to look at themselves as teachers and think about instructional decision making.

The emphasis on how perceptions are shaped and how they influence content area teaching has implications for research on resistance to content area literacy courses by secondary education majors (O’Brien & Stewart, 1990; Ratekin et al., 1985). Although many studies are available regarding attitudes toward such courses, few examine how perceptions about literacy instruction can be used to explain positive or negative attitudes.

This study provides the field with concepts which will encourage implementation of literacy instruction in secondary classrooms. For example, focusing on personal literacy history through autobiography and journal writing activates prior knowledge about the role of literacy in secondary teaching.

Current studies are examining the use of literacy strategies in secondary classroom settings (Alvermann & Moore, 1991; Jackson & Cunningham, 1994; Moje, 1996). This study moves beyond whether particular strategies are being implemented to an examination of whether literacy instruction is valued and how literacy will be used to meet student learning needs. New understanding regarding the value placed on literacy instruction by secondary preservice teachers has been gained along with their
perceptions about how pedagogical perceptions influence instructional decision making.

For Preservice and Inservice Teachers

Though perhaps limited by the small sample size, this study suggests that an examination of personal history and reflection about possible teaching scenarios can help prepare preservice teachers for the diversity found in secondary classrooms. Autobiography is a tool which can be used to gain insight into how pedagogical perceptions are framed, and reflective activities offer opportunity to think about the value of literacy instruction.

The participants made several comments about teaching concepts and literacy strategies which were introduced during the content area literacy course. Expressions of enlightenment such as "...my responsibility as a teacher is greater than I originally thought," and "I have become more knowledgeable about strategies to use" are examples of evolving pedagogical perceptions.

To varying degrees, these prospective teachers indicated they will apply strategies they learned to practice. For example, vocabulary emerged as a major literacy concept. All of the participants maintain that vocabulary is a necessary component of content area teaching, and it would be incorporated into their instructional planning.
Smith and Feathers (1983a, 1983b) claim that preservice teachers need to learn about the role of literacy in different content areas. The case studies and the findings generated from this study can be used to encourage dialogue between preservice teachers about how literacy instruction might be incorporated into practice. Also, cooperative teaching within subject areas and across disciplines can result from dialogue initiated as a result of this research.

An area of perceptual change which appears to be evolving for these participants involves secondary students' literacy needs outside the classroom. Content teaching can be positively affected by teachers who are aware that literacy activities must reach beyond the textbook to include materials which students will encounter in their worlds outside the classroom. Linking classroom activities with students' worlds is a step toward making content instruction relevant. Secondary teachers can use literacy instruction to help their students attain their goals in and out of the classroom.

For Teacher Education Programs

The findings from this study direct those involved in teacher education programs to consider the need for a flexible approach to content area literacy. Secondary education students have different perceptual understandings about the complexities of incorporating literacy
instruction into instructional planning and learning (Hollingsworth, 1989). Understanding the need for literacy in different subject areas can help secondary teachers be more aware of students' needs and how they can link content teaching to the world outside their classrooms.

Exploring the perceptions preservice teachers hold regarding the impact of literacy instruction is an exciting endeavor. Their insights are valuable. For example, classroom experiences which facilitate interaction give students the opportunity to discuss ideas about teaching and discover how other secondary teachers negotiate instruction. Such practice helps students and instructors tap into what is known, question the validity of existing pedagogical perceptions, and link new ways of thinking about the role of literacy in instructional planning.

The research presented herein provides a foundation for viable changes to enrich practice teaching experiences as they relate to utilization of literacy instruction in content area teaching. For example, the use of dialogue journals can identify literacy related concerns. Reflective activities can help make teacher educators aware of the subtle yet powerful force of preservice teachers' perceptions. A clearer picture of the impact of literacy instruction on secondary content area teaching facilitates more appropriate suggestions for improving literacy proficiencies of high school students.
The reflective activities employed by this study challenge preservice teachers' perceptions about literacy instruction. Results clearly indicate that preservice teacher educators should come to understand the perceptions of their students regarding the role of literacy in secondary classrooms in order to implement instruction which will best meet their students' needs.

The Role of Reflection

This study demonstrates the necessity for reflective activities as an integral part of teacher education programs. The personal histories of preservice teachers involve considerable time spent in the role of student. As this study indicates, literacy histories involve positive and negative experiences with reading. Secondary education students draw upon their own life stories to formulate perceptions of self as teacher. Perceptions of what "good" teaching should be function as prior knowledge used to evaluate the idealogies encountered in teacher preparation courses (Holt-Reynolds, 1992).

It is a challenging endeavor for future teachers to explore their past literacy experiences and the impact that their pedagogical perceptions have on instructional decision making. Reflection activities can serve as a catalyst to move preservice teachers from the concept of self as student to that of self as teacher.
Recommendations

The information gathered from these six participants suggests that perceptions about literacy instruction play a meaningful role in content area teaching. The complicated nature of content area literacy, secondary instruction, and student learning needs necessitates continued studies of secondary preservice teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the influence pedagogical perceptions have on practice.

O'Brien and Stewart (1990) suggest that preservice teachers can learn ideas they did not bring into a teacher education program. This data similarly suggests that preservice teachers can become more aware of the complexities inherent in teaching content area subject material through reflective activities. Some of the participants in this study expressed potential for modifying their future practice. Examples include discoveries regarding students' need to "read beyond" to survive in a math classroom, or the use of literacy instruction to help students become "content literate." Longitudinal studies which examine the impact of literacy instruction as perceived by preservice teachers before actual teaching is experienced, during student teaching, and in practice will yield more insight into the power and influence of pedagogical perceptions.
The findings suggest that literacy instruction is not perceived by prospective teachers to be a central activity in subject areas in which the teacher has a comfortable level of content knowledge expertise. However, if teaching in a content area in which their content knowledge expertise is uncertain, literacy instruction is perceived to be a crucial aspect of instruction. Therefore, this study clearly suggests a need for continued examination of instructional goals involving literacy which are important to preservice teachers, taking care to determine consistency between perceptions and instructional planning. It would also be relevant to investigate reflective writings regarding what preservice teachers feel they do not know in terms of content area expertise and the subsequent role literacy instruction would play.

Some of the participants observed their knowledge base about teaching is incomplete or confused. That finding implies it might be possible to educate preservice teachers who will challenge pedagogical perceptions that discount the need for literacy instruction at the secondary level. Further analysis is necessary to understand this point.

Questions that Emerged from the Data

In this report, I have considered some of the factors that contribute to prospective teachers' perceptions regarding secondary content instruction. The conclusions
about the impact of literacy instruction on content area teaching raise several questions.

1) Should secondary preservice teachers be encouraged to reflect upon their own literacy perceptions? and,

2) Do reflective activities influence secondary preservice teachers' awareness of the role that literacy plays in secondary classrooms? Replication of this study with other preservice teachers could offer insight into these questions.

3) Do literacy reflection activities introduced in teacher preparation programs carry over into classroom practice? If so, how is reflection used to meet students' need to learn? Research that looks at how content area teachers perceive the impact of literacy instruction on the relationship between subject matter knowledge and their students' need to learn the material would offer data to answer this question.

4) Does guidance from university instructors influence preservice teachers' pedagogical perceptions regarding the role of literacy in secondary classrooms to such a degree that changes in instructional practices result? This study did not attempt to answer this question. Further research is necessary to determine if this is so.
Limitations of the Study

Although the methods used to collect and analyze the information gathered from the six participants were carefully considered and administered, there were some limitations to the study.

First, there was limited time available with the six preservice teachers. At the university where the participants were enrolled, only one content area literacy course is required of secondary education majors. Because I chose to evaluate the perceptions of senior students who had completed much of their education course requirements, but had not been involved in student teaching, there was a narrow time frame available for working with the participants. I do feel successful in my attempts to investigate the negotiation of literacy instruction as perceived by this group. However, more time with them would have assisted my endeavor to comprehend the obvious as well as the subtle aspects of their pedagogical perceptions.

Secondly, the study was conducted with preservice teachers enrolled at a single university. This particular program recognizes students from all disciplines as secondary education majors. The course work and related activities foster communication between students from a variety of subject area backgrounds. There is opportunity for relationships to develop among students with different
perceptions regarding how to teach content material. Therefore, a comparative examination of students with different content area traditions and loyalties (O'Brien & Stewart, 1990) was accomplished in the mutual setting of a teacher education program.

In this study, only six secondary content areas were represented. While I did attempt to investigate perceptions from preservice teachers in subject area courses offered in many secondary schools, there were some content areas which were not represented.

Additionally, the knowledge gained from this study is limited in that it pertains to a small sample size of participants. According to Patton (1990), this type of research has the ability to provide generalizations that can have applicability to other situations under similar conditions. Therefore, I feel the conclusions can be generalizable to education students in university settings with similar characteristics to help explain how preservice teachers value literacy instruction in content area teaching.

Because there is a "unique configuration of background knowledge, values, and cognitive propensities that a particular reader brings to a text" (Kagan, 1992, p. 132), it is acknowledged that value judgments are inherent in the interpretation of the data. However, the methodology for
collecting and analyzing the information was carefully executed to maintain subjectivity.

Another limitation with the interpretation of the data is the prospective teachers' lack of opportunity to work with adolescent students in classroom situations. The study involves assumptions about preservice teachers. One assumption is that preservice teachers can internalize a realistic image of content classrooms. Another assumption is that they can define the role literacy will play in the context of the learning environment of a secondary classroom without the benefit of teaching experience. However, this study was designed to ascertain the perceptions of university students before experience gained through practice caused their perceptions to change (Jackson & Cunningham, 1994).

It is also possible that these preservice teachers may have responded to some of the journal prompts or questions as they thought "good" teachers should answer.
REFERENCES


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Appendix A
CONSENT FORM

Julie Lester
LSU, Fall '96

Negotiating Literacy Instruction: Pedagogical Perceptions of Secondary Preservice Teachers

Consent Form
Student Participants

This study will investigate preservice teachers' pedagogical perceptions of content area literacy. By signing this, you understand that the data collected will be used for a study I am conducting. Your name will not be used in any way. You also understand that if you do not wish to participate in the study, there will be no grade penalty. You have the right to ask questions at any point, and you have the right to withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

Thank you very much for your contribution to my work.

Julie H. Lester
SLU Box 529
Hammond, LA 70402

Julie Lester has my permission to use quotations from my survey responses, journal responses, and interviews in her research. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I give permission for a pseudonym to be used in place of my name.

I also understand that my responses on the Student Survey will not be shared with my instructor as they appear on the form.

Name

Date

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Appendix B
STUDENT SURVEY

Julie Lester
LSU, Fall, '96

Student Survey
Content Area Reading for Secondary Education Majors

Demographic Information

Name __________________________ Date ____________________
Content Area ___________________ Age ____________________
Social Security Number ___________ Classification ______
Year will begin teaching _________ Gender ________________

Reminder: Responses are anonymous. The information as it is appears on this form will not be shared with the instructor of your class. The results of the study will be available to anyone interested in reviewing them.

1. Please describe your teaching experiences. (For example, classroom, substituting, Sunday School, Scouts, etc.)

2. What experiences have helped to define your perceptions of literacy?

3. Do you see this course as being an asset to the educational background of a secondary education major? Why or why not?

4. Do you think subject area teachers should promote literacy in high school classrooms? Why or Why not?

5. What would you like for your former students to say about you as a teacher?
Appendix C
GUIDED JOURNAL ENTRIES

Julie Lester
LSU, Fall, '96

(Number 1 close to beginning of the semester, then number two at about four weeks, then one entry approximately every two weeks after I have given the Student Survey.)

1. In your journal, under the heading, Teaching and Me, write a short narrative for each of the following three questions:
   a. When did you decide to become a teacher and why?
   b. How did you go about choosing your content area?
   c. What do you consider to be "good" teaching?

2. In your journal, under the heading, An Autobiography of My Reading Experiences, recount your reading history. Be sure to include your earliest reading experiences in elementary school; take it through middle and high school; and conclude with your current perspectives on reading at the college level. You may want to take some time to reflect upon your experiences before you begin your story.

3. In your journal, under the heading Literacy Definition, define "literacy" in your own words. Then, define "content literacy" in your own words. Based on your definition and your own experience, explain what it means to be "literate" and to be "illiterate."

4. It has been said that our high schools today are turning out "students who can't read and understand the fine print on a bag of potato chips" (Readence, Bean, & Baldwin, 1995, p. 4). Consider that you will be teaching the students described in this quote from your textbook.
   In your journal, under the heading Literacy Needs, share what you, as a ______________________(your content area) teacher can do to help meet these students' needs to improve reading proficiency. What influences (internal and external) do you feel positively or negatively affect high school students' literacy proficiencies?

5. Congratulations! You have landed your first teaching job. However, you have been assigned to teach one class of ________________(a subject out of your area). In your journal, under the heading Negotiating Instruction, discuss how you will promote learning for your students in a content area in which you feel less confident about your own knowledge base. Will literacy be a part of your instructional planning? Why or Why not?

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Appendix D
GUIDED INTERVIEW

Julie Lester--LSU, Fall, '96

Name: ___________________________ Tape No. and Side: ___________________________
Date: ___________________________ Place: ___________________________

(Inform participant about purpose and ask if have questions about my study.)

Permission to tape — Assure confidentiality.

1. What kinds of printed materials (text) do you plan to use in your teaching?

2. How do you plan to use printed materials in your content area classroom?

   Could you teach in your content area without a textbook?

---Look at response to Journal Entry 5 and discuss---

3. How do you perceive your level of expertise as an authority when compared to your textbook?

4. How do you perceive your level of expertise as an authority when compared to other text materials?

5. Will literacy instruction be a valued component of your instructional planning? Discuss?

6. What are some of the literacy strategies (if any) that you feel you will employ in your teaching?

   Do you feel the literacy strategies you teach your students to use to help them learn your subject matter will be transferred to other subject areas?

7. Has this content area reading course influenced your perceptions about literacy in secondary classrooms? How?

8. What changes (if any) do you see in your perception of "self as teacher" as a result of your reflection on literacy during your participation in this project?

   This ends the interview with:

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Appendix E
CONFIRMATION LETTER ONE

40147 Pumpkin Center Road
Hammond, LA 70403
August 26, 1996

Martha H. Head, Ph.D.
Department Head
SLU Department of Teacher Education
SLU 749
Hammond, LA 70402

Dear Dr. Head:

Thank you for allowing me to work with the Department of Teacher Education at Southeastern this semester as part of my dissertation research. As we discussed, I am interested in secondary preservice teachers' perceptions about content literacy instruction.

In an effort to select information-rich cases, as described by Michael Patton's qualitative research methods, participants for my study will be chosen using the purposeful sampling approach. The students that are enrolled in the Content Area Reading Course, EDUC 472, for the Fall, 1996, semester will make up the pool of participants from which six students will be selected for case study analysis.

Enclosed are copies of the forms I plan to use. These documents are also being submitted to the Committee on the Use of Humans and Animals in Research at SLU for their consent to conduct the investigation. When their approval has been obtained, and upon approval of my research proposal by my graduate committee at LSU, I will begin collecting data. I intend to collect all of the information during the fall semester. Copies of the approved instruments will be provided for your records.

I am looking forward to working with you and the students in your department. I hope to make a worthwhile contribution to the field of content area literacy through my work. Thank you again for the opportunity to conduct my research at Southeastern.

Sincerely,

Julie Lester

/jal
Enclosures
Appendix F
CONFIRMATION LETTER TWO

40147 Pumpkin Center Road
Hammond, LA 70403
September 9, 1996

Connie H. Nobles, Ph.D.
Department of Teacher Education
Southeastern Louisiana University
SLU 749
Hammond, LA 70402

Dear Dr. Nobles:

I am looking forward to working with the Department of Teacher Education at Southeastern this semester as part of my dissertation research. My interest is in secondary preservice teachers' perceptions about content literacy instruction.

In an effort to select information-rich cases, as described by Michael Patton's qualitative research methods, participants for my study will be chosen using the purposeful sampling approach. The students that are enrolled in the Content Area Reading Course, EDUC 472, for the Fall, 1996, semester will make up the pool of participants from which six students will be selected for case study analysis.

Enclosed are copies of the forms I plan to use. These documents have been submitted to the Committee on the Use of Humans and Animals in Research at SLU, and they have approved the study. I intend to collect all of the information during the fall semester.

I am looking forward to working with you and the students in your class. I hope to make a worthwhile contribution to the field of content area literacy through my work. I appreciate the opportunity to conduct my research at Southeastern.

Sincerely,

Julie Lester

/jal
Enclosures

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Appendix G
MEMBER-CHECKING VERIFICATION

Julie Lester
Fall, 1996, LSU

I have had the opportunity to review the text from my student survey form, journal entries, and interview session with Julie Lester. I agree that this case study information has been accurately transcribed and interpreted.

_________________________  __________________________
Name                          Date
Appendix H
PERMISSION LETTER

40147 Pumpkin Center Road
Hammond, LA  70403

August 26, 1996

Committee on the Use of Humans and Animals in Research
Southeastern Louisiana University
Hammond, LA  70402

Dear Committee:

I am enclosing the Protection of Human Participants Declaration/Certification/Assurance Form for your review and approval. As indicated on the form, I am interested in secondary preservice teachers' perceptions about content area literacy instruction.

Thank you for your consideration of my study. Please let me know if you have any questions about the project. I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Julie Lester

/jal

Enclosure
1. Title of Proposal: Negotiating Literacy Instruction: Pedagogical Perceptions of Secondary Preservice Teachers

2. Principal Investigator(s) (PI): Julie Lester
   Department: Teacher Education
   Date Research Begins: Fall semester, 1996
   Expected Date of Completion: Spring semester, 1997

3. Identify agency if the research proposal is to solicit external funding:
   Agency: ____________________________ Submission Deadline: _________________

4. Declaration of Human Participants.
   ___ A. Human participants will be involved in the proposed research as either:
      ___ Adults ___ Prisoners
      ___ Minors ___ Mentally Retarded
      ___ Other (Specify) ________________________________

   ___ B. The PI will collect:
      ___ Secondary data from published sources such that individuals could not be identified (protocol must be submitted but no assurance form).
      ___ Primary data via questionnaire/personal interview/audio recording/but participants' identity could not be determined (attach complete protocol).
      ___ Primary data via questionnaire/personal interview audio-video recording/and participants' identity could be determined (attach complete protocol).
5. Provide a brief description of your proposed research procedures related to the use of human participants. Describe the characteristics of the participants (age range, number of participants, etc.) how they will be recruited, the instructions given and activities in which they will engage. Clearly indicate the process involved if incentives, compensation, or follow-up techniques will be used (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Students enrolled in the Content Area Reading Course, EDUC 472, for the Fall, 1996, semester will be surveyed for the study. Six participants will be chosen to provide information for case studies. These preservice teachers will be selected based on criteria provided on the Student Survey form. Different high school subject areas will be represented by the participants.

The students will be asked to participate in the following activities:

1. Questionnaire—Student Survey
2. Autobiography of Literacy Experiences
3. Guided Interviews
4. Guided Journal Responses

Copies of these instruments are attached.

Participation will be voluntary and anonymity will be maintained in reporting by use of pseudonyms.
6. The investigator gives assurances to the Committee on the Use of Humans and Animals in Research for each of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assurances</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The human participants are volunteers.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. All volunteers will consent by signature.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Participants have the freedom to withdraw at anytime.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The data collected will not be used for any purpose not approved by the participants.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The participants are guaranteed anonymity.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The participants will be informed beforehand as to the nature of the activity.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. The nature of the activity will not cause any physical or psychological harm to the participants.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Individual performances/responses will not be disclosed to persons other than those involved in the research, or to those authorized by the participants.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. If minors or interdicts are to participate in this experiment, valid consent has been obtained from the parents or guardian.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. If minors are of an appropriate age, valid assent forms will be obtained from the participants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. All questions concerning the proposed research will be answered to the participant's satisfaction.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each "No" answer to any of the above, the PI must provide an explanation.

If more space is needed for statements a-k than is provided, please attach additional sheets of paper.

7. If the data collected relates to illegal activities, provide explanation.
8. Does this research entail stress or possible psychological, social, legal, or physical harm to participants? Please explain. What steps have been taken to minimize these risks? Have provisions been made to ensure that appropriate facilities and professional attention necessary for the health and safety of participants are available and will be utilized?

n/a

9. University policy requires that any risk associated with participation be outweighed by potential benefits to participants and to humankind in general.

a. Identify any benefits to participants resulting from participation in this research.

These preservice teachers will have the opportunity to gain awareness of their personal theories about content area literacy in the context of teaching and learning in secondary classrooms.

b. Identify any benefits to humans in general resulting from the research.

The results of this study will provide the field of content literacy with useful information that will benefit secondary educational practices.

10. How will legally effective informed consent be obtained from all participants (or their legally-authorized representatives)? ATTACH A COPY OF THE FORM TO BE USED. If deception is necessary, please justify and describe debriefing procedures to be used.

Copy of Informed Consent form attached.

11. If minors or other vulnerable participants are involved, please outline procedures to be used in obtaining their individual agreement to participate, in addition to the consent of the parent or guardian. ATTACH A COPY OF THE FORM TO BE USED.

n/a

12. Are all participants protected from the potentially harmful future use of the data collected in this research?  

____ x ____ Yes ____ No Describe measures planned to ensure anonymity or confidentiality. If audio or video tapes are used, when will they be erased?

Pseudonyms will be used in place of any name in the project. Audio tapes of interviews will be erased upon final approval of the study.
13. ATTACH COPIES OF ALL SURVEYS AND QUESTIONNAIRES WHICH APPLY TO THIS PROPOSAL.

FOR PROJECTS PROPOSED BY STUDENTS, STAFF, OR FACULTY WITH NO PRIOR HUMAN RESEARCH:

This research involving human participants, if approved, will be conducted under my immediate supervision.

Name of Faculty Sponsor: [Signature] 8/29/96

14. Assurance:

I assure Southeastern Louisiana University that I will comply with all requirements to ensure the protection of human participants and that the statements made above are correct. I will permit the University to conduct reviews as may be required for the implementation of this assurance.

Signature of Principal Investigator: [Signature] August 26, 1996

15. Signature of Department Head: [Signature] 8/29/96

16. Signature of Dean: [Signature] 8/16/96

For CUHAR Use Only:

The proposed research received:

Full Review

Expedited Review

Committee Action:

Full Approval

Conditional Approval

Emergency Approval

Provisional Approval

Denied Approval

Comments or Conditions:

Signature of CUHAR Chair: [Signature] 9/6/96
VITA

Julie Hill Lester received her Bachelor of Science degree in Vocational Family and Consumer Science Education in 1990 from Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, Louisiana. In 1992, she received her Master of Science degree in Vocational Education from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She received her Certificate of Education Specialist in Reading from Louisiana State University in 1994. In May, 1997, she received her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Louisiana State University.

Julie taught Family and Consumer Science at the secondary level for three years and seventh grade science for one year in Louisiana public schools. For four years, she taught developmental education courses at Southeastern Louisiana University, and also taught Family and Consumer Science courses at Southeastern for three semesters. As a graduate assistant at Louisiana State University, she taught content area literacy courses in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Julie is a member of the American and Louisiana Family and Consumer Science Associations, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the International Reading Association, the National Association for Developmental Education, Phi Kappa Phi, and the Southwest Educational Research Association.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Julie Hill Lester

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Title of Dissertation: Negotiating Literacy Instruction: Pedagogical Perceptions of Secondary Preservice Teachers

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Date of Examination:
March 7, 1997