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Reading Research for Struggling and Reluctant Readers

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Abstract

Reading instruction is an important part of a child's education. Reading is essential in their academic career. Students who read well are able to perform at high standards but students who struggle with reading can experience many difficulties, ranging from doing poorly in all subjects to behavior issues. Many researchers are reporting successful studies in closing the achievement gap in reading. Teachers need this information to best support students who need interventions when learning to read. This literature review looks at how best to instruct students who struggle to read.

Reading Research for Struggling and Reluctant Readers

Reading is a vital part of education. It is a major piece of core instruction in the lower elementary grades as students are learning how to read. Elementary teachers spend a large part of their day in whole group reading instruction, small group differentiated reading instruction, reading interventions for students below expected levels, and progress monitoring students using reading passages. Despite the effort, some students still struggle with reading. Kilpatrick (2015) writes, “we have ample research to show that by making changes in our instructional approaches, we can prevent many reading difficulties as well as substantially accelerate the reading growth of most students with reading difficulties” (p. 23). The purpose of this literature review is to share the findings from research. Teachers can use the most efficient instructional practices to not only close the gap for struggling readers but also between research and practice (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Literature Review

Most students learn to read without difficulty. Reading will occur naturally through core instruction in reading. Most instruction is appropriate and beneficial for the majority of students (Kilpatrick, 2015). But for others, learning to read can be a struggle. Teachers need the most effective strategies to address students with reading deficiencies. According to Denton (2012), “Multiple studies have demonstrated that with typical instruction, children who do not learn to read adequately in the primary grades will likely continue to struggle with reading in subsequent years” (p. 233). Reading is a vital skill for later learning. Teale (1995) adds, “so much of school success hinges on

reading” (p. 109). Teachers will need to address those at-risk students who need extra help and interventions.

The positive from the research is that with the right type of instruction and intervention, struggling students can improve reading skills. With this goal in mind, there are several published studies on the reading interventions that can be used to most effectively teach struggling readers. The National Reading Panel, in the meta-analysis of research, wanted to look at phonemic awareness instruction as a reading intervention. Ehri, Nunes, Willows, Schuster, Yaghoub-Zadeh, and Shanahan (2001) state, “that phonemic awareness (PA) instruction is more effective than alternate forms of instruction or no instruction in helping children acquire phonemic awareness and in facilitating transfer of PA skills to reading and spelling” (p. 260). Phonemic awareness instruction can help those struggling readers. Kilpatrick (2015) adds, “All of these early studies suggested that phonological awareness training in kindergarten and/or first grade produces a substantial benefit for early reading acquisition” (p. 253). He goes on to list more supporting studies that include phonemic awareness, letter-sound, whole group, Tier 2 small group intervention, and systematic instruction (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Phonemic awareness (PA) is the ability to hear and identify the sounds. Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound. Phonemic awareness skills include blending, segmenting, and manipulation of sounds. It is a part of phonological awareness along with phonics, listening skills, and syllables. Phonics is when you apply these phonemes to the written letter or letters that represents those sounds.

But recent evidence shows that orthographic mapping can be just as, if not more, important at helping students learn to read. Kilpatrick (2015) states, “orthographic

mapping is the process readers' use to store written words for immediate, effortless retrieval. It is the means by which readers turn unfamiliar written words into familiar, instantaneously accessible sight words" (p. 81). Galletly and Knight (2013) add, "it is important that reading researchers be aware of orthographic complexity as an important variable impacting reading-accuracy development, difficulties and instruction" (p. 182). Teachers can apply the most effective, research-based strategies when they know how students learn best. This literature review will look at the history of reading instruction and share the most current research for both overcoming and preventing struggling and reluctant readers.

Historical Perspectives

Reading instruction of the past is an important piece of what is happening now and for the future. Teale (1995) writes, "Thus it is important for early childhood educators to know what has already been said and tried so that we can build on the successes and rectify the mistakes of the past" (p. 96). History shows us the different paths instruction has taken and why. As researchers, teachers, and scientist learn more about child development, brain development, and reading acquisition, students and teachers are able to capitalize on what is best practice. Educators can be most effective by being aware of research to put into practice.

Instruction has swung between whole word, whole language, and phonics instruction throughout the past. Gaffney & Anderson (2000) write, "Our sense is that the major theoretical changes in the reading field are captured like this: Behaviorist, Cognitive, Sociocultural" (p. 57). Pre-Twentieth Century focused on letter names and sounds. In the early 20th Century John Dewey, along with others, promoted the word

method as a way to learn to read. Between 1940-1960, whole language with contextual clues became the focus for reading. Since then there has been a combination of systematic phonics instruction along with sight word recognition with a focus on comprehension (Teale, 1995).

But Kilpatrick (2015) writes, “None of these classic approaches has a well-developed hypothesis about reading both familiar words and unfamiliar words. They each focus on one or the other” (p. 29). He goes on to say that while the past reading instruction has been based on good intentions, we need to look beyond intention by looking at the facts. Research supports phonics instruction but not for struggling readers (Kilpatrick, 2015). Phonics helps students sound out words but does not help those struggling readers to instantly recognize words that efficient readers are able to do (Kilpatrick, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Instruction in reading has taken many roads and yet reaching those struggling readers still presents problems. Teaching reading has changed and evolved in the past 200 years as more is learned about child and brain development. This also includes instruction for those who have reading difficulties. Yet what remains are the skills needed for learning to read. Kilpatrick (2015) writes, “The simple view of reading is a way of organizing the empirical findings about the components needed for skilled reading. It begins by dividing reading comprehension into two broad skills: word-level reading and language comprehension” (p. 77). When these develop through instruction, students’ word reading and language understanding will lead to comprehension. The

word reading and language understanding are then further broken down into different skills.

To be good readers, students need a good understanding of the language. English is not the easiest language or orthography. Orthography is the way a language prints letters and spelling (Galletly & Knight, 2013). Students learn phonemes, words, semantics, and grammar to have a grasp of the language. Kilpatrick (2015) defines the three developmental levels of phonological awareness as letters and sounds, decoding, and orthographic mapping. “Orthographic mapping suggests that readers accumulate unitized memories of common sub-word letter sequences, which would explain performance on orthographic tasks found in experimental studies” (Kilpatrick, 2015, p. 185). Burt (2006) and Cunningham & Stanovich (1990) in their separate studies found that how students perform on orthographic tasks could be directly related to the amount of print exposure (as cited in Kilpatrick, 2015). When these phonemic skills are mastered, students are able to recall words at a rate where they are able to read fluently and comprehend what they are reading.

Themes

Effective reading instruction begins with students who can distinguish between phonemes, can read words fluently, learn new vocabulary words, and make sense of what they are reading. Denton (n.d.) shares five research-based characteristics for effective reading instruction. These include teaching essential skills and strategies, differentiated instruction, explicit and systematic instruction, application of skills and strategies, and mastery of critical content (Denton, n.d.). These essential skills include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers also need to

teach skills, strategies, and concepts for students to use during reading. Instruction also needs to be explicit and differentiated. Students need the skills to read fluently, comprehend what they are reading, and decode new words.

Explicit instruction means teaching skills through a clear demonstration, opportunities to practice, and feedback from the teacher for mastery of the skill. This practice follows I do, we do, you do model of teaching. When you combine explicit with systematic instruction, students learn specific skills directly in a natural sequence. Differentiated instruction means meeting and adjusting instruction for the specific needs of individual learners. Teachers can do this by using data from observations or assessments to create small groups for specific instruction. When students are able to get the instruction they need, their skills will grow. You are supporting the student at their level, enforcing the strengths they already have and scaffolding to new knowledge.

Opposing Viewpoints and Conflicts

Reading is a vital skill for later learning. With this knowledge, the instruction of reading has been controversial. History has shown us that instruction swings like a pendulum between whole language and phonics instruction. Most schools provide a balanced approach to provide the best of both worlds. Cromwell (2016) supports this by writing, “no one approach to teaching reading and writing is best for every child” (para 7). And thousands of children have learned to read through either or both approaches.

But these findings do not support why some students still struggle with reading. According to Kilpatrick (2015), “the whole-word approach was developed long before researchers understood how words are remembered for instant retrieval” (p.

35). He also goes on to state, “First, in weak readers, phonics helps with identifying unfamiliar words, but does not necessarily promote instant word recognition. This is a significant problem because skilled readers primarily read by instant recognition based on a large sight vocabulary” (p. 41). The argument for phonemic awareness is undeniable as an important part of decoding the cipher.

Another part of reading that plays a part in reading acquisition is the desire to read. Students get better at reading when they read. Not only do students need the skills to read, they need the desire to read daily. There are numerous studies and a wealth of research that support daily reading. Yet interest, desire for reading, and the love for books are not researched. Layne (2009) writes, “Such goals are not easily measured or are they measurable beyond question; hence, they have not found their way into the traditional school curriculum, which remains rooted in an exclusive focus on the mechanics of reading.” (p. 12-13). Classroom teachers can foster the love of reading by creating engaging lessons and the love for books. All of which play a vital role in reading skills.

Legislation

There is legislation for reading disorders, specifically dyslexia. Youman and Mather’s (2013) outline state laws concerning identification and treatment of dyslexia. They wrote, “States with clearly defined dyslexia laws or with dyslexia reference handbooks take a different approach when identifying with dyslexia” (Youman & Mather, 2013, p. 140). The importance of early detection is the high rate at which early intervention can remediate students. Students who are identified early can be given the chance to be given the instruction they need to close the gap from their peers.

Goswami (2000) adds, “Dyslexic children, who have problems in analyzing and representing phonological information that are not yet well understood, are thought to acquire phoneme-level representations more slowly than normally progressing readers” (p. 146). Gray (2008) found that research has changed instruction for dyslexic children. “Recently, converging evidence shows that intense phonological intervention can improve brain function during word recognition activities” (Gray, 2008, p. 199).

But even without dyslexia identification laws, schools and teachers have intervention models and processes in place to help students who struggle to read. Many states have adopted a framework based on how students respond to instruction. One is the Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) and the other is Response to Intervention (RtI). While they have differences, the one thing they have in common is using research-based instruction for students and targeted interventions for students who struggle. Although MTSS or RtI are not part of national legislation, it is used in many schools in many states for identification of students for intervention of academic or behavior needs. VanDerHeyden et al. (2016) write, “Research has shown that RTI practices can work to improve student outcomes” (para. 18). Coleman, Buysse, and Neitzel (2006) add, “Results from a meta-analysis of RTI studies reported that approximately 15% of young children receiving Tier 2 instruction will make sufficient progress to return to Tier 1 instruction” (as cited in Koutsoftas, Harmon & Gray, 2009, p. 117). Effective implementation of RtI is the key to getting the most positive effects of intervention.

Impact

A successful reading program needs to be backed by research. The scientific inquiry into reading can really change the way we teach readers, especially those who struggle. The research supports teaching phonemic awareness and phonics as the foundation of reading. Students need to be able to have the word-reading skills and comprehension strategies to read well. Kilpatrick (2015) writes, “Phonic decoding and orthographic mapping are both based upon strong letter-sound skills, phonological blending, and phonemic proficiency” (p. 248). With these skills in place, students can be successful. He goes on to say, “The goal of preventing reading problems will be best served when the skills required for each reading-related skill (word-level reading and comprehension) is directly addressed in our prevention efforts” (Kilpatrick, 2015, p. 248).

Ehri et al. (2001) in their meta-analysis analyzed 52 published studies from 1976-2000. They were looking to validate and build on the findings of the Bus and van Ijzendoorn (1999) meta-analysis. Both analyzed the effect of phonemic awareness on the acquisition of reading. The meta-analysis looked at different types of PA, students from preschool - 6th grade, students from normally developing to reading disabled, teacher vs. researcher instruction, individual instruction, small group instruction, whole group instruction, and the effect size (the difference between the treatment and control group). When the effect size is 1 point, it means the intervention had a strong effect on instruction but a size of 0 means that the control and treatment group is the same. They found PA instruction to learning phonemic awareness had an effect size of 0.86 and for reading 0.53. But most surprising were the results for at-risk students, the effect size was

0.95 for learning PA skills and 0.85 for reading. Ehri et al. (2001) found that focus on only one or two PA skills, such as blending and segmenting, had a larger effect size than multiple skills and using letters to manipulate sounds had a greater effect size than without (with letters 1.11 and without 0.85). The effect size of teaching small groups was larger than individual instruction and that PA instruction did not need to be lengthy (Ehri et al., 2001). “The benefits of PA instruction were replicated multiple times across experiments and thus provided solid support for the claim that PA instruction is more effective than alternative forms of instruction in teaching PA and in helping children acquire reading and spelling skills” (Ehri et al., 2001, p. 274).

Kilpatrick (2015) wrote about The National Reading Panel’s meta-analysis, as well. He also shares the Shapiro and Solity (2008) study that used those findings to teach PA skills to struggling reader and found 75% decrease in struggling readers at the end of the intervention. Vellutino et al., (1996) used explicit and intensive PA instruction, systematic phonics instruction, and connected texts (as cited in Kilpatrick, 2015). The 15-week study had 67% at-risk students score at or above average on word level reading (Kilpatrick, 2015). Torgesen, Alexander, Wagner, Rashotte, Voeller, and Conway (2001) found that, “following intensive instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics and the opportunity to read connected text, these students made average gains of 14 standard score points on the WRMT-R Word Identification Subtests and 20-27 points on the Word Attack subtest” (as cited in Kilpatrick, 2015, p. 13). Kilpatrick (2015) also included how Vellutino, Scanlon, Zhang, and Schatschneider (2008) used these results to create the Response to Intervention (RTI) model.

Douglas & Albro (2014) created six teams of researchers in July of 2010 to investigate how to improve reading comprehension. With so much research supporting learning how to read, comprehension has not had much attention. They plan to change this with their comprehensive research initiative. Douglas and Albro (2014) share, “In sum, the RfU Research Initiative is poised to produce a number of new interventions for use in general classroom settings and as targeted interventions for struggling students in prekindergarten through high school” (p. 353). Such initiatives are important for teachers and students. Also, Podhajski, Mather, Nathan, and Sammons (2009) did a study where they examined both teacher knowledge and student performance through a control and experimental group with phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency instruction. “Results yielded growth patterns in the experimental group that support the success of the intervention” (Podhajski et al., 2009, p. 413).

Conclusion

Including research-based practices in instruction could improve reading for many who struggle. This means including phonics and phonological awareness for students in kindergarten and first grade. Kilpatrick (2015) writes, “The combination of explicit phonics and phonological awareness training for all students in kindergarten and first grade provides far greater results in word-level reading skills than any other teaching practice that has been studied” (p. 276). This implication requires teachers to have the knowledge of phonemic awareness skills and plan systematic and explicit instruction. The implementation is twofold. Teachers can provide systematic and explicit phonemic awareness instruction for both kindergarteners and first graders. The other implementation will be to provide Tier 2 instruction for those students identified as

‘at-risk’. This includes any student who may be reading below expected reading levels or who performs below peers.

According to Kilpatrick (2015), “Those studies that taught advanced phonemic awareness beyond the basic level needed for phonic decoding had the strongest outcomes reported in the literature” (p. 316). When students are given these skills, they are able to improve their word level reading. He adds, “the source of the dramatic results in the “highly successful” category of intervention studies in the combination of the three key elements: advanced phonemic awareness training, phonics instruction and reinforcement, and authentic reading opportunities” (Kilpatrick, 2015, p. 316).

Taking what the research has shown, teachers can use this knowledge to help students who are not progressing sufficiently or struggling to read altogether. “Yet the divide between research and practice in education generally, and reading education in particular, has long been noted” (Spear-Swerling, 2007, p. 305). Teachers need to use the knowledge from research with their students and to conduct further investigations. The research done also leaves other areas where further research can be done. There are still many factors that could be answered through a study, like orthographic mapping, early childhood instruction, parental involvement, brain research, and technology advances. Wise (2007) adds, “The research you produce is critical to improving educational practice” (p. 411). Doubek and Cooper (2007) add, “Studies that investigate the effects of multiple simultaneous initiatives on students’ reading achievement would also be useful” (p. 412). The hope is, as teachers learn more, both teachers and students are able to benefit from the advances.

Annotated Bibliography

Casbergue, R. M., & Bedford, A. W. (2010). Some legacies of no child left

behind. *Childhood Education*, 87(1), 5-7. Retrieved from

<https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/763162340?accountid=28306>

This article was an introduction to five articles in the magazine that analyzed the No Child Left Behind Act. The authors briefly describe the legislation and the reasons why the authors wanted to investigate the influence on young children, the teaching of reading, and teachers. The shortcomings of this act had an impact on the new legislation. I learned both more about No Child Left Behind and how politics and legislations can affect teaching and learning. It was also good to read both the positive and negative things that came from the legislation. I am reminded how important it is to learn from the past.

Cromwell, S. (2016). Whole language and phonics: Can they work together? *Education*

World. Retrieved from http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr029.shtml

This article looked at both sides of the debate between whole language and phonics instruction as the best approach to reading. There is pressure on teachers and schools for children to be successful readers. It is a vital skill for later success. Both methods have had their supporters and their place in history. Now a balanced approach seems to be most effective. The author gives suggestions for both phonics and whole language approaches. It looks like the swing between the two is showing that neither is effective alone but that both have a place in reading instruction. My research in the history of reading instruction shows the swing

between these two approaches. Many people are passionate about one or the other. But both offer strategies for teaching to the strengths of individual students. I think an important message of this article is that we need to differentiate instruction. But it didn't offer suggestions for students who struggle with reading.

Denton, C. A. (n.d.) Classroom reading instruction that supports struggling readers: Key components for effective teaching. *RTI Action Network: A Program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities*. Retrieved from <http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tier1/effectiveteaching>

This article gave 5 essential research-related components of effective reading instruction for students with reading difficulties. This information comes from The National Research Council's report. They include teaching essential skills and strategies, providing differentiated instruction, explicit and systematic instruction, providing opportunities to apply skills and strategies, and ensuring students master content. A big take away for me from this article is when Denton (n.d.) stated, "that most reading problems can be prevented by providing effective instruction and intervention in preschool and in the primary grades" (para. 1). She went into detail about what that effective instruction looks like. This supports the need to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension along with skills, strategies, and concepts.

Denton, C. A. (2012). Response to intervention for reading difficulties in the primary grades: Some answers and lingering questions. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 45(3), 232-43. Retrieved from

<https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/1010535436?accountid=28306>

This article looks at research on the response to intervention (Rti) models schools are using for reading instruction and intervention. The 3 tiers provide students with the level of support for their specific needs, core instruction, intervention, and greater intensive intervention. The article provides what instruction is most effective at each tier. It also shares the research that supports early reading intervention. I feel this article shares the research on the most effective reading intervention. It gives ideas for core instruction, at-risk interventions, and research based strategies that support all learners. The article suggests early intervention with phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and sight words instruction as the most effective. It also gives the evidence that early intervention in specific skills is effective. This article gives me information about how most students learn to read, the importance of early intervention, and what intervention instruction is effective.

Doubek, M. & Cooper, E. (2007). Closing the gap through professional development: Implications for reading research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42(3), 411-415.

Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/stable/20068305>

This article stressed the need for research on programs of professional development and their effects on reading achievement. The National Urban Alliance for Effective Education (NAU) is working with school communities to improve education and close the achievement gap. The article encourages examining current research as important to closing this gap. Without evaluating

the programs teachers are using, the time they are given to improve their practice, the programs used to prepare teachers, and even the texts used to teach students, teachers do not have the full picture to educate students to their fullest potential. The NAU stresses the importance of literacy research to improve instruction. This article validates my feelings that research is key to implementing best practice for optimal student learning. It also encourages implementing research practices and not just looking at research. I feel this supports my plan to look at current and past research to influence my teaching practices. But also encourages me to conduct research if I find an area lacking.

Douglas, K. M. & Albro, E. R. (2014). The progress and promise of the reading for understanding research initiative. *Educational Psychology Review*, 26(3), 341-355. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/10.1007/s10648-014-9278-y>

This article explains why the Institute of Education Sciences created the Reading for Understanding Research Initiative. The authors explained that research has shown us how students learn to read and the skills we need to develop reading. But they also pointed out there are still many struggling to read and understand what they are reading. They developed a theoretical framework on how reading develops and how to help readers who struggle with comprehension. The purpose of this initiative is to create better interventions and assessments. This article reinforced my findings that research supports explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. It also mentions the Florida Center for Reading Research. I am familiar with their website and

resources. We use it in our school as an approved intervention for struggling readers.

Ehri, L. C., Nunes, S .R., Willows, D. M., Schuster, B. V., Yaghoub-Zadeh, Z. & Shanahan, T. (2001). Phonemic awareness instruction helps children learn to read: Evidence from the national reading panel's meta-analysis. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36, 250-287. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/230852982_Phonemic_Awareness_Instruction_Helps_Children_Learn_to_Read_Evidence_From_the_National_Reading_Panel%27s_Meta-Analysis

This was a report for congress on the findings of reading research. This National Reading Panel wanted to look at the scientific evidence of phonemic awareness as an effective instructional practice. It looked at research that both supported and questioned the benefit of phonemic awareness. It does report that PA is a good indicator of learning to read. It also states the benefits of phonemic awareness instruction. They include the ability to read words, write words, and comprehend the reading. The report does state in its findings that phonemic awareness instruction aids reading and spelling. It also reported that at-risk students had larger gains over normally progressing students and students with reading disorders. It also reported that focusing on one or two phonemic awareness skills, like blending and segmenting, had a bigger impact on reading than teaching many skills. I found the information in this article very interesting and a little overwhelming. The article is a large report with many tables reporting very detailed information. Not only did the findings support using phonemic

awareness to teach reading but that focusing on one or two skills that students can apply is most beneficial. I also learned that teaching phonemic awareness along with the letters was more effective to help with transfer of knowledge to reading and writing. I feel this article does support the benefits of teaching phonemic awareness, especially from Kindergarten to 2nd grade.

Gaffney, J. & Anderson, R. C. (2000). Trends in reading research in the United States: Changing intellectual currents over thirty years. *Handbook of Reading Research, Vol. III*, 53-74. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Janet_Gaffney2/publication/258517255_Gaffney_J_S_Anderson_R_C_2000_Trends_in_reading_research_in_the_United_States_Changing_intellectual_currents_over_three_decades_In_M_L_Kamil_P_B_Mosenthal_P_D_Pearson_R_Barr_Eds_Handbook_of_Reading_Re/links/572997c608ae057b0a0346b8.pdf

This article reviewed scholarly journals from the past three decades over reading research. One thing they noticed were major theoretical shifts from behaviorist to cognitive to sociocultural. The authors also recognized the research and practice gap. They offered reasons why such a gap exists. The results of the review found trends in articles about writing, phonics, and other research. It was interesting to read through the shifts through the lens of article topics. Something that shocked me was what they revealed about special education research. The authors stated that reading research was seldom mentioned. I also learned more about the theoretical shifts in reading instruction and trends for reading research.

Galletly, S. A. & Knight, B. A. (2013). Because trucks aren't bicycles: Orthographic

complexity as an important variable in reading research. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 40(2), 173-194. Retrieved from

<https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/1361837176?accountid=28306>

Orthographic complexity is defined as the number and types of spelling patterns in a nation's written language. An orthography can be simple and others are complex. The more complex an orthography, the higher cognitive load for learning to read and reading difficulties. The authors do stress the importance of a program where both phonics and sight word instruction are important partners. This article looked at programs at many different countries. Their findings support that orthographic complexity has an important impact on reading and that is a missing variable to reading research on reading accuracy development. They also stress the importance of phonological awareness has on reading instruction. I learned so much about orthographic complexity from this article. I do feel that the complexity of our language does play a vital role on learning to read. It also encourages me to look for more information and research of orthography on reading instruction.

Goswami, U. (2000). Phonological representations, reading development and dyslexia:

Towards a cross-linguistic theoretical framework. *Dyslexia*. Retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/12476812_Phonological_Representations_Reading_Development_and_Dyslexia_Towards_a_Cross-Linguistic_Theoretical_Framework

In this article, Goswami looks at reading development and reading difficulties. She took research findings about phonological development across different languages and how the transparency of their orthography affected reading acquisition. She proposes the phonological representations hypothesis as a framework for students who have difficulty learning to read. The phonological representations hypothesis supports how students use spoken word sounds and apply this to alphabetic orthography. She applies this hypothesis to students with difficulty reading. She also shares that because English is a less transparent orthography, meaning the grapheme-phoneme correspondence are less consistent, learning to read may take more time for children with phonological processing deficits. I had much to learn from this article. First, I had an outdated definition of dyslexia. I learned more about this reading difficulty and that research supports that those with dyslexia have a phonological processing difficulty. I also learned more about the development of reading and how research supports the phonemic awareness and working memory tasks needed to read and write words.

Gray, E. S. (2008). Understanding dyslexia and its instructional implications: A case to support intense intervention. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 47(2), 116-123.

Retrieved from <https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/205363462?accountid=28306>

Erika S. Gray defines dyslexia and explains some recent brain research to support intense phonological awareness instruction and assessment-based instruction. She describes dyslexia as a reading disability with a decoding weakness. She dispels

some myths, such as: it is not a visual disorder, does not occur in those with low IQ, it is not curable, and affects females as much as males. The brain research shows those with dyslexia use less efficient strategies for word retrieval making reading more time consuming. You can use assessments on phonological skills to improve reading for dyslexics and focus on things to help with dyslexic difficulties. She provides a case study about one student in particular and how these interventions helped him. This article supports the need for assessment based instruction and intense phonological intervention. I also learned more about dyslexia as a reading disability. I also feel that the brain research she shared is very important as we learn more about helping students who struggle with reading.

Kilpatrick, D.A. (2015). *Essentials of assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

This book gives a detailed account of the research for students with reading difficulties. The author offers an explanation why research is not present in instruction. He then provides reasons why the way we teach reading is not working for those who struggle. The author gives a detailed account of reading struggles and assessments for struggling readers. Then the author gives the research for effective ways to prevent and overcome reading difficulties. This book is filled with information and research. I think the depth of knowledge in this book is important for understanding and implementing such practices. The author builds background knowledge for the reader about past practices and shares the research for helping students with reading difficulties. I was drawn to

the chapter on effective intervention approaches. I learned so much from this book and recommend that every reading teacher read this book.

Koutsoftas, A. D., Harmon, M. T. & Gray, S. (2009). The effect of tier 2 intervention for phonemic awareness in a response-to-intervention model in low-income preschool classrooms. *Language, Speech & Hearing Services in Schools, 40*(2), 116-30.

Retrieved from <https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/232587642?accountid=28306>

This article describes the RtI model for instruction. The authors explain the three tiers of core instruction, intervention, and intensive intervention. They advocate having this system of supports which allow teachers to monitor student progress through core instruction, provide specific interventions for students who aren't making adequate progress, and intensive interventions in the third tier. The research project in this article provided phonemic awareness interventions for low-income preschool students. Their results were successful but the authors were careful to state that more research was needed to generalize their findings. This article did a great job of explaining the RtI model and how phonemic awareness activities can be successful as interventions.

Layne, S.L. (2009). *Igniting a passion for reading*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

This book addresses aliteracy, readers who can read and choose not to. The author advocated for a complete reader, one who has the necessary skills to read and the will to read. Dr. Layne advocates adding interest, attitude, motivation, and engagement to literacy instruction. Reading is a choice a person makes and

that choice can play a large part in how a student reads. This book affirms in me that practicing makes perfect. If we can motivate students to read, the skills will follow. It also motivates me to practice some of the things he promotes, like engaging read alouds, book talks, and celebrating books. While he doesn't go into detail about the skills needed for reading, he does create an insightful motivation to create readers.

Lemann, N. (1997). The reading wars. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1997/11/the-reading-wars/376990/>

This article shows how educational issues can become political. It gave a detailed history of the swing from whole-language to phonics reading instruction in California. It likened whole language as joyous and phonics as boring. California advocated whole language and after poor test scores, switched to phonics instruction. Money and legislation began to support phonics. The poor test scores could be from whole language but didn't take funding, class size, and the influx of English Language Learners as part of the blame. This article also gave me a history of the recent history of California's education system. I learned more about how trends in education are adopted; through textbook/curriculum, professional development, and teaching in education schools. I also learned that whole language does not have much support anymore.

Podhajski, B., Mather, N., Nathan, J. & Sammons, J. (2009). Professional development in scientifically based reading instruction: Teacher knowledge and reading outcomes. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 42(5), 403-17. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/10.1177/0022219409338737>

Here the authors looked at teacher knowledge and its effects on reading instruction. They did a study where a group of teachers were given professional development on effective instructional practices that included phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. The findings in this article support that teacher knowledge of reading can influence instruction to produce greater student outcomes. This article was a reality check that even though, as teachers, we may feel knowledgeable about teaching of reading, there is always room to learn more to become effective teachers. It also showed me that there is success through intervention by teaching phonemic awareness.

Spear-Swerling, L. (2007). The research-practice divide in beginning reading. *Theory into Practice*, 46(4), 301-308. Retrieved from <https://ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/docview/62054961?accountid=28306>

The author here focused on what was called the research-practice divide. The article tells the reader that research doesn't always get to the teacher. They provide evidence of this claim. It also sites more reasons for the divide. And it offers suggestions for educators. By having educators be more knowledgeable about research findings, the teaching of reading can be much more effective. The author also emphasizes the importance of continually learning by reading, understanding, and evaluating research. This article was influential on my decision to do a literature review about reading research. There is so much out there, I will need to focus my efforts on specific pieces of reading research. This article gave me some ideas on where to start. It mentions how the English

language has an opaque orthography. I am not familiar with orthography so I want to start there. I also want to look at risk indicators, context cues, and reading development. I want to become more knowledgeable about the research out there so I can apply these findings to my instruction.

Teale, W. (1995). Young children and reading: Trends across the twentieth century. *The Journal of Education*, 177(3), 95-127. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42742373>

This article gives a history to both when reading instruction should begin and the best instructional practices to be used. The author stresses the importance of knowing where we came from in these areas, why differing practices were used, and the results of these practices. His findings show how the two main practices we have today emerge, whole language and phonics instruction. The article gives an account of the changes that occurred as new knowledge was learned by educators, scientists, and researchers. This article has a concise guide to the history of reading instruction. It gives me information about the historical perspectives of reading instruction. Not only does the author give me the history, he shares the major paradigm shifts and how the two most common patterns that seem to come and go. I learned more about the history of reading than I had known before. I have always known about the whole language and phonic battles, but to see how it unfolded was interesting to read. The most important thing I learned from reading this article is that reading instruction is very important and many people are passionate about how best to help children learn to read.

VanDerHeyden, A., Burns, M., Brown, R., Shinn, M.R., Kukic, S., Gibbons, K., Batsche, G., & Tilly, W.D. (2016). Four steps to implement RtI correctly. *Education*

Week, 35(15), 25. Retrieved from

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/01/06/four-steps-to-implement-rti-correctly.html>

This commentary offered an explanation of why and how RtI got started. It goes on to offer four suggestions to implement the framework for optimal results. The authors suggest a smarter screener, a focus on core instruction, the intervention needs to meet student needs, and the intervention needs certain pieces to be most effective. I feel this article is important in stressing the fact that effective implementation is the key piece to RtI. RtI can be at important intervention when used correctly.

Wise, B. (2007). Turning reading research into policy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 42(3), 407-411. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/stable/20068304>

Wise (2007) advocates for the use of research in the creation of education reform. More specifically, on how to present research to policymakers. He addresses past conflicts of opposing views and how it has left policymakers confused. He encourages conducting more research to help influence future policies. This article shares the importance of research to reading instruction policy. It shows that not only do teachers benefit from the research but that reading research also has a large influence on national or statewide policies. I also thought the suggestion to continue to do research is also an important suggestion.

Youman, M., & Mather, N. (2013). Dyslexia laws in the USA. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 63(2), 133-53. Retrieved from

<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.nwciowa.edu/10.1007/s11881-012-0076-2>

This article looked specifically at the legislation for students with dyslexia. The authors defined dyslexia as a neurological learning disorder. But they also write that the definition of dyslexia is not clear. Identification and intervention for students with this reading disorder was one topic. Then they compared the different specific state laws. Other important topics included early screening, identification, interventions, and even ELL students with dyslexia. I found the findings in this article informative. It leaves me wondering if states that have laws are better at identification and intervention. I also feel that if a state doesn't have the screening laws, it doesn't mean they don't do a good job of identifying and treating reading disorders.